

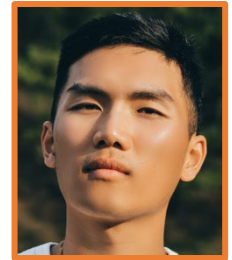


# Coping with the Stress of Racism

## Helpful Information for Kids & Teens

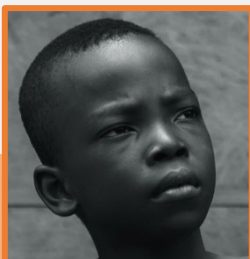
**Racism** is when people are treated badly or unfairly because of the color of their skin or the way they look. Here are some examples of racism that can be stressful for kids and teens:

- a teacher, store employee, or police treating you differently, for example by ignoring you, following you around, or giving you harsher punishments
- being left out or teased by other kids because of the texture of your hair or your facial features
- people expecting you to act or be a certain way, for example lazy, unintelligent, or dangerous
- seeing or hearing about people getting hurt in your community, on the news, or social media
- living with less (money, health care, good schools, healthy neighborhoods) because past and present racism put them out of reach for your community
- missing loved ones because they are in jail or died too young as a result of racism in their lives



What are some **common reactions** kids and teens can have when really scary or upsetting racism happens in their lives?

- ☐ Thinking about what happened, again and again
- ☐ Trying *NOT* to think about what happened
- ☐ Trying to stay away from people, places, and things that remind you of what happened
- ☐ Feeling super alert, jumpy, or on edge
- ☐ Having tummy aches, headaches, and other physical problems
- ☐ Having trouble falling or staying asleep, having nightmares
- ☐ Having strong feelings, like sadness, fear, worry, confusion, or anger
- ☐ Blaming yourself for what happened, even though it wasn't your fault
- ☐ Having a hard time knowing what is safe and what is dangerous
- ☐ Feeling less close to people around you, or getting upset at them too easily
- ☐ Not enjoying fun things the way you used to
- ☐ Worrying about the future
- ☐ Acting up and getting in trouble



What are some ways that you have noticed racism effecting how you **think, feel, and act**?

Racism can be very upsetting, but the reactions listed above usually do **get better over time**. Some kids even find that dealing with racism has made them stronger in some way.



What helps you when you are feeling stressed about racism?

Can you think of any ways you have been strong?

If you are feeling stressed about racism now, here are some ways that other kids and teens have coped and gotten support:

- ♥ **Talk to someone** you trust about what is going on. This might be a parent, family member, pastor, barber/hair stylist, teacher, coach, or friend. You can ask them for advice or just to listen and be supportive.
- ♥ **Spend time** with family or friends, do something fun or relaxing.
- ♥ **Keep your body healthy** by exercising during the day and making time for sleep at night. Staying active can lower your stress and improve your mood.
- ♥ **Take breaks** from watching news or social media, and find activities that can help you relax and focus on something else for a bit.
- ♥ **Take action** to make things better. This could be doing something that makes your own life better, or something that helps your community.
- ♥ **Talk to a doctor** or mental health counselor to get support with problems you might have and learn more ways to feel better.

What **questions do you have** about racism and coping with racism?



← *Parents and other caregivers can use this QR code to get tips and resources for supporting youth who experience racism.*



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