

## How to Talk to Children About Antisemitism

Let's face it, no one wants to have to tell their child that there are nasty people in the world who will try to hurt them just for being themselves. We raise our kids to be good people, mensches, to help and accept others, and to do the best they can to treat those around them fairly and with respect.

We know discussing the Holocaust and antisemitism with young children can be challenging. If your kids hear about events on the news, they may have big questions and need extra emotional support.

Research shows that one of the best ways that we can help prepare our children to cope with discrimination and intolerance is by being open about it. When we show our children that these topics, though tough, are not taboo, we let them know that they can always come to us with questions or thoughts about life's [scary situations](#).

We've pulled together a short list of links and resources that parents may find helpful in discussions with their children. This can be used as a starting point along with our post, [How to Talk to Your Kids About Scary Situations](#) as well as [Videos to Help Talk to Kids About Violence](#).

### Talking to Your Kids

Many sources recommend being direct with kids about difficult topics while also tuning in to gauge how much your kids can handle.

The American Psychological Association stresses that for children in groups that are likely to be targets of discrimination, it's vital for parents to have ongoing, honest, discussions with their children rather than shying away from the subject. The [APA also recommends](#):

- Let the discussion be ongoing.
- Keep talking. Yes, even--and especially--when it gets hard.
  - It's also ok to say "I don't know."
- Be age appropriate. Keep things basic. Young children especially need simple information balanced with reassurance.
- Encourage your children to ask questions.
- Help kids learn how to deal with being the potential target of discrimination.
- Develop healthy comebacks or responses to hurtful discriminatory statements. For example: "What an unkind thing to say." "Excuse me? Could you repeat that?" "I disagree with you, and here's why..."
- If you catch your child using insensitive language, use the moment as a teaching example.

- Model good behavior for your child.

## More Resources

In this [Kveller.com article](#), Rabbi Sarah Reines reminds us that each caregiver must trust their instincts when it comes to [How to Talk about the Holocaust](#). This article from *The Forward*, written by PJ Library's Sarah Ruderman Wilensky, offers a list of age-appropriate books to share with your children: [Children's Books That Tackle Antisemitism And Difference](#). This guide, [Talk and Take Action: Parents' & Caregivers' Guide to Countering Antisemitism](#), co-written by Nickelodeon and [USC Shoah Foundation - The Institute for Visual History and Education](#), helps kids resist prejudice against the Jewish community. [Talking to Young Children about Bias and Prejudice](#), from the Anti-Defamation League's (ADL), helps families open conversations with children on this difficult topic.

## Books And Stories Can Help

The Bible features many stories about the Jewish people facing oppression and persecution, especially as a minority group. The important theme in stories like Exodus, the Purim story, and the Hanukkah story, though are that small groups of brave individuals band together to triumph over adversity. If you are looking for age-appropriate versions of these stories, you can visit our [Books](#) section, or click the links below.

[The Hanukkah Story for Kids Ages 5 and under](#)

[The Hanukkah Story for Kids Ages 6+](#)

[The Passover Story for Kids Ages 5 and under](#)

[The Passover Story for Kids Ages 6+](#)