



## How to Talk to Children about Racism and Current Events

### Have open conversations with your children:

- Regularly check in with your child to see how they are feeling. Explore their thoughts and feelings, providing validation throughout.
- Make sure that the conversations are age appropriate. Consider your child's emotional maturity and threshold for anxiety/worry. You know your child best – lean on that.
- Conversations about race and race relations should be ongoing. Be proactive about exposing your children to different cultural experiences – museums, restaurants, cultural events, etc. While recent events can be used as teachable moments, the conversation cannot stop there.

### Limit children's exposure to the media:

- Avoid keeping news on in the background.
- Exposure to graphic images and violence in the media elicits and perpetuates trauma, especially in young children who do not have the cognitive or emotional ability to put the story in context.
- Watch the news with older children, processing their thoughts/feelings, and engage in discussions.

### Watch for changes in your child's behavior:

- Changes may include increased aggression, withdrawal, sadness, fear, or worry.
- If you are concerned about your child, reach out to your pediatrician or a mental health provider for additional support.

### Be aware of your racial biases, prejudices, and feelings before having a discussion:

- Racial biases can occur for anyone, regardless of skin color, and they do not discriminate across socio-economic status.
- Racial biases and prejudice are products of one's upbringing and one's experiences in life.
- Check into your emotions, making sure that you are okay prior to engaging in conversations with your children. It's okay to ask for help on how to deal with the trauma and emotional impact you are experiencing.

### If you struggle to find the "right" words, consider using books or other resources:

- Talking to Children About Racial Bias: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/Building-Resilience/Pages/Talking-to-Children-About-Racial-Bias.aspx>
- 100 Race-Conscious Things You Can Say To Your Child To Advance Racial Justice <http://www.raceconscious.org/2016/06/100-race-conscious-things-to-say-to-your-child-to-advance-racial-justice/>



- This is a teachable moment for all families. It is imperative that we educate our children about racism and discrimination, and equip them with tools to be a part of creating a more just and equitable society for all.

## References:

- [Something Happened in our Town: A Child's Story About Racial Injustice](#)
- [A Kids Book About Racism](#) by Jelani Memory
- [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\) Condemns Racism, Offers Advice for Families for How to talk to their Children](#)
- [How to talk to kids about racism: An age-by-age guide](#)
- [Your Kids Aren't Too Young to Talk About Race: Resource Roundup](#)
- American Psychological Association (APA): [Talking to kids about discrimination](#)
- *AntiRacist Baby* Board book by Ibram X. Kendi (Author), Ashley Lukashevsky (Illustrator)