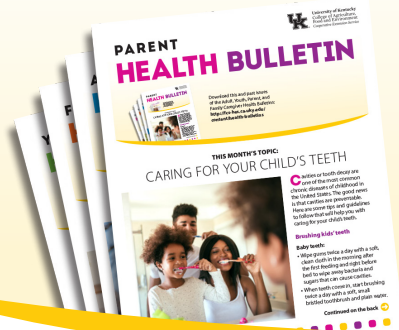


# PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



**JANUARY 2024**

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## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

# TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT WORLD CONFLICTS



**P**erhaps your child has come home from school worried about current world events, or they have seen a snippet of the evening news recently and have questions. Talking with kids about violence and world conflict (like what's happening in the Middle East and Ukraine) can be hard, but it is important. As caregivers, we want to help them make sense of what's going on in the world and keep them away from disturbing content.

Before having a conversation about an event or conflict, take some time to learn about who is involved. Read multiple perspectives on why there is a conflict. This often requires some historical context.

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## *Let your child talk about their feelings without judgment or negative response.*



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It is helpful to lead off a conversation by asking your child what they have heard and what questions or concerns they have. This can help tailor your conversation to answer your child's questions. You can better address a particular facet that is on their mind. It can also give you an opportunity to correct any misunderstandings that they have.

Let your child talk about their feelings without judgment or negative response. It can be helpful to repeat back to them your understanding of their feelings. It is OK to tell your child how these things make you feel, too. Fear, worry, anxiety, or stress are normal and valid reactions to violence and chaos.

Answer your child's questions as best you can with age-appropriate information. Avoid graphic details or real-world images if possible. It can be helpful to show children on a map where a particular country is or where there are boundaries between countries. You can also point out where they live so they will understand how near or far they are from the war.

Try to avoid giving more information than children ask for. They may come back with more questions later. Then you can give more information about a specific concern. End the talk by telling

them that you are there to protect them, help them, and look out for their best interests.

Encourage children to come to you first with their questions, instead of looking online or at media coverage. All children should have limits to what kind of content and how much social media and online information they see. This is particularly important when it comes to violence and war. Photos and videos can produce traumatic responses for those seeing it. Consider setting strict guidelines on news sites. Continued viewing can intensify feelings for children and adults alike.

If your child asks about ways to help, consider options such as collecting supplies for local refugees or emergency responders, or hosting a fundraiser. Look for positive news stories that highlight ways other people are helping, too.

#### REFERENCE:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/talk-about-middle-east.html>

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**ADULT**  
**HEALTH BULLETIN**

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