**National Hate Crime Awareness Week 2021**

**Stand up to stop hate**

Key agencies across North Yorkshire are coming together to call on local communities to stand together against hate, abuse and violence by being an active bystander.

To mark National Hate Crime Awareness Week (9-16 October 2021) the North Yorkshire and York Hate Crime Working Group are raising awareness of the simple steps every one of us can take to call out harmful behaviour when we witness it, making our communities a safer place for all.

Speaking about what being an active bystander means Sergeant Amanda Hanusch-Moore, who has worked alongside York St John University in the development of active bystander training said:

“Being an active bystander does not mean intervening in a situation and putting yourself at risk of harm. It’s about taking some simple action if you see or hear inappropriate and harmful behaviour, calling it out in a safe way and helping someone in a vulnerable situation. In simple terms, it’s about looking out for each other – our friends and families and our wider community – and not turning a blind eye if something doesn’t feel right. By sharing these straightforward steps, we’re hoping to raise awareness and empower members of the public, so they feel they can stand up and stop hate and harm.”

If you recognise that something is happening, perhaps in the street or when you are out socialising and you believe that the behaviour you are witnessing is harmful – for example, someone is being verbally abusive to another because of their race or religion, or someone is acting inappropriately towards another person who may be vulnerable in that moment, there are four steps you can consider.

Firstly – only intervene if it is safe to do so. If you are happy to proceed you could

**DISTRACT** – Distract the person who is acting inappropriately. Ask them the time or directions to the bar or toilets. By causing a distraction it breaks their pattern of behaviour and also gives the target of that behaviour a chance to move away from the situation.

**DIRECT** – If it is safe to do so, you could directly address the issue by telling the person that their behaviour is not ok. By acting directly, you may be the first person to ever confront their behaviour and challenge their thinking.

**DELEGATE** – If you think the situation you have witnessed has the potential to become harmful and you don’t feel it’s safe to challenge it, get some help. Perhaps a friend could assist, a member of staff or someone in a position of responsibility. If it’s an emergency and someone is at imminent risk of harm, call the police on 999.

**DELAY** – If it’s too dangerous and you can’t get help, wait for the situation to pass but check the victim is ok and offer support. It’s really important to also report this incident to the police too. While the incident may have passed and it may be too late for the police to send an emergency response, the information you pass onto them will form part of an overall picture of intelligence that they can use to prevent harm again.

Sergeant Hanusch-Moore concluded by saying “I think everyone can think of a time where they have been in an uncomfortable situation where a person’s behaviour or language towards someone else has felt wrong or inappropriate, but you’re just not sure what to do or how to handle it. So, we’re hoping that by talking about being an active bystander, sharing those four key steps, members of the public feel empowered to stand up and stop hate.”

North Yorkshire Police Assistant Chief Constable Lindsey Butterfield, Chair of the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership said “Being an active bystander means we don’t give any room to hateful behaviour in our society. It sends a clear message to those who think it’s ok to act abusively or inappropriately, that their behaviour is not acceptable, it won’t be tolerated and they won’t get away with it. If we all feel empowered to safely challenge inappropriate behaviour when we see it, we can stop it escalating and ultimately keep people safe.”

Richard Flinton, Chief Executive of North Yorkshire County Council, said: “North Yorkshire is built on communities, and everyone within those communities has a right to feel safe, secure and welcome. The focus of National Hate Crime Awareness Week is a valuable reminder that we can all play our part in addressing hateful behaviour where we encounter it and helping to make our communities the places we want them to be.”

Odette Robson, Head of Safer Communities, North Yorkshire County said: “Members of the multi-agency Inclusive Communities Joint Coordinating Group are keen to use this week to showcase the support and interventions available to those who are impacted by hate crime and incidents.

“The focus for this year’s campaign is to raise awareness on how we all can become active and help to keep our communities safe. We would also like to use the week to raise awareness of our multi-agency partnership, that has representation across many organisations and agencies. As chair of the group, I would like to thank all those partners and individuals who are actively involved in raising awareness and will continue to support those in need.”

**Cllr Denise Craghill, Executive Member for** Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods **at City of York Council, said:** “Hate crime is unacceptable and should have no place in our society. Anyone experiencing it should report it, so that together we can stop it.”

**Cllr Darryl Smalley, Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Communities at City of York Council, said:** “We’re asking everyone in York to: ‘Protect, Respect and Be Kind’, a message which extends to the way we all treat each other, regardless of disability, race or religion, sexuality or gender. If you do witness a hate crime, please report it. Reporting hate crime not only ensures perpetrators are brought to justice, but it also helps authorities better understand how common hate crimes are in our city, so resources can be targeted where they are most needed. The couple of times I’ve reported hate crime; it’s been really easy, quick and the team at North Yorkshire Police were helpful and professional.”

Sam Suttar, a self-advocate and North Yorkshire Learning Disability Partnership Board Keeping Safe Champion, said: “It is important that people get the opportunity to talk about hate crime and how it affects them, and that people shouldn’t be embarrassed about speaking up, as there are lots of people out there to help and support them.”

Members of the North Yorkshire Youth Commission, which challenges and informs the work of the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner were also invited to provide feedback on the idea of being an active bystander.

Some of the young people involved said:

“I think we need to normalise reporting it. If it was more common people wouldn’t be scared to do it or feel bad."

"You might not want to be seen as a grass, or the one reporting it. But at the end of the day, it's kind of your responsibility to, especially if it's your friend. But even if it's not and it's a stranger, you should just think, if it was you, you'd expect someone to help and come forward."

"I think reporting and raising awareness about hate crime is important because it can really help those who are victims from it, especially those who are vulnerable."

As part of a number of events that are taking place throughout National Hate Crime Awareness Week, a free online bystander awareness ‘train the trainer’ session is taking place on Thursday 14 October. Delivered by the All About Respect team based at York St John University, the training is aimed at professionals who work with teenagers and young adults. It gives an insight into why inappropriate behaviour may take place in the first place and runs through the four practical steps **(Distract, Direct, Delegate, Delay)** that can be shared with young people, to equip them with the skills to be an active bystander. To book a place on the session visit [All About Respect: Bystander Intervention Train the Trainer event Tickets, Thu 14 Oct 2021 at 10:00 | Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/all-about-respect-bystander-intervention-train-the-trainer-event-tickets-173356813897)

To find out more about the other events taking place throughout the week, visit the North Yorkshire Police website here [www.northyorkshire.police.uk/NHCAW2021Events](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.northyorkshire.police.uk%2FNHCAW2021Events&data=04%7C01%7CClare.Burborough%40northyorkshire.police.uk%7C334204f41d7342c7a74608d98a3ed132%7C2c84bc9193af476e9721cdad67cb3ead%7C0%7C0%7C637692824661955335%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=RaVnfqZYdsTjGO4qZEMh6g2V8k6wxIyflaSiG6egCBI%3D&reserved=0) To follow the National Hate Crime Awareness Week 2021 on social media follow the hashtags **#NHCAW2021 #HelpNotHateY2021 #BeAnActiveBystander #SeeReportSupport**