

# New Resources *from Teaching Tolerance*

TWO NEW TOOLS FROM TEACHING TOLERANCE CAN HELP EDUCATORS ADDRESS ACTS OF BIGOTRY THAT THREATEN A HEALTHY SCHOOL CLIMATE.

## SPEAK UP AT SCHOOL

*How to Respond to  
Everyday Prejudice,  
Bias and Stereotypes*

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



A PUBLICATION OF TEACHING TOLERANCE

A GUIDE FOR ADMINISTRATORS,  
COUNSELORS AND TEACHERS

## RESPONDING TO HATE AND BIAS AT SCHOOL



A PUBLICATION OF TEACHING TOLERANCE  
[tolerance.org](http://tolerance.org)

**EVERY SCHOOL HAS** fire drills. Students know to line up quietly and leave the building. They know this because schools prepare for fires. Everyone has discussed the dangers involved and the importance of being ready.

But a fire is hardly the only crisis that can hit a school. Seemingly small acts of bigotry and hate can, if left unchecked, erupt into life-threatening fights, suicide attempts or widespread violence. Even when they don't, such acts can

*I am a person who will speak up against bigotry.  
I will not let hate have the last word.*

– SPEAK UP AT SCHOOL –

leave behind poisonous—and unnecessary—hostility. The same forethought that goes into evacuation plans needs to go into making the ill effects of bigotry and hate less likely.

Many administrators are unsure about how to start building an inclusive school climate, let alone a crisis-management plan. That's why Teaching Tolerance has created two important resources: *Responding to Hate and Bias at School* and *Speak Up at School*. These booklets, which are revised and updated versions of previous works from Teaching Tolerance, lay out steps that educators need to take to make their schools safer, more welcoming places.

"We receive a steady flow of calls and emails from educators looking for guidance on these issues," says Maureen Costello, the director of Teaching Tolerance, "and there was clearly a need to help people recognize danger signs at school and address them before a crisis occurs."

*Responding to Hate and Bias at School* is written primarily for school administrators, although it provides valuable information for counselors and teachers as well. This booklet shows educators how to respond to a hate-related incident in their school or community. It also guides them through crisis management and post-crisis efforts at improvement.

*Responding to Hate and Bias at School* goes further, suggesting research-based strategies for reducing bullying and creating a welcoming school climate. It also provides ways to promote social emotional learning among faculty, staff and students. In developing model responses to incidents of bigotry and hate, Teaching Tolerance researched best practices and interviewed administrators, teachers and students from across the country. We also spoke with victims of campus incidents, teachers who train peer mediators, and organizations concerned with hate and bias at school.

Creating an inclusive learning environment requires leadership and a schoolwide plan, like the kind laid out in *Responding to Hate and Bias*. But it also requires the work of dedicated individuals throughout the building, day in and day out. That's where *Speak Up at School* comes in. This booklet is written for individuals. It provides advice for responding to verbal slurs, racist jokes or disrespectful remarks that can be heard anywhere in school and from anyone.

"These kinds of hurtful and biased remarks too often constitute the first steps in bullying and harassment," Costello says. "It's crucial to create schools that are free of bias and bigotry. But responding to offensive remarks takes forethought and courage."

*Speak Up at School* gives educators the tools to help students turn from bystanders to upstanders. It also shows educators how to respond when the biased remark or offensive joke comes from their peers, from parents or even from administrators. Costello says, "*Speak Up* coaches individuals to confront bigotry without being confrontational."

Not every intolerant remark is made in the same spirit. Some reflect genuine animosity, while others are said out of ignorance or a desire to get along with the crowd. *Speak Up* discusses these differences and explores the best ways to handle them. It also provides advice from teachers about real-life situations they've faced and what worked for them.

Educators at all grade levels and in all parts of the country agree that the most important thing to do in these situations is to act: Speak up against bigoted remarks every time they happen. "Stop what you're doing—whatever you're doing—and address it," says Sofía Galaviz, a 5th-grade teacher in Nampa, Idaho.

Costello says that people often have good intentions when it comes to confronting hate. Everyone wants to do the right thing. But addressing a racial slur or an anti-gay remark made by a friend or co-worker can be hard for anyone—unless they're prepared to take a stand. It's easy in volatile situations to say the wrong thing, making a situation worse.

"*Speak Up at School* gets people prepared," Costello says. "It helps individuals think through their responses to the day-to-day bigotry we all face."

Together, *Speak Up at School* and *Responding to Hate and Bias at School* give teachers and administrators a 360-degree view of school-culture issues and provide direction for educators trying to build an inclusive, nurturing school climate—a climate in which hateful acts are extinguished as swiftly as any life-threatening fire. ♦

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*Responding to Hate and Bias at School*  
and *Speak Up at School* are both  
available FREE to educators.

Download online at  
[tolerance.org/don't-ignore-hate](http://tolerance.org/don't-ignore-hate)