



# Alberta Hate Crimes Awareness Day

## Activity Guide



HATE IMPRISONS EVERYONE

*hate is silent so speak up*

*look inside yourself*

*you can make a difference*

*report hate crime*

**AHCC**  
ALBERTA HATE CRIMES  
COMMITTEE



Alberta Hate Crimes Awareness Day is sponsored by the Alberta Hate Crimes Committee (AHCC) and is held during National Victims of Crime Awareness week or Alberta Crime Prevention Week which are usually in April or May annually. Please see the website: <http://www.albertahatecrimes.ca> for more information.

Hate crime is a “message crime” designed to strike fear into the heart of a community. These types of crimes attack democracy, marginalize human rights, and erode multiculturalism; indeed, hate crimes are oppressive to all communities and society as a whole.

Hate Crime Awareness Day invites individuals, businesses, schools and communities to rally together to send the message that hate crimes will not be tolerated in their community. We invite you to help us mark and celebrate this important day by organizing an event, discussion, or activity in your community.

## What is a hate or bias crime?

Any criminal offence committed against a person or property which is motivated in whole or in part by the suspects’ hate, prejudice or bias against an identifiable group based on real or perceived race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or any other similar factor.

**Hate crimes include: graffiti or vandalism, threatening phone calls and destruction of religious symbols.**

## What is a hate and bias incident?

Hate/bias incidents can include: name calling; racial slurs; homophobic bullying; distributing or promoting material which endorses hate/prejudice; racist or offensive mail or emails and other prejudicial actions. Not all of these incidents may have the necessary elements required to violate the criminal code; however, they can be gateway behaviors leading to increasingly violent acts.

## Did you know?

- Approximately, 14 per cent of Alberta’s population is comprised of visible minorities; over 454,000 Albertans are not ‘White Caucasian’.
- Research estimates 1 in 10 Albertans are sexual or gender minorities (gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender).
- By 2017, Alberta will see increasing numbers of allophones, persons whose mother tongue is neither English nor French, more visible minorities in their communities, and more people of diverse religious faiths. The face of Alberta is changing rapidly.
- Statistics Canada indicates youth are the number one victims *and* the number one perpetrators of hate crimes in Canada.
- In 2007, youth ages 12 to 17 accounted for 32% (1/3) of all individuals accused of hate crimes in Canada.
- Only 1 in 10 hate crimes are ever reported to authorities.



## Who are the targets of hate and bias crime?

In Alberta, hate and bias crime are strongly motivated by **race** and **religion**. Hate crimes in Canada have one of three primary motivations: race or ethnicity accounted for 6 in 10 incidents in 2007. 'Black' people are targeted most often followed by: those with multiple ethnicities or East or Southeast Asian backgrounds; religious groups (Jewish, Muslim); and gender or sexually diverse individuals. This latter group tends to be targeted for more violent actions.

## Taking Action Against Hate and bias crime?

### Actions **INDIVIDUALS** can take:

Every person has the power to take action. We encourage individuals to develop local and proactive responses to hate. Suggestions include:

- Encourage your local City Council to proclaim Hate Crime Awareness Day.
- Organize a walk, run, or community activity to promote awareness about hate and bias crime.
- Create a local planning committee with municipal government, police authorities, schools, ethnocultural organizations, businesses and community groups and host an awareness day.
- Organize a public activity to stand up against hate. Invite the media to attend (see the Crime Prevention Week Guide for more tips on media releases <https://www.solgps.alberta.ca>)

- Help citizens in your community understand and appreciate the value diversity brings to our society (see Culture and Community Spirit's Help Make a Difference Guide: [www.helpmakeadifference.ca](http://www.helpmakeadifference.ca) ).
- Brainstorm activities to highlight and celebrate the diversity that exists within your community.

### Actions **BUSINESSES** can take:

Businesses are not immune to racism, prejudice, hate or hate incidents. We encourage Alberta businesses to address incidents in the workplace before they escalate to potentially violent situations. There are many actions business owners can take; a few suggestions are outlined below.

- Partner with other local businesses, service agencies and ethnocultural organizations to jointly host an event to indicate that hate is not a value that will be accepted in your business or community.
- Hold mandatory diversity training and increase cultural competencies in the workplace.
- Create hate prevention, healthy workplace and conflict management policies for your workplace.
- Make your business a hate-free zone!

### Actions **PARENTS/CAREGIVERS** and **FAMILIES** can take:

Children learn behaviors, attitudes and expressions from their parents. It is critical that parents take the lead role in helping children to develop conflict resolution and critical thinking skills around issues like prejudice, discrimination, and hate. Several actions parents and/or caregivers and families can take are outlined on the next page.

- Read books with your child focused on the diversity of cultures, traditions, and lifestyles in our society; this is an excellent way to prompt discussion.
- Cartoons, the Internet, magazines, movies, entertainment shows and television news provide great opportunities for critical and age appropriate discussion.
- Understand and explain the various manifestations of hate throughout our nation’s history so your child can learn to recognize it in contemporary society.
- Use available resources like [www.helpmakeadifference.ca](http://www.helpmakeadifference.ca) to make your own neighborhood and home more welcoming and inclusive.
- Speak out, model inclusive behavior and send a clear message against hate!
- Encourage your child to recognize instances of prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping and discuss appropriate responses to such attitudes and behaviors when you encounter them.
- Ask your children if they are being bullied in school or if they know of instances of bullying, harassment or intimidation being undertaken or experienced by other children in their school. There are good resources available at <http://bullying.org>.
- Ask your child’s school if it has a School Based Hate Prevention Program or a Hate Prevention Policy in place. If not, write your school board as it is electable and accountable to the communities they serve.
- Teach your children that even subtle forms of hate and prejudice are inherently wrong and will not be accepted or supported.

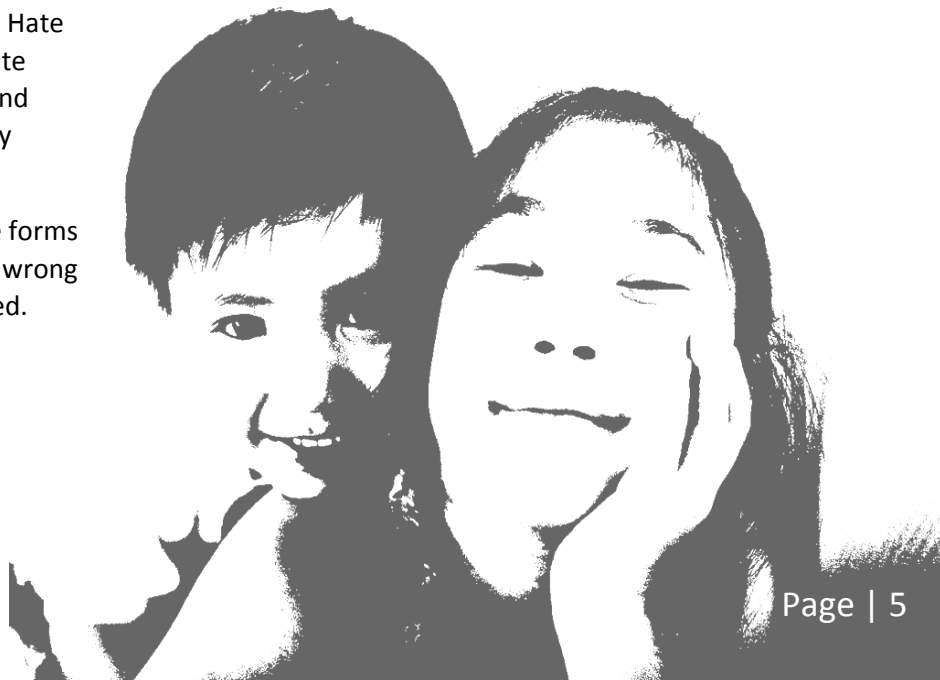
## Actions Alberta **SCHOOLS** and **SCHOOL BOARDS** can take:

Schools are a mirror of society; they are not immune to intolerance and violence. Teenagers and young adults are most often the victims and the perpetrators of hate incidents and crime.

**Hate-motivated behavior**, whether in form of bullying, name-calling, ethnic conflict, harassment, intimidation and graffiti **is often apparent on schools grounds**. Since children learn these attitudes, it is possible for schools, families, law enforcement and communities to work together to prevent and dismantle the development of prejudiced attitudes and violent behavior which may lead to hate crimes.

## We KNOW Alberta schools are already working to

- Instill in children an appreciation and respect for each other’s differences (e.g., Seeds of Empathy Program in Alberta [www.seedsofempathy.org](http://www.seedsofempathy.org); the Centre for Race and Culture – Peace Ambassador’s Initiative [www.cfrac.com](http://www.cfrac.com); Don’t Buy In program in Calgary [www.dontbuyin.ca](http://www.dontbuyin.ca); or the John Humphrey Centre’s human rights education program [www.jhcentre.org](http://www.jhcentre.org)).



## We INVITE Alberta schools to continue to take action by:

- Inviting children and students to create posters and artwork recognizing the importance of diversity and denouncing hate and discrimination (e.g. Mathieu da Costa National Challenge – see the website below:  
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/mathieudacosta/index.asp> ).
- Organizing a walk, run, or educational activity to promote awareness about hate and bias crime.
- Hosting educational workshops, seminars, or speakers to discuss the issue of hate and discrimination and its impact on both schools and communities.
- Inviting children to actively engage in discussions about hate and discrimination by inviting speakers from the Peace Ambassador’s Initiative from the Centre for Race and Culture (<http://www.cfrac.com> ) to bring diverse voices into classrooms to talk about the roots of racism.

## We ENCOURAGE schools to:

### Develop an effective School-Based Hate Prevention Program where:

- Prejudice and hate-motivated behavior, incidents and crimes are not accepted.

Diversity and differences are celebrated and the expression of diverse viewpoints in your school and curriculum are permitted, with an emphasis on our commonalities as human beings.

- A hate prevention policy is created and clearly communicated and distributed to all students, parents/ guardians /caregivers and staff.

### Provide:

- Hate and bias prevention training to all staff, including teachers, administrators, school security personnel and support staff.
- Structured opportunities for integration where young people can begin to interact across racial, ethnic and sexual identity lines through school supported organizations and activities such as the creation of gay-straight student alliances, diversity and social justice clubs. A good example is the STOP program developed in Red Deer by Dr. Darren Lund (see <http://people.ucalgary.ca/~dtoolkit/stopprogramhistory.htm>)

### Develop:

- Partnerships with families, community organizations and law enforcement agencies (hate crime prevention cannot be accomplished by schools alone!).
- A range of corrective actions for those who violate school hate-prevention policies such as restorative justice and conflict resolution programs.

### Ensure:

- All students receive hate prevention training through age-appropriate classroom activities, assemblies and other school-related activities.

### Collect and use:

- Data to focus province-wide hate prevention efforts.

## Actions **MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS** and **COMMUNITIES** can take:

- Consider hosting a town hall meeting to discuss how your community will become a hate free zone.
- Set up displays or information booths at local malls, recreation centres, or community gathering points.
- Hold diversity training and increase cultural competencies in the workplace.
- Hold a parade celebrating the diversity in your community.

## WHO can **HELP ME?**

For more information on hate crime, hate incidents in Alberta, please see the website: <http://www.albertahatecrimes.ca>.

For additional community supports, please call 211 if you are in Edmonton or Calgary. Alternately please see the Edmonton website [www.211Edmonton.com](http://www.211Edmonton.com) and Calgary website [211Calgary.ca](http://211Calgary.ca).

For Centre for Race and Culture information, please visit: <http://www.cfrac.com>

For Seeds of Empathy information, please visit: <http://employment.alberta.ca/Immigration/5783.html>

For help with bullying or bullying prevention information, please visit: <http://www.bullyfreealberta.ca/>  
<http://www.b-free.ca/home.html>

For more information about Safe and Caring Schools in Alberta, please visit: <http://www.sacsc.ca/>

Help Make a Difference information: <http://www.helpmakeadifference.com>

For details on National Victims of Crime Awareness Week activities, please visit: <http://www.victimswweek.gc.ca/>

Help is available if you or somebody you know has been a victim of hate crime: <http://www.victims.alberta.ca>

