

Guidance for Families and Educators When Responding to Racial Incidents

1. Be mindful of or limit media exposure, and encourage older students to do so as well.

- Graphic images depicted through news and social media are especially upsetting to children and teens.
- Be mindful of what you and other adults discuss and model in front children. Children are much more aware than we think.
- The more graphic visual coverage children are exposed to, the more likely they are to experience anxiety, fear, and trauma.

2. Talk with kids about racism, white supremacy, and the really hard things.

- You don't have to have all the answers or be an expert to have a conversation.
- Ask children and teens about their thoughts, feelings, fears, concerns, and perspectives on what they have seen or heard.
- Be concrete. Don't give more information than they can handle. Correct any misunderstandings or confusion.
- Be available to reassure them of their safety and of plans to keep them safe.
- Focus on the unfairness. Highlight examples of resistance and of allies and accomplices. Emphasize the agency of the people who are oppressed. This gives kids hope and examples.

3. Educate Yourself.

- In order to best guide your children and teens, you must engage and take responsibility for your own learning.
- There is no checklist for addressing systemic racism and oppression. There is no "one size fits all" remedy or handbook to become more racially informed and aware.
- Seek out and read BIPOC-authored articles and books.

4. Support your BIPOC community.

- Listen to BIPOC voices. Believe their experiences.
- Educate yourself on white privilege, white fragility, and white savior complex.
- Do not rely on your BIPOC friends or family to educate you. Equity work takes emotional and mental labor. It is not the responsibility of the oppressed to educate the oppressor or privileged.
- Ally is a verb. Leave it to BIPOC to refer to your actions as those of an ally or an accomplice. If you want to be an ally, get to work!

Further Resources:

[Talking to children after racial incidents](#)
[Social justice resources](#)
[Teaching about race, racism, and police violence](#)
[Resources for talking about race, racism, and racialized violence with kids](#)
[Anti-racism resources for white people](#)
[Your Kids Aren't Too Young to Talk About Race: Resource Roundup](#)
[75 things people of whiteness can do for social justice](#)
[Why it hurts when people say "all lives matter"](#)
[Video explaining Black Lives Matter](#)

Developed May 2020 Becca Laroi and Tiffany Burns, utilizing these resources:

[Tips for parents on media coverage](#) National Child Traumatic Stress Network
[Talking Race with Young Children](#) NPR, Sesame Workshop, & author Beverly Daniel Tatum