

Teaching Your Children About Diversity

(NAPSA)—The U.S. Bureau of Census estimates that by 2060, white Americans will no longer be the majority. Hispanic and Asian populations are expected to triple,



Photo Credit: KinderCare Learning Centers

increasing the country's racial and ethnic diversity.

“Respecting and appreciating diversity is essential in today's world,” says Barbara Anderson, Ed.D., vice president of education for KinderCare Learning Centers, which operates more than 1,250 early childhood education and child care centers nationwide.

Anderson offers some suggestions for teaching children to honor diversity. “Parents should acknowledge that everyone is different, that everyone has value,” says Anderson. “The easiest way to do that is by example.”

Home is where children first learn about tolerance. Raising children in an environment that accepts individual differences will allow parents to discuss the ways people are different. Remember that those differences may include age, gender, skin color or even weight, as well as ethnicity.

Children learn by example. Demonstrate your tolerance with your words and actions. Talk to your child about tolerance. Expose your child to diversity by reading books about other cultures. Sing songs from other cultures and attend multicultural events in your community.

Talk about your own family's heritage. Where did your ancestors live before coming to this country? Which of those customs does your family still celebrate?

Answer your child's questions about differences honestly, using simple, nonjudgmental language. Remind your child that we're all different and that it is those differences that make each of us special.