

How to Recognize Hate and Prejudice Online

Sometimes it can be hard to tell if what you're seeing really is hate or prejudice. Sometimes people will use words that they don't realize are offensive, or repeat things they heard from friends or family and never questioned.

“Almost half of Canadian kids say they sometimes don’t push back against hate because they’re not sure if what they’ve seen is really prejudice.”

Source: MediaSmarts, *Young Canadians Pushing Back Against Hate Online*

As well, people who are spreading hate on purpose often cloak it with humour and irony, or disguise themselves as legitimate sources of information. Here are some signs that can help you recognize hate and prejudice:

Stereotyping

Do they act like members of a group are all the same?

“It's easy to fall into stereotyping other groups, and the way they're portrayed in media can make this worse.”

Othering

Do they act like the group is totally different from people like you?

“The next step from stereotyping is othering. When someone exaggerates the differences between you and another group, or talks about them in ways that makes them sound less human, it makes it harder for you to feel empathy for them.”

Victimhood

Do they act like members of a group are getting things you aren't?

“Hate groups know that they can reach kids who have trouble at school or at home by making them feel like they're better than other people and that those people have cheated them out of what they expected.”

Fear

Do they act like the group is a danger to you?

“The most dangerous kind of hate speech doesn't try to get you mad at other groups, it tries to make you afraid of them. If a group seems like a threat it can feel okay to lash out at them.”

My Notes



Sometimes people spread hate on purpose, to try to get you to join or support their group, but you're just as likely to hear these things from people you know. Hate groups put a lot of work into making these attitudes seem normal and acceptable, so it's important for us to push back.

"Research shows that the values of a community are set by the loudest ten per cent of its members. Members of hate movement work hard to be that ten per cent."

"Why would adults want to do that? Why would they want to fool kids? How could I fall for it?"

Remember that anybody can post anything online. Sometimes websites made by hate groups look better than websites for universities or government agencies!

Don't be fooled.

Whether it's a website, a video or a forum, hate groups don't usually show you who they are right away. Instead they try to get you to laugh at hurtful jokes or make you blame a particular group for your problems, and tell you to look up search terms that they know will lead to sites or videos that were made to spread their message

"Watch out when someone tells you to search for a particular word or phrase. Try doing a more general search on the topic instead."

Check the source.

Don't assume a person or group are who they say they are. Do a search on their name or check Wikipedia to see what other people say about them.

"Check out [Breakthefake.ca](https://www.breakthefake.ca) for more on how to find out if a source is reliable."

Read between the lines.

A lot of times hate groups will present statistics, news stories or what they claim are scientific facts to support what they're saying, but in the end the message is always the same: that a group is all the same, that they're totally different from you, and that they're worse than you or a threat to you.

"[Reality Check](#) has tips, games and videos to help you tell real science from pseudo-science."

Hate is no joke.

People may pretend that they're being ironic when they say something prejudiced, or act like you're taking them too seriously. But if you're the target of prejudice, there's no difference between "ironic" hate and the real thing.



My Notes



Whether you're speaking out against hate, reporting it, or just showing you don't agree, we all have the power to stake a stand against hate online.

My Notes

