

4 Steps to Help Kids Push Back Against White Nationalism

By Nora Flanagan and Christian Picciolini

White nationalism is insidious, multifaceted, and aggressive. Parents and youth workers need to stay vigilant, because the imagery and language of this movement change often and quickly. Whether parents worry that their child might be a target for recruitment or they worry that their child encounters white nationalist sentiment at school or online, information and conversation are crucial to breaking hate. Here's how we suggest you dig in. (Also check out the [video of our related conversation with EmbraceRace](#).)

#1

Understand the issue. Learn the terms, groups, and issues at the center of the recent surge of white nationalist activity.

- *Facing History and Ourselves* recently published a [brief, clear explanation of white nationalism](#)
- *The Anti-Defamation League* maintains a [thorough database of hate symbols](#)
- *The Southern Poverty Law Center* provides a range of resources, including [Hatewatch](#), a blog that monitors hate group activity and helps place it in the context of national issues.
- Here's a recent [Atlantic interview with Christian](#) that does a great job of explaining the issue and why we need to be concerned.



#2

Talk to your kids. You will not be the first parent startled by what your child has seen or heard already.

- Ask them if they are seeing or hearing anything at school or online. Ask about online gaming platforms, too. Stay calm, so that they aren't scared to tell you more. Ask follow-up questions.
- *The Washington Post* just ran [a piece](#) built around the recent [viral Twitter thread](#) encouraging parents of teenage sons to look and listen more.
- *ColorLines* published [a guide for talking to kids of color about white nationalism](#) after Charlottesville; it's every bit as relevant now.
- Here's a [Scary Mommy blog post](#) that calls out specific bloggers and YouTubers as the writer describes stumbling into the issue during a car ride conversation with her son.



#3

Talk to your kids' schools. Yes, it's your business what they're doing to confront racism.

- Read up on what schools can do to prevent and respond to white nationalist activity in [Confronting White Nationalism in Schools](#).
- Ask your local school administration or school board what measures they have taken to strengthen their school community against white nationalism.
- Find a way to gather other parents around this issue. Start small if you need to, but start a conversation. You are not the only one worried about this.

#4

Read more. One of us (Nora) is an English teacher, so you're going to get more book recommendations!

- Christian's book, [White American Youth](#), explains how a kid from a good family can get sucked into racist hate, as well as how he got out.
- Here's a [New York Times piece](#) that cites two additional books about the recent resurgence of white nationalism, how young people get recruited, and how they can get out.
- Deep dive: here's an [extensive reading list](#) from Bustle about racism, white nationalism, and more.