



## President's Bulletin

CAROL WEITZMAN, MD

*January 13, 2021*

Dear Members, Trainees & Friends,

I had a fantasy as 2020 was coming to a close that I suspect many of us had. I imagined that I was going to wake up on January 1<sup>st</sup> and all the plagues of the past year – the COVID pandemic that has claimed the lives of so many, the racism that led to the violent, unnecessary deaths of many black men and women and shined a glaring light on the deep inequities in this nation, and the increasing national political divide – would all just magically resolve with the promise of a new year. And so, as we toasted the new year in one of the strangest New Year's Eve's that I can remember, I went to sleep with that hope. And then January 6 happened...

An angry mob stormed the US Capitol in an act of insurrection and violence in our nation's capital unlike anything we could have imagined. A breakdown of democracy that although many predicted but still is shocking and frightening. Like seeing a terrible accident on the highway, we knew at some point, we should turn away but many of us remained glued to the television watching the images repeatedly. Many of us right now are scared, disgusted, furious and wearied along with other intense emotions. And we are filled with questions. It's a hard time to calm our own feelings and figure out what we as professionals who care about children's well-being can do during this time.

The steady hand that our field has always had, though, brings us back to thinking about how we can help children and adolescents make sense of these recent events, feel safe, and have important conversations that will help them learn. **There have been a number of incredible resources emerging already for teachers and parents that I have included below**, some of which may be useful to clinicians or to us as parents that highlight talking to children of various ages and having valuable conversations without shying away from

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talking about scary or controversial content.

2020 will go down as one of the most difficult years in our lives and though we can't wait to see it fade into the rearview mirror, there are some valuable lessons. Through all of the events of this past year that continue into 2021, we have seen the devastating impact on children and families. We know more than ever that we must pay attention to children's reactions, listen to their stories, help them correct narratives that may be distorted, keep them safe and make sure we are a voice to advocate for their needs.

[NYC Dept Education Infohub Our schools](#)

[NPR How To Talk To Kids About The Riots At The U.S. Capitol](#)

[NPR What To Say To Kids When The News Is Scary](#)

[Common Sense Media: Talking to Kids About the Violence at the U.S. Capitol](#)

[PBS Kids Arthur Health Resilience](#)

[Beyond the Golden Rule: A Parent's Guide to Preventing and Responding to Prejudice by Dana Williams](#)

[NASP: Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers](#)

*Sincerely,*

Carol Weitzman, MD

President, SDBP

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