



County of Los Angeles
Department of Workforce Development,
Aging, and Community Services
Commission on Human Relations
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WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOU WITNESS HATE

When we see or hear someone being targeted with hate, we want to do something. But, often, we're not sure if we should. And we're not sure what we can do. Here are some possible actions you can take. Remember, though, no matter what you do, stay safe. It won't help if you are harmed.

Get Help

You may not be sure that what is happening is a crime. But, it's still a good idea to contact the police. Let the Aggressor know that someone called the police and that they are on the way. Look around to see if there are other Witnesses who are willing to help. Ask them to assist with the actions described below.

Record the Incident

This is one of those times when the camera on your mobile phone can be very helpful. As soon as possible, begin recording what is happening. And, be sure the Aggressor knows you are recording the incident. If necessary, back away to a safe distance and loudly announce that you are recording.

Connect with the Person Targeted by the Aggressor

If you can safely do so, make eye contact with the Target and then loudly call out a greeting to them. Go over to where they are and engage them in friendly conversation. Often, if you and the Target ignore the Aggressor, they will move on. If possible, escort them away from the Aggressor. Be sure you remain in an area where there are lots of other people.

Distract the Aggressor

Sometimes it's possible to distract the Aggressor. If you know them or believe they might respond to you, you could engage them in conversation. Keep in mind, though, that this is not a good time for confrontation. You may feel a strong urge to challenge the Aggressor directly. However, this is rarely wise in the heat of the moment and can make the situation worse.

SILENCE IS SUPPORT

People who are being offensive or abusive often interpret silence as support. If people are watching or listening, and none of the Witnesses says anything or does anything, the targeted person usually takes that to mean that the Witnesses agree or don't care enough to do something to stop the hostility. So, if you witness hate, do something. Don't just stand by! Step up! Encourage the targeted person to report their experience by calling **2-1-1** or at www.211la.org. 211 staff will be able to offer support and services. If they are not ready to **contact 211**, you can make the report.

