

CONTESTING ANTISEMITISM

In this section, we offer tangible steps to address antisemitism in ourselves, our circles and our society.

BE PREPARED

EDUCATE YOURSELF SO YOU CAN EDUCATE OTHERS

If we can't recognize and name something, we can't contest it – in others or in ourselves. Antisemitism is not always obvious. This toolkit is a place to start.

[LINKS TO MORE RESOURCES HERE!](#)

CURATE RELEVANT RESOURCES

Having information at hand means you are able to respond quickly when the need arises. Find trusted resources that you can access when you need them.

[UPSTANDERS HAS SOME HERE.](#)

LISTEN

Being an ally means supporting – not usurping. Listen to Jewish voices, activists and thinkers. Talk to your Jewish friends about these issues. Come at the topic with compassion and empathy.

STAY STRONG

DON'T TRY TO BE PERFECT

Be prepared to articulate the principles that lead you to your positions. Beyond that, you do not need to defend yourself against interrogators who seek to provoke.

DON'T OBSESS

We need to stay informed. But we also need to protect our emotional well-being. Set specific times aside to inform yourself, but do not obsess over the news or "doomscroll" social media.

CELEBRATE SUCCESSES

Do not expect to end a millennia-old phenomenon in a day. Celebrate successes. Look for the helpers. Remind yourself that you are among a world-wide network advancing equality and respect. Show gratitude. Send a message to those who stand with Jewish people.

ACT

DON'T LET IT PASS

When someone makes an inappropriate comment, we may be too shocked to react appropriately in the moment. Having verbal responses prepared allows us to react to antisemitic (or other offensive) comments. Have a response handy.

[HERE ARE SOME IDEAS.](#)

CONTEST UNANIMITY

When a view is expressed in media, at a public event, in the workplace or wherever you engage, express yourself. You may not be prepared, if it is an in-person event, so just let people know that not everyone agrees. Say something simple that doesn't raise the level of conflict.

[SOME SUGGESTIONS](#)

INTERVENE AS APPROPRIATE

The first priority in a situation of harassment is to ensure the safety of all involved – while not ducking the responsibility to do the right thing. [Right To Be has created a guide – the 5D's of Bystander Intervention](#) – to guide people in responding when we see instances of harassment.

INTERACTING ONLINE

The emotional impacts of online hatred can be debilitating. Contesting online hate is vital. But if making waves online causes a tsunami of emotions for you, consider supporting excellent organizations monitoring and contesting online hate, or use your energies in some of the other ways outlined in this section.

[IF YOU CHOOSE TO ENGAGE: SOME TIPS](#)

CONTEST MICRO-AGGRESSIONS

Microaggressions are slights, insults, indignities or other words or actions that are pervasive and, especially because they are so common, have a cumulative impact on the lives of the recipients. Be prepared to contest them with simple responses: "That's not actually funny." "Why would you say that to her?" "Would you make a comment like that about any other group?"

IF IT'S NOT FUNNY – SAY SO

Most people can tell the difference between a harmful and a harmless joke. Calling out cruel humour is not likely to make us popular. But not calling it out can make us complicit. Go with your gut. If you feel a joke is mean-spirited, say so. Don't laugh. Simply say, "I don't think that's funny."

EXPAND YOUR IMPACT

NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS

Individuals can have our greatest impact within our circles of influence. Coalition-building between organizations is important – but individual connections are a vital and often overlooked part of social change. Make contesting antisemitism part of your everyday life, at work, among friends and family, wherever you interact.

BUILD COMMUNITY

Don't do this alone. Find like-minded friends online and consider creating a private Facebook or WhatsApp group where you share and support one another. Try to connect over coffee, on the phone or while walking the dog, with others who share your outlook. (Tip: Talk about how you feel and identify successes and progress. Don't just share examples of the problems and bad news – that's debilitating!)

EMPOWER YOUR CIRCLES

You will be surprised at the range of spokes in your wheel of connection. Do an inventory of your relationships and circles of influence. Be prepared to respond when voices with negative agendas attempt to intrude on your kids' soccer team or the animal rescue organization you support. Be conscious that all your networks remain welcoming to all, including Jewish people.

BE A CONNECTOR

Act as a connector between Jewish agencies and your communities. Contact a Holocaust education centre to bring a speaker to your child's school. Ensure a Jewish community voice is included in antiracism panels by reaching out on both sides. If there is not a large Jewish community nearby, arrange for a video connection. Be sure your library has adequate resources on these issues. Ensure antisemitism is included in workplace discussions of racism and diversity. Familiarize yourself with groups, resources and individuals available nationally and in your community.

[HERE ARE SOME ORGANIZATIONS YOU MIGHT CONSIDER CONNECTING WITH.](#)

ADOPT THE 80/20 RULE

The trap we often fall into is arguing with people whose minds will never change. To have the greatest impact, we should devote most of our resources – say, 80% – to those who are likely to come over to our side. If you insist on trying to change the minds of people who are entrenched in their positions, limit the amount of effort you put in with them – say, 20%.

CALL IN, THEN CALL OUT

Why presume someone is bigoted when ignorance may be the likeliest explanation? When someone expresses an inappropriate view, call them in. Invite them to become informed. We are trying to make allies, not entrench people in antagonistic positions. Do not alienate potential allies by presuming people come from a place of hostility. If, after presented with your considered reasoning, they demonstrate a lack of goodwill, *then* call them out.