



# HOW TO TALK TO ASIAN AMERICAN YOUTH ABOUT RACISM



## Observe Behaviors

Is your young person experiencing the effects of racism either directly or indirectly? Have they:

- Mentioned any instances of racism, even off-hand?
- Mentioned they feel anxious about current events recently?
- Shown changes in their personality or behavior? Are they more withdrawn, having trouble sleeping, having trouble focusing?



## Ask Questions

Young people sometimes need us to be direct and open in order to create space for conversation to happen.

You can say:

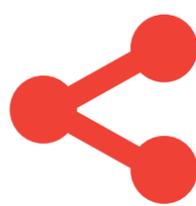
- "Has anyone been bullying you or your friends since the coronavirus started?"
- "Have you seen or heard anyone be racist to Asian people since the coronavirus started?"



## Listen

You can deepen the conversation by asking open-ended questions like:

- "What was that like for you? How did that make you feel?"
- "How are you feeling now?"
- During video calls, show welcoming body language, engaged facial expressions, and steady eye contact.
- During phone calls, **paraphrase** in your own words and **express verbal affirmations** like "huh" and "mmhmm".



## Share

- **A young person may simply want to be heard and understood;** they may not necessarily be looking for a solution. You can ask, "Do you want to vent or would you like advice?"
- If appropriate, **share a related personal story on how you dealt with a similar experience** so the young person knows you understand and they are not alone. If you are new to talking about racism, spend some time individually reflecting on your own feelings around race and racism so you enter this conversation prepared.



## Resources to spark a discussion

If you find it difficult to talk to your young person about racism they may be experiencing, these may come in handy:

[Zine](#) - Malaka Gharib (K-5th)

[A Kid's Guide to Coronavirus](#) - Podcast by NYTimes (K-5th)

[Coronavirus Racism Infected My High School](#) - NYTimes (6th-12th)

[Instagram post](#) - Taeyoon Kim (8th-12th)

[When Xenophobia Spreads Like A Virus](#) - Code Switch Podcast (9th-12th)



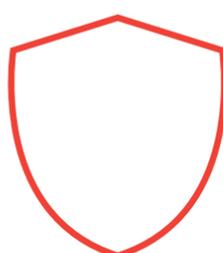
# RESPONDING TO RACISM DURING THE CORONAVIRUS



## Online Safety

What to do if someone is bullying you on the internet

- **Block and report the person who is bullying you.** If you see or receive messages that make you feel sad, scared, or confused, talk to an adult you trust.
- **Change your profile settings** to private and turn off your DMs.
- **Mute and/or unfollow** someone who is spreading harmful information.
- If you feel safe doing so, **speak up** about biases and myths surrounding the coronavirus



## Physical Safety: Create a Plan

- **Identify an adult you can call when you feel unsafe.**
  - How will you get a hold of them?
  - Do you have each other's numbers?
- **Find a buddy if you feel unsafe walking outside.** This could be a friend, neighbor, or relative. You can also text this person if you are traveling solo to let them know when you are leaving and when you have arrived at your destination.
- **Be aware of the sights and sounds in your surroundings.** If you are feeling unsafe, avoid distractions like headphones and texting while walking.



## Encountering Racism

Racism can make us feel scared, sad, angry, helpless and so many other things. It can be very hard for us to know what to do and you may choose to respond differently than someone else.

Here are some ways you could respond if you do encounter racism.

First, decide if it is safe:

- **Are you alone or in a public setting?**
  - If you are alone, it is better to **walk away and stay away.** You can always talk to a friend or an adult you trust about it afterwards.
- **Do you have support from people around you?**
  - If you know your friends will support you, you are within your rights to **speak up** for yourself.
  - This could also stop this person from continuing to harm others.

If it does feel safe and you want to respond:

- **Focus on the idea or behavior**, not the person. It's important to speak up but do not make your responses about that person's race or ethnicity either.
- Is the person saying something that's factual? **Share the reality behind their misconceptions.** For example, "The virus has nothing to do with race or ethnicity."
- Is the person speaking from a lack of information or malice? Sometimes sharing the facts can open people up to a new way of thinking. **If they are speaking from a place of hatred, it might make more sense to just walk away.**
- If you feel like you can have a dialogue (such as if you know the person), share your **personal experience.** For example, "Blaming Asians makes me feel unsafe."

All racism, online or in-person, is a form of discrimination and can be reported. If you decide to report,

- **Dial 311** and ask for Human Rights.
- **Email or call** the NY Attorney General at [civil.rights@ag.ny.gov](mailto:civil.rights@ag.ny.gov) or 1-800-771-7755.



## GUIDANCE FOR YOUTH & ADULTS

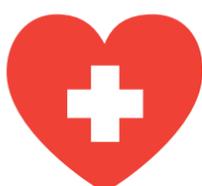
# HOW TO SUPPORT YOURSELF AND OTHERS



### Allyship

How to be an ally to the Asian community at this time

- **Practice upstander behavior.**
  - Stand and sit near the person and ask them if they are okay.
  - If you feel safe doing so, you can say something to the perpetrator such as, “Leave them alone” or “That’s racist”.
  - Walk with the person and remove them from the area.
- **Educate yourself** around the historical roots of racist tropes about Asians and the rise of the “Yellow Peril”
  - [Speaking up Against Racism Around the New Coronavirus](#)



### Self-Care

- **Channel your emotions through a creative outlet.** Try learning a new hobby, reading a book, journaling, or drawing.
- **Get your heart beating and your body moving** with stretching or high-intensity workouts. Exercise can be a powerful emotional restart button and mood-booster.
- Counter restlessness by practicing **mindful breathing and meditation**, proven to powerfully change how the brain functions. Try these free apps [Headspace](#), and [Calm](#).
- **Hit the unfollow button.** It’s okay to practice emotional distancing with influencers or news sources that increase your anxiety. Instead, talk to a friend to process what is going on.
- **Create a daily routine** that prioritizes healthy choices and self-care practices. Be kind to yourself.
- In a time when social isolation is an issue, it is important to **check-in with your friends and family regularly.**



### FAQs

- **Who can get coronavirus?**
  - Anyone can get the coronavirus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.
- **What are the symptoms of coronavirus?**
  - The most common symptoms are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. Some people become infected but don’t develop any symptoms and don’t feel unwell.
- **What is social distancing and why is it important?**
  - Social distancing means increasing the distance between people to decrease the spread of COVID-19. That is why schools are closed as well as many businesses. Social distancing doesn’t mean you cannot go outside. But if you do, do your best to stay 6 ft away from others, wear a facemask if you will be near others, and always wash your hands when you get home for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.
- **What is [flattening the curve](#)?**
  - Flattening the curve means reducing the number of cases of coronavirus within a period of time and is achieved through social distancing. If we do our best to stay away from others, there will be fewer cases and it helps our healthcare system can help those who do get very ill from the virus.
- **Why are some people calling it the “China virus”?**
  - This is an inaccurate term and has created a stigma against Chinese people in the U.S. and abroad. Anyone can become ill from the virus, not just Chinese people. It is also rooted in a history of blaming Chinese and other immigrants for spreading disease. Some people argue that we should call it the “China virus” because it was first detected in Wuhan, China; however illnesses are not inherently of ethnic, racial, or national origin. This is a misleading and inaccurate label.
- **I’ve heard people say Chinese people got it because of what we eat, is this true?**
  - No, this is not true. The virus cannot be transmitted by eating. While traditional Chinese foods are different from foods in the U.S., China’s food culture is one of the oldest and most diverse in the world and should be celebrated!