

SAY THEIR NAMES – BLACK LIVES MATTER

INTRODUCTION TO BLM

Peaceful protests, mass marches, petitions, political speeches, and demonstrations. Many children may have questions about the images, stories, and conversations they hear on the news and around them. As allies, it is also our responsibility to engage in positive and open discussions about racial inequality, racial hierarchies, and white privilege present in our societies. **The little conversations are just as important as the big parades.**

The movement seeks to “eradicate white supremacy, stop violence inflicted on Black communities, and create a safe space for Black communities. It speaks out against police brutality for the thousands of victims wrongly treated by the police.

It has grown to become a global movement – and when we say, “Black Lives Matter”, we’re not saying “ONLY Black Lives Matter”. However, by encouraging ‘all lives matter’ we risk taking away the racial difficulty felt only by Black communities.

Racism and race are not one-conversation topics.

THE THREE LIONS

England’s football team saw itself in the finals of the 2020 Euros, which for most was incredible.

However, for Bukayo Saka, Marcus Rashford and Jadon Sancho, what should have been a huge achievement in their career was made into a fight for their own justice, all because of the colour of their skin.

Black men all across the country faced horrific acts of racism as a result. Hundreds were attacked, injured, stabbed. Some were thrown into the River Thames. Some passed away from injuries sustained.

It was a simple logic; **when they won they were English but when they lost they were black.** It’s this behaviour that we need to change.

WHITE PRIVILEGE

White privilege can be explained in child-friendly hypotheses such as ‘**Imagine if I had a chocolate bar and I gave it to every white person for free but made black people pay.**’ Or ‘**Imagine if we went to swimming lessons and a white child could enter a competition after swimming 2 laps, but a POC had to swim 4 laps to enter the same competition.**’

Do you think that’s unfair? Well so do we!

The concept of white privilege is not an attack on white people but is a reflection of the reality that many communities across the world are affected by.

SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE

Perhaps one of the biggest takeaways from our guide is to understand that changing attitudes towards race **starts at home.** Once we, as parents, understand anti-racism ourselves, we are then able to lead by example to our children. Being open to change and criticism of current views is a powerful lesson, helping our children become better and more conscientious world citizens.

Actions often speak louder than words, and our children mirror how we act in day-to-day life. From a young age, children take note their parents’ actions, meaning that if you open discussion on race at home, yet treat people differently in view of their race, your children are likely to adopt similar behaviour. Whilst it’s not always easy, as parents we should try to acknowledge and be aware of our own implicit bias. Take note of your gestures, how you look at people, and how you interact with people. Small changes such as these go a long way.

“You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist.”

RESOURCES FOR TEENS

(Book) Angie Thomas: The hate you give (14+) & 2018 film adaptation exploring BLM movement in modern day

(Book) Malorie Blackman: Noughts and crosses (11-16) A reverse of social norms and confronts slavery

(Book) Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé: Ace of Spades (14+) Gossip Girl meets Get out, delving into institutionalised racism

(Film) 12 years a slave: (15) biographical period drama originally written by Solomon Northup exploring slavery

(Film) The Help: (12A) follows 1963 civil rights movement

RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN

(Book) Grace Byers: I am enough (3-8) picture book reminding kindness and respect

(Book) Isyiah Shabazz: Malcolm Little: The boy who grew up to be Malcom X (10) childhood story of Activist Malcom X

(Film) Hidden Figures: (PG) based on difficulties for black female mathematicians in 1960’s at NASA

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

BOOST POC VOICES – Interact with Black Authors, Black Musicians, Black Artists, Black Businesses to reduce economic inequalities they face.

ASK QUESTIONS – In a world where information is everywhere, being curious is a good thing. Independently learn more about marginalised groups and share your findings with your peers.

STAND UP – Be an upstander even when you feel scared. Transfer the benefits of privilege to those who lack it. Acknowledge that while you too feel pain, this conversation is not about you.