

## Hate Crimes

### Definitions

Hate crime refers to criminal offences that are motivated by hate towards an identifiable group, such as: race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or any other similar factor, such as profession or political beliefs. Hate can be expressed through: speech, literature, graffiti, internet, posters, brochures, pamphlets, assault, property damage or property defacing.

### Occurrence

Canadian Police Services reported 1 167 hate crimes in 2013

- About ½ of the reported incidents were non-violent
- 66% of crimes motivated by hatred of a sexual orientation were violent
- 44% of crimes motivated by hatred of a race or ethnicity were violent
- 18% of religious hate crimes were violent

USA reported 5 479 hate crimes in 2014

- Majority of hate crimes were violent
- Most hate crimes are not reported to the police

### Causes

Factors in the development of hate include: perceptions of vulnerability, unjust treatment, & threat to one's identity. Individual factors that increase the likelihood of hate-related processes include inclination to categorize people into groups & strongly identifying with one's own group.

### Effects

- Victims of hate crimes are more likely to experience psychological distress such as safety concerns, depressions & nervousness, than victims of other similar violent crimes.
- Witnessing a hate crime against one's own group can lead to psychological distress & lower self-esteem.
- Individual hate crimes victimize all members of the victim's group, decreasing feelings of safety & security.

### Prevention

1. Hate propaganda was included in the Canadian Criminal Code in 1970, with amendments in 1996 to make hate an aggravating circumstance when there is evidence of bias or prejudice.
2. Policies & programs that target & reduce prejudicial attitudes – through positive intergroup contact & by recognizing similarities with out-group members
3. Increase support of law enforcement & community partner programs

### More information/Sources

JH Centre for Peace & Human Rights - <http://www.jhcentre.org/our-projects/alberta-hate-crimes-committee>

Anti-Racism Resource Centre on discrimination & hate crime - <http://www.anti-racism.ca/node/25>

Police-reported hate crime in Canada (2013) Statistics Canada Online.

The Psychological Antecedents & Consequences of Hate Crimes. (2014). APA Online.

Shaw, M. (2002). Preventing Hate Crimes: International Strategies & Practice. International Centre for the Prevention of Crime Online.