



Understanding and Stopping Anti-Asian Hate: Article #11

## **UNDERSTANDING AND STOPPING ANTI-ASIAN HATE: WHY ASIANS AREN'T REPORTING HATE CRIMES**

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The Atlanta spa shootings. Asian woman attacked in NYC. Student of Chinese descent stabbed in the head. These are some of the more publicized hate crime stories against Asian Americans. However, in reality, hate crimes committed against Asian Americans are often overlooked and underreported. The FBI reported 279 anti-Asian incidents in 2020, but the actual number is likely much higher. NBC reported a 339% increase in hate crimes in 2021, but even this number is likely inaccurate. This is because most hate crimes are not reported.

There are multiple reasons why hate crimes aren't reported, including distrust of the government and obscurity around the definition of a hate crime. Many of the situations Asian Americans face don't count in the legal definition of hate crimes. These include spitting, racial slurs, and some instances of verbal assault. As a result, Asian Americans don't think that their difficulties will be dealt with and are less likely to report them. Some don't even realize they are victims of a hate crime. Also, some

Asian Americans face language barriers and feel uncomfortable reporting crimes. The government has not always helped Asian Americans, and historical cases in which America has supported oppression of Asian immigrants have caused a certain amount of distrust. Asian Americans do not feel comfortable talking to law enforcement about the racism that they face. In addition, Asians are often assumed to be doing well by stereotypes such as the model minority, so many people don't even believe that Asians face violence in the community.

Some Asian Americans, especially those with low-income, fear retaliation. They doubt law enforcement's ability to control perpetrators. Many do not have the resources to report hate crimes and aren't encouraged to report hate crimes because of their environment and culture. Younger Asian Americans are deterred from revealing they are victims of hate crimes because they feel like it will burden their parents. Although organizations are now encouraging people to report more often, cultural and societal values still discourage Asian Americans from reporting hate crimes. Recently, more elderly Asian Americans have been attacked and often do not understand what is happening to them. Since many are immigrants and do not speak English very fluently, they do not know how and where to report these crimes. Spreading the knowledge of how reporting hate crimes works is also important. Everyone can report to Stop AAPI Hate if they do not want to go directly to the police.

It's important to start reporting these crimes because hate crimes severely harm people and some even result in death. Even starting conversations within a small community can eventually help increase the number of people who report hate crimes. Starting with telling others like close friends and family will eventually lead to the confidence to report directly to law enforcement. The first step to stopping hate crimes is to acknowledge the prominence of racism and violence in the US. Having more accurate numbers will help induce change for a safer community.

