

FEBRUARY 2021

Albemarle County Parent Resource Center is a local effort to link families, schools and communities together to better support children with disabilities in the school setting. The Albemarle County Parent Resource Center has a goal of fostering a positive relationship between parents and schools in an effort to assist parents with questions and planning, as well as through the provision of resources and training. The Parent Resource Center is being operated by Michael Armstrong for the 2020-2021 School Year.

The Parent Resource Center is located at Albemarle County Public Schools, Department of Special Education, 401 McIntire Rd., Room 323, Charlottesville, VA 22902. You can contact the Parent Resource Center at (434) 296-5885 or by email at [SPEDHELP@k12albemarle.org](mailto:SPEDHELP@k12albemarle.org).

## Special Education Advisory Committee



Next meeting:

Tuesday, February 16, 2021

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

[Online Live Streaming](#)

## CO-WRITER:

### A Speech to Text Program

February 17, 2021

6:30 PM

Join us for a 1 hour demonstration of the Co-Writer Program. This assistive technology is on every child's ACPS Laptop!

Registration required  
[Click here to register](#)  
or call (434) 296-5885.

## Teaching Your Child About Black History

By Nefertiti Austin

Original Posting: <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/teaching-your-child-about-black-history-month>

By kindergarten, most children have heard of [Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) They are taught that he, like Mahatma Gandhi, was an advocate for peace and equality.

However, consider going beyond Dr. King. For example, teach your child about Rosa Parks, the seamstress and civil rights activist whose refusal to give up her bus seat to a white passenger ignited the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Her small act of nonviolent resistance helped to forge the way for transportation desegregation across the nation.

Her story is part of our shared American history. Instead of shying away from hard truths, parents can explain that a long time ago, people were separated by the color of their skin. Some people did not think that was fair, and men and women of all races united to make a change. This is a straight-forward example that teaches empathy, cooperation and the commonality of a shared goal. It is also a way to teach children how to connect their personal experiences with the larger world.

Television programming can also offer children windows into worlds outside their own. [PBS Learning Media](#) has a great lineup of short history lessons featuring former slave and abolitionist Sojourner Truth, scholar Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, and others.

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**BLACK  
HISTORY  
MONTH**



*"February is Black History Month, and since its inception in 1969, it has been an annual observance and celebration of the history and contributions of the African culture. February was chosen because it coincided with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. Black History Month has received official recognition from the United States and Canadian governments, but is now also observed in Ireland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. Teaching your children about Black History is our featured story this month, I hope you enjoy."*

**- Michael Armstrong, Parent Resource Center**

## Teaching Your Child About Black History (Continued)

In an article for PBS, children's book author Cheryl Willis Hudson [offered these and other suggestions](#) to help you connect your kids with Black history:

- Buy a book by a Black author or illustrator and make it a part of your child's permanent collection. Books offer a fun and easy way to introduce your children to new cultures and to help them explore the experiences of people from different backgrounds.
- Look for books that are inclusive and reflect the diversity of our communities. Books help illustrate that diversity is a natural part of everyday life.
- When and if children ask questions about race, don't sweep differences under the rug. Give children simple, concrete explanations when they have questions. Select books that affirm a valued place for all children. Try to find books that will help prepare children for the complex world in which they live.
- Make sure your selections include contemporary stories. Celebrate Black culture and experiences, in addition to history, through picture books, chapter books, and poetry.
- Seek the suggestions and guidance from knowledgeable cultural experts, booksellers and librarians. [Coretta Scott King Award-winning titles](#) are always a good place to start for excellence in text and illustrations.

For parents of mixed race or transracially adopted children, you must do your homework. You are your child's first teacher, so educate yourself about your child's cultural history. Stoke your child's curiosity about their place in the world and their ancestor's role in the establishment of this country. Young children believe what their parents tell them so take advantage of their eagerness to learn and show them how to appreciate differences. While you have their undivided attention, introduce your budding train conductor to [Engineer Elijah McCoy](#), inventor of an oil lubricant used in the steam engines of locomotives and ships in the past, and aviator [Bessie Coleman](#), the first African American civilian to be issued a pilot's license.

There are so many notable Americans to learn about. Beyond the internet, don't forget my favorite resource: the public library. During themed months (like Women's History Month or Asian American Heritage Month), most local libraries display related picture books. They may also schedule read-alouds about different cultures and offer scheduled lecture series for parents or activities for children.

In the end, as people, we are more alike than we are different. If children learn this simple truth early, the world will be the safe and interesting place that Dr. King dreamt about.

## Communicating with Baby:

### Tips and Milestones from Birth to Age 5

Original Posting: <https://doi.org/10.1044/leader.AN2.22122017.61>

[The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association \(ASHA\)](#) partnered with [Read Aloud 15 MINUTES](#) to produce a series of free handouts that detail infants' and children's expected communication skills by age and provide suggestions for how parents can support their children's development.

There are seven handouts that list developmental milestones in hearing, understanding and talking development for specific age ranges from birth–3 months to 4–5 years of age. Each handout, available in Spanish and English, also lists ways to encourage communication development for that specific age range.

"This toolkit offers parents vital information on what they should expect their children to be able to do by age in the areas of talking, hearing and understanding," says Gail J. Richard, 2017 ASHA president. "Some parents may question whether their child's communication development is on track. The detailed lists of milestones can help set parents' minds at ease or empower them to seek an evaluation if they see that their child is lagging behind on certain skills. This information gives parents the tools they need to monitor their child's communication development with confidence."

[Read Aloud 15 MINUTES](#) is a nonprofit organization that promotes reading aloud every day for at least 15 minutes to promote kindergarten readiness and literacy skills.



Birth-3 Months  
([English](#), [Spanish](#))

4-6 Months  
([English](#), [Spanish](#))

7-12 Months  
([English](#), [Spanish](#))

1-2 Years  
([English](#), [Spanish](#))

2-3 Years  
([English](#), [Spanish](#))

3-4 Years  
([English](#), [Spanish](#))

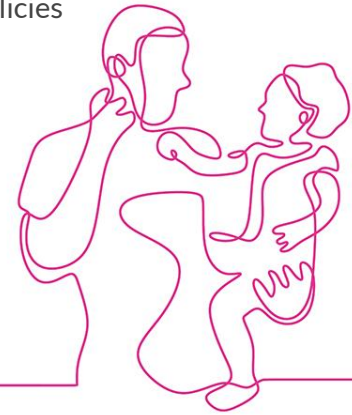
4-5 Years  
([English](#), [Spanish](#))

# Supporting Vulnerable Students in Stressful Times: Tips for Parents

National Association of School Psychologists

Reprinted from: <https://www.nasponline.org/x37551.xml>

The current climate of divisiveness, anger and fear in this country is having a significant impact on many children and adults. Feelings of uncertainty are particularly heightened for communities and families struggling to understand and cope with hate-based violence, discriminatory or threatening actions or speech, and shifting policies that are causing new uncertainties for specific populations. This marks an important time for families and schools to work together to foster supportive relationships, to help children understand their emotional reactions, and to teach effective coping and conflict resolution strategies. The tips and related resources in this document are intended to help you support your children.



- **It is important for parents to understand the effect of stressors and trauma on life functioning.** Experiencing stress and adversity can contribute to both internal symptoms (such as anxiety, depression, grief, fear, anger, and isolation) and external behaviors (such as reactivity, aggression, and behavior problems). Children may be concerned about actions or statements that they hear or see in the news. Recent events in their communities or reported in the media may cause children to fear that they or their family and friends may be targeted because of their gender, race, cultural or religious background, sexual orientation, or immigration status.
- **The following represent concerning reactions that you should monitor in your children.**
  - Isolation or refusal to attend school.
  - Withdrawal from peers or social activities.
  - Withdrawal from extracurricular activities at school or in the community.
  - Reports of bullying, harassment, or intimidation in school, the community, or on social media.
- **You can promote a sense of safety for children by doing the following.**
  - Set limits around television and social media viewing, because too much exposure can increase fears.
  - Provide a consistent structure and routine for children, as this helps to generate a sense of psychological safety.
  - Provide a safe place for your children to talk about their fears.
  - Encourage healthy and safe coping strategies.
  - Emphasize that there are many adults in this country who care deeply about them and who will do all they can to ensure that children and their families are safe and remain together.
  - Maintain contact with your children's teachers, as they can connect children with supports inside the school where they can talk through their feelings and reactions.
  - Seek help immediately from your school's psychologist, counselor, social worker, and/or nurse if your child is experiencing strong emotional reactions and/or you have noticed significant changes to his/her behavior.
  - Immediately report any instances of bullying, harassment, or discrimination that your child observes or experiences to school administrators.
  - Report hate crimes to local law enforcement and the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#).
- **Adult reactions can influence children's' reactions. Children may look to adults to determine how to respond and cope with stress. You can model appropriate coping strategies in the following ways.**
  - Communicate with loved ones about feelings and healthy coping strategies.
  - Take care of your own physical health.
  - Make time to do things you enjoy with family and friends in your community.
  - Access school and community resources. Many schools have parent and/or cultural liaisons who can help connect families to supports in their communities.
  - Help others in your community by referring them to helpful resources.

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## Supporting Vulnerable Students (Continued)

- Reinforce and focus on your child's strengths, and promote their sense of belonging. All children and families bring unique skills, strengths, and knowledge to our society. Build and emphasize those strengths in the following ways.
  - Help your children find others who allow them to share their knowledge about their origins, customs, and culture.
  - Identify positive activities that can help your children feel they are heard. For example, students can write a letter to the president-elect expressing their hopes and desires for the new administration.
  - Identify activities your children can engage in to show support and solidarity for each other and for their local and school communities.
- Remember that at any time, should you or your children struggle with feelings of stress, please reach out to your school and community organizations for support. While many families may fear drawing attention to their diverse backgrounds, there are individuals and organizations who want to help. Talk to representatives of your school or local cultural or faith organizations. Other organizations include:
  - [American Civil Liberties Union](#)
  - [Southern Poverty Law Center](#)
  - [National Immigration Law Center](#)
  - [The International Rescue Committee](#)
  - [The State Refugee Coordinators](#)
  - [Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Inc.](#)
  - [PFLAG](#)
  - [Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network \(GLSEN\)](#)

## Parental Rights and Due Process

### Knowing Your Rights as a Parent of a Child With a Disability

Parental rights are legally defined and dictated by the Federal and State Regulations. They exist to safeguard the rights of children, parents and school personnel in ensuring fair treatment for everyone involved in the Special Education process. Well-informed, involved parents are essential partners in planning, developing and implementing a positive educational plan for a child receiving special services.

A copy of the document "Parental Rights in Special Education" was mailed to every family of a child eligible for special education services in January of 2021 by Albemarle County Public Schools. The blue colored document, available in various languages, provides a detailed explanation of parents' rights. The document is to be given to parents upon initial referral or parental request for evaluation and then once per year.

In the event you did not receive a copy of this document, please reach out to The Parent Resource Center at (434) 296-5885 or emailing [SPEDHELP@k12albemarle.org](mailto:SPEDHELP@k12albemarle.org) and we can mail you a hard copy of the document. Below is a link to the document in various languages for your immediate review.

- [Your Family's Special Education Rights – Virginia Procedural Safeguards Notice](#) (PDF)  
[\(Spanish\)](#) (PDF), [Arabic](#) (PDF), [Chinese](#) (PDF), [Urdu](#) (PDF),  
[Farsi](#) (PDF), [Korean](#) (PDF), [Vietnamese](#) (PDF))



#### Non-Discrimination Statement

Albemarle County Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America, the Girl Scouts of the USA, and other designated youth groups.



Contact: (434) 296-5885



Email: [SPEDHELP@k12albemarle.org](mailto:SPEDHELP@k12albemarle.org)



Website: <https://www.k12albemarle.org/our-departments/special-education/prc>