Helping your child stay connected with their culture

Living in a multicultural family can bring a lot of new experiences into your child’s life. The thing for the parent to do is to explore and to let them discover all the richness of different cultures and what they can add and what they can benefit from.

Hopefully, you both have a strong identity in yourself that you can actually pass on to the child.

**How do I help my child connect with their heritage?**

Talk to grandparents, look at the family tree, look at the family history, look at the language, look at the people and this will sort of like help them to understand and give them a good sense of balance and being, and to understand what makes them unique and what makes them special. You can celebrate certain customs, maybe Diwali and Christmas. The different types of music that each country has, they can listen to.

**TOP TIPS Help your child explore their culture through extended family.**

It’s not so much that I wanted to know, because I’m so close with my grandparents and that side of my family so it’s not like I wanted to know because I had them there.

It’s very important to involve your extended family because through them you can see your heritage.

**TOP TIPS There are many resources available to you.**

If a parent doesn’t have access to a wider family, there are places you can go to to get the information you need – you’ve got libraries, you’ve got friends, you’ve got the Internet.

**TOP TIPS Talk to your child about how they feel.**

It’s very important to talk to your child about their views on culture because you’ll get an understanding where they’re coming from and that they may have questions that they don’t know how to put to you until you breach [sic] the subject which is to ask them their views, what they feel, why do they feel that way.

**TOP TIPS Be a role model and embrace your culture.**
What I bring my kids up to be is what they choose to be, really. I let them know their heritage and let them know the food that I like to cook. You know, they have a pretty sound upbringing.

Definitely if you embrace your culture at home it will show your child how proud you are about your culture, and then they’ll be proud about their culture too.

**TOP TIPS Talk to your child about possible prejudice.**

As they were growing up and they start to ask things like, ‘Oooh, Daddy’s brown and Mummy’s white...’ but that was just normal. It was only really when they went to school and then they get to school and people start talking to them about colour and stuff like that and people’s prejudices come out then, but it’s never happened in the house.

If your child’s involved in a race related issue, the best thing to do is to confront it and tackle it openly so that by your example your child can see that it is not acceptable.

I think being mixed race definitely enriches me and makes me more tolerant of other people and more understanding.

**Involve extended family in exploring culture. If possible celebrate cultural holidays. Talk to your child about possible prejudice...and always help them feel proud of who they are.**