

Breaking Down Hate Speech

* DID YOU KNOW ...

Eighty-eight percent of social media-using teens have witnessed other people being mean or cruel on social-networking sites. You can help change the trend: Be an upstander against meanness and cruelty when you see it online.

Match the words to their definition

demographic	intentionally hurtful and harmful, designed to insult or degrade
track	knowledge collected from many people towards a common goal
collective intelligence	when companies collect information about you based on your online behavior
derogatory	common categories of the population, such as age, gender, and race

* WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How would you describe the impact of hate speech on individuals? On targeted groups? On communities?

* DO YOU REMEMBER ...

What hate speech is and how you can create a culture in which hate speech is unacceptable, both online and offline?

1. Family Activity

Sara lived in a community where there had recently been a number of robberies. A store owned by the father of a boy in her class was one of the shops targeted; several windows were broken and a number of items stolen during the night. Sara wasn't sure why, but José's father -- the store owner -- told the police he suspected that the teens who had broken in were Muslim. Sara could understand why José and his family were upset about the robbery, but she was shocked to see José making derogatory comments about Muslims on his Twitter page. "Muslims are terrorizing our town!" he tweeted, along with, "I wish they would go home." Sara was confused and upset. As a Muslim who was born and raised in her town, this was her home. Plus, it wasn't even clear that it had been a Muslim who had vandalized the store -- and even if it was, all her family and friends were honest and peaceful. Sara had always liked José, but she was confused, hurt, and scared by the tweets. She decided to call in sick to school the next day.

2. Think Out Loud!

- ~ What is your immediate reaction to this situation? What seems realistic or unrealistic?
- ~ Do you think José's tweets would be considered hate speech? Why, or why not?
- ~ Can you understand why Sara felt hurt and scared when she saw José's tweets?
- ~ Why do you think José posted the comments on Twitter? If you had the opportunity to respond to José in person, what would you tell him?
- ~ How is hate speech online similar to or different from hate speech offline?

3. Common Sense Says ...

Sometimes people repeat hurtful stereotypes because they're trying to be cruel -- or even trying to be cool -- but other times it's because they're ignorant. Don't be one of the ignorant ones: If you're making a comment about a group of people, check yourself! Is the comment a generalization about a race, religion, national origin, gender, or sexual orientation? Not all stereotypes are bad, but if you think it might hurt, embarrass, or offend someone, you could be getting dangerously close to spreading hate speech.