

# RESOURCE

**FOR PARENT OR CAREGIVER**

## Talking with kids about violence in the Capitol



Photo by [Jacob Morch](#) from [Pexels](#)

The attack on Washington, DC has challenged families once again to consider how to discuss a difficult topic with their children. There are many resources and articles out there that can help.

Key Takeaways from the National Education Association's article titled [Talking to Kids About the Attack on the Capitol](#) include:

1. Violence at the U.S. Capitol is an attack on our country and on our democratic institutions.
2. Most children are aware of more than we realize.
3. Continuing that discussion is critically important in this moment.

[Caroline Norr](#), Editor for [Common Sense Media](#), outlines [Explaining the News to Our Kids](#) and recommends that you consider the child's age as a key to how to discuss current events with your child. She also suggests:

- assure kids that they are safe
- limit news intake
- remember your own actions and responses
- consider taking some positive action to help (if possible)
- talk, talk, talk with your kids about the situation
- check-in with your kids, asking questions and listening
- let kids express themselves

Dr. Neha Chaudhary, double board-certified child, adolescent, and adult psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School, provides [Ten Tips for Talking with Kids About the Attack on the U.S. Capitol](#), including: 1) give your child space to talk, 2) limit media exposure based on the age of your child, 3) reassure them they are safe, 4) be transparent and honest, 5) talk about bad actions not bad people, 6) highlight the helpers, 7) name your feelings, 8) keep your own feelings in check, 9) teach healthy coping skills, and 10) use this as a springboard for other tough conversations.

[Dr. Karen Aronian](#), former New York City teacher and educational consultant for the [Child Mind Institute](#), discusses several useful ideas and shares helpful resources in her video titled: [How to Talk with Kids About the Assault on the Capitol](#). Citing reputable sources, some of her suggestions include:

1. Partner with the schools and teachers.

2. Help children name their feelings.
3. Discuss what civil discourse means and model it.
4. Model what we are going to do to bring it forward.
5. Be careful with language and actions in the home.
6. Drawings are a great way for children to process what they are going through.
7. Don't make assumptions about what kids know. Ask them broad questions to help you learn what they do know (Child Mind Institute).
8. Make time to talk, review safety procedures, and maintain a normal routine (National Association for School Psychologists).
9. Listen and check-in.
10. Don't deliver too much information.
11. Limit media-don't have television and radio constantly on play.
12. Monitor, filter sources and think about what you are sharing with them.
13. Deliver factual information.
14. Check-in with kids on a regular basis.

These are but a few of the useful resources out there and one thing we can recommend is to trust yourself and your child to get through this difficult time together. We will work hard to continue to support you and your family, too.

### **Developer**

Beth Powers

### **Tags**

Current Events, Difficult Conversations, Social-Emotional Learning

### **Ages**

Birth - 36 months (Infant-Toddler)

3-5 years (Preschool)

5-6 years (Kindergarten)

6-8 years (Primary)

9-11 years (Elementary)

11-14 years (Middle School)

14-18 years (High School)

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