Table Talk: Family Conversations about Current Events

About Table Talk
Parents and family members often want to discuss current events and the news of the day. It’s a great opportunity to engage children in rich conversation, impart important values and encourage lifelong interest in the news and the world around them. These talks can happen on the way to school, during a walk or over a meal together. Family dinner is a key time to have these discussions. Research shows that dinnertime conversation benefits the health, emotional and academic outcomes for children of all ages.

Table Talk: Family Conversations About Current Events provides parents and family members with the tools they need to engage their families in conversations
about important news stories and other timely discussions about societal events. Each guide includes a topic summary, questions to start the conversation and dig deeper, ideas for taking action and additional resources.

How Systemic Racism Impacts Coronavirus Racial Disparities

The impact of coronavirus has been vast and devastating; its impact on public health and the economy is felt across the globe. Many communities are engaging in quarantine and social distancing. The job losses are staggering. Schools are closed and businesses are shuttered. Every day, people face the threat of illness and death of loved ones along with anxiety about the economic future of our nation and world.

Various U.S. cities and states are tracking demographic data which reveals COVID-19 is disproportionally impacting communities of color in the U.S. Communities of color are at increased risk of serious illness related to coronavirus
due to systemic inequities and structural racism in housing, employment, education and health care systems.

Previous Table Talks

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.

© 2020 Ricardo Levins Morales

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

COVID-19 and Societal Inequities

Discuss how societal inequities are highlighted and perpetuated by the impact of the Coronavirus.
Discuss the 2020 presidential election and the extent to which sexism plays a role in this unprecedented campaign.

**Tools and Strategies**

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

**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.
Talk with your family members about how polls inform, influence and impact elections.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**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.
Engage in a family discussion about the use of "they" and "them" as a gender-neutral pronoun.

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

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

Tools and Strategies

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

**Gun Violence and Mass Shootings**

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?

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**Slurs and Biased Language (en Español)**

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, Privilege and Racism**
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.

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**

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."
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**

**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.”
**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.

**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.
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.

**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.
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.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**Scientist Drawings and Gender Stereotypes**

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.
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.

**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.

**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.

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**

**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.
Why We Need Diverse Books
Talk with youth about literature, diversity and what other aspects of their life or forms of media lack diversity.

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.
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.

**Confederate Monuments**

Anthony Crider/CC BY 2.0
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.

![Image of monument being removed](Abdazizar/CC BY-SA 4.0)

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**What Bullying Is and Is Not**

Use this parent and family roundtable discussion guide to talk with youth about bullying/cyberbullying and how to be an ally.

![Image of children sitting on steps](Bigstock)
**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.
Tools and Strategies

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.

Tools and Strategies

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.
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.

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.

Bias in the Presidential Election
Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about bias and bullying in the presidential election.

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

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.
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

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Dolls and Diversity

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.

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.

Refugees, Reactions and World Response

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.

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.

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

Caitlyn Jenner has been in the news recently because she recently came out as transgender.
Over the years, schools have implemented student dress codes to address a wide range of issues, some of which have been quite controversial.

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.