

WORKING MOTHER

family | learning curve: 6 to 10 years

So Proud to Be Me

We live in a diverse society—but our society still struggles to embrace all its differences. You may understand this because you've faced challenges in your multicultural workplace. And your grade schooler may face similar challenges when peers make comments like "Your name is weird" or ask, "How come you don't have a Christmas tree?"

Kids may not mean to be hurtful, but the things they say can feel bad to a child who is acutely aware of her dark skin, the scarf covering her head or the fact that no one else in her class takes Hebrew lessons. She may even grow to feel shame about her heritage, which can lead to low self-esteem and depression. But there's a lot you can do to help your child handle subtle and not-so-subtle racial teasing.

And it starts with ethnic pride. "Making sense of cultural differences is not easy for children," says child psychologist Sylvia Rimm, PhD, the author of *How to Parent So Children Will Learn*. "But by honoring family traditions, you can instill in your child a love of heritage and also help her cope in sticky situations."

Start by telling detailed stories about your own childhood or about grandparents and other relatives, which can nurture your child's pride in her background and culture. As you celebrate holidays with your community, invite your child's school friends to be part of it. Consider bringing a cultural show-and-tell to school.



Global Girl Power

Introducing **Karito Kids**—five appealing dolls that will help your child embrace the world's diversity. The characters, with believable ethnic features, hail from Italy, Kenya, China, Mexico and the U.S. Each comes with a book that tells her national story. You go, girls! (\$100, www.fao.com)