

# TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT ANTISEMITISM

Recent world events may have left your child with questions, worries, or feelings they don't yet have words for. As a parent, you are the most important voice they will hear. This guide offers a calm, age-appropriate starting point for those conversations.



A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN **CST** & **MACCABI GB**

# HOW DO I APPROACH THE CONVERSATION?

## KEY STAGE ONE: KEEP IT SIMPLE

At this age, children are often curious and pick up on the emotions of adults around them. Aim for short, clear answers. Lead with reassurance.

### Try saying:

“Some people behave unkindly to Jewish people. That is wrong, and lots of grown-ups are working hard to keep you safe.”

“Being Jewish is something to feel proud of.”

- Answer the question they asked - not more.
- Use familiar words: kind/unkind, fair/unfair.
- Reassure them that home, school and synagogue are safe places.

Consider what news they are exposed to i.e. the radio in the car.

# HOW DO I APPROACH THE CONVERSATION?

## KEY STAGE TWO: CONTEXT & TOOLS

Older children may have heard things at school or online. They benefit from honest framing and practical responses.

### Try saying:

“Antisemitism means prejudice against Jewish people. It’s been around a long time, but it’s never acceptable.”

“If you ever hear something that doesn’t feel right, you can always tell me, you won’t be in trouble.”

- Ask what they already know - correct gently.
  - Acknowledge feelings: worry, anger, confusion are all OK.
  - Talk about Jewish identity with pride, not just defence.
  - Agree together what to do if something happens.
- Consider their exposure to the online world i.e. social media.

## LOOKING AFTER THEIR WELLBEING

- Create positive Jewish moments: festivals, shabbat, stories etc.
- Encourage empathy: Use books or real-life examples of friendship and kindness across differences.
- Model how to respond to unkind behaviour.
- Create a safe space for questions. Children may ask awkward or blunt questions, if you don't know the answer, suggest finding out together.
- Focus on what they can understand, try to avoid frightening or overwhelming them.
- Consider how you have conversations with other adults about antisemitism in front of your child.
- Be aware of what they are exposed to online, check what platforms they are using and where they are coming into contact with the online world
- Look for natural moments (news, school, friendships) to revisit the topic.

## LOOKING AFTER YOUR WELLBEING

- Children absorb what we feel. Process your own worry first.
- Use other parents as sounding boards, your school community is there to support you.
- You don't have to have all the answers – acknowledge that with both yourself and your child.
- Reach out to your school or community for support.

# ENSURING THEIR SAFETY TO & FROM SCHOOL

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Many children in upper KS2 will begin to travel to and from school independently. Staying safe is about staying in control: prepare, look confident, trust your instincts, and don't assume nothing will happen to you.

## **STREET SAFETY**

**Plan the route together:** Walk or cycle it with them several times first. Agree on the safest path (even if it's not the shortest) and identify "safe places" along the way like shops or friends' houses they could go to if they felt worried.

**Stick to the plan:** Encourage them to always take the agreed route and avoid shortcuts through quiet areas, alleyways, or parks.

**Road safety refresher:** Stop, look, listen at every crossing. Use pedestrian crossings where possible, and remind them that headphones can make it harder to hear traffic.

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**Phones away, head up:** A phone is useful for emergencies, but walking while staring at a screen is a real hazard. Agree they'll only check it when stopped in a safe spot.

**Travel with a buddy:** Walking or cycling with a friend or sibling is safer and more fun. Agree a meeting point if they're joining up with someone.

**Know what to do if something goes wrong:** Missed bus, lost key, feeling unwell, or someone making them uncomfortable: they should know exactly who to contact and where to go. Practise these scenarios.

**Stranger awareness:** They don't need to be frightened, just sensible: don't accept lifts, don't share personal details, and trust their instincts if something feels off.

**Build it up gradually:** Start with shorter or partial journeys (e.g. you walk halfway, they do the rest) so confidence grows before they go fully solo.

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## **Listen fully**

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Let them tell the story in their own words. Don't interrupt or jump to conclusions.

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## **Validate**

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“That sounds really upsetting. I'm glad you told me.” Avoid minimising.

# **IF YOUR CHILD SEES OR EXPERIENCES ANTISEMITISM**

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## **Reassure**

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Make clear it isn't their fault and they did the right thing telling you.

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## **Report**

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Tell their school.  
Report incidents to  
CST: 0800 032 3263  
(24-hr) or [cst.org.uk](https://www.cst.org.uk).



# Streetwise

EDUCATING ON ANTISEMITISM  
AND PERSONAL SAFETY

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