

Cultural Diversity and Awareness: Tips for Parents of Young Children

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“Dad! My skin matches your skin,” four-year-old Mitchell shouts as he sits at the dinner table after every meal. This is Mitchell’s way of reminding everyone that he knows he is not alone. And empty nesters may have noticed that the days of carpools and kids sports activities have become scarcer as those represented in the local communities that reflect the ethnic diversity of our society. Their children interact with other families and children who are from different cultures, speak different languages, or may have a special need. Children today live in communities that reflect the diversity of the society in which they live. They have the opportunity to support their own unique culture as well as those represented in the local community.

The following are two tips parents can use to help children become citizens of our very diverse community and world:

**Tip 1: Start First with your own cultural diversity within your family.** Create or share a family photo album with your child, discussing your heritage and places around the country or where members of your family are from or have traveled to.

**Tip 2: Complete a visual scan of your home environment.** Does your home reflect the diversity of the community and country in which you live? Try a new recipe from another culture, listen to a different musical genre, or expose your child to toys, books and puzzles that are non-stereotyped and represent interesting and positive images of the cultural group.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Nebraska Extension’s Early Childhood Development website (http://child.unl.edu) has a topic area on cultural diversity.

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Cleaning on Your Schedule

_The key to a clean house is finding a system that works for you and your schedule. What worked before you had kids may need some modifications. And empty nesters may have a busier schedule than before the days of carpools and kids sports._

**Cluttered Kitchen?** _Just Say NO_

It’s tempting to let the dishes “soak” while you relax after dinner, but you have to decide why you are doing it and why you wait. Put the dishes in the dishwasher, wash the pots and pans and wipe the counters and table after every meal. This keeps dishes from piling up and minimizes bugs.

**Quick Pick Up Before Bed**

Don’t let the clutter pile up. As you turn out the lights and head to bed grab the toys, magazines, remotes and put them in their place.

**One Chore a Day**

Make a list of the chores you need to complete and choose one to do each day. Here is a sample to get you started. There are lots of ready-made lists online, but success lies in modifying the list to your lifestyle and activities.

- **Monday** — laundry (change sheets regularly)
- **Tuesday** — laundry
- **Wednesday** — kitchen (floors, microwave, refrigerator)
- **Thursday** — vacuum & dust
- **Friday** — trash, bathrooms
- **Saturday** — meal planning (stick to the list when shopping!), yard work
- **Sunday** — rest

Which day or evening works best for your schedule? Families with children may do laundry every other day. Trash is usually taken out the evening before trash collection. Sunday may not be a day to rest but a time to do all the things that didn’t get done during the week. Maybe Saturday is your cleaning day.

Make a plan that helps make housekeeping a non-dreaded task. Include all family members in the plan, even small children can help.

*Source Adapted from American Cleaning Institute*

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**2015 Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events**

These collections are for households only. Only residents of Lincoln and Lancaster County can bring items to collections.

**SOME ITEMS YOU CAN BRING FOR DISPOSAL:** Thermometers, thermostats containing mercury, bleach cleaners, glues, lightweight paints, paint thinner, furniture stripper, oil-based stains, old gasoline, pool chemicals, herbicides, pesticides, antifreeze or ammunition.

**SOME ITEMS YOU CANNOT BRING:** Latex paint, fertilizers, medicines/pharmaceuticals, electronics & computers, large propane cylinders, tires, used oil, batteries, antifreeze or ammunition.

For more information or if you have questions about how to recycle or dispose of items not accepted, call the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at 402-441-8021 or go to www.lincoln.ne.gov (keyword: household).

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