

MANITOBANS:  
**COVID-19  
DOESN'T  
DISCRIMINATE.**  
NOR SHOULD  
**YOU!**



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## Steps for Responding to Racist Comments

COVID-19 is not specific to any ethnic or racial group! However, racist and xenophobic misinformation about Asian communities and racialized groups has been spread online, in the community, and in the media. Below are steps for responding to this type of misinformation.

### 1. Identify

The first step is to identify comments that are racist or xenophobic. These can be very obvious and hateful, or subtle such as a joke. Both forms reinforce racist and xenophobic biases and need to be addressed.

### 2. Interrupt

Next, interrupt the situation so that you can begin to address the racist or xenophobic comment. For example: **“Hold on a second, let’s talk about that comment.”**

### 3. Ask

It can be very powerful to question a racist or xenophobic comment. Questioning an ignorant comment can cause the individual to reflect on their own biases or blind spots by having to explain themselves, and it also helps you understand their thinking so you can better frame your response. For example: **“Why do you say that?” “What do you mean?” “Tell me more.”**

### 4. Educate

Not all racist and xenophobic comments and images are motivated by hate,; sometimes they come from a place of misinformation, ignorance or lack of a contact with diverse communities. So, it can be helpful to explain to the individual why the comment is offensive. This gives the individual the benefit of the doubt and allows them to change their opinion. For example: **“COVID-19 is a virus that anyone can get. It is not associated with any specific race or ethnicity.”**

### 5. Support

Just like it is important to be the first to interrupt racist and xenophobic comments, it is also important to support and repeat the anti-racist messages others who have done the same. Having multiple people interrupt racist and xenophobic comments can have a multiplying and reinforcing effect. You can repeat the anti-racist message in different words, or you can thank the first person for addressing the comment.

**Reporting Racist Incidents:** If you have experienced racism related to COVID-19 please report the incident with the [Asian Heritage Society of Manitoba](https://www.asianheritagemanitoba.com) to document your experience and help inform our collective action efforts. The reporting form is available here:  
<https://www.asianheritagemanitoba.com/incident-reporting/>

*Source: This information was adapted from Teaching Tolerance’s “Basic Strategies”:  
<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/publications/speak-up-at-school/in-the-moment/basic-strategies>*