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4th Grade

“How My Parents Built on the Foundation of the Civil Rights Movement”

Have you or anyone you know ever had to stand up for what’s right? In November 2025 ICE raids began in New Orleans. Many families were in danger or afraid to leave their home. My parents stood up for what they believed in, much like the leaders before them. What they did wasn’t as significant as what Dr. Luther King Jr. or Rosa Parks did, but it still made a difference. My parents worked hard to keep their community safe. They helped families get the food they needed. They made sure kids got to school. They strive for a better future and a better world.

Many Black Americans today would have been discriminated against during the Civil Rights Movement, including part of my family. Many people like Martin Luther King Jr. used peaceful protest to earn the equal rights they deserved, but even now things aren’t perfect. People around the world are discriminated against and don’t have what they deserve. The Civil Rights Movement was the building blocks. They built the foundation and we will continue to build towards the roof. The world will never be perfect, but people can always strive for a better world. The people before us fought, and now the younger generations can learn from them. People like my family can now give the help they received to the people who need it now.

Immigrants throughout New Orleans were nervous to leave their homes during the ICE raids, including parents with kids that go to my school. This meant that kids couldn’t go to school and families couldn’t get the food they needed. My parents stood up for the school community by volunteering to deliver food and get kids to school. My dad volunteered for morning school patrol. He would start work late because he was patrolling different stations around the school and making sure everyone got there safely. My mom did grocery delivery and gave rides. We picked multiple kids up on the way to school. The car rides felt weird or awkward sometimes since I was riding with kids I didn’t know. My mom would pick up groceries and deliver them so families would have something to eat. She still does groceries and financial aid. People who need help can always get help from people like my parents, who strive to help their community.

My parents weren’t the only ones to stand up for what was right. Neighborhoods and communities across the country organized to support their immigrant neighbors. They learned different strategies and ideas from each other. My parents helped to organize a local training at the neighborhood church. People could learn how to safely observe immigration enforcement. They handed out flyers and whistles. People can learn from each other in order to protect our communities. My parents helped their neighborhood and community just like people all around the country.

In these ways, my parents strived to help their community. You can use peaceful methods to protect equal rights too. People like Jerome Smith or Rev. Jesse Jackson helped their community by using peaceful protest. The methods my parents used were a form of peaceful protest and yours can be too. You can continue to build on the foundation that the generations before us built. Use your building blocks.