



How Schools Can Create a Safe Environment for Muslim Students



How can schools create an environment where Muslim students feel safe and respected? How can schools prevent and address anti-Muslim bullying, rhetoric, and activity, both in the classroom and in the school community? And how can schools offer students support after traumatic events that target Muslims? Here is a collection of resources on the topic

and ideas on how to use books and author interviews to foster empathy and spark dialogue; we'll add new resources as they become available.

For additional ideas, see our guide [*How to Support Immigrant Students and Families: Strategies for Schools and Early Childhood Programs \(/immigration/guide\)*](#).

Resources for Educators



Bullying and COVID-19

Learn how schools [*can respond \(/responding-covid-bullying-and-bias-against-asian-americans\)*](#) to the increase in bullying of Asian American and Pacific Islander students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[*How Educators and School Leaders Can Create a 'Safe Learning Environment' for Students \(http://www.aaiusa.org/departments_of_education_pushes_back_against_discrimina*](http://www.aaiusa.org/departments_of_education_pushes_back_against_discrimina)

This 2016 archived letter from the U.S. Department of Education offers ideas on how schools can create a 'safe learning environment' for all students, including 'those who are, or are perceived to be, Syrian, Muslim, Middle Eastern, or Arab, as well as those who are Sikh, Jewish, or students of color.'

[Perspective: Parents, we need to teach our children about the dangers of hate-laced speech against Muslims \(https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2019/04/09/teaching-my-son-all-parents-stand-up-against-muslim-hatred/?fbclid=IwAR3NNT8h1UQG3ImFq3D5MiN0OXOhKIBY9MRLKfzciIID2YpjlmgHzYoCNU\)](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2019/04/09/teaching-my-son-all-parents-stand-up-against-muslim-hatred/?fbclid=IwAR3NNT8h1UQG3ImFq3D5MiN0OXOhKIBY9MRLKfzciIID2YpjlmgHzYoCNU)
(*The Washington Post*)

This column from author [Hena Khan \(/videos/meet-authors/hena-khan\)](/videos/meet-authors/hena-khan) speaks to the importance of talking with all kids about hateful speech, bullying, and bias.

News Headlines

- [Canada Grapples with Anti-Muslim Bias as a Family Is Mourned \(https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/09/world/canada/muslim-family-london.html\)](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/09/world/canada/muslim-family-london.html) (*The New York Times*)

Teaching Tolerance

- [Finding Resolve After the New Zealand Mosque Shooting \(https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/finding-resolve-after-the-new-zealand-mosque-shootings\)](https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/finding-resolve-after-the-new-zealand-mosque-shootings)
- [Countering Islamophobia: Lesson Plan \(Grades 9-12\) \(https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/tolerance-lessons/countering-islamophobia\)](https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/tolerance-lessons/countering-islamophobia)
- [Expelling Islamophobia: When Anti-Bullying Policies Aren't Enough \(https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/spring-2017/expelling-islamophobia\)](https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/spring-2017/expelling-islamophobia)
- [A Matter of Life and Death: Two Scholars Make the Case for Teaching Religious Literacy \(https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/summer-2017/a-matter-of-life-and-death\)](https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/summer-2017/a-matter-of-life-and-death)
- [More Resources on Religion \(https://www.tolerance.org/topics/religion\)](https://www.tolerance.org/topics/religion)

Anti-Defamation League: Educational resources

- [Myths and Facts about Muslim People and Islam \(http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/myths-and-facts-about-muslim.html#.V-EzXSErLct\)](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/myths-and-facts-about-muslim.html#.V-EzXSErLct)
- [Helping Students Make Sense of News Stories About Bias and Injustice \(https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/helping-students-make-sense-of-news-stories-about-bias-and\)](https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/helping-students-make-sense-of-news-stories-about-bias-and)
- [Empowering Young People in the Aftermath of Hate \(https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/empowering-young-people-in-the-aftermath-of-hate-in\)](https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/empowering-young-people-in-the-aftermath-of-hate-in) (Resources in English/Spanish)

- [Talking to Young Children about Bias and Prejudice](https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/talking-to-young-children-about-prejudice) (<https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/talking-to-young-children-about-prejudice>)
- [Anti-Bias Tools & Strategies](https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/anti-bias-tools-strategies) (<https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/anti-bias-tools-strategies>)
- [Pyramid of Hate: From Bias to Genocide](https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/pyramid-of-hate) (<https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/pyramid-of-hate>) (in English and Spanish)

PBS NewsHour

- [NewsHour Extra: How Teachers Can Discuss New Zealand, Violent Extremism, and Islamophobia](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/daily-videos/how-teachers-can-discuss-new-zealand-violent-extremism-and-islamophobia/) (<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/daily-videos/how-teachers-can-discuss-new-zealand-violent-extremism-and-islamophobia/>)
- [Video: Teaching 'different is ok' to combat Islamophobia in U.S. schools](https://youtu.be/PWM9I6_E8GE) (https://youtu.be/PWM9I6_E8GE)
- [PBS NewsHour Extra: Islamophobia Resources](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/tag/islamophobia/) (<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/tag/islamophobia/>)
- [Column: Why educators still need to talk about 9/11 — and Islamophobia](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/education/column-educators-still-need-talk-911-islamophobia) (<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/education/column-educators-still-need-talk-911-islamophobia>) by Rusul Alrubail
- [New Americans: Video Series with Teenage Immigrants](https://srlnewamericans.tumblr.com/) (<https://srlnewamericans.tumblr.com/>)

Bias and bullying

- [8 Tips to Protect ELLs from Bullying in Your Classroom and School](/article/8-tips-protect-ells-bullying-your-classroom-and-school) (</article/8-tips-protect-ells-bullying-your-classroom-and-school>) (Colorín Colorado)
- [Preventing Cyberbullying: Multilingual Resources for Schools and Families](/teaching-ells/technology-ells/technology-safety-english-language-learners#cyberbullying) (</teaching-ells/technology-ells/technology-safety-english-language-learners#cyberbullying>) (Compiled by Colorín Colorado)
- [Bullying Prevention Resources](https://sharemylesson.com/preventbullying?theme=286461) (<https://sharemylesson.com/preventbullying?theme=286461>) (Share My Lesson)
- [Bullying Help: Resources and Partners](https://www.tolerance.org/professional-development/bullying-help-resources-and-partners) (<https://www.tolerance.org/professional-development/bullying-help-resources-and-partners>) (Teaching Tolerance)

Additional lesson plans and resources

- [Teaching While Muslim: Lesson Plans and Collections](https://www.teachingwhilemuslim.org/classroom-resources) (<https://www.teachingwhilemuslim.org/classroom-resources>)
- [Larry Ferlazzo: Combating Islamophobia in Our Schools](http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/2019/03/15/combating-islamophobia-in-our-schools/) (<http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/2019/03/15/combating-islamophobia-in-our-schools/>)

Talking about tough topics in the news

- [Helping Children Cope with Traumatic Events](https://sharemylesson.com/collections/helping-children-cope-traumatic-events?theme=284956) (<https://sharemylesson.com/collections/helping-children-cope-traumatic-events?theme=284956>) (Share My Lesson)
- [Fred Rogers Talks About Tragic Events in the News](http://www.fredrogers.org/new-site/par-tragic-events.html) (<http://www.fredrogers.org/new-site/par-tragic-events.html>) (The Fred Rogers Company)
- [Difficult Times and Tough Talks for Young Children](http://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/) (<http://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/>) (Sesame Street)
- [How to Help Kids Feel Safe After a Tragedy](http://www.pbs.org/parents/talkingwithkids/news/help-kids-feel-safe.html) (<http://www.pbs.org/parents/talkingwithkids/news/help-kids-feel-safe.html>) (PBS Parents)
- [Parenting for a Challenging World: Recovery After a Traumatic Event](http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/parents-caregivers/parenting-in-a-challenging-world) (<http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/parents-caregivers/parenting-in-a-challenging-world>) (National Child Traumatic Stress Network)
- [Help in the Times of Crisis or Loss](https://sowkweb.usc.edu/about/centers-affiliations/national-center-school-crisis-and-bereavement) (<https://sowkweb.usc.edu/about/centers-affiliations/national-center-school-crisis-and-bereavement>) (National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement)
- [Talking About Tragic Events](http://www.onetoughjob.org/your-family/transitions/talking-about-tragic-events) (<http://www.onetoughjob.org/your-family/transitions/talking-about-tragic-events>) (One Tough Job)
- [Talking to Children About Tragedies & Other News Events: Bilingual Tips in English and Spanish](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Talking-To-Children-About-Tragedies-and-Other-News-Events.aspx) (<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Talking-To-Children-About-Tragedies-and-Other-News-Events.aspx>) (HealthyChildren.org)



Making Students Feel Welcome

- [Creating a Welcoming Classroom for ELLs](/create-welcoming-classroom) (</create-welcoming-classroom>)
- [Supporting Special Populations such as Refugees and Unaccompanied Children](/ell-basics/special-populations) (</ell-basics/special-populations>)
- *Education Week: A Primer on Helping Immigrant Students Feel Welcome in School* (http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning-the-language/2016/11/a_primer_on_helping_immigrant_.html)
- [Welcoming America Network: Resources and Ideas](https://www.welcomingamerica.org) (<https://www.welcomingamerica.org>)
- [How to Teach Empathy and Appreciation](/immigration/guide/student#empathy) (</immigration/guide/student#empathy>)

Creating a warm welcome for immigrant families in the front office



When the window becomes the mirror

“When lighting conditions are just right, however, a window can also be a mirror. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience.”

— Rudine Sims Bishop

Books and Authors

We've compiled some of our booklists of titles featuring Muslim characters, celebrations, or stories.

Booklists

Books by Theme

- [Celebrating Ramadan and Eid \(/booklist/celebrating-ramadan-and-eid\)](/booklist/celebrating-ramadan-and-eid)
- [Syrian Stories: Books for Children and Teens \(/booklist/syrian-stories-books-children\)](/booklist/syrian-stories-books-children)
- [The Refugee Experience: Books for Children \(/booklist/refugee-experience-books-children\)](/booklist/refugee-experience-books-children)
- [Immigrant Stories: Home at Last \(/booklist/immigrant-stories-new-home\)](/booklist/immigrant-stories-new-home)
- [Refugee Stories from Iraq and Afghanistan: Books for Teens \(/booklist/refugee-stories-iraq-and-afghanistan\)](/booklist/refugee-stories-iraq-and-afghanistan)

- [Muslim Stories \(http://www.imyournneighborbooks.org/category/setting/region-islamic/\)](http://www.imyournneighborbooks.org/category/setting/region-islamic/)(I'm Your Neighbor)
- [Muslim Kids as Heroes \(https://kitaabworld.com/blogs/news/counter-islamophobia-through-stories-muslim-kids-as-heroes\)](https://kitaabworld.com/blogs/news/counter-islamophobia-through-stories-muslim-kids-as-heroes) (Kitaab World)
- [Muslim/Muslim-American Themes \(https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid\[226\]=226&tid\[229\]=229\)](https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid[226]=226&tid[229]=229) (Anti-Defamation League)

Books by Author

- [Books by Hena Khan \(/author/hena-khan\)](/author/hena-khan)
- [Books by Rukhsana Khan \(http://www.rukhsanakhan.com/books/books.html\)](http://www.rukhsanakhan.com/books/books.html)
- [Books by Naomi Shihab Nye \(/author/naomi-shihab-nye\)](/author/naomi-shihab-nye)

More recommended resources

- [Hena Khan talks about the hijab and her children's book "Under My Hijab" \(https://blog.leeandlow.com/2019/02/05/an-interview-with-hena-khan-author-of-under-my-hijab/\)](https://blog.leeandlow.com/2019/02/05/an-interview-with-hena-khan-author-of-under-my-hijab/)
- [Hijabi Librarians: Books, Discussion, and More \(https://hijablibrarians.wordpress.com/resources/\)](https://hijablibrarians.wordpress.com/resources/) (Blog)

Building bridges through books

Turning the Page, an education non-profit supporting family engagement in DC and Chicago Public Schools, builds summer learning experiences for families. [One such excursion \(http://www.readingrockets.org/blogs/book-life/not-just-kids-our-journey-turquoise-mountain\)](http://www.readingrockets.org/blogs/book-life/not-just-kids-our-journey-turquoise-mountain) took children to the Smithsonian's Freer and Sackler Galleries to tour their exhibit, Turquoise Mountain: Artists Transforming Afghanistan, learn about Islamic art, and make their own ornament from a [printable pattern guide \(http://www.readingrockets.org/content/pdfs/islamicpattern.pdf\)](http://www.readingrockets.org/content/pdfs/islamicpattern.pdf) to take home.

Videos

These excerpts are part of our [Facebook Live conversation \(/videos/facebook-live-series/hena-khan-writing-kids-and-teens-about-american-muslim-experiences-event\)](/videos/facebook-live-series/hena-khan-writing-kids-and-teens-about-american-muslim-experiences-event) with Hena Khan. See more videos in our Meet the Author interviews with [Hena Khan \(/videos/meet-authors/hena-khan\)](/videos/meet-authors/hena-khan) and [Rukhsana Khan \(/videos/meet-authors/rukhsana-khan\)](/videos/meet-authors/rukhsana-khan).

Including the Vandalism of a Mosque in *Amina's Voice*

What I am learning from my sons and other young American Muslims about their experiences

Conversations with kids in schools

"Under My Hijab"



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