



No Hate in the Hammer

# HAMILTON'S COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO HATE

A practical and comprehensive resource for creating a collaborative, coordinated, and holistic path forward against all forms of hate.



[Hamilton Skyline from Wikipedia](#)

**August  
2022**

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# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The City of Hamilton sits on the traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Anishinaabe nations who have shared in this land for thousands of years. Today, this land is home to many Indigenous communities, visitors and settlers. This land is covered by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant\*, an agreement between Indigenous nations, and later, visitors and settlers that came to this land, to share and care for the resources of the land, and to take no more than needed.

There are many resources to help us understand territory acknowledgements. The most important thing is to understand that a land acknowledgement is more than just a scripted overview of the histories of this land - it is a living document, which is alive to the interconnected and ongoing nature of colonial violence continuing to be enacted on this land. As visitors, or settlers working, playing and living on this land, we are accountable to engaging with the past and present histories of Indigenous communities from this land and across Turtle Island.

Resource: [Territory Acknowledgement](#)

**\*Dish with One Spoon**

# INTRODUCTION

A safe community is a community where ALL people can live, work and play without fear, risk of injury or violence and where discrimination in all its forms is eliminated. It is a place where citizens, community leaders and organizations have a shared responsibility to each other to plan and create community efforts and programs that reduce injury, violence and improve community health and well-being for everyone. It is a community that addresses all forms of discrimination and hate. Where discrimination and hate live, communities cannot thrive.

So when members of our community or community groups are being targeted or excluded from fully participating, citizens have a responsibility to act. When our community is being harmed, we must stand together!

The alarming rise of hate in the City of Hamilton requires a holistic, community-wide response. The goal of Hamilton's Community Response to Hate and its Anti-Hate Toolkit is to create a blueprint for action that is supported by a broad coalition of individuals, agencies, institutions, faith groups, advocates and experts, and that holds all of us responsible for our respective commitments and roles in this coordinated plan.

Hamilton's Community Response to Hate includes critical frameworks and practices that are necessary for addressing all levels of hate, racism, and discrimination including: decolonization; Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression; calling in versus calling out; bridge building; and, steps for moving from allyship to meaningful solidarities as "co-conspirators."

Hamilton's Anti-Hate Toolkit consists of concrete action steps for stakeholders at all levels: municipal, provincial and federal governments; police, health and emergency services; the education sector; non-governmental organizations; employers; faith institutions; and individuals.

We believe everyone has a role to play in eliminating forms of racism, hate, discrimination, and oppression. The practices in the Community Response and the recommendations in the Toolkit seek to hold one another accountable on our collective journey to creating an inclusive community.

These resources are a living document that will be amended over time to reflect our shared learnings and development.

# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "HATE"?

Some expressions of hate are universally recognized and understood, such as the mowing down of a Muslim family in London, Ontario in 2021, the shooting of worshippers at a Quebec City Mosque in 2017 and the recent mass shooting in Buffalo. These terrorist acts are hate-motivated crimes that horrify the entire community. They are carried out by far-right extremists who follow a White Supremacist ideology and believe in the "Great Replacement Theory", targeting all non-whites and other marginalized communities. They are a systemic and politically exploited expression of hatred.

**But not all expressions of hate are as overt and violent. We use the term "hate" much more broadly and inclusively in this resource. We follow an anti-racism, anti-oppression framework that recognizes how harmful barriers to inclusion are ingrained in our systems and structures and negatively impact members of our community daily and throughout all aspects of their lives.**

Accordingly, our use of the word "hate" encompasses a continuum from individual speech and action that may be covert and implicit, through to policies and practices of institutions and government that perpetuate divisions and discrimination, impacting whole communities. "Hate" includes the violence of White Nationalists, but also micro-aggressions uttered daily and the enforcement of supposedly neutral policies that prevent full civic participation. This understanding of the term requires all of us, as individuals as well as our organizations and institutions, to recognize our shared roles in dismantling racism and oppression that fuel hate.

# DECOLONIZATION IS THE STARTING POINT FOR ADDRESSING HATE

The rise in outward and overt actions of hate, discrimination and oppression is a marker that Canada has not addressed the historical or current issues of systemic racism and oppression that live within people, within communities and within its systems. Canada and Canadians are awakened and must come to terms that our systems, laws and cultural practices are rooted in a white, non-disabled, heteronormative, gendered and settler-colonial system. Canada and Canadians are awakened to the Truth and Reconciliation recommendations that demonstrate a dark side of cultural genocide and legislative discrimination towards Indigenous, Metis and Inuit peoples.

In order to move forward towards Reconciliation and towards an inclusive place where hate does not exist, Canadian's must grapple with settler-colonialism

***"as the continued occupation, exploitation, and destruction of land traditionally stewarded by Indigenous peoples by countries in what is considered the Global North (countries that have amassed their wealth and built their development through said occupation)" (Belfi & Sandiford, 2021).***

This starts with the premise that there is a responsibility to decolonize. As shared by Belfi and Sandiford (2021):

***"Decolonization is work that belongs to all of us, everywhere. It asks us to think about our relationship with Indigenous lands that colonizers have unjustly claimed, re-defined and repurposed all over the world. It asks us to embrace responsibility as opposed to accepting fault. Lastly, decolonization is a path forward to create systems which are just and equitable, addressing inequality through education, dialogue, communication and action."***

Our blueprint for this work is set out in the Calls to Action from the 2015 Truth & Reconciliation Commission report and the Calls to Justice from the 2019 National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.



Photo credit to Fungus Guy via Wikipedia



## ABOUT NO HATE IN THE HAMMER

No Hate in the Hammer launched on August 1, 2019, at a large community event to take action against public expressions of hate.

At the time, groups of "Yellow Vesters", were holding public hate rallies in front of City Hall. The groups were loosely aligned with values and actions of the Soldiers of Odin. This is a recognized Hate group that started in France and they often refer to themselves as "Yellow Vesters". The group rallying at City Hall spread messages of hate, antisemitic, homophobic, and anti-immigrant. They often spoke that violence is a measured response to those who oppose them. Like the Soldiers of Odin, some of who wore these jackets at the rallies, hold to the belief that they have the right as Canadians to gather and had the right to free speech. They were calling on all people who thought like them to join them and thus they gathered in increasingly large numbers in the forecourt of City Hall. Our public officials were reluctant to intervene and this left many people feeling unsafe in our city.

Concerned citizens who denounced the "Yellow Vesters" messages of hate began to gather to counter the rally. However, the police were slow to intervene when the "Yellow Vestors" verbally and physically harassed and assaulted citizens.

This lack of response from public officials and police led to the "Hamilton Yellow Vests" in their social media posts to call in militant groups to attack counterdemonstrators. Violence erupted in June 2019 at the annual Pride event at Gage Park. The police response was heavily criticized and led to an independent investigation of its handling of the event.

Hamilton residents were shocked and horrified to witness the growing actions of hate and violence, thus individuals and organizations came together and the No Hate in the Hamilton Coalition was formed. We are working together to be an effective tool for social change. Through education, collaboration, knowledge sharing, and advocacy, our purpose is to make Hamilton an inclusive city where everyone is free from all forms of hate.

We value relationships built on trust with communities, institutions and government agencies; facilitate conversations, promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, and nurture relationships and solidarity; and, value transparency and a culture of non-blaming/non-shaming. We also support a restorative practice approach, meaning that we constructively address both the harmed and the harmer.



# CREATING A COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO HATE SPEAKER SERIES

The ideas and actions that populate Hamilton's Community Response to Hate and its Anti-Hate Toolkit were generated mainly from two virtual speaker series hosted by NHH starting in the fall of 2020, and the May 2021 two-day Listen Learn Act: An Anti-Hate Community Summit (LLA). The summit brought together activists, organizations, grassroots groups, academics, faith and thought leaders, researchers as well as those in the "mushy middle" (those who are aware of the problem and want to do something but do not know where to start or feel overwhelmed). The content explored ways to get involved in anti-hate and anti-racism work.

From October 2021 to March 2022, The Community Response to Hate Speaker Series explored bridge building, reflecting on intersectionality, Islamophobia and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, Trans, and Two-Spirit Individuals. Through local and national perspectives, we learned from the speaker series as well as other resources that serve as the foundation and blueprint for Hamilton's Community Response to Hate and Hamilton's Anti-Hate Toolkit.

# WHAT DOES HATE LOOK LIKE IN CANADA?



While discrimination, oppression and hate crimes are not new to Canada, since 2020, overt actions motivated by hate towards a community or communities have been disturbingly growing across the nation.

The safety of a community cannot and should not be measured by the absence of hate crime charges. However, the statistics on hate crime charges do give an insight into how active Police are in applying the criminal code, which communities are being targeted, and the level of personal violence and injury being experienced. It is important to also measure how many organized groups are being charged with hate propaganda. To only hold individuals accountable will not address the systemic nature of hate crimes. Furthermore, NHH's definition of hate is broad because without addressing systemic forms of discrimination as a proactive measure, hate motivated crimes will continue.

Statistics Canada reports that **2,669** hate-motivated crimes have been reported to the police in 2020 - this is the highest amount since 2009.

Between 2019 and 2020, the number of police-reported crimes motivated by racism also drastically increased by **80%** [from 884 to 1,594]: +318 incidents targeting Black populations; +202 incidents targeting East or Southeast Asian groups; +44 incidents against Indigenous populations; and +38 incidents against South Asian communities.

The City of Hamilton, like cities all across North America, have been grappling with the rise in Organized Extremist Hate Groups, and targeted acts of hate towards various communities. Some of these targeted actions are meant to cause severe fear, injury and death.

**Statistics Canada released a report in 2018 stating that Hamilton experiences 17.1 hate incidents per 100K people compared to 5.3 incidents for Ontario and 4.9 for Canada; Hamilton also has the highest rate of police-reported hate crimes (Deuling, 2019). According to the Hamilton Police Services 2021 Hate/Bias Statistical Report, there was a 35% increase in hate occurrences reported to the police. Black, Jewish and 2SLGBTQIA+ community members remain the most targeted in Hamilton.**

Further, incidents of arson, assaults, and hateful graffiti throughout the community continue to target Indigenous, Black, Jewish, Muslim and Queer people in Hamilton. A confederate flag was recently flown in community. Racialized, non-Christian community members report verbal and physical assaults in public spaces (like buses).

The Truth and Reconciliation recommendations call for the removal of colonial statues. But many continue to defend the right to keep statutes, despite perpetuating trauma and pain.

Without improved relationships between communities and leaders, police, health care, and education, we cannot end hate and create safe communities for everyone.

There is much to be done and this resource is a collective guide to addressing this challenge.

Photo Credit to Tandem X Visuals via [Unsplash](#)



# FRAMEWORKS TO COMBAT HATE

Hamilton's Community Response to Hate and its Anti-Hate Toolkit are rooted in unpacking how systems of power can be used to marginalize, exclude, or disadvantage certain individuals and communities in society (The Anti-Oppression Network, n.d.). This is referred to as an anti-racist and anti-oppression (ARAO) model or a social determinant of Health framework.

Anti-racist practices include recognizing, directly naming and "actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life" (Race Forward, 2015). An anti-racist perspective allows us to understand how histories of colonialism are interconnected and embedded in our present-day systems and institutions; and how we must work towards identifying and eliminating racism at all levels, so power and equity are redistributed (NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity cited in CARED). An anti-racist and anti-oppressive framework is central to Hamilton's Community Response to hate where we strive to eliminate racism and discrimination in all forms through a collaborative journey. We remind you that being anti-racist is a journey and there is no end date; it is a commitment to ourselves and those around us to eliminate racism in all forms!

# ANTI-RACIST AND ANTI-OPPRESSIVE PRACTICES

***“Anti-racism is an active process of seeing and being in the world with the intention of working to identify, challenge and change the values, structures and behaviours that perpetuate structural racism. This highlights the idea that racism occurs at all levels of society and manifests itself in both individual attitudes and behaviour as well as formal and unspoken policies and practices within institutions. In the absence of anti-racism, we (un)consciously uphold aspects of white supremacy, white-dominant culture, and unequitable institutions and societies” (Loyola University of Maryland).***

The goal of this work is to eliminate all forms of racism, discrimination and oppression at all levels, and to redistribute power and equity. Dr. Priya Sharda tells us how the group in society that holds the most power can create policies, practices, and socialized norms that systematically exploit and marginalize those who do not have power.

Our goals cannot be accomplished if we do not examine the people and systems of Canada’s confederation, meaning the nature of white supremacy and colonial values. Change always requires us to reflect, examine and reimagine a way forward. We will be challenged and feel uncomfortable and at times fear the unknown. Though this may be an uncomfortable topic to approach, we encourage you to embrace this; positive change can occur through the most discomfort!





# LEVELS OF RACISM

Merriam-Webster defines racism as “**a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race.**”

Racism and oppression manifest itself on many levels and in different forms. Stephen Menendian from the Othering & Belonging Institute at UC Berkley reminds us of individual, institutional, systemic, and structural forms of racism:

**Interpersonal racism** are acts of bigotry, discrimination, or biases that occur between individuals. Often times these acts are under guided by harmful beliefs or stereotypes in the inferiority of or characteristics of certain racial groups.

**Institutional racism** is when institutions create neutral rules, policies or laws that have disparate racial effects within that institution such as excluding certain racialized or equity-deserving folks from participating in the institution.

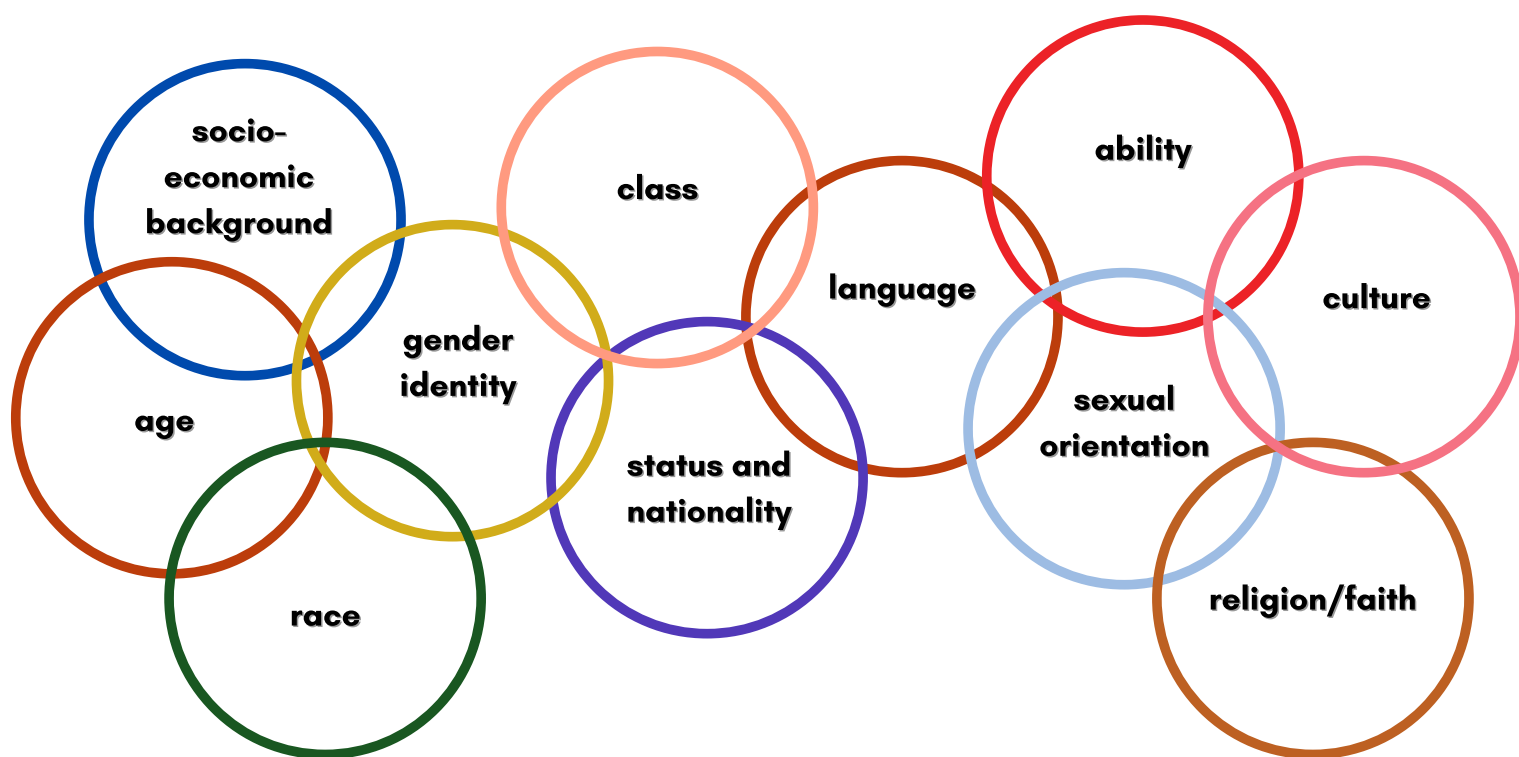
**Systemic racism** looks at how institutions interact within a system; what makes systemic inequality is with a disparity in one institution then jumping from that institution to another.

**Structural racism** is the largest group-based equality. Structural racism includes interpersonal, institutions, systems and non-system agents and actors (decision makers, markets etc.) working together to create disparate racial effects that exclude certain groups from participating in society altogether.

# INTERSECTIONALITY

If we think about the types of oppression and levels of racism, we must consider that many different manifestations can occur.

Intersectionality, a term coined by Professor Kimberlee Crenshaw (1989), becomes an important concept to consider when we are understanding the ways in which different [race]isms can occur. Intersectionality considers how the overlapping nature of social identities can create intersecting and related forms of inequality (Steinmetz, 2020).



Some folks do not just experience racism; many people can experience multiple forms of oppression based on their social identities. For instance, Islamophobia can intersect with gendered experiences. We have many pieces that make up our identities and who we are - therefore it is important to tread with an intersectional mindset. A one size fits all solution does not work for a community response to hate!

# WAYS OF WORKING





# CALLING IN VERSUS CALLING OUT

Maisha Z. Johnson (2016) from *Everyday Feminism* shares that calling out “stands up for people who are harmed, which is great. But if it includes shaming, isolating, and punishing the people responsible for causing harm, it also just repeats the same tactics of the systems of oppression we’re trying to move away from.”

Professor Loretta J. Ross (2020) discusses that “calling out assumes the worst. Calling in involves conversation, compassion and context.” *Calling in* can look like sending a private message, calling on the telephone, “or simply taking a breath before commenting, screen-shotting or demanding one “do better” without explaining how”.

**Calling in** invites you to examine racism, it also calls you to action. **Calling in** does not mean you remain silent when witnessing racism or oppression. It calls in our responsibility to each other and does not divide us. It rejects shame and invites responsibility to each other.

Calling in creates an environment of courageous conversations, critical self-reflection, works with the harmed and harmer, which makes a powerful sense of healing and belonging!

Accountability	Punishment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Is something you <b>choose</b> to do</li><li>◦ Recognizes and requires your power, including your power to <b>enact repair</b></li><li>◦ Is fundamentally <b>active</b>: it requires you to address suffering you caused by seeking to transform yourself and to mend and rebuild for others</li><li>◦ <b>Deepens</b> relationship and connection</li><li>◦ <b>Fosters healing and restoration</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Is <b>imposed</b> by others with power over you</li><li>◦ Aims to diminish or contain your power, which it presumes can only be <b>harmful</b></li><li>◦ Is largely <b>passive</b>: it requires you to address suffering you caused simply by suffering yourself with no pathway to provide anything to others</li><li>◦ <b>Severs</b> relationship and connection</li><li>◦ <b>Fosters shame and isolation</b></li></ul>

Danielle Sered's description of accountability. For more, read "Until We Reckon: Violence, Mass Incarceration, and a Road to Repair (2019)."

# BRIDGE BUILDING

Bridging "addresses tensions or "breaking" dynamics that sustain division, to develop a new "we" that is not only more inclusive, but cohesive, durable, and consistent with bringing about belonging and greater social justice" (Othering & Belonging Institute, n.d.).

In the words of Professor John A. Powell (2019):

**"Meaningful bridging—like real integration—must acknowledge, respect, and appreciate difference as a starting point, not try to erase differences. Bridging requires more than just acknowledging the other but listening empathically and holding space for the other within our collective stories."**

## RESTORATIVE PRACTICE: ONE PATH TO JUSTICE

We support a restorative practice approach where appropriate and mutually desired, meaning that we constructively confront harms so that people and institutions can take responsibility for their actions and work together to move forward on a shared path. It is a non-adversarial approach to harm that emphasizes healing in victims, meaningful accountability for offenders and the involvement of citizens in creating healthy and safe communities.

# FROM ALLYSHIP TO SOLIDARITY AS CO-CONSPIRATORS

The process of building trust with communities starts with a commitment to unpack assumptions, realign or deconstruct old ways and systems. It also begins with the acknowledgement that if I am not part of a marginalized community (Indigenous, Francophone, racialized, disabled, 2SLGBTQ+, non-christian, non-english etc.) that I will learn and unlearn how systems have afforded me access and space (privilege) that have excluded marginalized communities. **This is often called Allyship.**

Taking on the role of Allyship is a beginning step and yet it has its limitations and problems. Too often privileged persons or organizations have self-identified as allies when they have not consulted or been working on ways to be an ally that is set out by the community affected. In addition, people or individuals who claim this title often do not stand up when the community faces the biggest struggles for equity and inclusion. This leaves affected communities feeling used or abandoned.

Without action, deep, authentic and meaningful relationships cannot be formed. **Taking action supports the elimination of racism and oppression faced by any community and supports equity, inclusion and safe communities.**

Racialized, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQ, disabled and many other marginalized communities are asking for people and communities to take up the responsibilities to each other and become Co-Conspirators. Layla Saad provides a definition of allyship that is consistent with this notion of co-conspiratorship:

***“Allyship is an active, consistent, and challenging practice of unlearning and reevaluating, in which a person of privilege seeks to work in solidarity with a marginalized group. Allyship is not an identity—it is a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups. Allyship is not self-defined—our work and our efforts must be recognized by the people we seek to ally ourselves with” (Saad, 2020, pg. 119; PeerNetBC, n.d.).***

We must move our allyship towards solidarity. Solidarity is taking action, committing to ongoing justice and breaking our silos to engage and collaborate with communities and stakeholders. We achieve accountability by understanding that what we profess to value must be demonstrated in action!

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August, 2022