Table Talk: Family Conversations about Current Events

About Table Talk
Families often want to discuss news stories and other timely societal events. It’s a great opportunity to engage children in rich conversation, share important values and encourage lifelong interest in the news. These talks can happen on the way to school, during a walk or over a meal. Research shows that dinnertime conversation benefits the health, emotional and academic outcomes for children of all ages. Each Table Talk guide below includes a topic summary, questions to start the conversation and dig deeper, ideas to take action and additional resources.

Here are some tips for discussion:
• *Find out what young people know and use the summary information to expand upon their prior knowledge.* Ask what else they want to know and research together to learn more.

• *When discussing the topic, ask young open ended questions that deepen the conversation.* Be mindful not to judge their responses and listen thoughtfully.

• *Think together about a child-level action they can take; this can be something they do on their own or something you do together or as a family.*

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**The Purpose and Power of Protest**

In the wake of George's Floyd's murder in May 2020 by the police, protests erupted across the United States. The first protest took place in Minneapolis, MN the night...
after George Floyd was killed. Within days, protests were taking place in all fifty states and more than 140 cities nationwide. Tens of thousands of people also gathered in countries around the world to support the protests and show solidarity. In a recent poll, 74% of Americans said they support the protests that have taken place since Floyd’s killing. The impact of the protests is already evident in several cities where steps are being taken toward a broader set of law enforcement reforms.

Overall, these protests are focusing on Black Lives Matter, racial injustice in the criminal justice system and countering systemic racism in society at large.

Engage your family in a discussion about the purpose, history and impact of protests.

Previous Table Talks

George Floyd, Racism and Law Enforcement (in English and en Español)
Engage your family in a discussion about the killing of George Floyd, how bias and hate escalate and the larger context of systemic racism.
Talk with your family about the disproportionate impact of coronavirus on communities of color and how systemic racism is a contributing factor.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**How Systemic Racism Impacts Coronavirus Racial Disparities**

Talk with your family about the disproportionate impact of coronavirus on communities of color and how systemic racism is a contributing factor.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**Draw Me Safe: Coloring and Conversation about a Pandemic**

Use Ricardo Morales’ "What to Do in a Pandemic... Our Cousins Know" coloring series to be creative, pass the time, relieve stress and engage in family conversations with children about how to stay safe and well during the coronavirus pandemic.
Discuss how societal inequities are highlighted and perpetuated by the impact of the Coronavirus.

**COVID-19 and Societal Inequities**

Discuss how societal inequities are highlighted and perpetuated by the impact of the Coronavirus.

**Elections, Gender and Bias**
Discuss the 2020 presidential election and the extent to which sexism plays a role in this unprecedented campaign.

Engage in a family discussion about the different ways that heterosexism manifests in society and schools and explore ways to address it.

**Tools and Strategies**

**What Is Heterosexism and What Can I Do About It?**

Engage in a family discussion about the different ways that heterosexism manifests in society and schools and explore ways to address it.
**Election Polls**
Talk with your family members about how polls inform, influence and impact elections.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**Diversity in Media and Why Visibility Matters**
Talk with your family about the importance of diverse representations and visibility in the media.
Gender-Neutral Pronouns Make Headlines
Engage in a family discussion about the use of "they" and "them" as a gender-neutral pronoun.

Merriam-Webster/Twitter

Antisemitism Today
This family discussion guide shares current information about the state of antisemitism in the U.S. today.
TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

The Little Mermaid, Diversity and Bias

Family discussion guide about the recent controversy about the casting of an African-American woman in The Little Mermaid.

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Gun Violence and Mass Shootings
Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about mass shootings, violence, guns and gun laws.

Talk with your family about the Stonewall uprising, which took place on June 28, 1969 and is viewed by many as sparking the movement for LGBTQ rights in the U.S.

Stonewall and LGBTQ Equity

Talk with your family about the Stonewall uprising, which took place on June 28, 1969 and is viewed by many as sparking the movement for LGBTQ rights in the U.S.
Slurs and other biased language have become commonplace. What are they and how can we address them in order to prevent the next generation from perpetuating this offensive language?

Kyle Korver, a basketball player with the Utah Jazz, writes an essay about racism and white privilege. Discuss the essay with your youth using our Table Talk parent/family discussion guide.

Kyle Korver, Privilege and Racism

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Women in sports face a wide range of inequalities. Talk with your family about the lawsuit the U.S. women's soccer team filed against the federation that governs soccer in the U.S., which cites "institutionalized gender discrimination."

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

**Women's Soccer Team Takes a Stand**

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TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

**Gillette’s New Ad: ‘The Best Men Can Be’**
There has been a heightened awareness of and discussion around sexual harassment and sexual assault. Use this discussion on Gillette's ad about gender roles and masculinity to talk about these issues with your family.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**Shooting at a Pittsburgh Synagogue**

Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about the deadly shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA, antisemitism and hate.
**Tools and Strategies**

**Nike's Ad and Believing in Something**

Colin Kaepernick, former N.F.L. quarterback with the San Francisco 49ers, took a stand about racial injustice. This Table Talk provides a discussion guide about the Nike ad featuring Kaepernick and the campaign's slogan “Believe in something.”

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**Colin Kaepernick, via Twitter**

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**Tools and Strategies**

**Kids, Allowance and Gender**

A survey showed that in U.S. families, boys are paid twice as much allowance as girls for doing weekly chores. Have a discussion with your youth about the "gender allowance gap" and their thoughts about chores and allowance in your home.
Have a family discussion about the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, what it means to be 'American' and the consequences when DACA is eliminated.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**What is DACA and Who Are the DREAMers?**

Have a family discussion about the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, what it means to be 'American' and the consequences when DACA is eliminated.

**Family Separations and Detentions at the Border**
There have been horrific stories of children being ripped from their parents at the border. Discuss with your youth what they have heard, how they feel about the situation, what it means to seek asylum and how they can help.

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

What is Everyday Bias?

We are seeing more and more news and social media stories about people experiencing bias as they go about their daily lives. Here are some tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about incidents of everyday bias.
Research studies, past and present, revealed that most children’s scientist drawings depict men. Use this discussion guide to talk with youth about the "Draw-a-Scientist" tests and what they reveal about gender stereotypes.

**Scientist Drawings and Gender Stereotypes**

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**The Rohingya Crisis**

Since August 2017, about 655,000 Rohingya people have fled into neighboring Bangladesh to escape violent and deadly persecution in Myanmar. Here are some tips...
and strategies to help guide a discussion with youth about the Rohingya refugee crisis.

Use this discussion guide to have a parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about President Trump's ban on foreign nationals into the U.S.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**What is the 'Muslim Ban'?**

Use this discussion guide to have a parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about President Trump's ban on foreign nationals into the U.S.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**What is Net Neutrality?**
On December 14, 2017, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted to dismantle net neutrality regulations that were passed in 2015. Discuss with youth what net neutrality means and how this veto will impact people's ability to express their thoughts and ideas online.

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Why We Need Diverse Books

Talk with youth about literature, diversity and what other aspects of their life or forms of media lack diversity.

Airman 1st Class Kaylee Dubois, photographer
Sexual Harassment in the News

In October 2017, Harvey Weinstein, a powerful producer in the movie industry for decades, was accused of sexual harassment by more than thirty women. Use these tips and strategies to discuss with youth their thoughts, experiences and how they can support others.

Charlottesville and Beyond

Here are some tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about the lessons of Charlottesville, racism, anti-Semitism, white supremacy, the alt right and the First Amendment.
More than 150 years after the Civil War, there is a new drive to remove Confederate monuments. Discuss with youth why they think this issue is controversial and why monuments hold so much power and meaning.

**Confederate Monuments**

More than 150 years after the Civil War, there is a new drive to remove Confederate monuments. Discuss with youth why they think this issue is controversial and why monuments hold so much power and meaning.
Use this parent and family roundtable discussion guide to talk with youth about bullying/cyberbullying and how to be an ally.

"We Think Black Men are Bigger than White Men (Even When they're Not)," a perception revealed in a study by APA. Talk with youth about stereotypes and how misperceptions of others impact our interactions.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**Race, Perception and Implicit Bias**

"We Think Black Men are Bigger than White Men (Even When they're Not)," a perception revealed in a study by APA. Talk with youth about stereotypes and how misperceptions of others impact our interactions.
Hate Symbols

We see symbols every day in all aspects of our lives. Lately, a proliferation of hate symbols is increasing concern. Use this discussion guide to engage youth in conversations about swastikas and other hate symbols.

What is Fake News?

Here are some tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about "fake news," what it means and how to identify it.
Nice, France and Our Response to Terrorist Attacks

Have a parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about the 2016 attacks in Nice, France and understanding the complexities around incidents of terrorism.

Responding to Cyberhate

Online hate speech, or "cyberhate," is often in the news. Use these tips and strategies to discuss with youth two different responses to cyberhate highlighted in the news and...
ways they can respond.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**Bias in the Presidential Election**

Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about bias and bullying in the presidential election.
Propaganda, Extremism and Online Recruitment Tactics

Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about propaganda, extremism and recruitment tactics of terrorist groups.

Tools and Strategies

Movies and the Diversity Gap

Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about implicit bias and the role it plays in the movie industry, and award platforms.

Cliff/Licensed under CC BY 2.0
Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about dolls and diversity.

Facebook / Toys Like Me

Islamophobia and Being an Ally

In the wake of terrorist attacks and ISIS, here are tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about Muslims, islamophobia and being an ally.
Behavior that once led to a trip to the principal’s office and a detention, now often leads to suspension, expulsion and/or arrest. Use these tips for parent/family roundtable discussion with youth about incidents of harsh school discipline.

**School Discipline and the School-to-Prison Pipeline**

Behavior that once led to a trip to the principal's office and a detention, now often leads to suspension, expulsion and/or arrest. Use these tips for parent/family roundtable discussion with youth about incidents of harsh school discipline.
Refugees from Syria have been leaving their homes in search of safety and assistance. Use these tips and strategies to have family conversations with youth about the refugee crisis.

**Tools and Strategies**

**Kids Can Make a Difference**

Two fourth grade students expressed their opinion's about their school's lunch policy that required boys and girls to sit at separate tables. Have family conversations with youth about school policies and making a difference.
The Washington D.C's football team's name continues to spark controversy. Here are tips and strategies for family conversations with youth about mascots, slurs, names and epithets.

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Sports, Mascots and Bias
The Washington D.C's football team's name continues to spark controversy. Here are tips and strategies for family conversations with youth about mascots, slurs, names and epithets.

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Teenagers and Technology
Teenagers are online constantly. Use these conversation tips to help guide family conversations with youth about their technology use and habits.
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Caitlyn Jenner and Being Transgender

Caitlyn Jenner has been in the news recently because she recently came out as transgender.

What's Fair and Unfair About Student Dress Codes?
Over the years, schools have implemented student dress codes to address a wide range of issues, some of which have been quite controversial.