

# Hate Crimes

## What Is It?

A hate crime is the victimization of an individual based on that individual's race, religion, national origin, ethnic identification, gender, or sexual orientation. Hate crimes may include acts such as:

- Physical assaults
- Assaults with weapons
- Harassment
- Vandalism
- Robbery
- Rape
- Verbal harassment
- Attacks on homes or places of worship

Hate crimes can occur anywhere: at schools, work, home, or any public place. Those who commit these acts come from all social/economic backgrounds and represent different age groups.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, these acts of violence are common in American society and part of the daily experience of many members of minority groups.<sup>2</sup>

## If You Are a Victim of a Hate Crime, You Might:

- Feel angry.
- Feel a deep sense of personal hurt and betrayal.
- Have feelings of powerlessness, isolation, sadness, and suspicion.
- Fear for your own safety and for your family's safety.
- Notice changes in your lifestyle such as where you walk and your reactions to strangers.

## You're Not Alone

- In 2005, 7,163 hate crime incidents were reported to law enforcement. Approximately 62 percent of bias-motivated offenses were committed against persons, and 37 percent were offenses against property.<sup>3</sup>

- Of reported crimes, 55 percent of hate crime incidents were motivated by race, 17 percent by religion, 14 percent by sexual orientation, 13 percent by ethnicity, and 0.7 percent by disability.<sup>4</sup>
- According to one study, 1,985 incidents of anti-lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) violence were reported to victim service providers in 13 locations in 2005, almost twice the number reported to the police in the entire United States.<sup>5</sup>
- The Anti-Defamation League reported more than 1,700 anti-Semitic incidents in 2005.<sup>6</sup>
- Acts of harassment (threats and assaults against individuals or institutions) accounted for approximately one-third (617) of anti-Semitic incidents in 2005, and acts of vandalism (property damage, cemetery desecration, or anti-Semitic graffiti) accounted for approximately two-thirds (1140).<sup>7</sup>

## Get Help

It is important to remember that hate crimes are against the law, and as a crime victim, you do not have to cope with this alone. There are people in your community who want to help you.

- If you want advice about whom to talk to, call the National Crime Victim Helpline at 1-800-FYI-CALL (1-800-FYI-CALL) or a crisis hotline in your area. You might also want to talk to a trusted family member, a friend's parent, an adult neighbor or friend, an older sibling or cousin, or other experienced person you trust.
- Consider calling the police.

## Help Yourself

- If you sense that something is about to happen, try to get to a safe place.
- Try to stay in areas where other people are around.
- If you are attacked and need medical treatment, call 911, and let your parent or another adult know as soon as possible.
- If you are attacked and you do not know the attacker(s), try to remember what the person looked like. It will be useful when you call the police.

## Help Someone Else

If you see or know someone who has been a victim of a hate crime, you can:

- Call the police.
- Get a parent, teacher, or other adult to come help.
- Talk to the person who was the victim, let the person know you want to help him or her, and encourage the victim to talk to a supportive adult.

## If You Want to Read More...

...about hate crimes, see our GET HELP series at [www.ncvc.org/gethelp](http://www.ncvc.org/gethelp).

- 1 Lance Bradley and Kevin Berrill, "Safety and Fitness Exchange," (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 1986).
- 2 National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence, "The Ethnoviolence Project Pilot Study," *Institute Report* no. 1 (Baltimore, MD: 1986).
- 3 Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 2005*, (Washington, DC: GPO, 2006).
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Clarence Patton, "Anti-Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Violence in 2005: A Report of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs," (New York: National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2006).
- 6 Anti-Defamation League, "Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents," (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 2005).
- 7 Ibid.