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## Dos and Don'ts in Responding to Anti-Semitism on Campus

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In the 1930s, the dean of Yale University's medical school—who was Jewish himself—reportedly advised his admissions team, “Never admit more than five Jews, take only two Italian Catholics, and take no blacks at all.”

The American college campus has come a long way in the past century. Colleges are more diverse, and they treat Jews and other minorities more fairly. But that does not mean that you won't encounter biased attitudes and bigotry.

Let's say something anti-Semitic happens on your campus. Maybe it's a speaker who says Jews are “the new Nazis.” Or an ad appears in your campus newspaper that denies the Holocaust. Or a swastika is drawn on the building of a Jewish group, or a comment made by a fellow student sounds anti-Jewish to you. You can respond effectively, empower your campus community to learn from the event, and even take steps to ensure it doesn't happen again.

### **If an anti-Semitic incident happens on your campus:**

- **DO call** campus security or 911 immediately if there is any threat to your safety or that of your fellow students.
- **DO document** the incident. If you discover anti-Semitic graffiti or posters, take a photo of the scene, then call the campus police and tell them you need them to come and take an incident report.
- **DO report** the incident to a campus authority as a bias incident. Even if campus security determines that the action was not illegal, you are ensuring

that some type of follow-up will take place.

- **DO try** to find out if the perpetrator of the incident was a student or someone from off campus. That will make a difference to how campus security and the administration deal with the matter.
- **DO report** the incident by calling your local ADL office or using ADL's [online incident report page](#). ADL staff can provide support and advice. Also, ADL tracks anti-Semitic incidents, including those that occur on campuses. Your report will help ADL keep accurate data and combat anti-Semitism.

Depending on the type of incident and the scope, here are some other things you could do:

- **Talk** to your fellow students about how much anti-Semitism can hurt you. Speak about the impact it has on you personally. This is especially relevant if students at the school have a casual culture of making fun of Jewish students or making assumptions about Jews.
- **Turn** the incident into a teachable moment. Organize a small gathering, or, if you can, a campus-wide event on the topic of mutual respect and understanding for all religious, racial, ethnic, and social identity groups. A collective message against anti-Semitism and all hate can be very powerful. Hillel, an on-campus Jewish Life professional, or another relevant campus organization can help you make it happen.
- **Ask** your university president to issue a statement against what happened. In most cases, they will do so without being asked. If no statement has been issued, organize a group of students and faculty to make this request. A strong statement that specifically names the action as anti-Semitism goes a long way toward making it clear that the school will not tolerate acts of hate.
- **Show** pride in your Jewish identity and heritage.
- **Don't use** hateful language to respond. Your goal should be to show why bias is hurtful, not to even the score.

- **Don't take** matters into your own hands. If someone puts up anti-Semitic flyers, for example, do not remove them without approval from your university.
- **Don't call** for bans on free speech. Anti-Semitic speech by itself is generally protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and other laws. Focus instead on countering bad speech with good speech.
- **Don't give up** It's important to show how much this event or incident hurt you and share those feelings with your fellow students. The actions you take can increase understanding and lead to collaboration.