



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

August 14, 2017

Mayor Michael Signer
605 E Main St., # A230
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Dear Mayor Signer:

On behalf of the 115,700 members of the American Psychological Association, I offer our condolences to the Charlottesville community for the loss and trauma you have experienced as a result of the violence that occurred this past weekend. The sight of people carrying lit torches evoked the past violent intimidation of African-Americans by the Ku Klux Klan. And the horror of one man deliberately driving his car into a peaceful crowd, killing one and injuring many, was shocking.

The American Psychological Association condemns the racism, antisemitism and antigay attitudes that were manifested by demonstrators in Charlottesville. APA opposes prejudice, discrimination and violence against others. Psychologists are committed to improving the conditions of individuals, groups and society. Psychological research has shown that prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination can have adverse effects on both the targets and the perpetrators. These effects include heightened vigilance, anger, anxiety, depression and physical symptoms. Discrimination can create a climate of rejection, fear, anxiety and insecurity, for both individuals and the target group as a whole. Exposure to demographically diverse settings decreases prejudice, improves opportunities for stigmatized individuals and prepares people to be better citizens in a multicultural democracy.

We support Charlottesville and our nation in efforts to heal from this recent trauma. Please feel free to share the resources we have provided on our website, particularly "[Talking to kids about discrimination](#)", "[Helping your children manage distress in the aftermath of a shooting](#)", and "[Building resilience to manage indirect exposure to terror](#)".

Finally, we join you in condemning the behavior we witnessed over the weekend and in calling on our nation to unite in opposition to the racist ideology of white supremacy and to bigotry, violence and fear-mongering. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to all the individuals and families affected by this violence.

The diversity of our nation is what makes us strong. The embrace of our differences is what makes us a beacon to others.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Antonio E. Puente in black ink.

Antonio E. Puente, PhD
President

Handwritten signature of Arthur C. Evans, Jr., PhD in black ink.

Arthur C. Evans, Jr., PhD
Chief Executive Officer

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