

## Community Education Workshop

### Hate Crimes

Length of Session: 2 hours

#### Workshop Objectives:

At the end of the session participants will understand:

1. Knowledge and Understanding of why/ who commit hate crimes.
2. How to identify and document a hate crime.
3. How to report a hate crime.

#### Draft Agenda

1. Introduction and brief overview (**5 minutes**)
2. Group guidelines (**5 minutes**)
3. Basic Role of Police (if needed) (**20 minutes**)
4. Break (**5 minutes**)
5. Frequently Asked Questions and Answers (**20 minutes**)
6. Wrap up (**10 minutes**)
7. Evaluations (**10 minutes**)

**Total Time: 75 minutes**

#### Materials Needed:

- Flip chart paper
- Colored markers
- Tape
- Brochures, flyers and agency contact information
- Evaluation forms

#### 1. Introduction/Overview

This workshop is intended to help educate the public about Hate Crimes. It will deal with issues including; what a hate crime is, what hate propaganda is, what motivates perpetrators, the impact of hate crime, what to do if you are a victim of a hate crime and where you can get help.

#### Facilitator Notes

At this time the facilitator should go over the outline of the workshop for the group. This can be done verbally or written on flip chart paper.

Suggestion: As a warm-up have the group go around and introduce themselves.

#### 2. Group Guidelines

In the large group, invite participants to set the ground rules for the session. These can include;

- respecting each other,
- listening to one another,
- one person speaks at a time,
- everyone has the right to participate, everyone has the right to pass;
- confidentiality (what is said in the room, stays in the room).

#### Facilitator Notes

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If it is a short session, these rules can be prepared ahead of time, and participant's can be invited to add to it. Because of the sensitive nature of this topic the facilitator should explain that people are free to leave the session at anytime if there are uncomfortable with the discussion and that the space is a safe space and while everyone opinion is welcome discriminatory comments of any kind will not be tolerated.

### 3. Duties of Police Officers (20 minutes)

The goal of this section is to familiarize participants with the basic role and duties of the officers of the Toronto Police Service. This can be done again through a brainstorming session with participants. The following are some of the specifics of that should come out of brainstorming session.

- Protecting life and preventing injury
- Protecting property
- Preserving the peace
- Preventing crimes and other offences and providing assistance and encouragement to other persons in their prevention
- Assisting victims of crime
- Apprehending criminals and other offenders and others who may lawfully be taken into custody
- Laying charges and participating in prosecutions
- Executing warrants that are to be executed by police officers and performing related duties
- Performing the lawful duties that the chief of police assigns
- Enforcing municipal by-laws
- Completing prescribed training

#### Facilitator Notes

Participants may have a number of questions about what police offices can and can not do at this point. As the facilitator you should try and focus the questions to matters just discussed vs. individual cases. The next section Q&A is the section that can best answer most general questions.

#### 4. Break

#### 5. Brainstorming (45 minutes)

Place a large Bristol board, with the words Hate Crime in the center on the wall. Have the group brainstorm around the following questions:

What is a hate Crime

**What is Hate Propaganda?**

**What motivates the perpetrators?**

**What is the impact on victims of hate crimes?**

**Under-reporting Incidents of Hate Crime**

**The Aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup>**

**If you are a victim**

**What to do**

Have that participant tape the participant's answer on the Bristol board. Discuss each answer with the group. Continue the above until the Bristol board is full and each potential victim is identified.

#### Facilitator Notes

Unlike a traditional brainstorming session it is important that participant answers are challenged and corrected to ensure that the target groups of hate crimes are identified. The facilitator should avoid discussions of "reverse-racism or reverse-sexism".

#### Key Questions, Answered

##### What is a Hate Crime?

Hate crime is a criminal offence committed against a person or property that is motivated by the victim's race, national or ethnic origin, language, color, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or any other similar factor. Hate crimes differ from other criminal acts because they are usually more assaultive. More violent, more traumatic to the victim, and they are prone to increases in severity. Hate speech or hate propaganda is also a criminal offence in Canada, as well as a violation of human rights.

In determining whether an incident is a hate crime, police consider the following:

- Totality of the circumstances
- Victim's perception
- Demographics of the area
- What the officer knows about the area
- Most importantly, known motivation

##### What is Hate Propaganda?

Hate propaganda exposes identifiable group to contempt or hatred by 1) advocating genocide (i.e. the intent to destroy in whole or in part, any identifiable group), or by 2) the public incitement of hate (i.e. communication in public that is likely to lead to a breach of the peace, or willfully promotes hatred against an identifiable group. Such communications include: words, spoken, written, recorded electronically or otherwise, gestures, signs or other visible representations, other than in private conversation.

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#### **What motivates the perpetrators?**

The targets of hatred are the objects of prejudice and stereotyping, often characterized as taking advantage of the rest of society and a threat that ought to be removed. Perpetrators of hate crimes often feel themselves to be victims to. Difficult economic times inevitably lead to this pattern of scapegoat, and any identifiable minority group is at risk.

#### **What is the impact on victims of hate crimes?**

The goal of perpetrators is to instill fear or terror into their victims. Hate crimes result in a disproportionate level of harm, which affects not only the individual, but also the victim's community. Hate propaganda can lead to a negative self-image in targeted group members, and self-doubt, even to the point of self-hatred and a feeling of worthlessness. Hate propaganda does damage in that it plays on people's fears, and feeds on misconceptions, increasing discrimination and barriers to understanding.

#### **Under-reporting Incidents of Hate Crime**

It is believed that 95% (one in ten) of hate crimes go unreported in Canada. There are several reasons to believe that these crimes go unreported. First, victims may fear additional victimization. Second, victims of racially- motivated hate crimes may well be apprehensive that the criminal justice system will not take their reports seriously enough. Third, the sensitive nature of hate crimes directed at gays or lesbians may result in the victim staying away from the police for fear of stigmatization on the basis of homophobia.

The majority of hate crimes recorded by the police across Canada were directed against racial minorities. 61% of all hate crimes incidents were directed against racial minorities, 23% against religious minorities, 11% against gays or lesbians and 5% against ethnic minorities.

#### **The Aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup>**

In the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup>, hate crimes soared by 66% in Canada. Anger and frustration allowed ignorance and racism to emerge, as some people lashed out against fellow Canadians. In just the first three weeks following the bombing of the World Trade Center, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation noted:

*-Sixteen bomb threats towards mosques in Canada, and three known acts of arson-Montreal, St. Catherines, and the burning of a Hindu temple in Hamilton, Ontario.*

*-Muslim students at Laval University in Quebec were harassed and threatened, and similar reports came from campuses and schools across the country.*

*-A 15-year old Arab boy in Ottawa was beaten by 12 teenagers and left unconscious.*

*-Female staff members of an Islamic school in London, wearing the traditional hijab, were taunted by passing motorists.*

*-There were 11 reported incidents in Toronto, and 7 in Montreal of harassment, vandalism and bomb threats against Jewish individuals and institutions, and many additional hateful messages on the Internet.*

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*-A Surrey BC Aboriginal man his fiancé, mistaken for Sikhs, were viscously attacked by teens armed with a crowbar.*

#### **If you are a victim**

If you are a victim or witness of any of these kinds of incidents:

*-Racist graffiti is spray-painted on a community building (e.g. synagogue, mosque, community center);*

*-A local community leader receives hate mail, threats, or Internet hate;*

*-Tombstones in an ethno culturally identified cemetery are overturned or vandalized;*

*-Students leaving school or congregants leaving a place of worship are attacked physically or verbally;*

*-A family home or community center is defaced with racist slogans or windows are smashed;*

#### **What to do**

1. Notify the police immediately. Have the number of your local precinct handy. Learn who officers are responsible for hate crime, street crime and/ or community liaison. Contact a community support group who will assist you to go to the police if you are afraid to do so yourself.
2. Be sure of the facts. When you first learn of the incidents, attempt to determine accurately the WHO, WHEN, and WHERE of incident. Leave any evident intact. Do not remove graffiti until the police have seen it. Take photographs, if possible. Do not handle photocopy hate mail. Retain the envelope.
3. Notify a community organization for support. Document all information that indicates that the attack was racially motivated. Do not attempt to solve the problem on your own. The experience of a support group will be helpful in determining what action to take.
4. Contact political and social community leaders. Such contacts are urged for all major incidents. Do not hesitate to ask them for support. Support from the non-aggrieved community can be invaluable, and statements by public officials condemning racism and hate crimes are important.
5. Be cautious with the media. In the absence of a pattern incidents in the area, contacts with the media on minor incidents are not advisable, due to the “copy cat” effect when incidents are reported publicly.
6. Stay informed. Contact an experience organization and/or your local police service for training or information sessions on recognizing and responding to hate/bias crime and incidents.

#### **Where can you get help?**

Contact your local police service, school board, and regional offices of the Department of Canadian Heritage, Canadian Human Rights Commission, municipal community and race relation committees, mosques, synagogues, churches, schools and community centers.

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#### **Your Rights**

The Ontario Human Rights Code protects your right to work, do business, obtain accommodation, receive services and go to school in an environment free from discrimination and harassment. For example, graffiti or other symbols that are racial slurs and form of discrimination and are illegal under the Code. The Ontario Human Rights Commission is responsible for protecting these rights on such grounds as race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age and handicap.

#### **6. Question and Answer Period (15-20 minutes)**

In almost every case participants will have general questions about the law or a particular situation involving the police. This section provides an opportunity for people to ask questions

##### Facilitator Notes

Some questions may be too specific for the facilitator to answer. Simply remind the group that resources will be handed out including contact information for legal clinics and in some cases to contact a lawyer for legal advice.

#### **7. Wrap-up (10 minutes)**

The wrap-up section provides the participants and facilitators the opportunity to share some final thoughts on the workshop and the topic

#### **8. Evaluations (10 minutes)**

Give participants time at the end of the session to fill out the evaluation forms.

##### Facilitator Notes

It is important to receive feedback from participants so that as facilitators we can learn and grow with each session.

#### **References:**

CRRF – Recognizing and Reacting to Hate Crime in Canada Today

<http://www.crr.ca/EN/Publications/Educational>

Department of Justice Canada

<http://canada.justice.gc.ca>

Media Awareness Network

<http://www.media-awareness.ca>

Every Victim Counts

<http://tolerance.org>