

Resources for Responding to Racist and Violent Acts

*"The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and cruelty by the bad people
but the silence over that by the good people."*

Martin Luther King, Jr

Dear Colleagues:

Students, teachers, families, and school leaders, faced with vivid images of racist and violent acts, confront the dilemma of what to do and what to say. How and why do we talk about this? How, especially, do we support black and brown students, families, and teachers so they feel safe and embraced? How do we provide opportunities to process and understand this? How do we address the deeply rooted racism in our system that is at the heart of this?

There are resources available from many sources. The ones we feel are especially useful and timely are listed below. We note the critical importance of responding swiftly and of emphasizing actions as well as words. Even as the school year draws to an end and other demands command your attention, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s message is more important than ever.

As always we stand with you and we are available to support you in your efforts.

CT Center for School Change www.ctschoolchange.org

For Families

- This Saturday, June 6, at 10 a.m. ET, CNN and "Sesame Street" will host a 60-minute special: ["Coming Together: Standing Up to Racism. A CNN/Sesame Street Town Hall for Kids and Families"](#). "The show will talk to kids about racism, the recent nationwide protests, embracing diversity and being more empathetic and understanding."
- CNN has a piece for parents that is quite long but that provides info to parents (and teachers) about talking with children at different age levels. CNN: [How to talk to your children about protests and racism](#). "As cities and social media explode with anger over the killing of yet another black man at the hands of police, worried parents struggle with how to protect their children from seeing the worst of the violence while simultaneously explaining the ravages of racism."
- The Public Radio Program *On Point* from WBUR in Boston is hosting a program called [How To Talk To Your Kids About Race, Racism And Police Violence](#). The website page about this program has additional useful resources. *(also useful for teachers)*
- *NPR (National Public Radio)* has a story [Talking Race with Young Children](#) from April 2019.



For Teachers and Administrators, School and District Leadership Teams

- *Education Week Online* (June 3, 2020), [6 Considerations for School Leaders Making a Statement About George Floyd](#), an opinion piece on how leaders can reach out to their community to address racial incidents and responses to those incidents. “Dozens of leaders have sought our counsel on what to say in this moment. This essay includes some advice we have offered them on ways to make statements more substantive, trustworthy, and actionable.”
- *Chalkbeat* has an extremely useful piece for teachers ["Moments Like Now Are Why We Teach"](#). “*Chalkbeat* is a nonprofit news organization committed to covering one of America’s most important stories: the effort to improve schools for all children, especially those who have historically lacked access to a quality education.” They are asking educators to share what they are doing to talk about race and violence with their students.
- *Teaching Tolerance*, [Let's Talk! Facilitating Critical Conversations With Students](#). Use the strategies in this resource as you prepare to talk with students about the historical roots and [contemporary manifestations of racial inequality and discrimination](#).
- *Teaching Tolerance*, [Teaching as Activism, Teaching as Care](#). “I have begun to feel helpless during this time. But I never felt helpless as a teacher.” [Jamilah Pitts](#), May 15, 2020.
- *ADL (Anti-Defamation League)*, [How Should I Talk About Race in my Mostly White Classroom](#), [Helping Students Make Sense of News Stories about Bias and Injustice](#), and [Anti-Bias Education](#).
- [Framing Brave Conversations about Race and Ethnicity](#). This piece was just published by Sheldon Eakins, Ph. D., *Leading for Equity*.
- [5 New Ways for Schools to Work with Families](#). The online publication *The Conversation* published this resource in December 2019. It provides strategies for how to reach out to and support families respectfully in ways that recognize and honor their agency and voice.