



NOT IN OUR TOWN

Hate and Bias Action Teams

NIOT MISSION STATEMENT

NIOT is a movement to stop hate, racism, and bullying, and build safe, inclusive communities for all.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

A Hate & Bias Response Team (HBRT) provides a structure to local communities to respond to and prevent hate crimes, support residents who may experience hate incidents, and mobilize the community for effective action. The Hate & Bias Response Team is a collaborative effort between diverse community organizations and members; governmental agencies; faith, business and civic groups; and nonprofit organizations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Monitor and improve reporting** of hate and bias incidents and crimes by working with diverse community groups (especially targeted communities), law enforcement, faith and civic organizations, and local media.
- **Support victims and vulnerable communities** after incidents.
- **Communicate facts and methods** for action to the larger community.
- **Mobilize community members** to stop hate and bias.



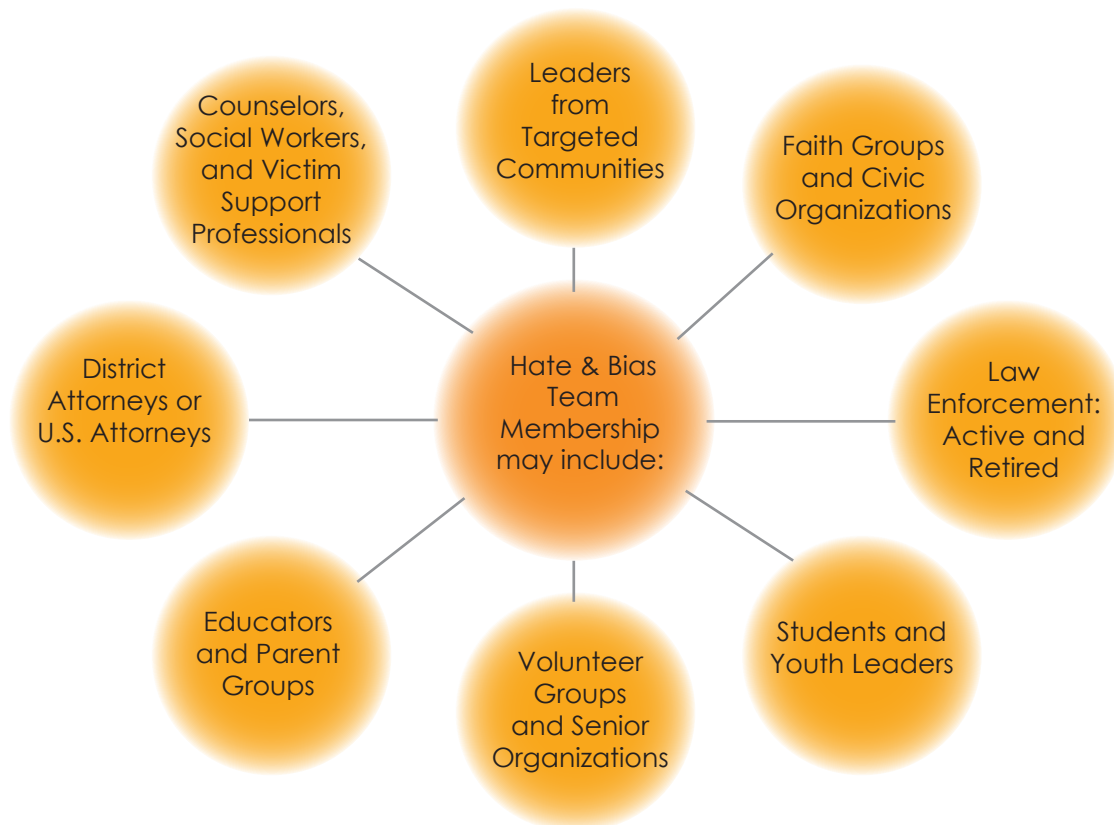
HATE CRIME DEFINED AND THE IMPORTANCE OF RECOGNIZING HATE CRIMES

The FBI has defined a hate crime as a “criminal offense against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by an offender’s bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity.” Although hate crime laws vary by state, this definition, codified by federal law through the **James Byrd-Matthew Shepard Act**, can guide local reporting and tracking of hate incidents and crimes.

Hate crimes spread fear to all who recognize they could have been targeted because of their identity. While all crimes by their very nature are harmful, hate crimes tend to have an especially devastating effect on both the individuals who are directly impacted, as well as the broader community in that demographic group.

Fear caused by hate crimes degrades the quality of life for people, drives decisions about where to live and work, and whether to participate in the community. It is also important to understand the potential for hate incidents to increase community tensions. Distrust toward law enforcement and civic institutions can grow when hate crimes and bias incidents are unacknowledged and unaddressed.

TEAM CONCEPT



All HBRT members will be trained, but a core group of first responders will have more focused training on trauma-informed engagement with victims, working with law enforcement, and effective, sensitive messaging on social media. The majority of members will collaborate to build a community response system. Activities will include outreach when an incident occurs, spreading messages of support for those harmed, organizing education and awareness events, holding vigils or gatherings, and strategizing with the larger community on effective preventive action.

PLAN OF ACTION

1. Build a response protocol with local community organizations on how to contact and provide resources to victims, communicate with targeted groups, and mobilize community support.
2. Create a monitoring mechanism that includes a database of incidents that can reveal patterns and problem areas that require follow-up action. (Guidance and sample forms provided by NIOT)
3. Form a network of engaged members and contacts, including diverse community and faith organizations.
4. Develop a relationship with law enforcement and prosecution agencies to communicate about emerging incidents and support of victims of hate crime.
5. Listen to victims and act in partnership with them. Respecting the wishes of those who have been harmed is essential to team protocols, including whether or not to report the incident to the police. HBRT members will take precautions to not compromise any possible investigation.
6. Work with NIOT community outreach team or other groups on a communications plan to help alert the community of an incident.
7. Raise awareness in the community about HBRT and the need to address hate and bias.