



Celebrating our Legacy. Forging our Future.

As evidenced by the rising incidents of violent hate crimes, racism has continued to plague our society. In these unprecedented times, standing in solidarity with Asian and Pacific Islander communities only works if we also combat anti-Asian racism as a united front against oppression.

In the wake of increased violence against the Asian community south of our border and here at home in Canada, CDCD expresses immense sadness over the lives that have been lost. Our deepest sympathies are with the survivors, families and loved ones who have been affected by these heinous acts.

The [statistics](#) on Anti-Asian and Pacific Islander crime are sobering; even while the recent tragedy in Atlanta demonstrated the gravity of anti-Asian racism, media conversations have often focused primarily on the terrorist and [not on the victims](#). Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, Ontarians have seen an explosion of hate crimes perpetrated against the Asian community. The continued impact of historical discrimination has encouraged and emboldened racist attacks on Asian and Pacific Islander communities.

The reality is that anti-Asian racism is not only an “American problem”; these sentiments have a long and shameful history in Canada as well -- including, but not limited to -- the Chinese head tax of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the expulsion and internment of Japanese-Canadians during WWII. The legacy of [anti-Asian legislation and history](#) makes it imperative for us to collectively protect and stand with Durham’s Asian and Pacific Islander communities.

Some steps to consider towards advocating for change includes:

- **Offer support to your Asian neighbours and friends.** Underlying the blatant attacks are stories of dismissal and even denial. Now is the [time to listen deeply](#) to the communities impacted by racism and to acknowledge their realities.
- **Take time to learn about racism and its impacts.** It is important to continue to educate and re-educate ourselves. It is each person’s responsibility to take the initiative to learn about the history, stories and struggles of marginalized populations. [Knowledge and empathy](#) open up the opportunity for meaningful discussion and drives positive change.
- **Learn how to safely intervene if you see a racist attack.** Consider signing up for a [bystander training program](#) to learn skills on how you can help during an attack.
- **Practice respectful language.** Many people are subjected to [micro-aggressions](#). Be mindful of your language and the questions you ask others. Asking where someone is from or what their nationality or heritage is can be hurtful and make them feel singled out. Think about whether you would want someone asking you the same questions you feel inclined to ask.

CDCD stands in solidarity with Asian residents and allies in Durham and beyond.

Hermia Corbette, Executive Director

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