

How to Push Back When Someone You Know Says Something Prejudiced

"It's my best friend who says something shocking."

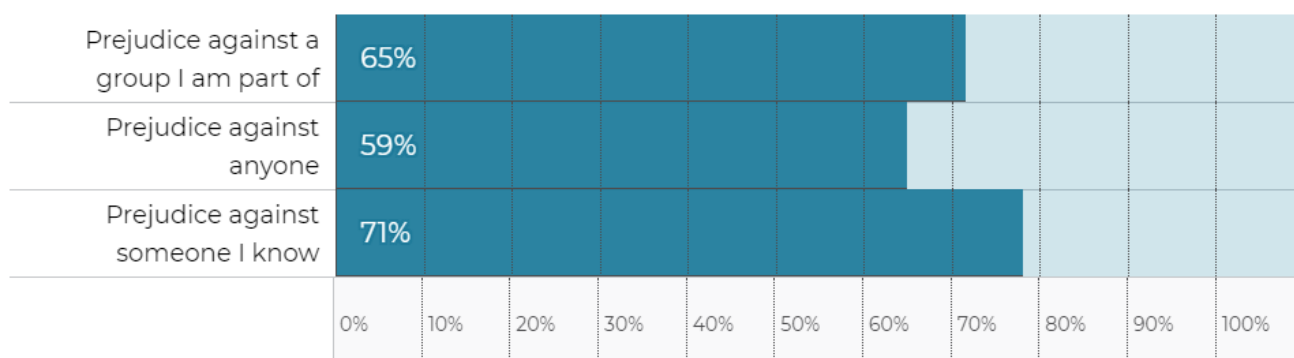
It can be hardest to push back against prejudice when it's coming from people who are close to you. But those are the people who are most likely to listen to you, so it's extra important to say something.

My Notes



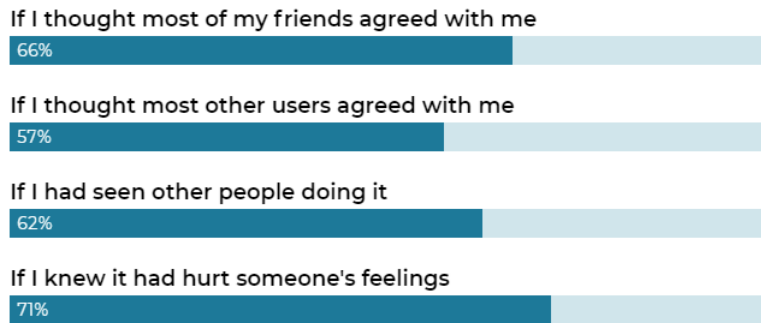
It doesn't matter whether someone in the group that's being targeted is there to hear it: you can object to prejudiced speech because it hurts you.

What hurts?



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

What did other people say?



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

"Sometimes my friends say they're just kidding, but the damage is done and they're backtracking to cover what they really mean."

Sometimes it's not clear whether or not somebody meant to say something prejudiced. As well, people sometimes will act like something doesn't hurt their feelings because they don't want to admit that it affected them.

If people have to think for a moment about whether people are going to push back against a prejudiced joke or comment, they're going to be a lot less likely to say it.

Try saying:

- "I don't like hearing that stuff."
- "That really makes me uncomfortable."
- "I don't want to hear about it."
- "Use a different word, please."

Why does it matter?

Prejudice keeps people from feeling welcome.

Get ready.

You can also have some responses ready that you can use in a lot of different situations.

Try saying:

- "I don't think that's funny."
- "Do you really mean that?"
- "Did you seriously just say that?"
- "That doesn't sound like you."

What can I do?

If you're not sure if someone meant to be prejudiced, you can help them understand that what they said was hurtful without making them feel ashamed or guilty.

Try saying:

- "You've probably seen that word in old books or movies, but I think they prefer [correct name]."*
- "I'm not sure you realize how that sounded. I'm sure you didn't mean to insult anybody."*
- "I hear that word a lot in song lyrics, but I don't think it's okay to use it."*
- "I'm really surprised you would say something like that. It just doesn't sound like you."*

If you're going to do this, think about doing it privately so your friend doesn't feel called out.

My Notes



"The big thing is recognizing it at the time. Too often it goes by so fast, it is over before you realize what just happened."

You don't have to respond right away. Instead, take a few seconds to think about how you want to respond.

Press your mental pause button and ask yourself:



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

My Notes

