

THE COUNSELOR CORNER



Chestnutwold Elementary School

What's in this month's issue:

- **CULTURAL AWARENESS IN MODERN PARENTING**
- **UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH**
- **CHCK TRAIT OF THE MONTH: EMPATHY**



THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL AWARENESS IN MODERN PARENTING

Teach Awareness of Your Own Culture

Every parent wants the best for their child. We want our children to be confident, curious, and open to different cultures from all corners of the globe. We live in an increasingly connected world, with modern societies more culturally diverse than ever before. It's no longer enough to teach your children about your own cultural heritage. To raise a global child, you need to instill an appreciation and interest in other cultures and peoples around the world.

Why is Cultural Sensitivity So Important?

Teaching cultural sensitivity opens up a child's mind to the possibility that their own culture is not the only important one. Kids are not born with pre-determined opinions and values. They learn from their parents, so it's important that you encourage your child to develop the 'soft skills' they need to make a positive contribution in the world.

Essential Skills for a Global Child

Children are naturally curious. From very early on, a child listens, observes and shows interest in the world around them. Children are like sponges. Teach your child to question the things going on around them. Encourage them to show empathy for different cultures, and give them the space and love to form their own opinions.

If history teaches us anything it is that we must look back to learn lessons for the future. Children need to be grounded in their own culture so they have the confidence to feel comfortable learning about different cultures.

You can begin teaching a child about their own culture – and others – from a very young age.

- Expose them to the sights, sounds, smells and flavours of your culture, and then give them the freedom to learn more about other cultures through music, books, dance and art.
- Celebrate the similarities between your own culture and different cultures.
- Challenge stereotypes and encourage children to question these stereotypes when they come across them in everyday life.
- Tell stories from your childhood, talk about how the world is a different place now, but celebrate these differences as a sign that cultures need to evolve in order to grow.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL AWARENESS IN MODERN PARENTING (CONTINUED)

Fun ways to teach your kids about different cultures

- **Learn a Language** – Younger children find it very easy to learn a second (or third!) language, and if you make it a fun game, they won't even notice it's a lesson!
- **Travel to New Places** – Travel to different countries is a great way the whole family can learn more about different cultures. Take a trip to a country where the people speak a different language and practice a different religion. It will really open your child's mind to new experiences.
- **Celebrate Popular Cultural Celebrations** – Make a point of celebrating festivals important in other cultures, not just your own. Make it fun and get the whole family involved.
- **Explore Cultural Diversity through Music, Art and Literature** – Read books together, listen to music on podcasts, and explore art from different cultures. The internet is full of amazing resources, so engage their senses with the rich diversity of other cultures.
- **Experiment with Different Cuisines** – Food is an excellent way to expose a child to a different lifestyle. Experiment with recipes and have a 'world food day' once a month. Let your child try new flavors and build their curiosity for new and exciting flavors.

The more you teach your child about different cultures, the easier they will cope with a rapidly evolving world. Teaching children to respect other cultures ensures they will grow up to form culturally cohesive communities whilst still retaining a strong sense of identity.

Adapted from The Importance of Cultural Awareness in Modern Parenting. (2020, December 1).

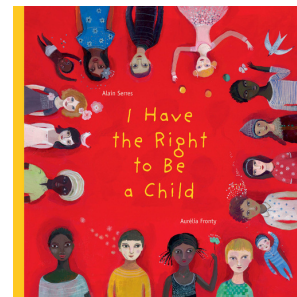
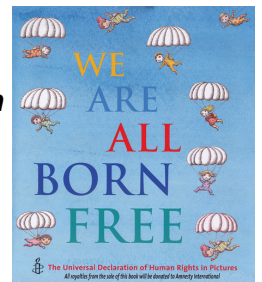
Retrieved from https://www.lululittle.me/en/our_blog/details/The-Importance-of-Cultural-Awareness-in-Modern-Parenting-

THIS MONTH WE ARE OBSERVING UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH

The world observes Universal Human Rights Month every December. This month is a reminder that the United Nations General Assembly codified the basic human rights of every person. It's also a time to reflect on the way we treat others, and to do what we can in the fight for equality.

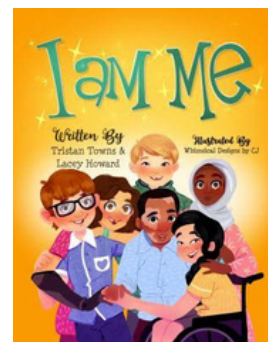
To further explore this topic, here are some titles that may be of interest to you and your family. As is the case with any readings, we always recommend that you preview the books before sharing them with your child.

We Are All Born Free: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pictures by Amnesty International



I Have the Right to be a Child by Alain Serres

Kid activists: true tales of childhood from champions of change by Robin Stevenson



I Am Me by Tristan Towns and Lacey Howard

OUR CHCK TRAIT OF THE MONTH IS...

EMPATHY

Starting this month we will begin to feature a ChCK trait of the month. Our ChCK traits include Responsibility, Respect, Empathy, Trustworthiness, Positive attitude, and Integrity.

Here are 5 tips you can cultivate empathy in your child

Empathize with your child and model empathy for others.

- Know your child. Ask your child questions. For example, what did you learn today that was interesting? What was the hardest part of your day?
- Demonstrate empathy for others, including those different from you.
- Engage in self-care and self-reflection.

Make caring for others a priority and set high ethical expectations.

- Keep to a clear message. Consider the daily messages you send to children about the importance of caring.
- Prioritize caring when you talk with other important adults in your children's lives.
- Help your children understand that the world doesn't revolve around them.

Provide opportunities for children to practice empathy.

- Have family meetings.
- Encourage empathy for peers.
- Reflect on empathy and caring.
- Discuss ethical dilemmas.
- Support doing with.

Expand your child's circle of concern.

- Zoom in and out. Help children learn to zoom in, tuning in carefully to others, but also to zoom out, taking in multiple perspectives and people.
- Understand those who are different or struggling. Emphasize with your child the importance of really listening to others, especially those people who may seem unfamiliar whom they don't immediately understand.

Help children develop self-control and manage feelings effectively.

- Identify feelings. Name for children their difficult feelings such as frustration, sadness and anger and encourage them to talk to you about why they're feeling that way.
- 3 steps to self-control. A simple way to help children to manage their feelings is to practice three easy steps together: stop, take a deep breath through the nose and exhale through the mouth, and count to five. Try it when your children are calm.
- Resolve conflicts. Practice with your child how to resolve conflicts.

Adapted from *For Families: 5 Tips for Cultivating Empathy* (2020, December 1)

Retrieved from: <https://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/resources-for-families/5-tips-cultivating-empathy>