

# Parent Link

Connecting You and Your Child to Information on Our Journey to Greatness

*The evidence is consistent, positive, and convincing: families have a major influence on their children's achievement. When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more." Anne T. Henderson, Karen L. Mapp*



January 2016

## Helping Children Cope with Crisis in Our World Tips for Parents

While we welcome the happy possibilities of the New Year, last month's tragic events in Paris and San Bernardino still linger. School staff have researched good resources to use both to reassure students about their safety and to ensure that all of our students, particularly our Muslim youngsters, continue to feel safe and supported in their schools. As always, it is critical that parents are active partners with school staff to prevent intolerance and to help students respond effectively to bias-motivated behaviors.

The National Association of School Psychologists offers key messages and many tips for parents, teachers and schools. Excerpts from two articles follow. See [NASPonline.org/resources](http://NASPonline.org/resources) for these and additional resources.

### Promoting Compassion and Acceptance in Crisis

*A natural reaction to acts of extreme violence, like school shootings, rioting, and terrorist attacks, is the desire to lash out and punish the perpetrators or perceived enemy. While anger is a normal response felt by many, we must ensure an already tragic situation is not compounded with hateful reactions against innocent individuals. Children, in particular, may have difficulty handling their feelings appropriately and they can easily pick up negative cues given by adults around them. Given the diversity of America's schools, some students may become targets of hostility and blame.*

*Adults can help children understand the importance of treating all people with dignity and not judging entire groups of people for the actions of a few. Most importantly, adults must model compassion and acceptance of differences in their words and behavior. They should also encourage children to explore their feelings about prejudice and hate... and to incorporate into their values the true strength of our country—our commitment to individual freedom and upholding the respect and dignity of all people.*

### Help Your Children Feel Safe

*Intentional acts of violence that hurt innocent people are frightening and upsetting. Adults can help children work through their emotions and, perhaps, even use the process as a learning experience.*

#### All Parents Should:

- **Model calm and control.** Avoid appearing anxious or frightened.
- **Reassure children they are safe** and (if true) so are the important adults and other loved ones in their lives. Depending on the situation, point out factors that ensure their immediate safety and that of their community.

### Learn about more Muslims and Islam

Grades 1-6: *My Name is Bilal*; A sensitively written children's book about Muslim children who are teased. [Amazon.com/Name-Bilal](http://Amazon.com/Name-Bilal)

Grades 6-12: Debunking Stereotypes about Muslims and Islam  
[www.TeachingTolerance.org](http://www.TeachingTolerance.org)



## Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

**Volunteer as a Family**  
Monday, January 18, 2016  
Church on the Rock  
649 Old Mill Rd., Millersville, MD 21108  
10 am until 2 pm.

Please register for one of two shifts:  
10:00am-11:30am or 12:30 pm-2pm.

By giving back to the community, you show your children, firsthand, how volunteering makes a difference and how good it feels to help other people and to enact change. Assist with a variety of family-friendly volunteer projects – such as creating Valentines for our troops, seniors and shut-ins, assemble felt blankets for the homeless, learn the basics of conflict resolution, and more.

Visit the Anne Arundel County Volunteer Center's website: [www.aacvc.org](http://www.aacvc.org)



## Volunteers of the Month

December 2015

**Kelly Cooper & Lisa Saunders**

**Windsor Farm Elementary**

*... for enthusiastically dedicating their time and talents as school community leaders to ensure successful fundraising and student enrichment initiatives.*



Office of School & Family  
Partnerships

#### AACPS TV Programs:

Comcast and Broadstripe Channel 96, & Verizon Channel 36

Parent Connection, Parents' Corner, World View

Nuestra Comunidad (Our Community), and

iCharlemos Juntos! (Let's Chat)

Published by:

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