



Helping Students Cope with Difficult News

Here are some ways you can help children process and cope with difficult news. Explain the news to them in an age-appropriate way. Use [this guide](#) to help them understand what's happening. Give them space to share their feelings and reactions.

Tell them they're safe and offer hope.

Whether the violence is taking place near home or far away, it can be scary for kids. Reassure them that they're not in immediate danger. Build on their resilience by balancing the scary news with stories of hope. You can also talk about meaningful and positive ways that your family can get involved to support a cause.

Encourage them to take breaks from screens.

Like adults, older kids and teens may want frequent updates on breaking news. But constant exposure to negative news [can take a toll on us](#). While it's important to stay informed, setting limits on how often kids see violent media coverage is best for their well-being.

Focus on what connects us all.

When individuals and communities are victims of tragic events, hate speech can be an extra burden to bear. Kids may encounter cruel language and false information, on- and offline. They may see or hear things meant to harm groups of people based on their religion, ethnicity, sexual identity, gender, or race. [Standing up against hate speech](#), [questioning sensationalized news](#), and [celebrating](#) your family's culture and the beauty of diversity are all ways to combat messages that are meant to divide us.

Create a self-care routine.

Routines can be comforting and let kids feel more in control. Help them make time for relaxing activities during times of uncertainty. That can include reading, taking walks, journaling, listening to music, or anything else that grounds them.

Seek connection and support with your community.

Knowing they're not alone and spending time with people who share similar experiences can help kids feel valued and accepted.

During these times, it's important to remember that we adults are processing a lot of distressing information too. Take care of yourself as you support your children through it all.