

# Understanding and Responding to Incidents of Bias



Afterschool Alliance

Thursday, July 13, 2017



# “Tools to Build On” Series

In a changed political climate and national dialogue, afterschool & summer learning programs must equip themselves to help students work through complex thoughts and emotions.

- **Today:** Understanding and responding to incidents of bias
- **Coming up:** Facilitating tough conversations with students; Addressing police-community relations
- **Watch the recording:** [Supporting immigrant students & families](#)



# Guest Speakers



**Lauren Bickford**

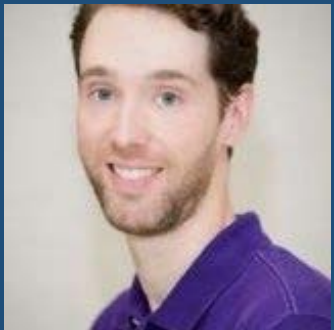
*Operations Director of Youth  
Development*

YMCA of Greater Richmond



**Jessica Rojas**

*Manager, Diversity & Inclusion*  
YMCA of the USA



**Hoyt J. Phillips III**

*Manager, Teaching & Learning*  
Teaching Tolerance



**Jinnie Spiegler**

*Director of Curriculum*  
Anti-Defamation League



# Let's speak the same language!

- 1. Bias** - An inclination or preference either for or against an individual or group that interferes with impartial judgment.
- 2. Discrimination** - The denial of justice and fair treatment by both individuals and institutions in many arenas, including employment, education, housing, banking and political rights.
- 3. Bullying** - **Repeated actions** or threats of action directed toward a person by one or more people who have (or are perceived to have) **more power or status** than their target in order to **cause fear, distress or harm**.
- 4. Identity-Based Bullying** - Any form of bullying related to the characteristics considered unique to a youth's identity, such as their race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or physical appearance.

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## A story from:

YMCA of  
Richmond, VA

# THIS SCHOOL WELCOMES...

students of all races, ethnicities and nationalities  
students with diverse abilities  
students who are LGBT  
students of all family structures  
students who are English language learners  
students of all religions and no religion  
students from all socio-economic backgrounds  
students regardless of their immigration status

# ...YOU



TEACHING  
TOLERANCE

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# Framing the Issue

There's been an uptick, but it's not new. Organizations have worked for years to track and combat bias, and to improve school climate. The OST field can adapt and build on these resources.



# A November 2016 survey of 10,000 K-12 educators found that:

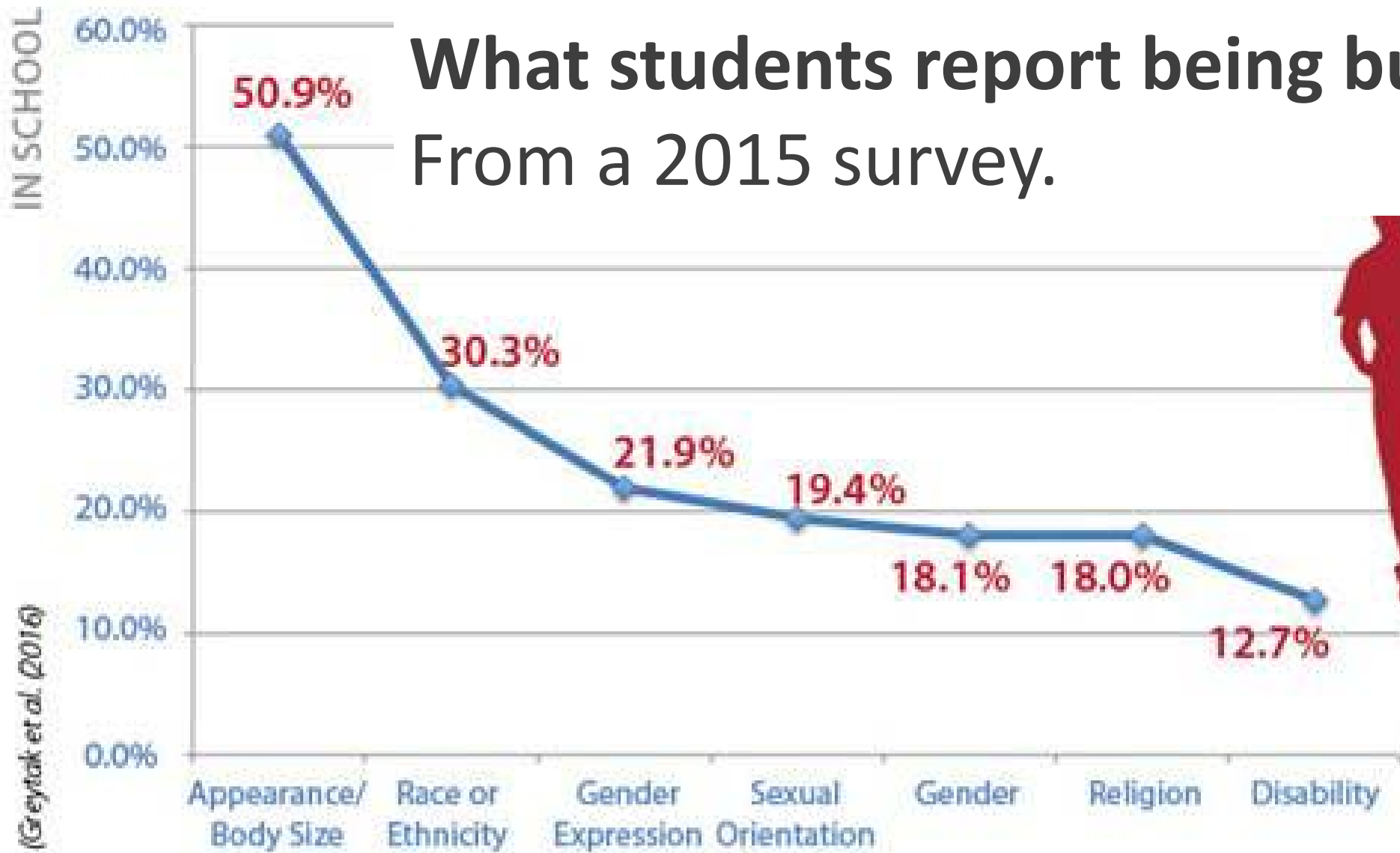
- 8 in 10 report **heightened anxiety** from marginalized students
- 4 in 10 have heard **derogatory language** directed at students of color, Muslims, immigrants, and people based on gender or sexual orientation.
- 2,500 described **specific incidents** of bigotry and harassment that can be directly traced to election rhetoric, including graffiti, assaults on students and teachers, property damage, fights and threats of violence.
- 4 out of 10 don't think their schools have an **action plan** to respond appropriately

SOURCE: [After Election Day: The Trump Effect // The Impact of the 2016 Presidential Election on our Nation's Schools](#)



# What students report being bullied about

From a 2015 survey.



SOURCE: [Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention Strategies and Resources](#)





# Students don't often tell adults.

**SOURCE:** [Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention Strategies and Resources](#)

**39%** BULLIED, NOTIFIED AN ADULT  
after a school incident

**23%** CYBERBULLIED, NOTIFIED AN ADULT  
after an online incident

*Luxenberg et al. (2015)*



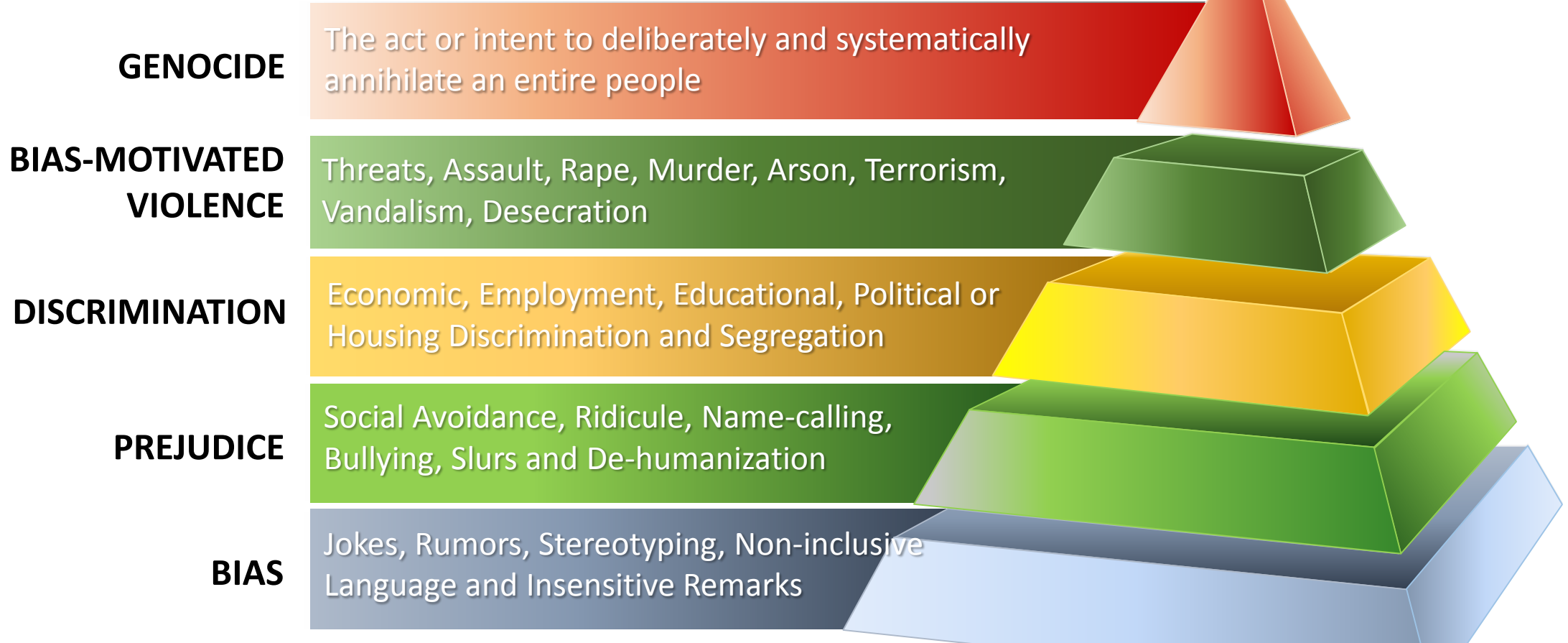
## REASONS STUDENTS KEEP SILENT

- Negative messages about 'tattling' and "snitching"
- Fear of retaliation
- Don't think adults will handle well (won't get better, won't do anything, etc.)



# What's the bigger context?

The Anti-Defamation League's "Pyramid of Hate" shows how biased behaviors grow in complexity and impact. It's our job to intervene at the foundational levels of bias and prejudice.



# Two things to do now.

- 1. Write an inclusion statement.** An necessary first step.  
The YMCA of the USA shares their language and process.
- 2. Create a response plan.** Don't get caught flat-footed.  
Teaching Tolerance overviews their guide.





FOR ALL

the



The Y is made up of people of all ages and from every walk of life **working side by side to strengthen community.**

Together we work to ensure that **everyone**, regardless of ability, cultural background, faith, gender, gender identity, income, race, or sexual orientation has the **opportunity to live life to its fullest.**

We share the **values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility** – everything we do stems from it.



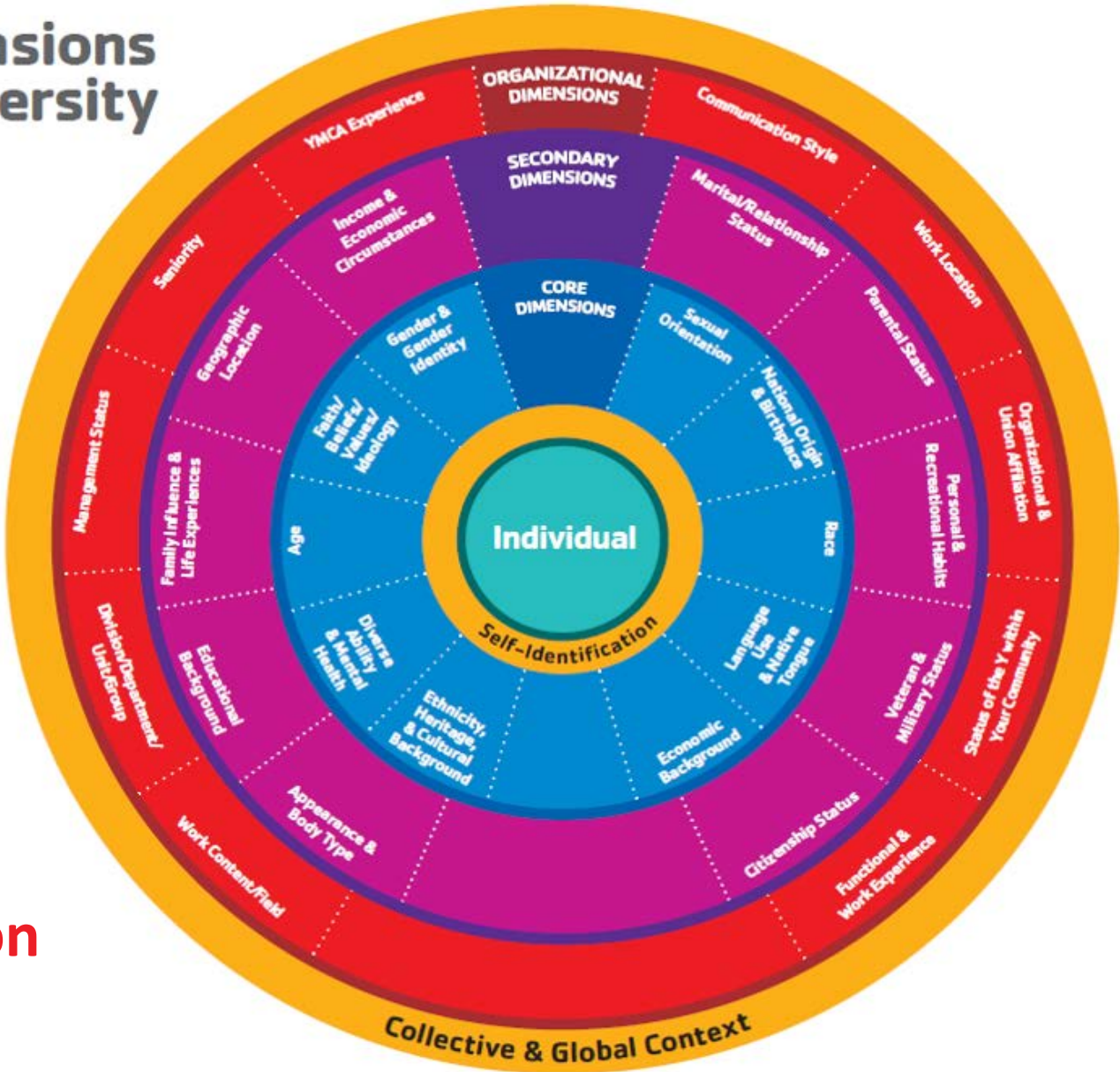
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# Dimensions of Diversity



# Dimensions of Diversity

[www.ymca.net/diversity-inclusion](http://www.ymca.net/diversity-inclusion)



# Create a Response Plan

BEFORE



DURING



AFTER



A GUIDE FOR ADMINISTRATORS,  
COUNSELORS AND TEACHERS

## RESPONDING TO HATE AND BIAS AT SCHOOL

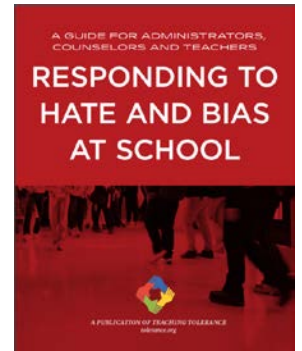


A PUBLICATION OF TEACHING TOLERANCE  
[tolerance.org](http://tolerance.org)



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# Creating a Response Plan



## DURING A CRISIS:

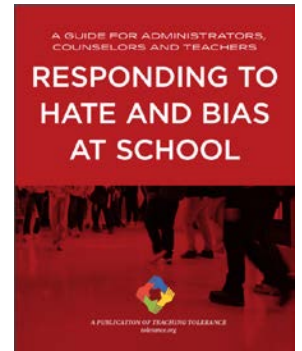
Nine key points to consider when responding to a crisis that has been triggered by a bias incident.

**SOURCE:** Teaching Tolerance's [Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers](#)



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# Creating a Response Plan



## DURING



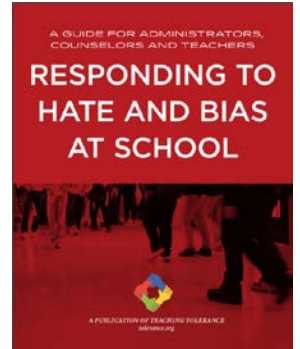
1. Put safety first
2. Denounce the act
3. Investigate
4. Involve others
5. Work with the media
6. Provide accurate information—and dispel misinformation
7. Support targeted students
8. Seek justice, avoid blame
9. Promote healing

**SOURCE:** Teaching Tolerance's [Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers](#)





# Creating a Response Plan



## AFTER THE WORST IS OVER:

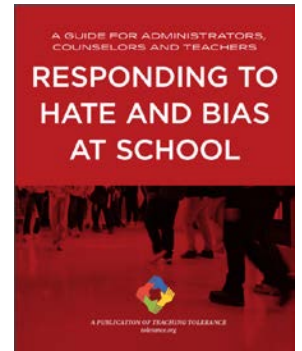
Address long-term planning and capacity building for the future, including development of social emotional skills.

**SOURCE:** Teaching Tolerance's [Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers](#)



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# Creating a Response Plan



## AFTER

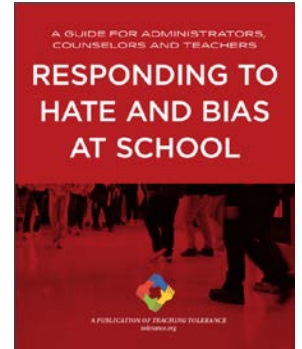


1. Reflect on lessons learned
2. Pull together a task force to ensure follow-through
3. Start capacity building

**SOURCE:** Teaching Tolerance's [Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers](#)



# Creating a Response Plan



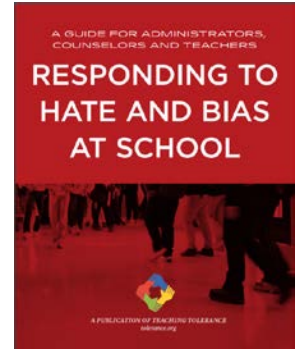
## PREVENT A CRISIS FROM OCCURRING

How can you assess your program's climate with an eye toward defusing tensions, preventing escalation and avoiding problems?

**SOURCE:** Teaching Tolerance's [Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers](#)



# Creating a Response Plan



## BEFORE



1. Listen, watch and learn
2. Stay current, stay connected
3. Set high expectations
4. Make the most of teachable moments
5. Speak up

**SOURCE:** Teaching Tolerance's [Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Guide for Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers](#)



# Training Staff

Helping staff address their own biases and equipping them to productively respond to students and parents.



# Example from the field: YMCA of Richmond, VA

1. Diversity and inclusion represented in the organization's 2025 Strategic Plan
2. For the first time, the Richmond Y is planning a new pre-Fall training that addresses inclusion and tolerance.
  - [Watch the video](#) made for summer camp staff
3. Creating a resource: Toolkit on safe space conversations



# Preventing bias and bullying means establishing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

## Necessary staff competencies:

1. Provide a culture where young people can be honest and open about their lives, perspectives and experiences.
2. Make themselves approachable.
3. Identify incidents, follow procedures, and provide the appropriate support.
4. Educate students about what bias and bullying.
5. Teach students to be allies.

# There's a lot more to this issue.

- Designing and implementing staff professional development
- Working with students (anti-bias education and being an ally)
- Engaging families and communities
- Influencing school, district, or state policy (coalition work)
- Deeper dive into school climate





We hope this webinar helped by introducing you to a general framework for thinking about and responding to bias.

Dig into our [Resource List](#) for more tools and reading.

# Thank you!



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