

How Parents Can Support Kids Facing Challenging Peer Situations ***Drs. Jennifer Karp, Lindsay Borovay and Shari Mayman***

- Be present when your child is telling you about their peer challenges
 - Slow down
 - Stop what you are doing
 - Make eye contact
 - Listen
 - Mirror back what they are saying
- Start by validating their experience and empathizing with what they are going through
- Most important is for kids not to feel alone
- Family unit is the protective space for kids, and it is crucial to keep strong connections
- Parents can give personal examples or other known examples of experiences with antisemitism
- Be mindful of not disclosing too much of your own personal anxiety in order to be calm, secure base and sounding board for your kids
- Talk about what is happening at school (both positives and negatives)
- Role play scenarios that your child is experiencing or might experience with regards to antisemitism
 - Start by brainstorming different scenarios
 - The parent can then model what the child can do or say
 - Ask the child to practice the skills with the parent
- Develop healthy comebacks or responses to hurtful discriminatory statements. For example: “What an unkind thing to say”, “That hurts my feelings”, walking away and not engaging
- If you catch your child using insensitive language, use the moment as a teaching example
- The more equipped your child feels, the better they will be able to handle it
- Kids feel empowered when they are prepared
- This will likely be an ongoing conversation versus a one and done
- Keep talking about it, especially when it gets hard
- Be age appropriate – young children need simple explanations balanced with reassurance
- Encourage your child to report antisemitic or hateful incidents to their teacher or principal
- Balance supporting your child’s Jewish pride with their safety (safety is priority, kids can feel pride for their Judaism on the inside even if they are not displaying it on the outside)