Hate crimes & bias incidents

Defining and understanding the nature of acts of hate

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• Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations
• Commissioner & Chairperson, Civil Rights Taskforce,
  PA Governor’s Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR)

- First municipal human relations commission in the nation
  - Established by Home Rule Charter in 1951
- Charged with:
  - Enforcing the civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination, particularly the Fair Practices Ordinance of the Philadelphia Code
  - Conducting educational programs to promote the equal rights and opportunities for all people, including programs that advance understanding among people and groups of different backgrounds
PCHR Divisions

• Compliance
  ▫ Investigates claims and conducts hearing for cases of discrimination in the workplace, housing, and public accommodations
    ● There are twice as many protected categories in the City than at State or Federal levels

• Community Relations
  ▫ Works to strengthen relationships among the people in the city and assists to manage conflicts in the community
  ▫ Coordinates the city’s community-government network to respond to hate
Hate against APA Community in Philadelphia

- From January 1st to September 30, 2021, there have been 60 hate/bias incidents that were reported to law enforcement or recorded by a government agency in Philadelphia.
  - 22 of these incidents involved victims of Asian communities
- These numbers do not reflect how many incidents that have actually occurred in the city.
Hate or bias?

- Two young teenage males cursed at and made anti-Asian statements such as "Go back to your country you Ch****!" before throwing an unopened soda can at the elderly Chinese woman. Similar incidents of harassment in the past had occurred to the complainant and others from the Chinese community in that neighborhood.
Hate or bias?

• An Asian American woman and her family were walking in a park when 3 teenagers running through yelling at people in the area stopped and pointed at the family yelling, “coronavirus!”
Hate or bias?

- Heavily intoxicated person threw a beer bottle through his neighbor's window yelling racial slurs and other phrases including TERRORIST and IMMIGRANTS GO BACK TO YOUR COUNTRY!
Hate or bias?

• Does it matter if the situation was a hate crime or bias incident?
  ▫ Not to the person experiencing hate
  ▫ Not the victim’s responsibility to determine if the act was a hate crime or bias incident, but to understand the importance of reporting it
Why report?

- Help prevent others from being targets of hate
- Tracking incidents aids in knowing the seriousness of the issue
- Patterns of similar incidents may lead to further actions:
  - organizing events; connecting with services; arrests
- Local, state, federal laws may apply to threats
How to report

- Call 9-1-1
- Contact a human relations commission (local/state)
- Report through a community organization you trust
How to report in Philadelphia

• For any emergencies, call 9-1-1
• Contact the PHCR
  ▫ Office: 215-686-4670
  ▫ Hotline: 215-686-2856
  ▫ Email: pchr@phila.gov
• Report through a community organization you trust
Thank you!

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