

Youth Experiences of Discrimination & Racism on the North Shore

What Parents Need to Know

What is discrimination?

Discrimination happens when someone is treated unfairly based on their race, ethnicity, language, religion, gender and sexual orientation, where they come from, or other personal characteristics.

For youth, discrimination can show up in many ways, including:

- Teasing, bullying, or harassment
- Being ignored, excluded, or treated poorly
- Verbal abuse or hate speech
- Online attacks or social media targeting

Discrimination can affect a young person's sense of safety and belonging.



What is racism?

Racism is a form of discrimination based on race, skin colour, ethnicity, language, accent, or place of origin. Racism can happen between individuals, but it can also be built into systems like schools, media, or institutions. Racism is harmful and violates human rights standards in Canada.

How common is discrimination and racism among youth?

In Impact North Shore's 2025 Youth Survey, many young people shared that discrimination is part of their everyday lives: **7 out of 10 youth respondents** said they experienced some type of discrimination in the past year.

Among youth who have experienced discrimination, many said it was based on their race, skin colour or ethnicity (31%), place of origin (23%), and language or accent (20%). They also shared that they experienced racism in multiple places, including in school, online and on public transit, and that these experiences happened several times each month.



Why does this matter?

Experiencing discrimination can affect youth **mental and emotional health**. Impact North Shore's survey found that youth who experienced discrimination are more likely to experience stress, anxiety that is difficult to cope with, isolation, and poor mental health.

These experiences can have **long-term effects**, influencing their well-being into adulthood.

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How can you support your children?



Recognize the Signs

- Changes in your child's mood or behavior
- Withdrawal from their friends or activities
- Not wanting to go to school or leave their home



Talk About Racism

- Help your child understand that racism and discrimination are harmful and unacceptable
- Encourage open conversations about discrimination and human rights in Canada



Build Strong Support Systems

- Strengthen family connections
- Foster friendships and community participation
- Ensure your child knows they have someone to rely on for support



Foster Safer Spaces

- Ask your child what they need to feel physically and emotionally safer at home, at school, and in the community
- Speak to other parents, teachers, and trusted adults about building safer spaces for youth



Empower Youth

- Explore strategies with your child on how to respond safely and assertively to racism, such as reviewing resources together
- Support your child to report incidents or talk to trusted adults; review the [STEP UP North Shore protocol](#) on reporting.

Research shows that youth who have **trusting relationships, community connections**, and a **strong sense of belonging** are more resilient against the negative effects of discrimination.

Resources for Parents & Youth



Learn More About Racism & its Effects:

[Impact North Shore: Anti-Racism E-Learning Course](#)

Learn How to Practice Allyship:

[STEP Up North Shore: Racism Response Protocol](#)

Access Support for Incidents of Racism:

[BC Racist Incident Helpline](#)
1-833-457-5463

If you require support in navigating resources or making a report, please contact Impact North Shore at 604-988-2931 or Office@ImpactNorthShore.ca.

Remember: Supporting your child through experiences of discrimination helps them feel seen, heard, and valued. Small actions, open conversations, and strong connections can make a big difference in their mental health and overall well-being.