

# 17 WAYS

## for Parents and Children to Honor the Students and Teachers of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, Parkland, Florida

Many of us throughout the nation have been grieving since the tragic events of February 14th in Parkland, FL. We wondered how we might turn our grief into action. After some thought, we compiled a list of 17 actions that families could take in the wake of the trauma and tragedy faced by the students, teachers, and community in Parkland. This list is not exhaustive or comprehensive, but a starting point, a list of some things that you and your family may find helpful as we all work together to foster a healthy, nurturing, and loving environment in our communities.

- 1 “When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’” - Fred Rogers. Read this quote to your child at dinner and ask who has helped her. Ask whom she has helped.
- 2 Read *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* by Carol McCloud with your child. Talk about what it means to fill someone’s bucket. Other good books include *Stand in My Shoes* by Bob Sornson or for older children *Wonder* by RJ Palaci.
- 3 Help your child write a letter to a teacher to say thank you for all that she or he does to make your school a safe environment for your child’s education.
- 4 Talk to your children about what happened at Parkland. Use *Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers from the National Association of School Psychologists* (NASP) to guide you in your conversation. The conversation will differ depending upon the age of your child: <http://www.nasponline.org>.
- 5 Have everyone in your family draw a picture of a peaceful world. Ask everyone to share their pictures and talk about them.
- 6 Encourage your child to sit with someone new at lunch this week.
- 7 Donate a book about kindness to the school library in honor of the 17 students and teachers from Parkland.
- 8 Call your elected officials and ask them to pass legislation that makes our schools safer.
- 9 Teach your child about one of these 17 people who have made a difference in our world: Marjory Stoneman Douglas, Martin Luther King, Ghandi, Rosa Parks, Jane Goodall, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, John Lewis, Nelson Mandela, Malala Yousafzai, Thich Nhat Hanh, Susan B Anthony, Elie Wiesel, Cesar Chavez, Peace Pilgrim, Mother Teresa.
- 10 Participate in a local or national march that tries to raise awareness about school safety like the March for Our Lives on March 24th. <https://marchforourlives.com>
- 11 Organize a letter writing campaign with other families in your community. Write letters to elected officials with your ideas about how to make our schools safer for all children.
- 12 Encourage your child to find a friend who doesn’t have someone to play with on the playground and invite him/her to play.
- 13 Encourage your child to offer “put-ups” rather than “put-downs” about classmates. This way, students will recognize the value of kindness and affirming what is good about each individual.
- 14 Talk with your kids about gun safety and how to be safe with guns at home. [www.safekids.org/tip/gun-safety-tips](http://www.safekids.org/tip/gun-safety-tips).
- 15 Draw a picture or write a note thanking someone who works in public safety (police, firefighter, first responders).
- 16 Read *The Invisible Boy* by Trudy Ludwig with your child. Talk about what it feels like to be left out. Talk about ways to include others who feel left out.
- 17 “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” *The Lion and the Mouse*, Aesop. Read this quote to your child and ask what is a small act of kindness?

*“Since it is so likely that children will meet cruel enemies, let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage.” - C. S. Lewis*