

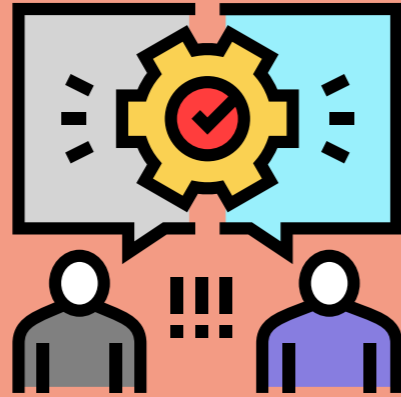
# RESPONDING TO HATE



Hate often happens in public places, so you may witness it when you're out and about. Hate can manifest in various ways, but can be classified into two main categories:

### Hate Incidents

Hate incidents are acts that are motivated, in whole or in part, by bias, prejudice or hatred towards a group characteristic of the victim but do not amount to a breach of the law. Actions such as mocking, teasing, stereotyping, or sharing derogatory jokes can constitute hate incidents.



### Hate Crimes

Hate crimes are acts that are against the law and are motivated, in whole or in part, by bias, prejudice or hatred towards a group characteristic of the victim. Examples include assault, criminal damage, and threats of violence.



[AHCN\_Community\_Profiles\_Hate\_Crime\_Hate\_Incidents\_Australia\_2022.pdf (hatecrime.com.au)]

Whether it's a passing comment or a confrontation, we all must strive to challenge any sign of hate.



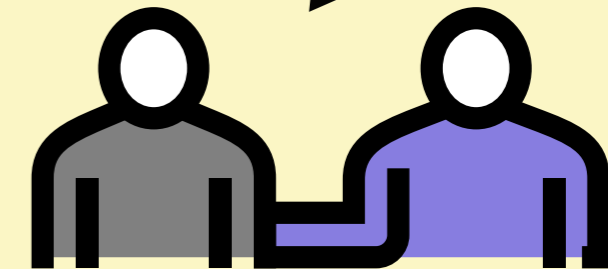
## BYSTANDER INTERVENTIONS

In recent history, we've been witnessing a spike in hate crimes, hate incidents and violence aimed at LGBTQ+ communities. As community members, we must be especially vigilant and aware of what these harms can look like, so that we're ready to stand up and intervene.

When we intervene, not only can we reduce the harm and trauma that the victim may suffer from, but we are also doing important work in showing that there is no place for hate in our communities. Your actions matter.

*When one community is made to feel unwelcome or blocked from full participation in public life, it is a problem for us all. Hate crime and hate incidents undermine human dignity, equality and respect for diversity. Hateful conduct demands a co-ordinated policy, law enforcement, educational and community response.*

- Australian Hate Crime Network



Witnessing public hate incidents or hate crimes can be a disturbing experience. Witnesses may feel frozen, mute, and unsure of how to react. This guide was designed for and by LGBTQ+ community members and allies to provide information on bystander interventions when witnessing hate, in the interest of supporting victims and keeping yourself safe in the process.

ACON strongly discourages the confrontation of any individual or group if they are or might become violent. We don't ever want you to get hurt while trying to help someone out. Always prioritise safety and consider possibilities that are unlikely to put you or anyone else in harm's way. In the case of emergencies, you should always call 000.

**INDIRECT INTERVENTIONS - Can be done from a safe distance**



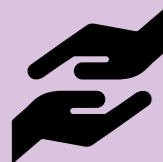
**WITNESS**

- Witness with purpose. Stand firm and show no tolerance for discrimination.
- If safe to do so, use your phone to try and record the incident or take photos. Don't put the video online without the permission of the harassed person.
- Pay attention to details for future reporting, note down:
  - Where you are
  - What time it is
  - A physical description of the offender



**REPORT**

- Call for help from security, staff, or other bystanders.
- If you feel safe to do so, you can report all incidents of abuse and/or violence to the NSW Police Force (NSWPF) by:
  - Calling the Police Assistance Line 131 444
  - Reporting online using the NSWPF community portal or Crimestoppers
  - Attending your local police station and asking to speak with a GLO (LGBTIQ+ Liaison Officer). If a GLO is unavailable, another police officer can take your report.



**CARE**

- Intervention doesn't always need to happen while an incident is occurring. It can take place after the incident.
- Help the victim get to a safer location. If possible, speak with the victim and assure them of the wrongness of the incident. *"You do not, and did not, deserve to be targeted."*
  - Ask if they're OK and if they need anything. If the person was injured because of the incident, offer to call an ambulance with their consent.
  - Do not call the police if the victim didn't ask for it. If you've recorded the incident, ask them if they want you to give them the recording.
  - Provide information about available support services they can go to:
    - ACON can provide counselling support, information and referrals to LGBTQ+ people in NSW who have experienced abuse and/or violence. Call ACON on (02) 9206 2000.
    - Ask Izzy has a list of additional support options

Prior to attempting any of these direct interventions, it can be useful to assess the situation by asking yourself the following questions:

**1.**

**Are you physically safe?**

**2.**

**Is the victim physically safe?**

**3.**

**Does it seem unlikely that the situation will escalate?**

If you can answer yes to all these questions, you might choose to be more direct in your intervention.

**DIRECT INTERVENTIONS**



**DISRUPT**

- Interrupt the abuse by creating a distraction, such as spilling a drink or playing music loudly on your phone. Address the victim directly while ignoring the perpetrator.
- You can attempt to steer the conversation away from the abuse by asking for directions or the time. If it may be dangerous for you to approach or if the victim is in imminent serious danger, then you can try making noise or yelling something that will distract those involved but also bring attention to the situation.



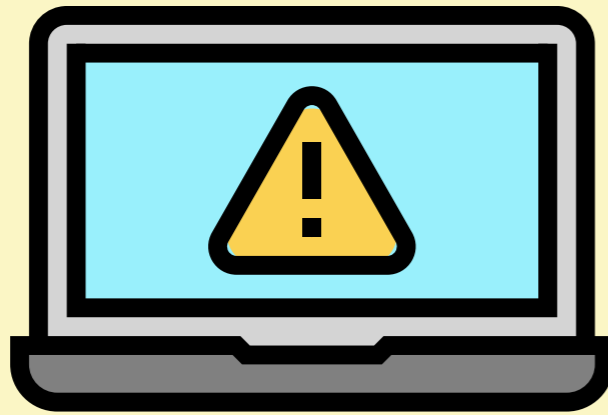
**ENGAGE**

- Speak to other bystanders at the scene to encourage involvement. *'This isn't ok. We should do something.'*
- It can be helpful to address other bystanders directly and individually e.g *'Excuse me, you in the blue hoodie, can you help?'*
- Show your disapproval through facial expressions and body language if you are unable to be vocal.



**CONFRONT**

- This intervention technique is the riskiest as there is a possibility of escalation or the perpetrator redirecting their aggression; therefore, it should always be approached with caution. Always assess the situation and think safety first.
- Keep it short and succinct. Use a non-aggressive but strong tone.
  - Ask the perpetrators to stop harassing the person or say, *'That's not ok. Leave them alone.'*
  - Question their reasoning for committing the abuse, as a way of signifying disapproval. *"Why would you say something like that?"*



## ONLINE HATE

Online hate is very common and challenging to tackle. It is as serious as a crime committed in “real life” and should be treated as such. Social media platforms have strong policies that do not tolerate hate speech, but their programs often need human help.

In Australia, we can report serious incidents of cyberbullying and online hate to eSafety. eSafety can help Australians experiencing online bullying or abuse to take action or make a complaint. They can escalate matters directly with social media platforms on behalf of victims, and advocate for the removal of content.

If you see hate speech online:



Don't get into an argument. Be aware that engaging in hate content may result in you being exposed to this content more often due to the nature of social media algorithms. Block the user if they are upsetting you but take screenshots beforehand so that you can report the harmful content.



Gather evidence. To make a report to an online service or platform, or to eSafety, you will need to collect evidence of what has happened and where. This can include screenshots and noting down other information like the URL.



Report it to the social media platform. If the online hate persists, and the service or platform does not remove the harmful content, then you can report it to eSafety for investigation and possible removal.

**If there are clear threats of violence and if you are in immediate danger or at risk of harm please call 000.**

## AFTER AN INCIDENT

Witnessing a hate crime or hate incident can be difficult and distressing; we encourage you to take care of yourself. Consider:



Debriefing with a friend



Taking time to do something that makes you feel good, like going for a walk, or listening to music



Engaging and debriefing with your communities

Debriefing with your communities can not only help you to process the incident, it can also enable you to share learnings about effective de-escalation and safety strategies with one another.

## FURTHER SUPPORT

For free legal advice or further help reporting a hate crime or hate incident, you can contact the Inner City Legal Service, the Redfern Legal Centre (RLC) or call LawAccess NSW on 1300 888 529.

You may also wish to report your experience to Anti-Discrimination NSW. You can call them on 1800 670 812 or visit their website for more information.

ACON can provide counselling support, information and referrals to LGBTQ+ people in NSW who have experienced abuse and/or violence. Call ACON on (02) 9206 2000.

If you have experienced a hate incident and have reported this to your local Command/District but have received a poor response (for example, you have requested a report be made but this has not occurred), you can email [safety@acon.org.au](mailto:safety@acon.org.au) for assistance escalating within the NSWPF. Please note that the ACON Safety team can only assist when you have first attempted to report or manage the issue directly with your local Command/District

Alternatively, you can also lodge a complaint through the NSWPF. RLC has two factsheets that answer some frequently asked questions about making a formal police complaint in NSW.



[acon.org.au](http://acon.org.au)