



We have compiled some resources which you may find helpful when having conversations about racism and traumatic events

*Be mindful of your own wellbeing and the support available to you

- [Child Mind Institute: Helping children cope after a traumatic event](#)
- [After the Event: Supporting children after a frightening event](#)
- [Stop Hate UK: Young people's resource hub](#)
- [NSPCC: Talking to children about racism](#)
- [Young Minds: Islamophobia and mental health, resources for young people](#)
- [BBC Podcast: Talking to your kids about race and racism](#)
- [Beacon House Trauma-Informed Resources](#)
- [Save the children: Talking about distressing current events with kids](#)

Other websites and resources available:

- [TellMAMA](#)
- [UK Trauma Council](#)
- [HOPE not Hate](#)
- [SW London and St George's : list of support following an upsetting event](#)

Guidance for Parents and Carers

Be honest but age and developmentally appropriate:

Give them information that is truthful but tailored to their needs in a format / language that they will understand

Reassure their safety:

Emphasise that they are safe and that such events are rare.

Be present and available:

Let them know they can ask questions or talk about their feelings anytime.

Use simple and clear language:

Avoid graphic details and stick to the basics.

Monitor their emotions:

Look for signs of distress and provide comfort as needed.

Remember this might be different to how you are comforted / what you expect.

For example early childhood experiences, social and communication needs and cultural norms (amongst other things) influence how children and adults display distress and feel safe and comforted.

Consider limiting exposure to media:

Protect them from repeated exposure to the news, which can be overwhelming.

The suggestions below are a guide only and not prescriptive. Children and young people's development are not linked to their age. Use your judgement and seek advice where appropriate

For Toddlers (Ages 2-4):

Children this age may not understand the concept of death and are usually more focused on their immediate environment. You might not need to discuss the event unless they've been directly exposed to it. But they do pick up on your emotions.

Script Example:

- Child asks: "Why is everyone sad?"
- Carer answers: "Something very sad happened far away. Some people got hurt, and that makes people feel sad. But you are safe, and we are here to take care of you."

For Young Children (Ages 5-7):

Children in this age group start to understand that death is permanent but may struggle with understanding why bad things happen.

Script Example:

- Child asks: "What happened to those children?"
- Carer answer: "Something very sad happened. Some children were hurt very badly by a person who made a terrible choice. It's okay to feel sad or confused about it. The grown-ups are working hard to make sure everyone is safe."

For Older Children (ages 8-12):

These children have a more developed understanding of death and might hear about the event from peers or media. They may ask more detailed questions.

Script Example:

- Child asks: "Why would someone do that?"
- Carer answer: "It's very hard to understand why someone would do something so terrible. Sometimes, people do bad things that hurt others, but it's important to know that most people are kind and care about keeping others safe. It's okay to feel sad, angry, or scared, and we can talk about those feelings whenever you need to."

For Teenagers (Ages 13+):

Teenagers are often capable of understanding complex issues, including the reasons behind violence. They might want to discuss the event in the context of larger social issues, and they may express strong emotions.

Script Example:

- Teenager asks: "How could this happen? Are we safe?"
- Carer answer: "What happened is truly tragic and raises a lot of difficult questions about safety, mental health, and violence. It's normal to feel worried or angry, and those are important feelings to talk about. It's also important to focus on what we can do to stay safe and how we can help others. If you want to talk about this more or find ways to get involved, I'm here to support you."

Additional Tips:

- **Encourage expression:** Encourage children young people to express their feelings in ways that keep them safe eg through words, drawings, or other activities.
- **Offer comfort:** Physical comfort, like hugs or sitting close, can help some children feel secure.
- **Routine:** Maintaining regular routines can provide a sense of normalcy and stability.

Follow-up:

- **Check in regularly:** Children and Young People may need to revisit the conversation or ask new questions as they process the event.
- **Seek professional help if needed:** If a child or young person shows signs of prolonged distress, consider consulting professional advice - links above