The Diversity Center
of northeast ohio

Confronting Hate Speech

Hate speech and its ideology wreaks havoc on communities and individuals by inciting violence and encouraging division. In recent years, activity and abuse based on ideologies of hate, misogyny, and xenophobia have increased across the United States and the globe.

What is Hate Speech or Hate Ideology?

- Ideas, attitudes, and explicit or coded language that promotes extreme dislike or distaste against a person or a group of people based on their social identity (e.g. race, nationality, religion, gender, etc.)
- Use of symbols/speech that endorse or co-opt hateful ideas about people or places

What can we do?

- Reinforce and uplift positive community and family values that focus on respect and inherent value of all people.
- Be proactive against misinformation that spreads hateful or biased ideas.
- Update policies and procedures to include a process for reporting the use of hateful symbols, language or other signifiers, including on social media.

How can I respond?

- Remind community members that hate speech is not tolerated and it contradicts community values.
- Take all claims of harassment or abuse seriously.
- Document all physical evidence of hate speech.
- Report this evidence to your school's administrators
- Focus on positive steps everyone can take to move forward in enacting community values.

Resources

- A Guide for Administrators, Counselors and Teachers for Responding to Hate and Bias at School from Teaching Tolerance provides in-depth guidance on bias and hate speech crises, for before, during, and after the crises occurs.
- How to Confront Hate Speech at School, from UPenn's Graduate School of Education, provides best practices for students and educators alike in confronting hate speech.
- Parents' and Educators' Guide to Combatting Hate Speech is a guide from ConnectSafely for those "seeking to prevent children under their care from experiencing or engaging in hate speech [online] as well as dealing with it in healthy ways when they encounter it."