

How to Teach Tolerance

Practical Parenting for 21st Century Change-Makers

In a democratic society, there should be equality in access to education, training, and occupations. Moreover, there should be equal pay for those in the same occupation. Many women and racial minorities, however, do not have this equality in access and pay.

As parents, we must guard against perpetuating sexism and racism in our children. More than that, we must be for equality, and truly value diversity. Success in the workplace requires an enlightened attitude among workers. In 1991, a prestigious, national commission of employers identified “Works with Diversity” as being an essential skill for the U.S. to succeed as a high-performance workplace in the 21st century.

Specifically, working adults need skills to:

- “Work well with people having different ethnic, social, or educational backgrounds.
- Understand the concerns of members of other ethnic and gender groups.
- Base impressions on an individual’s behavior not on stereotypes. Understand one’s own culture and those of others and how they differ.
- Respect the rights of others while helping them make cultural adjustments where necessary.”

Arguably, it is even more important for parents to teach these skills to their children.

*Adapted from Job Skills for the 21st Century
A Guide for Students (1996, Oryx Press) by
Lawrence K. Jones.*

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