

# Surge in Anti-Asian Hate Crimes



March 13, 2021, Jason Redmond / AFP—Getty Images

## Help is Available

We are experiencing a period of stress and turmoil in our country, which is having an impact on us all. Intense feelings are natural reactions to the current situation.

We hope suggestions in this newsletter help you find ways to cope. However, if you feel stuck or have difficulty managing your feelings, consider contacting Concern for support. Our counselors are here to help you manage these challenging times and develop strategies consistent with your personal values.

Call 800-344-4222 or go to our website at [employees.concernhealth.com](https://employees.concernhealth.com). Calls are answered 24/7.

## Incidents on the Rise

A recent string of attacks has brought attention to the dramatic rise in racism and violence against Asian Americans. Between mid-March and the end of 2020, the advocacy group [Stop AAPI Hate](#) received nearly 3,000 reports of “hate incidents” directed at Asian Americans. In 2021, the incidents have only continued.

### Discrimination comes in many forms.

Not all hate crimes are physical. A hate crime is about offensive behavior, such as damage to property, bullying, harassment, verbal abuse, insult, propaganda, offensive graffiti, and physical assault.

Victims of bias-motivated crimes are likely to experience post-traumatic stress, safety concerns, depression, anxiety, and anger. Hate crimes send a message that they and the group they represent are unwelcome and unsafe in the community. Witnessing discrimination against one’s own group can lead to psychological distress and sadness.

### If you experience a hate crime

Experiencing a hate crime or hate-motivated act can be difficult and distressing. We encourage you to take care of yourself.

- **Make sure you are safe.** Trust your instincts and assess your surroundings. If you feel unsafe and you are able to, leave the area. Get to a safe location such as a public place, a police station, or friend’s home to secure yourself against harm.

- **Stay Calm.** Take a deep breath, limit eye contact, and maintain neutral body language.
- **Seek Immediate Help.** Ask bystanders for support and intervention.
- **Reach Out.** Once you feel safe, talk with a friend, family member, or someone you trust to help you process what happened.
- **Remember**—This is not your fault!

### When You Witness a Hate Crime

- **Be An Ally.** Just because you don't belong to a specific race or ethnicity doesn't mean that you can't empathize with a hate crime victim. Approach the distressed person, introduce yourself, and offer support.
- **Actively Listen.** Ask before taking any actions and respect the person's wishes.
- **Accompany.** If the situation escalates, invite the person to join you in leaving.
- **Offer Emotional Support.** Help by asking how they're feeling. Assist them in figuring out what they want to do next. Victims are often in a state of shock and don't understand what just happened. Let them tell you what they need.

#### Other resources:

- [Hate is a Virus](#)
- [Fighting Anti-Asian Discrimination](#)
- [APA, The Psychology of Hate Crimes](#)
- [Stop AAPI Hate](#)

### Take care of yourself

The wave of attacks on Asian Americans, including the recent Atlanta shootings, have left many of us with a justifiable sense of helplessness. It's common to experience a variety of emotions, including shock, sorrow, numbness, anger, grief and disillusionment. You may have trouble sleeping, concentrating, or even doing simple tasks. Here are a few suggestions that might help.

- **Build a support network.** People with a strong network of family and friends manage stress better. Have open talks about race, your experience, and your needs and concerns.
- **Turn off and take a break.** You may want to keep informed, but try to limit the amount of news you take in. Being overexposed can increase your stress.
- **Engage in healthy behaviors.** Eat well, get enough rest, exercise. Try deep breathing, listen to music, play sports, walk in nature.
- **Gain perspective.** It's natural to worry about "what ifs," and your mind can easily go to worse-case scenarios. Sometimes practicing mindful self-awareness can help you stay focused on the present.

Employees and eligible dependents can request Concern counseling and work/life services 24/7 by calling or visiting our website.

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