



the family values toolkit

For Children Ages 8 to 10

This Month's Featured Value Is: **Tolerance**

A tolerant person accepts diversity and doesn't prejudge others on the basis of religion, race, or gender. If we are to live in harmony with others and seek cooperative solutions to conflicts, we need to focus more on our common humanity than on our differences. How a person treats those who appear different depends to a large extent on what he or she is taught in childhood.



What Can Parents Do to Nurture This Important Value?

First, Set Goals:

Correct unfair judgments and encourage cooperation with a variety of children.

As children get older, they absorb a host of prejudicial messages. Television, movies, and popular music share a lot of the blame; but intolerance may also be passed on by relatives, friends, and even religious educators.

At school, children find it easy to make fun of others for any number of reasons: being overweight, being the "teacher's pet," or even bringing ethnic food to school for lunch. Such kids are not hardened bigots but are trying to develop a group identity. Increased contact between different groups may not automatically solve the problem, but having to work together for a common goal has been shown to reduce competition. Parents can help kids navigate difficult social situations. Some great ways to start are pointing out instances of prejudice in the media and, at birthday party time, asking children to be sensitive about not leaving out unpopular kids. Here are some other great ideas:

Next, Take Action! Try These Activities:

- ✓ **Create a family cookbook.** Interview relatives and come up with recipes that are part of your heritage. Ask for memories of favorite dishes from prior generations. This helps develop an awareness of family ancestry, and is the first step to understanding and tolerating other people's differing cultural traditions.
- ✓ **Have a "Family Cultural Event Night."** Plan to take the whole family to a local museum to be exposed to the art of different cultures. Watch educational videos about other cultures, or go to a cultural event such as a concert by international musicians. Talk with the kids about what new things they saw and heard.
- ✓ **Develop empathy for people with disabilities.** Have your children try writing with their non-dominant hand, or do things with one hand behind their back. Or have them put on a blindfold and try to find things in their room. Talk with them afterward about what life is like for the disabled person.

Then, Report Back!

Share your stories of success, your challenges, and overall experiences with others in our community @

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