

WHO ARE YOUR FRIENDS?

WHAT DO YOU HAVE IN COMMON?

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE FAMILY TRADITIONS?

WHAT MAKES EACH OF YOU SPECIAL?

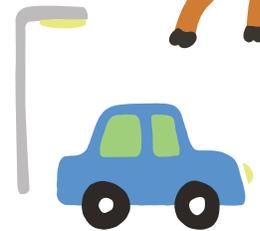
WHAT THINGS DO YOU LOVE TO DO?

HOW CAN WE SHOW CARE AND RESPECT FOR OTHERS?

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE IN YOUR FAMILY?

IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

LET'S TALK ABOUT WHAT MAKES YOU UNIQUE



KALAMAZOO RESA
INSPIRING EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE





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DEAR FAMILIES,

We are excited to bring you a new resource to help your children on the path to literacy! Kalamazoo County Talking is Teaching offers materials and activities that are easy, everyday ways to boost your children's brain power. Kalamazoo County Talking is Teaching is an initiative of the Great Start Collaborative, a program of Kalamazoo RESA.

The research is clear: the brain develops more rapidly in the first few years of life than at any other time in life.

Understanding lots of words makes all learning easier in their future. Talking is Teaching focuses on "making small moments BIG." Whether you are at home folding laundry, changing diapers, watching TV, or going for a walk, there are so many little things we can all do to help children become successful readers and learners!

THE MORE WORDS YOUR LITTLE ONE HEARS
IN CONVERSATIONS WITH YOU, THE MORE
CONNECTIONS THEIR BRAIN MAKES
ABOUT WORDS AND WHAT THEY MEAN.



We look forward to providing lots of fun lessons, materials and ideas for you and your child. Kalamazoo County Talking is Teaching offers virtual playgroups and parent skill-building sessions.

Reach out to Jen Stroven, Campaign Manager, at jen.stroven@kresa.org or call 269-598-0686. Like us at Facebook at [Kalamazoo County Talking is Teaching!](#)

LET'S TALK, READ, SING ~
AND BUILD YOUR CHILD'S FUTURE ONE WORD AT A TIME!

More early childhood services at Kalamazoo RESA:

- ▶ **Great Start Collaborative** offers virtual "Parent Cafes" to connect and feel supported! For more check us out at KalamazooGSC.org, or call 269-250-9635.
- ▶ **Seeds for Success** offers developmental screenings and home visits to all families. Call 269-250-9647.
- ▶ **Early On** offers free evaluations and home visiting for children birth to age 3. Call with any developmental concerns. 269-250-9649

TALKING ABOUT DIVERSITY WITH YOUR CHILD



Too Small to Fail and the National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) are proud to share information and resources to help families talk, read, and sing together to celebrate diversity.

We live in a world filled with rich traditions, cultures, and routines, and it's never too early to start helping your child appreciate diversity. By modeling respect and care for others in our communities, we can help children embrace differences while recognizing the many things we all have in common.

Tobeka G. Green, President and CEO of the National Black Child Development Institute, shares tips on how families can celebrate diversity all year long by engaging children in meaningful conversations during everyday moments.

WHEN SHOULD I BEGIN TALKING WITH MY CHILD ABOUT DIVERSITY?

It is never too early to talk with your child about diversity and what makes people unique. Research shows that babies as young as six months old notice differences in the way people look and behave. As a parent, you play an important role in helping your child appreciate and understand diversity!

TALK WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT WHAT MAKES HIM OR HER SPECIAL.

When children learn to love what makes them unique, it builds self-esteem. Help your little one take pride in her identity by talking about activities she enjoys or qualities she is proud of. You can also create a song together about something that makes her unique! For example, you might sing: "I love my hair, I love the way it bounces in the air!"

TALK WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT WHAT MAKES YOUR FAMILY UNIQUE.

When children know their family's history, it can build a sense of belonging. Talk with your child about your family's history by telling stories about his family and show pictures or videos if you can. Share stories about positive moments in your family or community's history.

TALK WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT HOW OTHER PEOPLE ARE UNIQUE.

Your child may notice differences in others, which is also a great opportunity to talk about what we have in common: we all eat food, we take baths, and we love to play. There are also many things that make us unique: we may look different, eat different foods, and speak different languages, which makes all of us special! Ask your child what makes her friends and family members unique.

HOW CAN I USE BOOKS TO HELP MY CHILD LEARN ABOUT DIVERSITY?

Reading helps your child discover new things about his history and the world around him. Reading books featuring diverse characters with your child not only promotes his sense of identity, it also helps him see the lives of children from backgrounds different from his own!

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NATIONAL BLACK CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE AND ITS PROGRAMS, PLEASE VISIT WWW.NBCDI.ORG.



NBCDI
National Black Child
Development Institute



#TALKINGISTEACHINGTIPS CALENDAR



Talk, read, and sing with your children every day! Simple interactions like the ones below can help boost children's brain and language development, setting them up for success in school and beyond. Please share photos of your family talking, reading, and singing using the hashtag #TalkingIsTeachingTips.

1 Talk about what makes everyone unique! "What makes you, you? What makes me, me?"

2 Help your child recognize the beauty in diversity. While outside, point out the shapes and colors you see. Ask, "How do the different types of flowers help make the world more beautiful?"

3 Celebrate your unique culture! Sing songs, tell stories, and make food from your culture with your child. Ask, "What do you love most about our culture?"

4 With your child, think about the ways you can spread kindness to everyone. "How can we be kind to everyone? What makes people feel included and loved?"

5 Read together! Cuddle up with your baby and read books with diverse characters. Talk about what makes each character special and unique.

6 Sing and dance to music from all over the world. Exposing children to diverse cultures can help them understand and respect differences.

7 Talk with your little one about similarities and differences. Let them know that while people may look different and live their lives differently, they still have a lot in common.

8 Have fun playing outdoors with your baby and talking about what you see together!

9 Give your baby age-appropriate art materials like chunky crayons and paper to create art together.

10 When you go on a walk with your baby, count the trees, leaves, cars, or animals that you see.

11 At the grocery store, give your baby an apple to hold in each hand. Ask, "Which is heavier? Which is lighter?"

12 Your baby loves to hear your voice. Talk, read, and sing together every day.

13 Go on a "shape hunt" with your little one. Search for different shapes in your home and around your neighborhood.

14 Ask questions about your child's art. You can say, "I noticed you used the color blue. Why?"

15 During bedtime, talk with your baby about your favorite parts of the day.

16 Play "I-Spy" by taking turns naming and describing the things you each see. Say, "I spy with my little eye...a big red truck. You?"

17 Go on a number hunt! Take turns pointing to and naming the numbers you see on signs, in books, or at the store!

18 Have fun finding things of different sizes and using words to describe them. Ask, "Can we find something big? Humongous? Small? Tiny? Short? Tall?"

19 Establish a consistent family routine, like eating meals together as often as possible. This strengthens family bonds.

20 Use colors to express feelings! Encourage your child to scribble or draw a picture using colors to show how he is feeling. Talk together about the colors and feelings.

21 Talk with your child about the weather each day! What do they see in the sky when it is sunny, cloudy, or rainy?

22 Have fun pretending to move and sound like different animals. "Ribbit and hop like a frog" or "chirp and flap your wings like a bird"!

23 Cuddle and share a story about your childhood. It's a great way to bond with your baby.

24 Use stories to spark creativity and imagination. During story time, ask, "What do you think will happen next?" Or ask her to make up and tell you a story of her own!

25 Laughing is an important part of learning! Play fun games like "peek-a-boo" or sing funny nursery rhymes.

26 Talk about clothing and the weather. "What do we wear when it is cold? Warm?"

27 Grow your baby's vocabulary by using big words like "humongous" or "gigantic" instead of "big."

28 When you read together, let your baby help turn the pages—it can help build their interest in books.

29 Talk about your job or workers you see out and about! What is the construction worker building? How does a firefighter help people?

30 Use your senses to explore the environment around you! What do you see? Hear? Smell?



LET'S TALK, READ AND SING ABOUT DIVERSITY!

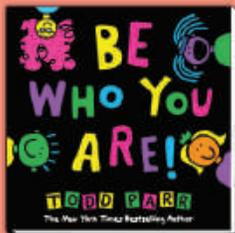
BOOK AND VIDEO RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

BOOKS

Be Who You Are

By: Todd Parr

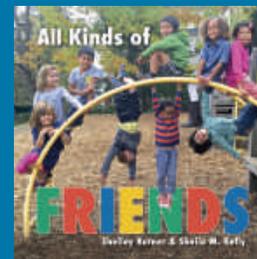
In this colorful picture book, bright drawings and bold words encourage children to be proud of who they are, inside and out. *Be who you are! Be proud of where you're from. Speak your language. Wear everything you need to be you!*



All Kinds of Friends

By: Shelley Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly

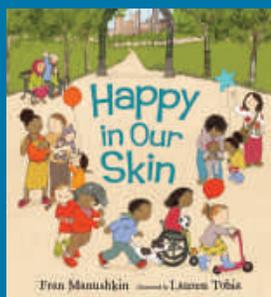
In this engaging take on diversity, this picture book demonstrates how friends come in different colors, sizes, shapes, and ages. Through the colorful photographs and simple text, discover ways to be a great friend and celebrate all of the different kinds of friendships you have.



Happy in Our Skin

By: Fran Manushkin
Illustrated By: Lauren Tobia

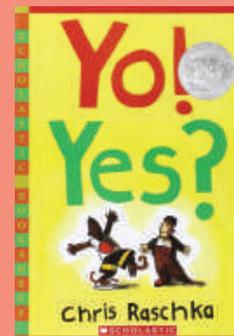
Through charming text and illustrations of diverse families, this delightful rhyming book celebrates the beauty of all shades of skin, and how wonderful it is to be just who you are. Follow families as they go about everyday activities, loving the skin they're in.



Yo! Yes?

By: Chris Raschka

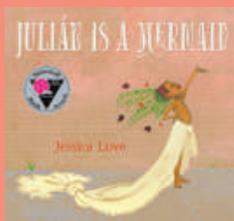
Two kids meet on a street. "Yo!" says one. "Yes?" says the other. And so begins a conversation that turns strangers into friends. With vibrant illustrations, this rhythmic read-aloud is a celebration of differences -- and how it just takes a few words to overcome them.



Julián Is a Mermaid

By: Jessica Love

In this beautiful picture book on self-love and individuality, young Julián is mesmerized when he sees some women dressed as mermaids. Julián begins to dream of dressing up like a mermaid, but what will his abuela (grandmother) think about the mess he makes and about how Julián sees himself?



VIDEO



Sesame Street: Song - Lupita Nyong'o Loves Her Skin

One of the things that makes the world such a wonderful place is diversity! From different cultures to different races and ethnicities, diversity makes the world beautiful. Today, celebrate who you are with Elmo and Lupita Nyong'o as they talk about skin. Skin comes in all different textures and shades of color - let's love the skin we're in! Watch the video here.

For more information, please visit: www.KalamazooGSC.org