



The following are some terms that might come up when you are discussing racial bias and injustice with your child, with child-friendly definitions.

Discrimination:

Prejudice is about how you think and discrimination is about how you act. **Discrimination** is the unfair treatment of a person or group of people because they are different from you. People discriminate against others because of their race, whether they are male or female, the country they come from, their religion, or other differences. Prejudice (bad thoughts about others based on differences) can cause you to discriminate against (treat unfairly) people who are different.

Fairness

Being **fair** means treating each person in a way that fits what that person needs. For example, it is not fair to give only one child in a family or classroom a treat or privilege for no good reason. It is also not fair to punish one child for no good reason. Being fair doesn't always mean treating everyone exactly the same. Parents don't treat each of their children exactly the same because their children may be different ages and need different things. For example, younger children need more sleep, so they go to bed earlier than older children.

Immigrant

An **immigrant** is someone who was not born in this country but moved here to make this country his or her home. People who move or immigrate here may not speak our language and may act differently than people who were born in our country do. They may have different ways of doing things based on the way they did things in their country. These differences may cause people to be prejudiced towards immigrants or to discriminate against them.

Prejudice

Prejudice means believing negative or bad things about someone who is different from you without proof. You might have learned or been taught these beliefs. A person could have a prejudiced belief related to skin color, whether a person is a boy or girl, has a different religion, or comes from a different country. For example, a prejudiced belief implied in the story is that because Omad, an immigrant, doesn't speak English well, he will not be good at soccer. Prejudice is a problem because you have already made up your mind or have a bad belief about someone before you know the person, and this is wrong.

Race

Often when people talk about the **race** of a person, they are noticing the skin color of a person. Black people or African Americans often have skin that is a darker brown than that of White Americans. Most Black people have ancestors that came from Africa. But There is a lot of variety in skin color, even when people belong to the same race. Also, some people have parents who are different races. In America, people have paid a lot of attention to skin color and have used the idea of different races to give some groups of people better treatment than other groups.

Racism or Racial Injustice

Treating people unfairly (or discriminating against people) based on their race is called **racism or racial injustice**. Racism starts with a belief that certain races of people are better than others. Racial injustice occurs when people of one race are given more privileges than people who are not of that race.

Slavery

Many years ago, light-skinned people from America and Europe went to Africa. They forced the dark-skinned African people who lived there to come to America, even though the African people wanted to remain in their own land. The Americans treated the Africans very badly during the journey and after they arrived in America. Laws were passed that said that the Americans could own the Africans and the Africans were called slaves. The Americans would not allow the African slaves to make any decisions for themselves. They forced slaves to work for them without paying them. They told the Africans where to live and did not allow them to go to school. They could even sell them as slaves to another American, so that sometimes African parents or children would have to leave their families. Many years later, some White Americans realized the system of slavery that they had developed was very wrong. It took many years and a lot of struggle, but Black people and White people worked together to change the law so that slavery was not allowed anymore. Slavery is no longer legal in our country. However, after slavery ended, for many years there were different laws for Black Americans than there were for White Americans. For example, African Americans had to go to different schools, sit at the back of the bus, and were not allowed to vote. Now, the laws are the same for all Americans, but unfortunately, African Americans are still treated unfairly sometimes.

Stereotype

A **stereotype** is an idea about a group of people, which could be based on their skin color. You could also have a stereotype based on whether a person is a boy or girl, a person's religion, or other qualities. A stereotype may be true about some people in the group. But a stereotype becomes a problem if you have an extreme idea that you wrongly think applies to everyone in a group. For example, it is true that some Black people are poor and don't have much money. But it would be a stereotype to think that all or almost all Black people are poor. Many Black people have good jobs and have enough money. Here's another example: It might be true that most men are stronger than most women in lifting weights. But it would be a stereotype to think that men and boys are stronger than women and girls in everything. There are lots of ways that boys and girls are both strong. Also, some girls are stronger than some boys in certain situations.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Marianne Celano, PhD, ABPP, **Marietta Collins**, PhD, and **Ann Hazzard**, PhD, ABPP worked together for over two decades as Emory University School of Medicine faculty members serving children and families in Atlanta. All three psychologists have been involved in community advocacy efforts focused on children's behavioral health and social justice. Dr. Celano and Dr. Hazzard have developed and utilized therapeutic stories in individual and group therapy with children and teens. All three authors valued story-time with their children, who taught them important lessons about what children need from adults. This is their first picture book for children.

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