



NEW YORK CITY ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT



A Guide to Community Rapid Incident Response

A Guide to Community Rapid Incident Response

Five simple tips you could learn over a lunch break

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TRANSGENDER, QUEER
& HIV-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES**

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live without fear

The New York City Anti-Violence Project is dedicated to eliminating hate violence, sexual assault, stalking, and domestic violence in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and HIV-affected communities through counseling, advocacy, organizing, and public education.

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5 Simple Tips for Responding to a Bias Incident

Quick Reference Guide

This tip sheet is provided to help you tackle your community rapid incident responses. To **learn** more about any of the tips outlined here, please read the corresponding chapter of this manual.

I WANT TO RESPOND TO A BIAS INCIDENT BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN

TIP # 1: Strategizing Your Approach

- Thoroughly assess the situation and past responses to hate violence in your community.
- Plan your actions. Decide your goal, gather resources, assign tasks & develop a timeline.
- Communicate all relevant information and your plan to everyone involved.
- Remember your SCHEMES:
 - S**pace - where are you going to hold your event?
 - C**ash - what might need to be paid for and what can be donated?
 - H**elpers – two heads are better than one & it takes a community to help one another out
 - E**quipment - will you need banners, sound equipment, a stage, etc.?
 - M**aterials – signs are always very helpful to unite people and bring in onlookers
 - E**xpertise – survey the community to see who can offer their expertise
 - S**ystems - what systems might be contacted to help with your event?
- Decide on your message and your demand. Your demand should be measurable and your message should answer the following questions: **What's the problem? Why should I care? What's the alternative? What can I do?** Always keep your message consistent.
- Identify the key people – stakeholders - who have to be involved, may be affected by or have an interest in your response. Engage them in your response to ensure success.

I WANT TO ALERT PEOPLE AND RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT A BIAS INCIDENT IN MY COMMUNITY

TIP # 2: Flyering for a Cause

- Make sure you have obtained a consent from the victim & are acting with their knowledge
- Decide where you will post and distribute the flyers and find out if permits are required.
- Flyers should be legal and easy to read. Use font style & size that is easy to read. To avoid fines do not post flyers in illegal areas.
- Include all relevant information (information on the incident, contact information, reward if any, and if this is a murder case, you may include a victim's photo if available).
- Get your flyer out as soon as possible. Timely responses to bias incidents are key to apprehending the offender(s) and keeping the community safe.
- Think about safety & prepare a plan for how to respond to potential threats while flyering.

I WANT TO DO SOMETHING BOLD THAT WILL INVOLVE A LARGER COMMUNITY

TIP # 3: Public Protests and Demonstrations

- Review your message, who you want your message to reach and what resources you have available, then decide what form of a public demonstration you will do (a rally, march, vigil, protest, etc.).
- Decide when you will hold a public demo (i.e. immediately after the incident, to mark the anniversary, before or during a trial, etc.). Consider your goal and the key stakeholders.
- You will also need to consider and decide these four elements:
 - Resources – people, materials and equipment
 - Time – time for the preparation and the actual duration of the event
 - Money – cost of the event and the amount you seek to raise for your cause
 - Scope – demo size, goals, and other requirements
 - Permits – sound or gathering permits for the event
- Create & distribute flyers to get the word out about your event or write a press release.

I WANT THE ENTIRE NEIGHBORHOOD AND TOWN TO KNOW ABOUT THIS INJUSTICE

TIP # 4: Media Power Tool

- Write a press release or media advisory to let the media know about a bias incident and if there will be any public response to the incident such as a rally or a vigil.
- Your press release should address the “five W’s”:
 - What: What happened, what response will you be doing and what is its purpose
 - Who: Is the survivor going to be there? Any notable public figures who will be speaking?
 - When: The time and the date of your planned response
 - Where: The location needs to include exact address and directions.
 - Why: Explain the importance of addressing bias incidents and note any compelling stats
- Always include a media contact person and keep the press release brief.
- You can reach a global audience while maintaining control over your message when you use internet blogging.
- Verify that your facts are correct & that your post will not cause any harm to the survivor.
- Be careful not to reveal any personal or identifying information of the victim/survivor.

I WANT TO HELP APPREHEND THE OFFENDER AND TO MAKE SURE THIS DOESN'T HAPPEN TO ANYONE ELSE

TIP # 5: Engaging Law Enforcement

- Establish the goal you want to achieve by doing police advocacy. You can have more than one goal (i.e. filing a report, obtaining bias classification & catching the offender).
- Familiarize yourself with the applicable law. It will help you in monitoring police response. Look for violations of procedures & unequal application of the law.
- Learn about the structure of your local law enforcement agency. Knowing the chain of command will help you determine who to talk to if you need to go to the “next level”.
- If you choose to engage law enforcement you should be proactive & not wait for them to come to you. Start building relationships before a bias incident occurs.
- Find out if there is a LGBT-community liaison officer and get to know them.
- Offer help and show them how you can be a resource (i.e. do joint flyers, help with community connections; act as a buffer between the survivor and the officers).

About the NYC Anti-Violence Project

History and mission

The New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP) was founded in 1980 in reaction to neighborhood incidents of anti-LGBT violence and the failure of the criminal legal system to respond. AVP remained an all-volunteer organization until 1984, when the first full-time Executive Director was hired. With the addition of full-time staff, AVP was able to broaden our services to provide professional counseling to victims and survivors of hate violence. AVP also began expanding our work beyond bias-motivated violence to include services for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and HIV-related violence.

AVP is the nation's largest organization working to end violence in all its forms against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and HIV-affected (LGTBQH) communities.

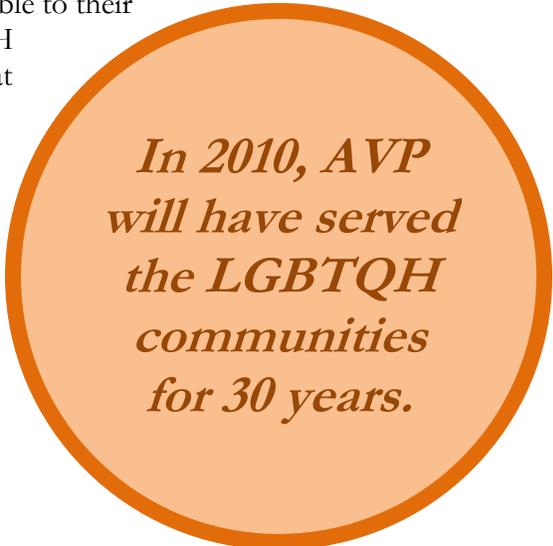
Our work today

Today, AVP provides free and confidential assistance to thousands of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and HIV-affected (LGBTQH) people each year from all five boroughs of New York City. The organization maintains a 24-hour, Spanish/English bilingual hotline staffed by professional counselors and trained volunteers providing professional and peer support counseling, advocacy with police, courts, and social service agencies.

AVP also works with the larger community through efforts to educate the public about violence within and against our communities and to reform government policies and practices affecting LGBTQH and other survivors of violence. AVP works to educate law enforcement, health care professionals, school-based staff, and social service agency personnel on

violence issues impacting our communities. By calling attention to discriminatory and re-victimizing responses, AVP works to hold law enforcement and social service agencies accountable to their obligation for fair and just treatment of LGBTQH people. AVP works to change public attitudes that encourage and condone hate-motivated violence and to promote public policies designed to deter such violence.

Additionally, AVP tracks and documents anti-LGBTQH incidents, sexual assault, stalking, and domestic violence and uses this information to educate our own communities and our allies about aspects of safety including safe dating, safe cruising, recognizing the signs of abuse, the importance of reporting, accessing effective services, and safety planning.



*In 2010, AVP
will have served
the LGBTQH
communities
for 30 years.*

National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP)

NCAVP is a coalition of programs that document incidents and advocate for victims of anti-LGBTQ and HIV/AIDS-related violence, harassment, domestic violence, sexual assault, police misconduct and other forms of victimization.

NCAVP is the only national organization dedicated to reducing violence and its impacts on LGBTQH individuals in the U.S. NCAVP currently unites close to 40 community-based LGBTQH anti-violence organizations across the country. NCAVP member organizations work to provide direct services for and to document bias and hate crimes, domestic violence in LGBTQH relationships, sexual assault and abuse, “pick-up” crimes and other characteristic forms of violence affecting LGBTQH individuals. It is also dedicated to helping local communities establish, promote and expand anti-violence education, prevention, organizing, advocacy and direct services.

The core of NCAVP's mission is to raise awareness and educate the general public about the existence and extent of violence against and within LGBTQH communities. NCAVP member organizations develop policy that assists victims of violence, addresses the perpetrators of violence and changes the social atmosphere of violence in which we all live.

To become an NCAVP member or to learn more about the process, contact the New York City Anti-Violence Project at **212-714-1184** or visit **www.avp.org**.

Who is the Community Rapid Incident Response Guide for?

Have you ever witnessed, heard or read about an injustice committed against someone and thought, ‘I can’t stand this’ or ‘this has got to stop’ or ‘I need to get involved,’ but did not know what or how? Now you can! This guide contains techniques that community members may adopt or adapt to identify and respond to anti-LGBTQH incidents in urban, rural and suburban areas.

“You must be the change you want to see in the world.”

Mahatma Gandhi

When anti-LGBTQH incidents are committed, an entire community can be affected. One person or a small group might be targeted for a particular act of violence, but the violence ripples through communities by sending the very clear message that no one in the community is safe. This is part of the devastation of hate-motivated violence.

Many people in the LGBTQH communities can relate to, whether through their own experience or those of friends and loved ones, stories that appear in the paper or that circulate among communities, of bashings, murders, pick up crimes, rapes and assaults. And we hear about and read about the ways that the various systems designed to assist survivors of violence fall short of actually helping and in too many instances, exacerbate the impact of the violence by re-victimizing the survivor. If you want to take action and work to end this violence, this guide can help you.

What makes this guide unique?

Our *Guide to Community Rapid Incident Response* (or CRIR guide) focuses specifically on anti-LGBTQH hate violence and in doing so addresses some of the unique factors that may need to be considered in before launching a response to this type of violence.

This CRIR guide can be used by anyone, but it has been specifically developed with a beginner or a less experienced community activist in mind to provide a number of helpful tips, each of which are simple enough to be learned over a lunch break.

Very broadly, the CRIR guide is meant to *inspire* action, *encourage* people to act and *engage* in the process of taking care of one another. More specifically, this guide will help you:

- * Develop an understanding of anti-LGBTQH bias related violence in your community
- * Think about how your community responds/does not respond to anti-LGBTQH bias related violence
- * Integrate strategies developed by NCAVP members into your local response
- * Create your own community-specific response to anti-LGBTQH bias related violence

Hate-motivated violence impacts communities by sending a message that none of us are safe. Because hate violence often targets and impacts communities, it will take the efforts and support of communities to bring an end to such violence. Like for most disenfranchised communities, working together and for one another to take a stand against violence is a step onto the road to liberation and freedom.

If you have questions about anything discussed in this guide, or would like help and support, please feel free to contact us at **(212) 714-1141**.

We would also like to hear your opinions! If you have any suggestions or ways that you felt the guide was particularly helpful, let us know.





Responding to Anti-LGBTQH Violence

What is hate violence?

The first step in responding to an incident of hate violence is identifying that a bias incident occurred. Being able to distinguish bias incidents from other acts of violence is not always easy, but an important task. To help with this task, in this chapter we will define these concepts and explain the core characteristics of hate violence, bias-motivated incidents and hate crimes.

We at AVP define violence as any act or situation in which a person or group harms others, denies their integrity, or diminishes their quality of life. Violence can be perpetrated directly and indirectly. Verbal, physical, and sexual assault, harassment and coercion are direct acts of violence against people. Discrimination of all kinds, including uneven application and enforcement of community standards and laws, represents indirect violence perpetrated by individuals and institutions against people.

Hate violence (also bias-motivated violence or hate-motivated violence) can be defined as any act or expression directed against a person, group, or their property that is motivated in whole or in part by belief or perception regarding their real or perceived race, color, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, religious practice, age or disability. When that perception involves sexual orientation or gender identity of the victim or the intended victim, we call that type of violence anti-LGBTQH hate violence. An act does not have to be criminal to be an act of hate violence; the use of an epithet with the intent to intimidate or cause fear is hate violence regardless of whether or not it is a crime. Generally, there are three elements to hate violence: 1) the perpetrator’s perception of the victim’s identity and their bias or prejudice against that perceived identity, 2) the desire to target the victim based on that perception and 3) the belief, at least in part, that the act is socially acceptable or sanctioned.



Violence does not belong to any one community, culture, religion or a group of people. It affects people of all backgrounds.



Anti-LGBTQH Bias Incident: any act or expression (spoken, written, symbolic or other form) which is motivated by some form of prejudice and bias based on victim's perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity and/or expression.

What are bias incidents and how are they different from hate crimes?

Although they may sound as though they are the same thing, there is a major difference between a bias incident and a hate crime. Understanding the difference will not only help shape your own or your group's responses to the event, but it will also help you determine when you might want (or need) to involve the police or local law enforcement agency. Let's take a look at the definitions.

Bias (or hate) incident is any expression whether spoken, written, symbolic or other form, which is motivated by some form of prejudice based on victim's perceived or real identity (i.e. sexual orientation, race, gender, etc.)

Hate crime is any bias-motivated incident that is defined under local or federal law as a criminal act. New York State defines a Hate Crime as:

"A person commits a hate crime when he or she commits a specified offense and either:

- (a) intentionally selects the person against whom the offense is committed or intended to be committed in whole or in substantial part because of a belief or perception regarding the race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation of a person, regardless of whether the belief or perception is correct, or
- (b) intentionally commits the act or acts constituting the offense in whole or in substantial part because of a belief or perception regarding the race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation of a person, regardless of whether the belief or perception is correct."

New York State Penal Code, Title Y - Hate Crimes Act of 2000, Article 485

The legal definitions differ from state to state and at the federal level. Different laws might protect sexual orientation but not gender identity.

There are many examples of bias motivated incidents that are not classified as hate crimes because the government does not decide to categorize the violence as a "crime" of hate violence. The lack of understanding of what constitutes a bias incident and a hate crime and the difference between the two can lead to underreporting. And, the police and the media often conflate the two, which may lead to difficulties down the road such as finding help for the victim/survivor and looking for patterns in attacks. In some situations, the police and other law enforcement professionals either intentionally or unintentionally fail to appropriately classify the incidents as hate crimes, so it helps to be informed.

What types of messages does hate violence send?

- ◆ We want you gone/we hate you
- ◆ You do not deserve to exist
- ◆ You do not deserve to feel safe
- ◆ We will just further victimize you when you ask for help
- ◆ You do not deserve respect or equality

Hate violence can also involve all sorts of situations and may occur on many different levels. For instance:

Between only two people

- Gay bashing

State sanctioned

- Anti-LGBTQH laws

Institutional

- Medical bias, police brutality, victim assistance provider re-victimization

Community based

- Protests against LGBTQH groups

Culturally based

- Classifying homosexuality and gender identity disorder as mental illness

Religiously based

- Expulsion from the church

Part of our efforts is to educate people and communities about hate violence so they can recognize and name hate violence for what it is, challenge the belief systems that underlie it, and encourage them to report. One way that our communities have been silenced about how we are targeted is that we are told that the violence had nothing to do with hate and that we are either overreacting or that we want to be given special privileges. Often, we may only have a gut reaction that what happened had something to do with bias and prejudice or even hate. There is so much power in naming violence for what it is that the various institutions and systems do their best to cover up the violence that is enacted against us. This does not mean we shouldn't address it. Reporting and documenting helps the community, police, service providers and elected officials know the full scope of the problem. Bias attacks are immensely

Reporting and documenting bias incidents helps, even if they seem small or insignificant, it is vital. Accurate statistics on bias incidents will help strengthen our responses to anti-LGBTQH violence.

underreported. It is essential for an organization like the Anti-Violence Project to know when and where these attacks occur, even when the survivor will choose not to report to police. We at AVP have found that the more people talk about what happened the more tools and options for dealing with anti-LGBTQH violence we have, such as data trends on which to base lobbying efforts and creating connections and mobilizing resources, communities and allies to demand our right to safety and to live without fear.

Police misconduct

In this section, we'd like to address a difficult issue, police misconduct. In many ways, the general public, including LGBTQH communities, value and support law enforcement. Such a trusting relationship with law enforcement is not shared across the board. Many individuals and communities have reasons, both immediate and historical, for distrusting law enforcement. Recognizing this complicated situation, AVP is working hard with our local law enforcement to address issues of police misconduct and to improve the working relationship between the police and the LGBTQH communities.

What is AVP doing about police misconduct affecting LGBTQH folks?

From 2007 to 2008, reports of verbal abuse by police rose 50% and reports of physical abuse increased 150%.

NCAVP

- Documenting the instances of police misconduct
- Providing police advocacy
- Advocating for policy change
- Providing short-term counseling and other services to survivors
- Training law enforcement personnel
- Holding presentations and training for community members addressing safety
- Holding police departments accountable
- Working with other organizations and local government to eliminate bias & police misconduct
- Providing communication between LGTBQ communities and the police department
- Advocating on issues of importance to LGTBQ communities and victims of crime.
- Consulting and working in partnership with police on addressing bias incidents and ensuring adequate response to relevant community concerns
- Collaborating with other organizations on elimination of barriers to policing services and ensuring access to appropriate services for LGTBQ victims of crime.
- Providing additional resources to help police department increase cultural competency for serving LGBTQH communities and adapt preventive approach to community policing

What can you do about police misconduct?

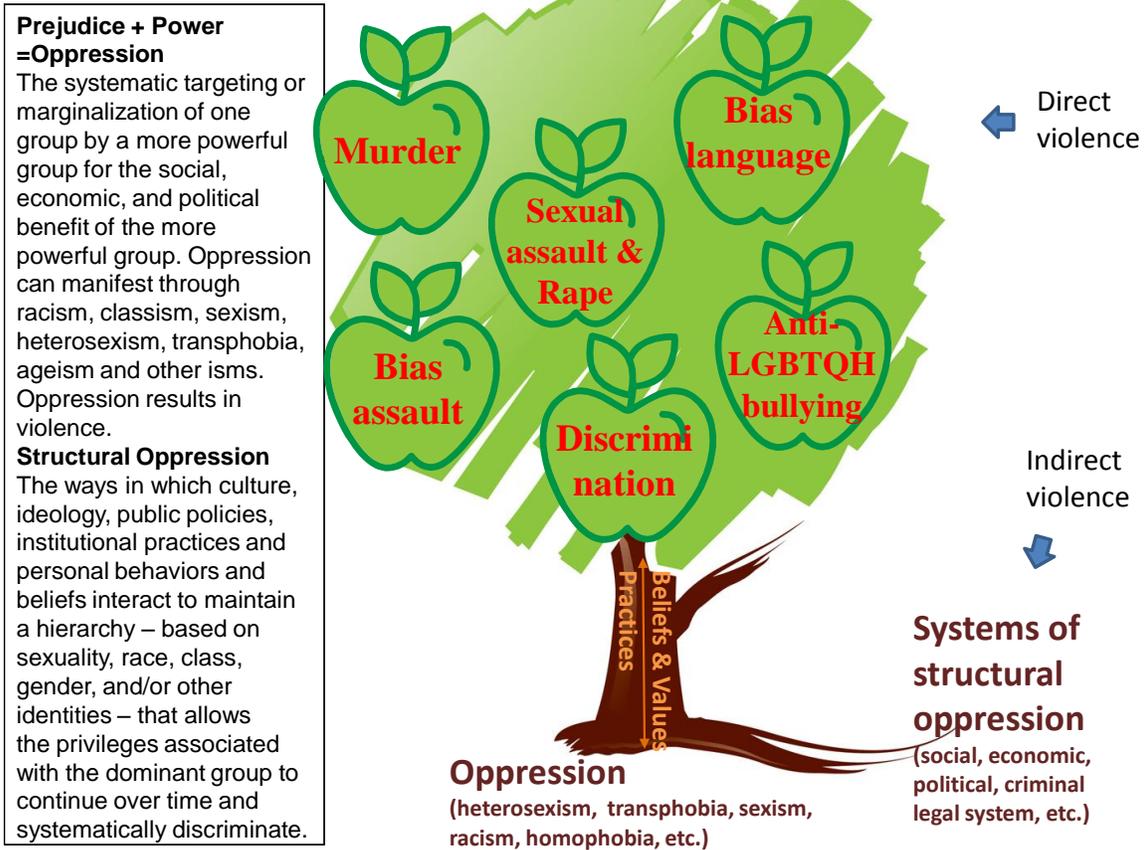
- Document the incidents and report to your local anti-violence program, civil rights agency such as ACLU or another review authority
- You can support the survivor and refer them to an anti-violence program or victim assistance agency
- You can form a public response to police misconduct such as flyering, blogging, or staging a rally using the tips provided in this CRIR guide

We acknowledge that police misconduct is widespread and disproportionately affects LGBTQH people and certain other communities, and that there are many good reasons for choosing not to engage with the systems that are inherently biased and oppressive such as the law enforcement and the criminal legal system. We also acknowledge that there are many valid reasons based on which survivors and anti-violence activists or organizations choose to work with these same systems. This decision, like the one about going public about a bias incident, is a personal one and should be left to the survivor to decide for themselves. You can support the survivor and help them make a decision that is best for them by evaluating the pros and cons of involving law enforcement.

Root causes of (hate) violence

Where does hate violence come from? The roots of violence lie in oppressive norms and ideologies, including heterosexism, sexism, transphobia, racism, ageism, and ableism to name a few. These negative attitudes and harmful stereotypes are being propagated and reinforced by individuals and also by social systems and public institutions such as schools and churches. That may give the perpetrators of hate violence a sense that their acts of violence are either condoned or socially acceptable hence encouraging them to act. The structural oppression tree on the next page illustrates how oppression grows violence in our communities.

Acts of violence may be intended to threaten, coerce, or punish all members of a group even in cases in which they are perpetrated against individual members of that group. An important result of violence is a sense of hopelessness and helplessness among its victims.



Apart from being harmful, bias attacks carry some special characteristics.

- They are attacks on the individual and the community that the individual is thought to represent
- They are usually more brutal than other kinds of attacks, involving weapons that require excessive use of force like hammers, boots, bats
- Most bias attacks involve multiple and more severe injuries (sometimes described as “overkill”), such as 20 stab wounds, or multiple fractures
- Offenders outnumber victims in most cases
- Are reinforced by a society that often encourages homophobia
- Are defended as a civic duty and may represent a rite of passage

- Send the message that there can be no safety

Hate violence has a chilling effect on the individual victim and the community as a whole. By targeting an individual or a group of people, the perpetrators of hate crimes and bias-motivated incidents are in fact making an attack on entire community that the individual (or group) represents to them. The devastating and traumatizing effects of hate violence go beyond individual victims and can be felt by entire communities.

Visibility

As the LGBTQH communities became more visible in the recent years and our struggle for equality and civil rights became more public, we also began to see that this increased visibility was often met by more anti-LGBTQH hate violence and assaults. This violence has to end.

According to national data from NCAVP, we know that anti-LGBTQH violence has risen an alarming 26% from 2006 to 2008.

We also know that at least one out of every four LGBTQH relationships is violent and unsafe. We know that we, as LGBTQH people, continue to be marginalized in myriad other ways - we are more likely to be poor, we are more likely to be homeless - because of violent reactions to our sexual orientation, and our gender identities.

**Anti-LGBTQH
violence has
risen an
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from 2006
to 2008**

We hope you find the tips below useful in this endeavor to be responsible to one another and keep one another informed and safe in a world that still condones violence against us.

Cowardice asks the question - is it safe? Expediency asks the question - is it politic? Vanity asks the question - is it popular? But conscience asks the question - is it right? And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular; but one must take it because it is right.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Tip # 1:

Strategizing Your Approach

What approach is right for me and my community?

There are so many ways to approach a response to a bias incident and as many directions the response can take at any point during the planning stage or the actual carrying out of the response. As was stated earlier, this CRIR guide is meant to *inspire* action and *encourage* people to act and engage in the process of taking care of one another. Community responses vary depending upon many different factors including when you start to organize, the needs of your community, your ultimate goals, local resources, the scope of the issue and any issues of resistance. As you begin to craft your response, here are some questions for you to think about:

- What is the goal of my involvement?
- What is my strategy to getting my goal accomplished?
- What tactics will I use to carry out my strategy?
- Will I need help and if so, who else can I approach to help?

What you hope to accomplish with your involvement will depend greatly upon what is or is not already in place. Figuring out how long you can wait before you do something and what should you do and who should you involve is an initial step. It will also depend upon how much community involvement there is. While there are many different considerations when deciding whether or how to get involved, the answers to the questions posed will depend greatly upon your goals and your capacity. You can also contact AVP for help in talking through your options.

The LGBTQH communities are incredibly diverse and the needs of each community are unique and vastly different. Because of this, the suggestions for responding to an incident are broadly based. For instance, some communities seek out the help of law enforcement and some do not. How or if one works with law enforcement will be something to think about. There are many more possible and powerful responses to a bias incident than the five included in this guide. No single approach is better than another and how you respond will depend on the incident itself, the unique needs of your community or group, the resources you have available, and the needs and wishes of the victim/survivor you are trying to support.

Special Considerations: Being sensitive to victims & survivors

One important consideration in developing your response to anti-LGBTQH hate violence is whether what you are choosing to do respects the survivor's self determination. Before taking any other steps examine your own reasons for getting involved and see where they line up with or work against what a survivor may need.

• • •
 The decision to go public about a bias incident is a personal one and should always be left up to the victim/survivor.
 • • •

A survivor of a bias incident may be dealing with the trauma from the incident and also feelings brought up around being targeted because of one's identity and you should always approach them with sensitivity and care. Any bias, and especially biases against sexual orientation or gender identity, have a strong stigma attached to them which serves as a great barrier preventing victims/survivors from speaking out, seeking help and reporting attacks to the police. Victims/survivors may also fear being revictimized by the police and criminal legal system. (Note that we use criminal *legal* system and not criminal *justice* system. That is because the system is not always just to the victim or the perpetrator). Many survivors of hate violence are less likely to report bias crimes to law enforcement because they are often target for police action. For instance, young queer people of color, transgender youth and homeless and street involved youth are more vulnerable to police violence and are likely to have past negative experiences with the police making it less accessible and less likely for them to seek help and protection from authorities.

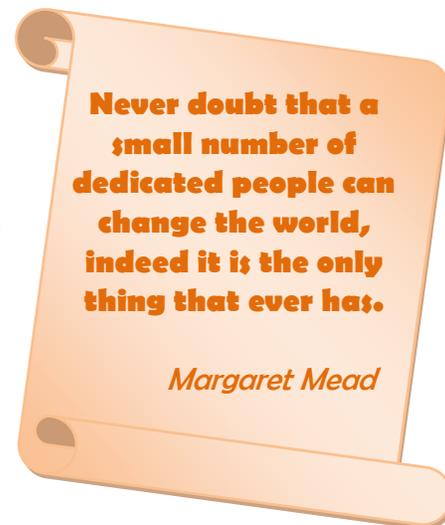
You should never force the victim/survivor to go public about any incident that that they experienced. That decision is a private one and should be left up to the survivor. What you can do is work with them through different options to help them decide if going public is in their best interest.

In some situations, even though the survivor may not want to go public, this does not mean that there can be absolutely no response. What it means is that if the response includes the survivor's story to a significant degree you must respect the wishes of the survivor. If you want to have a response, because, for instance, you feel it is important to the safety of the community, this can still happen without the survivor's involvement by focusing on the type of violence that happened and what the

community can do about it. For example, if someone is targeting gay men in bars and a survivor does not want to come forward to talk about the violence, you can focus on the serial targeting, ways to keep safe while partying and involving the community in looking out for one another.

Careful planning is the key to success

OK, you have decided to take action. There are a number of options to choose from and it may seem overwhelming as you think through them. Regardless of what you decide to do, you must plan your actions. Planning will help you to organize your thoughts, develop a doable plan of action, and help you to be as effective as possible. We have outlined a series of tips below to choose from; which you choose and how you employ them will depend upon a number of factors including your goals, resources, and time.



When creating a public response to violence against an individual in your community or the community more generally, there are a number of goals or sets of goals you may be interested in including:

- Bringing the awareness of an issue of importance to your community
- Mobilizing your community to put pressure on elected officials, law enforcement, etc., to bring justice to the situation
- Call attention of the media to the situation
- Provide a space for your community to mourn a particular act of violence
- Protest an injustice
- Demand a change in a policy
- Support proposed legislation

Once you have an idea of what you want to accomplish, it helps to develop a plan for how to get there. We will borrow some concepts from the *Project Management* field, which can be extremely useful in planning demonstrations or any other incident response. A simple yet very effective tool is using an *Action Plan* to help you prepare, strategize and carry out your response. To develop your own action plan follow these five simple steps.

1. **Clarify your goal.** Can you get a visual picture of the expected outcome? How can you tell if you have achieved your objective? What constraints do you have, like the limits on time, money, helpers or other resources?

2. **Write a list of actions.** On a piece of paper write down all actions you may need to take to carry out your public demo from start to finish. Write as many ideas as you can come up with, just as they come to your mind. While you are doing this, try not to judge or analyze.
3. **Analyze, prioritize, and refine.** Look at your list of actions. What are the absolutely necessary and effective steps to carry out the public demo of your choice? List them in order of importance. What action items can be dropped from the plan without significant consequences for the outcome? Take them off your list.
4. **Organize your list into a plan.** Decide on the order of your action steps. Start from looking at your marked key actions. For each action, what other steps should be completed before that action? Rearrange your actions and ideas into a sequence of ordered action steps. Finally, look at your plan once again. Are there any ways to simplify it even more?
5. **Monitor the execution of your plan and review the plan regularly.** How much have you progressed towards your goal by now? What new information you have got? Use this information to further adjust and optimize your plan.

You can also use the Action Plan template provided for you on the next page to help you plan your public demo or other activities you may choose to carry out in response to a bias-motivated incident.

Instructions:

1. Using this form as a template develop an action plan for your public demonstration or other activity.
2. Keep copies handy to bring to meetings to review and update regularly.
3. You may decide to develop new action plans for new phases of your planned activity.

Action Plan Template

Goal:				
Chosen actions/tasks: (What will be done?)	Timeline:	What are the things we need to do to make this happen?	Resources: (space, cash, volunteers, equipment, material, expertise, systems)	Who is going to be responsible for making sure these things happen?
	(When will it be done?)			
Action 1				
Action 2				
Action 3				
Evaluation Process (How will you determine that your goal has been reached? How are you going to measure it?)				

Communication is a very important aspect of community organizing and will be important in your planning and implementing an incident response such as a public demonstration or protest. As a leader or community organizer you will be responsible for coordinating and motivating the team (your allies and key stakeholders), and you will also need to provide relevant, timely and accurate information to everyone involved.

Common pitfalls

- ▶ You don't do enough planning
- ▶ You under-estimate the impact of a public demonstration
- ▶ You don't involve your key stakeholders
- ▶ You don't clearly define roles & responsibilities
- ▶ You have unrealistic plans & no measures to evaluate success
- ▶ You get too involved in the nitty-gritty and get bogged down rather than moving forward
- ▶ You don't do enough planning

To sum it up, the more time you spend planning your demo, the better your results. An easy way to remember all the types of task that might be needed to carry out your public demo and meet your goal is to remember your **SCHEMES**:

Space - where are you going to hold your event?

Cash - what might need to be paid for and what can be donated?

Helpers - it takes a community to help one another out

Equipment - will you need sound, a stage, etc.?

Materials - signs are always very helpful to unite people and bring in onlookers

Expertise - survey the community to see who can offer their expertise

Systems - what systems might be contacted to help with your event?

Developing a communications strategy

Once an incident has occurred, it is important to know who to talk to about it, what to say and to whom. If you have the opportunity to do so, talk over the incident with those most closely affected, such as the survivors, their friends, and their families. This information gathering may include questions such as these:

- ◆ Has anything like this happened to them before?
- ◆ How was it handled then?
- ◆ Is this an isolated incident or a serial incident?
 - Serial incident can be defined as series of incidents that occur in a short space of time at different locations and are committed by the same perpetrator.
- ◆ Identify other victims/survivors. Were other people targeted?
- ◆ You may want to check with other agencies/groups documenting anti-LGBTQH bias incidents in your area or check newspapers and other media reports.

You might be able to get some guidance and information about what occurred if there is a local community services provider, such as an anti-violence project or a community center that has been involved. These organizations most likely have strict confidentiality rules about individual cases, but are also often willing and interested in helping the local community respond to the violence. Once you have talked matters over with those who have been most closely affected by the incident(s) you should think about the message you want people to hear and how you want to convey that message.

“Silence kills the soul; it diminishes its possibilities to rise and fly and explore. Silence withers what makes you human. The soul shrinks, until it’s nothing.”

Marlon Riggs, Filmmaker

Response assessment

Before launching a response, you want to conduct as thorough assessment of the situation as possible.

What follows is a general outline of the types of questions you may want to think about before planning a response to an incident of hate violence. For more information you can always call us at **212-714-1141**.

- Ask community members and local anti violence programs what has been done on the issue to date. If nothing has been done, ask why.
 - Does the incident warrant a police response?
 - Do the survivors want or trust police involvement? What does police involvement mean? If the survivors do want involvement, have the police been notified? If so, what was their response? If the police have not responded, why hasn’t anything happened?
 - What will you do if the police apprehend the attackers?
- Does the victim or your group want to go public?
- Risks of a widely publicized outcry to an issue of injustice may include:
 - Harassment
 - loss of public support
 - loss of community support

You very well may be disrupting power structures and you will need to prepare for this and decide how much you want to push your issues. The question to ask here is: Do these potential harms associated with the public response outweigh benefits of a response?

- Benefits to a widely publicized outcry to an issue of injustice may include:
 - Garnering necessary public support
 - Energizing your group
 - Keeping the issue in the public eye
- Is the incident one that the community wants to respond to?
 - Should you reach out and involve other groups?
 - How do you negotiate different approaches?

For example: To utilize the media or not? To involve certain groups and not others?

- Is there a victim assistance agency that can help such as an anti-violence project or other community based organization?
 - Often times, these agencies have resources that they can contribute toward your response or they may already have a response you can join.



**All human beings
are born free and
equal in dignity
and rights.**

*Universal Declaration of
Human Rights*

- They may also have helpful contacts and ties to community leaders, elected officials, law enforcement, and the media that may be useful.

- **Safety assessment/safety planning for the community.** Who else may be at risk? Is there a way to reduce the risk?

- What is the risk of future attacks by same perpetrator(s) against others in the community?

- Determining that there is some potential safety risk is not necessarily reason to keep quiet, it just helps to inform what an action might look like and what a community should have in place.

- **What do you do once all the hype dies down?**

- The struggles of the survivors and the community almost certainly will not go away when the hype dies down. You can continue conversations about bias and violence and encourage people in your community to know that they, too, can confront prejudice and can create positive change. One idea is to start community forums.

Deciding your message and your ask

What is a message? This is your way of communicating to the outside world:

- What's the problem?
- Why should I care?
- What's the alternative?
- What can I do?

Your message should be as consistent as possible, throughout the group, organization, community, coalition or collaboration you may be working with, and across the span of your involvement. Who are you speaking to? Your audience or the intended recipients of the message may change, and so should your delivery of the message, but the message itself need to be consistent. For example, if you want non-activists to pay attention to the issues of anti-LGBTQH hate violence you may use a metaphor or rhetoric to draw connection between oppression and

other types of violence to persuade them. Whatever your message delivery style or approach, try to be consistent in the content of your message.

In developing your message, try to gather as much information about the situation as possible. The more you know, the better you will be able to frame a message that speaks to a situation. Knowing the background information will help you if you ever need to speak with a reporter, do a public speech or try to convince an elected official or other community leaders why your issue is important. This does not mean that people should be expected to know every single thing about a topic. It's more about being able to talk about your issue in a way that brings people into the story about what happened and why it is important so that they get involved or support your cause. And while arguing point for point with a detractor is not always advisable, knowing something about your cause will help you keep control of a potentially difficult situation and you just may inspire the person to shift their perspective! And finally, keep the message very simple and relevant.

Knowing what you are asking for or demanding is the centerpiece to organizing. Your message must be clear and concise and must relate to your demands or your requests. These demands or requests must be measurable-meaning you need to know when they have been met or not. Some demands or requests may take longer than others and so you may also need to figure out how to determine if there is progress being made along the way. You might need different things from different people or groups, but you will want to be working toward some overall goal.

Some ideas for asks:

- Re-establish safety
- Justice
- Alleviating trauma/supporting victim(s).
- Empowering and comforting local communities experiencing the trauma ripple.
- Decreasing violence/preventing future incidents.
- Facilitating ally-building between people and between oppressed communities.
- Identifying or locating a suspect.
- Holding a system accountable.

Stakeholder analysis

While some incidents may present a clear community that has been impacted, quite often, bias related incidents involve complex intersections of identities, expanding to other communities that may become stakeholders in a particular response. Often

times, ‘the community’ may be thought of as a stakeholder. There are all different types of communities including those based on identity, geography or interests. For instance, issues of race, gender, class, immigration status and/or sexuality may frame in issue in a way that involves many different communities.

Engaging the right people in the right way in your community rapid incident response can make a big difference to its success.

Stakeholder analysis is the technique used to identify the key people who have to be involved and who may have an interest in your response. To help you map out your stakeholders, think of all the people who will be affected by your rapid incident response, who have influence or power over it, or have an interest in its successful or unsuccessful conclusion.

The list below shows some examples of the people who may be the stakeholders in your rapid incident response.

- ≈ **Victim/Survivor**
- ≈ Community based organizations
- ≈ **School/ college**
- ≈ LGBTQH community
- ≈ **Media**
- ≈ Youth
- ≈ **Police**
- ≈ Elected officials
- ≈ **Victim’s family & loved ones**

What do you need to know about your key stakeholders? You need to know how they are likely to feel about and react to your incident response because they are the cornerstone to any response. You also need to know how best to engage them in your response and how best to communicate with them. To not do so risks exploiting people who have been impacted by violence or may compromise work being done by others on the same issue.

Tip # 2:

Flyering for a Cause

When a hate-motivated incident occurs, such as a murder or abashing attack, it is often helpful to a community to know about it. One course of action you can take is to make flyers to distribute around the community. If your purpose is to raise awareness in LGBTQH communities, one of the most effective ways to do this is to flyer in areas where you know LGBTQH people tend to go as well as some places where you might attract allies. When the flyering you are doing is for the purpose of identifying and apprehending the bias attacker(s), you will want to post flyers at the incident site and in the vicinity of the incident. It is also useful to put flyers up in public spaces such as libraries, shopping centers, and laundromats. Provided that you have all necessary resources (i.e. copy paper, money for copying/printing and volunteers to flyer), try to flyer in as many places as possible. Flyers should be easy to read and should contain all the information you feel may be necessary to get your message across. This is also a good way to get others to come forward about similar incidents that they or someone they know may have experienced. **If you are flyering about a specific incident you should only do so with the victim's permission.**

Flyering for a public demonstration is also very useful, but also know that this means that anyone will be able to see it, including hate groups. If you put identifying information on the flyer know that you may get some unwanted replies. Be prepared for people who may not agree with your cause and document these contacts by calling your local anti-violence project or by calling AVP (212-714-1141) for technical assistance.

**"All that is necessary for evil to succeed is that good men do nothing."
Edmond Burke**

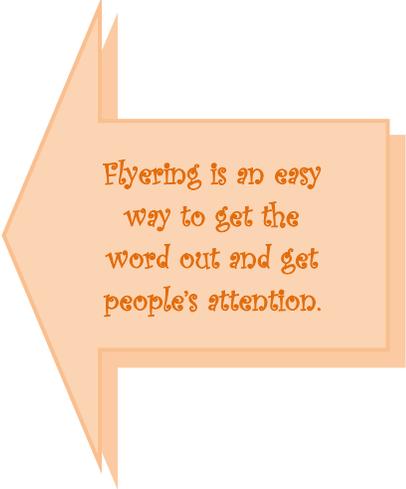
Whether you are flyering to raise awareness about a bias incident in your community or neighborhood or to ask for help from the general public, flyering can be a relatively cheap and easy way to get the word out and get people's attention.

How to create flyers

One very important consideration for creating and distributing flyers is to make certain they are legal. You should check to make sure there are no city ordinances against posting your flyer in certain areas or passing them out on the street.

You can make a flyer easily and quickly in Microsoft Word or any word processing program or by hand in five easy steps.

1. Across the top of the page, in large font, write your heading. This may be for example "Candlelight Vigil" or "Information Wanted."
2. Add specific details about the incident including: location, date and time the incident occurred, any special circumstances, any information on the attacker, etc. If a vehicle was involved list the make, model, year, color and any other pertinent information that is known and may be helpful in apprehending the perpetrator(s).
3. If a reward has been established, include the reward here in large font. This might help capture people's attention.
4. If the purpose of the flyer is to raise awareness about a bias murder and you are using a photo of the victim, make sure you obtain consent from the victim's family and their loved ones first. Help them find one or two photos that really capture their loved one. The photos should be of good quality.
5. List all contact information and verify that it is correct. Do NOT put the family's private contact information. List the numbers and email address for the hotline if you are working with a local anti-violence program, community based organization or a victim assistance agency. If the incident is a police matter also list the number for police station or tips-line given to you by the authorities.



Flyering is an easy way to get the word out and get people's attention.

Other helpful tips:

- ◆ Fact check documents line by line and make certain you have some corroborating documentation regarding what you wrote.
- ◆ If there is going to be an event addressing the incident, make certain that all the information that is needed is on the flyer. Have someone who has no connection to the situation read it over to see if they can get everything you want them to get from the flyer.

- ◆ If you work at a victims services agency involved in any way with the incident, do not use information directly from the agency intake forms because an attorney may petition the court to have access to those forms.
- ◆ Information can be taken directly from press reports; this way you can be certain that the information you put on your flyer is a public knowledge and that you are not releasing any confidential information that may harm the victim/survivor directly or impact the investigation and prosecution of the case.
- ◆ Run the flyer by volunteer attorneys or a local community based organization that has experience with this type of outreach.
- ◆ Get your flyer out ASAP, but not at the expense of doing it right.
- ◆ Post flyers in the neighborhood where the attack happened to get information from the community.
- ◆ Make certain that you post them in appropriate areas to avoid posting fines.

A note on safety

When people post or pass the flyers out, make certain that they go in groups of two or more and train them on how to respond to questions or potential threats. We recommend that you always make a safety plan before going out to flyer to help prepare yourself for dangerous situations. Your local anti-violence program or a victim assistance agency can help you with developing safety plan for you and your group. In New York City, please feel free to contact AVP at **212-714-1141**. You can also contact us if you need a referral to an NCAVP member in your area.

Sample flyers

We have included some flyers to inspire you and to give you examples of different types of flyers you may do. Feel free to use these templates for developing your own flyers:

- **Template # 1**
Information Wanted flyer, pg. 27
- **Template #2**
Flyer for a Memorial March, pg. 28
- **Template #3**
Flyer for a Murder Case, pg. 29

COPY

POST

DISTRIBUTE

INFORMATION WANTED

On DAY, FULL DATE, YEAR at approximately TIME a(n) CRIME occurred at LOCATION (STREET ADDRESS AND NEIGHBORHOOD/TOWN).

NAME OF YOUR GROUP OR ORGANIZATION and NAME OF ANY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS OR POLICE AGENCY are seeking information leading to the arrest of the person(s) responsible for the CRIME. Anyone who may have witnessed this crime, or who may have information that will aid in the identification and prosecution of those responsible is asked to contact YOUR AGENCY NAME or YOUR LOCAL POLICE AGENCY.

If you have information about this crime, please contact:

**NAME, POLICE AGENCY at PHONE NUMBER or
NAME, AGENCY/ORGANIZATION at PHONE
NUMBER**

All calls to AGENCY NAME are confidential

Insert your
' '

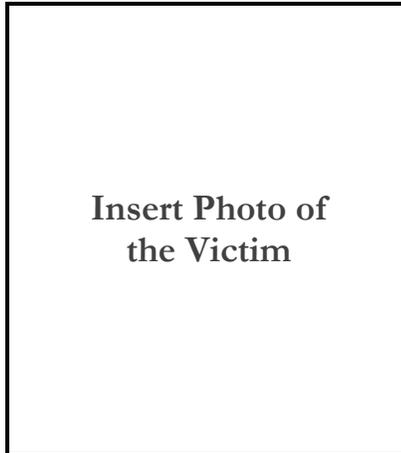


Call AGENCY TEL NUMBER						
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TEMPLATE 1

TEMPLATE 2

VICTIM'S NAME Memorial March



On DATE, DESCRIBE THE THE LOCATION WHERE IT DETAIL AS NECESSARY. MAKE SURE THE INFORMATION IS ACCURATE AND PUBLIC.

INCIDENT AND INCLUDE HAPPENED. GIVE AS MUCH

Join the YOUR AGENCY NAME and NAME OF PARTNER ORGANIZATION and others in a memorial march and vigil to remember VICTIM'S NAME and to demand answers regarding his/her still unsolved case.

Where and When:

DATE at TIME: Meet at EXACT ADDRESS. INCLUDE CROSS STREETS.

TIME: WHEN WILL YOU START MARCHING. PROVIDE ROUTE FOR THE MARCH AND A LOCATION OF THE RALLY. March on STREET to the END POINT for a rally and speak-out on the violence within and against our communities at the LOCATION (E.G. POLICE STATION, INCIDENT SITE, ETC.)

TIME: LIST ANY OTHER ACTIVITIES THAT WILL TAKE PLACE (E.G. CANDLELIGHTING)

Other families and friends of murdered loved one are highly encouraged to attend and to join the speak-out.

If you have any information on this case, please call AGENCY NAME at PHONE NUMBER



All calls will be kept in the strictest confidence.

If you have any questions regarding the memorial march, please call AGENCY NAME at PHONE NUMBER.

3
TEMPL
ATE

Murdered:

VICTIM'S NAME



\$SUM Reward

The family of VICTIM'S NAME, YOUR AGENCY NAME, and POLICE AGENCY are seeking information leading to the arrest of the person(s) responsible for the death of VICTIM'S NAME (pictured above). DESCRIBE THE MURDERED PERSON IN WAYS ANYONE CAN RELATE TO. (E.g. A brother, son, uncle and friend; VICTIM'S NAME was loved by many.) WHO (E.g. Family, the City, Police, Crime Stoppers) will pay up to \$SUM in cash for information leading to the arrest and indictment of the person(s) responsible for this heinous crime.

On DAY, DATE, YEAR at about TIME, VICTIM'S NAME was found DESCRIBE SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES OF THIS CASE (E.g. stabbed to death in his apartment) at STREET ADDRESS, CITY/TOWN.

If you have any information about VICTIM'S NAME murder, please contact: NAME, POLICE AGENCY at PHONE NUMBER or call the YOUR AGENCY NAME at PHONE NUMBER

All calls to AGENCY NAME are confidential.

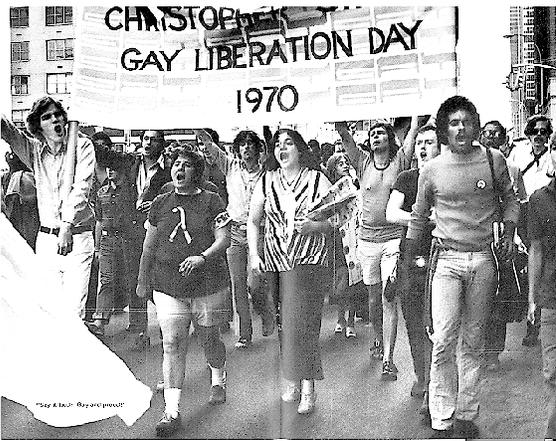


Tip # 3:

Public Protests & Demonstrations

From Stonewall Riots to present

Without a doubt the most well-known public protests in LGBTQH history were the Stonewall Riots. The Stonewall Riots as the five days of protests and public demonstrations in response to the police raid of Stonewall Inn, a New York City gay bar, on June 27, 1969 became known have inspired action in the LGBTQH communities (and beyond) across the United States. In the following days, months and years, LGBTQH anti-oppression protests increased in frequency and boldness. Although not all of these protests were strong in numbers, the fact they even happened was a measure of the strength of LGBTQH community activism. The Stonewall Riots and many of the large and smaller protests that followed had a powerful impact and a series of anti-LGBTQH laws and policies were overturned during the next decade. This included the decriminalization of consensual same-sex acts in a 2003 landmark Supreme Court case ruling in *Lawrence vs. Texas*, the passage of the first laws prohibiting anti-LGBTQH discrimination, and the election of the first openly LGBTQ political figures.



*Christopher Street Gay Liberation Day march, June 1970
Photographer Unknown*

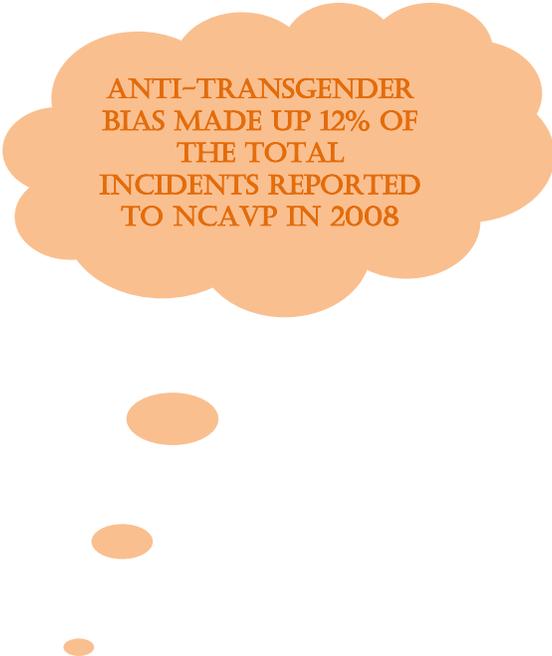
From Stonewall Riots to present, public demonstrations continue to be popular and used as a powerful vehicle to call attention to a specific issue and as a way of getting the points across to those in power. Public demonstrations are a good way to express opinions on certain public policies (whether expressing a positive affirmation or an opposing stance), to affect opinions and to encourage greater participation by oppressed groups in democratic processes, anti-violence and social justice activism.

What type of public demonstration should I do?

Many very good hearted people may want to help victims of bias-motivated violence, whether or not they even know the person or people who had the experience. Even if you are not working directly with the survivor(s), it helps to be aware of some of what a survivor may go through post-victimization as this may help when you are deciding what actions you might want to take or participate in. *(If you haven't already, we encourage you to read Chapter 5, Special Considerations: Being Sensitive to Victims & Survivors)* Your incident response may have a direct or indirect impact on the survivor of a bias incident even if you are not in contact with them or any proximity. Also, what you should remember is that it is not just one person who is victimized, but often it is also the family, friends, classmates and entire communities that are affected.

A public response to anti-LGBTQH bias incidents may take many forms. For example:

- Marches
- Protests
- Rallies
- Vigils



ANTI-TRANSGENDER
BIAS MADE UP 12% OF
THE TOTAL
INCIDENTS REPORTED
TO NCAVP IN 2008

The above examples are all forms of public demonstration. **Marches** are usually associated with advocacy, support, or protest, and often serve as well for public relations. For example, AVP organized a memorial march to remember a victim of a hate crime murder. This particular march had a two-fold goal of supporting the family and loved ones and advocating for additional resources to be dedicated by the police department and the city to the ongoing investigation of this heinous crime.

Rallies, like marches, are usually associated with advocacy, support, protest, in addition to providing opportunities for powerful expressions in the media. Demonstrators gather at a designated place, where they listen to speeches or participate in other activities (poetry reading, music, other artistic expressions, remarks by elected officials or celebrities, etc.) expressing their view or concerns.

Vigils are commonly held when someone has been murdered or seriously injured during an anti-LGBTQH bias attack, when you want to mark the anniversary of an act of violence, or bring attention to multiple unanswered acts of violence or injustice. We at AVP have witnessed how

very powerful candlelight vigils can be to act as an instrument for community healing and instill strength in people and communities.

Many people do not think too much about the differences in public demonstrations. A rally, a press conference, a speak out, a protest - each is different and deciding which to do or how to combine them will depend upon what message you are trying to send, who you want the message to get to and what you want them to do about it (*read more about developing your message in Chapter 5*). For instance, a rally may be used to get your target community involved in a specific issue and may attract elected officials or other public figures who may want to speak. Rallies often have titles like: "Rally to Stop the Hate." Protests, however, tend to target discriminatory policies or certain public figures or groups due to abusive practices or inaction. Protests tend to be more controversial in nature and may deter elected officials who, depending on who is being protested, may feel that the protest is beyond their ability to support it. An example of a protest would be a public demonstration to demand the firing of a police chief for not addressing the misconduct and brutality of the officers under his or her command.

HOPE IS IMPORTANT
BECAUSE IT CAN MAKE
THE PRESENT MOMENT
LESS DIFFICULT TO
BEAR. IF WE BELIEVE
THAT TOMORROW
WILL BE BETTER, WE
CAN BEAR A
HARDSHIP TODAY."

THICH NHAT HANH

There are many more forms a public demonstration can take from street theater to speak outs to press conferences - too many to go over in detail in this guide. Instead, what we will do is to give you general suggestions and tips for organizing a public demonstration that could be applied to any form of a public demo. For more ideas and guidance on other forms of public demonstrations please consider visiting the Community Tool Box (see Chapter 11, Resources).

In general, the form of a public demonstration you choose will depend on a number of factors including, but not limited to:

- The message you are trying to send
- The audience you want to reach with your message
- The actions you took on the issue up to this point
- Other events that may be taking place on the issue (for and against it)
- The resources you need versus resources you have available
- Your personal comfort with public demos and speaking engagements

Once you have figured out the above and have decided on a form of a public demonstration, the next step is deciding *when* to hold your public demo.

Depending on the overarching goal of your public demo, you may have a number of options to choose from:

- * Immediately after a bias incident occurred
- * When the survivor is willing and able to participate
- * During the indictment or trial, but not in a way that will interfere with or may be construed to influence the process
- * When an official statement is released
- * To commemorate an anniversary

When making these decisions, remember what is your message and your ask (in other words what is the overall goal you are trying to achieve), and who are your key stakeholders. You can use flyers to get the word out about your demonstration (*for more information on how to make a flyer see Chapter 6.*)

What you will need to organize a public demo

Whether you are planning a rally or a vigil, and whether your goal is to support a classmate who was a victim of anti-LGBTQH bullying or to raise public awareness that an anti-LGBTQH hate crime occurred in your community, you will need to consider and decide the following four elements:

- ▶ **Resources**
 - People, equipment, material
- ▶ **Time**
 - How much time you will need for preparation and the actual duration of an event
- ▶ **Money**
 - Cost & profit (if you seek to raise funds for your cause)
- ▶ **Scope**
 - Demo size, goals, and other requirements
- ▶ **Permits**
 - Will you need sound or gathering permits
 - Do you have enough time/money to get a permit
 - Will you need security or legal monitors

Think carefully about what you will need to organize your public demo. In deciding the scope of your public demo consider things it will include as well things it will not include. For example, you may decide to have four speakers, but decide against a “free mic” to ensure your demo stays on schedule and the message is on point. Alternatively, the size of your demonstration may affect whether or not you will need to obtain a police permit or other type of clearance. To the extent possible your key stakeholders should be involved in making decisions regarding the above and throughout the planning stages.

Note on safety

As was suggested earlier, think about safety and prepare a safety plan before hand to minimize risks to yourself and the other demonstrators. The safety plan can include practical ways to keep oneself safe during a demonstration as well as tips for getting home safely after a demonstration has ended. It can be a simple list of Do's and Don'ts. If you need help preparing your safety plan you can call us at **212-714-1141**. You may decide to hold a presentation or a training session for the stakeholders to share the safety plan or to inform them about their rights as protesters and when interacting with the police.

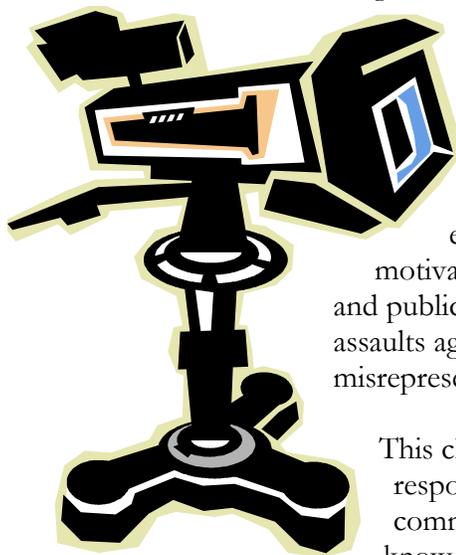
Tip # 4:

Media Power Tool

When you are having some type of public response to an incident of anti-LGBTQH violence, utilizing the media offers one of the greatest chances of success and response from the community-at-large, law enforcement and elected officials. It is also a way to draw more support to your cause or concern. If an announcement of your response to an incident appears in media or there's coverage of your event on TV, radio, internet blog or in print media, you and your message are almost definitely going to reach more people. Working with the media requires a certain amount of preparation and it is always important to make certain that you have someone who is designated to speak with the press and who understands the message or key points of your group.

We know that issues of importance to LGBTQH communities rarely if ever get the attention that they need or deserve. Anti-LGBTQH hate-motivated violence is one such issue needing and deserving a lot more media and public attention than it is generally given. Too many hate crime murders and assaults against LGBTQH people go underreported, unclassified and misrepresented not only with the police, but in the media as well.

This chapter deals with involving media in your community rapid incident response. While we cannot promise this chapter will make you a communications expert, you will have acquired a basic understanding and know-how of how to use old and new media to report a bias incident and get attention to your cause. More specifically, this chapter will help you learn how to write a media advisory or a press release and how to use internet blogging.



Proceed with caution

While engaging media can be a helpful way to get public and those in positions of power to pay attention to anti-LGBTQH hate violence, it can also result in unwanted results. Journalists are in a unique position of power when it comes to reporting crime issues. Besides making decisions about what ‘worthwhile’ story

they will report on, they have a power to give victim/survivor a voice, or to take it away and silence them. It is important to be aware of the pitfalls and dangers of involving media in your incident response before you decide to do so or obtain consent from a survivor (or their family and loved ones). The following is a list of three most significant pitfalls of engaging with traditional media such as broadcast and cable television, radio, newspapers, etc.

Media is a powerful tool against injustice that can do a lot of good, but it can cause serious harm if used improperly.

- Once the story is shared with the journalist, you have little or no control over how the message will be delivered and in what direction it will be spun
- The media can re-victimize the victim/survivor and the community through insensitive, sensational and dehumanizing coverage of the victim
- The real issues can be diluted if a journalist focuses on a singular sensationalized aspect of a story

Media is a medium that plays an important role in community justice and crime prevention and we encourage the use of media in responding to bias incidents but suggest approaching it with caution.

Creating media advisory and press release

The purpose of an advisory or the press release is to let the media know about the bias incident or hate crime and that there will be a public response to the incident such as a rally or a vigil. All of the previous tips on gathering your facts and information, making baseline assessment and developing your message also apply to writing a press release. The following simple steps will help you write a press release that gets the attention.

- ◆ Always include a media contact (name and phone number of the media ‘spokesperson’) so that people know where to get follow-up information
- ◆ Keep the information brief, one page if possible
- ◆ Precede each paragraph with one of the “five W’s.” (Though you may not be able to include all of them, you will need to address each heading)
 - **What:** What kind of event will you be holding and what is its purpose?

- **Who:** Any notable figures who will be speaking, presenting or in attendance
 - **When:** The time and the date
 - **Where:** The location needs to include exact address with cross streets and name of building and the room/floor number if appropriate, and directions
Remember, some location barriers may prevent some people from attending an event. For example, immigrants without documentation, youth without documentation people who need alternative access
 - **Why:** Use this space to note briefly any compelling statistics or explain the relevance and significance of the issue
- ◆ **Release date:** If the information is ready to use, you should put “For Immediate Release” across the top. If the information is to be used at a later date, use an embargo date, e.g.: “Embargoed for Release Until (date)”
 - ◆ Close all releases/advisories with an end-stamp to indicate the end of the document and include a mission statement if your group has one.

Internet blogging

One way to make sure that the message remains true and accurate is to use internet blogging to get it out to the outside world. By eliminating the middle men, you can ensure the accuracy of your message. You can be as brief and or as explicit as you desire. You can use photos, video and other images to help persuade the readers into action.

A blog is a frequently updated online personal journal or diary. It is a place to express and share your thoughts and your passions. And like with the traditional or “old” media, this “new” media tool allows you to reach a global audience in an instant.



Never before have average people like you or us been able to reach a global audience as easily, just by typing a few keystrokes. Bloggers can reach hundreds or even thousands of people each and every day.

Basic Components of a blog:

1. **Title** - The blog's title should be catchy and indicative of its content
2. **Date** - The date of the most recent post. You will notice that previous posts have been pushed down on the page to fit below the most recent one.
3. **Post Title** - The title of the most recent post.

4. **Text** - The actual text of the most recent post.
5. **Posting Information** - Information telling who wrote that particular post and when it was posted to the blog.
6. **Comments** - An area for readers of the blog to add their comments. This is an option some bloggers use and others avoid.
7. **Previous Posts** - A list of the most recent posts.
8. **Archives** - A link to view the archive section which contains older posts.

Blogs are very easy to start and maintain. Even if you have little experience with a computer you can probably begin one and quickly gain a dedicated readership. There is a lot of online help available for a beginner blogger. For example, take a look at www.blogbasics.com for detailed instructions on how to start your own blog.

When blogging about a bias incident, be careful not to reveal any personal or identifying information of the victim/survivor and remember that once the information is out there, there is no going back. Even if you remove your post later, the information that was already made available through the posts on your blog will remain public forever. Therefore, make certain you have your facts straight about the incident you are blogging about and that the information on your blog will not cause any harm to the survivor(s).

Tip # 5:**Engaging Law Enforcement & Criminal Legal System***Pros and Cons of Working with the Police*

Many people in our experience want to engage law enforcement for different reasons and we've found that in some instances it is beneficial to engage them, even in cases when they have been at fault. For survivors, law enforcement may lead to the apprehension of someone who may have caused the survivor even more harm in the future; a police report is often needed for access to further help; and in some instances a sense of control is returned post arrest. For people interested in organizing, law enforcement is the

link to permits; the police may have helpful information; and there are instances where law enforcement will help in your response for instance, creating their own outreach flyers to get information on the same incident you are working on. You will never really know whether or not a survivor or the people you are organizing with want to do this, unless they either just tell you or you ask them. Try not to judge, make assumptions or disempower the survivor or the people you are organizing with when working through options whether or how to engage law enforcement. Remember, the

final decision rests with the survivor(s) and the people most directly affected by the bias incident.

Consider carefully your community's relationship with the police and whether you want to engage them. Sometimes a community or an individual will not work with law enforcement because the police have never responded well, whether out of

AVP's Hate Violence and Police Relations Program seeks to improve the relationship between the queer communities and the law enforcement and criminal legal systems, to hold them accountable and to improve the responses and ensure the accessibility of these systems for LGBTQH survivors of violence.

neglect or outright police brutality. For example, the law enforcement agency may not put much effort into solving crimes when the victim is LGBTQH, or the police may be raiding LGBTQH establishments or conducting undercover stings in cruising areas. Some officers mock survivors while others will target and attack members of marginalized communities, using state power to protect themselves from prosecution. Communities that are disproportionately affected by police misconduct include:

- People of color**
- Trans communities**
- Immigrant communities**
- Youth**
- LGTBQ communities**
- Homeless people**
- Sex workers**
- Street involved communities**

These complicated relationships with law enforcement may come up when you are organizing. Negotiating whether or how to engage law enforcement often takes up a great deal of discussion time among organizers. Quite often the engagement choices will fall somewhere in the middle. For instance, you or your group may want to engage law enforcement to acquire permits but may choose to not invite them to a local organizing meeting.

The table below lists some of the reasons why one may choose to engage or not to engage the law enforcement, and can help you make that assessment with the survivor you are trying to support.

Reasons for engaging with the police & reporting a bias incident	Reasons for NOT engaging law enforcement & not reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying an unknown victim • Police & legal protection for victims/witnesses • Empowering a victim/survivor • Bringing forth witnesses • Increased patrols in areas where anti-LGBTQ violence is occurring on a regular basis • To prosecute the offender(s) • To deter potential offenders • To document hate crimes - more accurate data on anti-LGBTQ hate crimes • To receive compensation from crime victim's bureau • Increased sensitivity to the LGBTQH communities • Development and implementation of hate violence prevention strategies • To hold police accountable for their actions • Access to criminal & civil orders of protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of revictimization, stereotyping and/or physical abuse by police • Double bind of coming out/being outed (more out more open you're to harassment) • Racial profiling / targeting of your group/community • Police misconduct and brutality • Corruption • Bias inherent in & perpetrated by criminal justice system • Discriminatory laws and practices • Well documented patterns of abuse and neglect of one's community • Risks outweigh the benefits • Past history of abuse/negative experience with police • Becoming a target for police action as a result of making oneself known to the authorities • Concerns about immigration status • Retaliation by perpetrator (sometimes it is police)

Basics of engaging law enforcement

Responses to bias incidents should be done in a timely fashion. Law enforcement is often a part of this response even if they are not fully welcomed or their involvement is resented. Other times, people may want them involved and they may be noticeably absent. When a person has experienced a stressful and traumatic situation such as an anti-LGBTQH bias crime, they may need support in dealing with not just the experience itself, but also myriad legal, health, housing, economic and other issues that were brought on by the incident. This means dealing with the hospital or medical service provider, insurance company, attorneys, court, police or other law enforcement agency. Support in these areas is crucial and can have a significant effect on the person's recovery and healing from the trauma of the incident. Sometimes this support can come in the form of a police advocacy. One may engage in police advocacy even in situations when it was concluded that police misconduct has occurred. As a first, establish the goal you want to achieve by doing police advocacy. There may be more than one goal:

- * getting the report taken
- * getting the bias classification
- * getting the offender arrested/ holding them accountable
- * obtaining an order of protection
- * monitoring police response to ensure proper handling of the case
- * calling attention to a police misconduct
- * improving response and sensitivity to LGBTQH survivors of violence
- * some other goal defined by the victim/survivor or the community

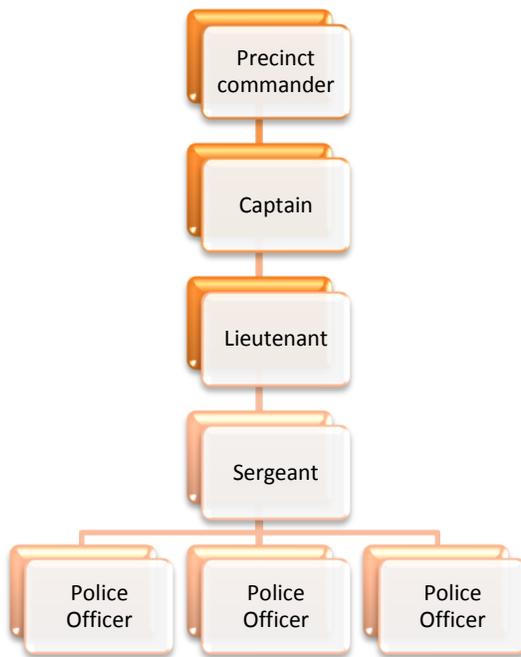
Advocacy with the police can take form of a phone call, a meeting, a discussion forum or an accompaniment to the police precinct/sheriff's station. We will provide you with some helpful tips for advocating with the police, whether it's on behalf of an individual survivor or a community as a whole:

- ◆ Look for violations of procedures by police and for inconsistencies in applying/enforcing the laws
- ◆ Ask the victim/survivor to speak
- ◆ If you're with a group, if they want to, have one designated point person who will speak
- ◆ Develop a relationship with the local police (offer help, propose a meeting to discuss concerns off your community and response strategies, give thanks if someone does the right thing)
- ◆ Learn as much as you can about the structure of your law enforcement agency and the chain of command

The above suggestions should not be confused with submitting to the system. Know that you both may need something from one another but there may be a host of issues that may get in the way of full cooperation. You do not have to compromise your ethics, but you might want to think about what is your bottom line and what you might be willing to give up.

Law enforcement agencies (i.e. police department, Sheriff’s office, District Attorney/Prosecutor’s office) operate under a structured chain of command.

Sample chain of command:



Knowing the chain of command will help you determine who to talk to if you need to go to the “next level.” Depending on your goal and on the situation you may need to start at the top working your way down, or from the bottom going upwards. Knowing when to go in what direction is the key. For instance, if the issue is a larger problem within the police station, a top-down approach may be the only way to institute change, but if the problem is a single officer then a bottom-to-top approach may be more appropriate because it may bring needed results faster.

Even if there is no need in this particular situation at this particular time to involve the police, you can think about and begin developing a working relationship with law enforcement agency in your area (for example: state; county; city; campus; FBI, etc.) From our own experience, we can say that one of the best ways to work with law enforcement around anti-LGBTQH bias crimes is to be proactive and to already have some form of a relationship with law enforcement agencies.

How to work with law enforcement and build relationships that will help achieve your goals

Rarely do law enforcement agencies reach out to the different communities in their precincts or sectors, although sometimes that can happen especially when the agency has a designated community affairs liaison officer (i.e. LGBT Liaison Officer). If you choose to engage law enforcement, you should be proactive and not wait for them to come to you. Things you can do to build a strategic relationship with law enforcement:

- ◆ One good avenue is to join local community organizations that work with law enforcement agencies, such as neighborhood watches.
- ◆ You can attend monthly police-community meetings if there are any in your area.
- ◆ You can also try to set up meetings with the commanding officers of all law enforcement agencies in your region. Use this opportunity as a time to introduce yourself and/or your organization and offer sensitivity trainings.
- ◆ If you pair with a group or an organization, you may be able to conduct trainings for law enforcement personnel and offer strategies, definitions and language for being more sensitive to the LGTBQ communities and survivors of violence. Effective trainings can help toward improving law enforcement responses to LGBTQH victims; development of effective bias crime prevention programs and strategies; more accurate data collection on anti-LGBTQH hate crimes and even successful prosecutions. Such results, however, take a tremendous amount of energy and time and multiple trainings as well as the commitment by the police to engage the process.
- ◆ Offer help and show them how you can be a resource. For example, do joint flyers and distribution, helping them make community connections and acting as a buffer between the survivor and the officers.
- ◆ Find out if there is a LGBT-community liaison and get to know them.
- ◆ Encourage law enforcement agencies to conduct accurate data collection. Accurate data collection helps law enforcement agencies, anti-violence programs and community centers with research, legislation and public policy. It can also help secure funding to institute initiatives for the community.

Once you have established a connection, maintain ongoing contact. Staff changes and people sometimes forget important information as new issues arise.

Alternatives to working with law enforcement

Even if the survivor chooses not to engage with the law enforcement, there are still many things you and your group can do without violating the survivor's personal choice and respecting their privacy and confidentiality. If the bias incident you are responding to is a public knowledge, for example, if the story appeared on the evening news or in print media, you could still reach out to the police around the incident and approach it from a 'community issue' angle. You would not be engaging in a police advocacy on behalf of a survivor per se, but on behalf of the community that was targeted. The police may not be able to share with you the specifics of a case as this would constitute violation of victim's confidentiality, but they should be able to work with you around the community safety issues and concerns.

We know from our own experience that it can be sometimes challenging doing advocacy and community organizing/response. Our responses at AVP are informed and driven by the needs of individual victims/ survivors who come to us for help, and are also driven by the needs of LGBTQH communities we serve and represent. It is sometimes hard to strike a balance between the two, as they may not always be the same, and sometimes may even be in conflict. Continually reminding the group of agreed upon goals often helps. It is also helpful to have some portion of your organizing time be about relaxation and just getting to know one another. This helps to bring people together in a different way and often makes the work go more smoothly. If you are having trouble negotiating the various needs of the people you are working with, one option is to call us for some support.

For some communities and individuals, working with law enforcement directly is

POWERLESSNESS AND SILENCE GO TOGETHER. WE...SHOULD USE OUR PRIVILEGED POSITIONS NOT AS A SHELTER FROM THE WORLD'S REALITY, BUT AS A PLATFORM FROM WHICH TO SPEAK. A VOICE IS A GIFT. IT SHOULD BE CHERISHED AND USED.

**MARGARET
ATWOOD**

simply not an option. There are different models in existence for doing this work without the involvement of law enforcement and criminal legal system. One example is a model developed by the Audre Lorde Project in Brooklyn, New York called Safe Outside the System (SOS) which uses community accountability approaches to challenge violence.

In addition to the 5 tips provided in this CRIR guide, you can respond to the anti-LGBTQH hate violence without engaging the law enforcement by doing one or more of the following:

- ◆ Documenting the bias incident and reporting it to the local anti-violence program (this could be an NCAVP member or another agency working on these issues; call **212-714-1141**)
- ◆ Doing advocacy with other agencies or systems
- ◆ Helping with community organizing
- ◆ Bringing people together for planning
- ◆ Hosting community forums

And last but not least, don't forget to consult our resources list in Chapter 11, for further help, ideas and resources.

Assessing Your Success and Following Up

Take the time as soon as possible after the action you have taken to assess all of the aspects of how you responded to the incident, from the message you developed to whether you had enough people helping with clean-up. Use this assessment to create a “Best Practices” for your future incident responses.

***Recognize
achievement-
there is
nothing more
motivating.***

Evaluation and Review Tips:

- ✓ Hold a post-project review meeting (hint: put this in your action plan)
 - ✓ Focus your meeting on learning – identify what you can use on the next incident response. Share the learning with others on your team or the organization.
 - ✓ Check whether you have met the objectives of doing this activity.
 - ✓ Did you deliver your response according to your budget and within your deadline?
 - ✓ Prepare a list of unfinished items and decide who will complete them
 - ✓ Write an end of project report and circulate. Identify in the report key learning points.
- ✓ Celebrate success with your team!

To evaluate your performance and map out areas to which you may need to pay more attention next time, try using the evaluation form on the next page.

Incident Response Review Form Template

Activity	Planned time	Actual time	Difference	Planned Cost	Actual Cost	Difference	Notes/ Observations
March/Rally							

You can adapt this template to serve your needs. You can for example add more columns for number of helpers, number of people attending your event, etc. When you are done, use this form to revise your Action Plan by changing anything that could have gone better.

So you say it's over

So the flyers have been distributed, the rally has ended and the crowd has dispersed, your message has been delivered, and the journalists have moved on to another story. The hype has died down. It's over. Or is it ever? It may be over for some people, but not for the victim/survivor and the community that was targeted. The trauma of hate violence can linger for a long time. As the new emergency arises, it consumes us. In the process of responding to the new crisis and helping the latest victim, we sometimes forget about those who were in crisis yesterday. For our response to truly have an effect on the survivor and the community we are trying to support, we must remember to take the time to check in with those we helped yesterday.

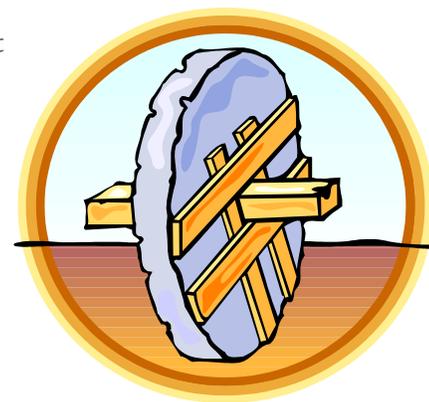
And finally, remember to practice self-care. Take time for yourself to do the things that are important to you outside of the organizing. Make sure you are able to have days where you can follow the routines that you had before you started organizing. Rest and familiarity will help to keep you motivated and energized.

Resources

Why reinvent the wheel?

We are big believers in sharing information, best practices and resources with one another and working together to transform our world into a safer and happier place for everybody. In this spirit, we encourage the use of and distribution of CRIR guide or any part of it as long as proper credit is given to the author, the New York City Anti-Violence Project.

If this CRIR guide has motivated you to take action, get more information on the topics covered herein and/or inspired you to learn and explore other ways of responding to bias incidents in your community, we have succeeded. For those seeking more information, we are providing a list of great resources developed by other projects and organizations, and we encourage you to explore them.



Knowledge is power. The more you know about hate violence and its effects on LGBTQH communities and communities at large, and the more you know about different approaches to forming a response, the better prepared you will be to respond to bias incidents in your community or neighborhood and the more effective your responses will be. Rapidly responding to anti-LGBTQH hate-motivated violence is an important task, not only because of its symbolic meaning, but for its positive impact on the survivors and the communities at large. We thank you for your interest in helping us address this very important issue and your desire to make a change in the lives of people affected by this type of violence. We are always here to support you—just call us at **212-714-1184** (office) or **212-714-1141** (hotline) when you need us. THANKS!

Resource List

ACT UP, Civil Disobedience Training and Resources

www.actupny.org/documents/CDdocuments/CDindex.html

- You can find a number of free and helpful documents and manuals for civil disobedience and nonviolent action on their website.

American Civil Liberties Union, Know Your Rights Handouts

www.aclu.org

- Student Walkouts and Political Speech at School handout
<http://www.aclu.org/pdfs/immigrants/studentwalkouts20060503.pdf>
- Know your rights when encountering law enforcement
http://www.aclu.org/pdfs/immigrants/kyr_english.pdf

American Civil Liberties Union of Florida

www.aclufl.org

- Your Right to Protest handout
http://www.aclufl.org/PDFs/right_to_protest_brochure.pdf

Community Tool Box, Community-building Toolkits

<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/>

- Offers numerous toolkits and step-by-step guidance in specific community-building skills, from developing an intervention to advocating for change and influencing policy development. Available online and free.

Gay and Lesbian Anti-Defamation League, GLAAD Media Essentials,

www.glaad.org/mediaessentials

- Free, downloadable training manual designed to provide individuals and organizations the tools necessary to meet their communications goals through effective media work.

INCITE!, Resources for Organizing

www.incite-national.org

- INCITE! works to produce educational resources that support grassroots organizing to end violence against women of color and create safer, more liberatory communities, and has a great list of free and downloadable organizing resources.

Midwest Academy, Organizing for Social Change Manual
www.midwestacademy.com/academy_manual.html

- This 425-page manual covers every aspect of Direct Action Organizing. The Academy also provides training and consulting, and you can submit your questions about direct action organizing online and they will post the question and a reply on their webpage. This is a free service, the manual is not.

National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs
www.ncavp.org

- List and contact information for over 30 local anti-violence programs across US. Also, NCAVP offers technical assistance around issues of hate violence and a number of free and downloadable publications are available on their website.

National Gay and Lesbian task Force
www.thetaskforce.org

- The Task Force provides intensive skills training to activists nationwide and has a list of free and downloadable tools on their website.

Ruckus Society, Training Manuals
www.ruckus.org/section.php?id=9

- Ruckus Society provides environmental, human rights, and social justice organizers tools, training, and support. Their Action Planning and Media manuals are posted on their website and are free.

Training for Change, Organizing Resources
www.trainingforchange.org

- TFC has a lot of resources for activists from handouts to online books to manuals. Some are free, others are for purchase.

Notes:

Notes:

A Guide to Community Rapid Incident Response

Five simple tips you could learn over a lunch break

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