

Responding to Discrimination: Supporting Those Who Experienced Harm and Those Who Caused Harm

This resource has been developed with care and sensitivity to the emotional, cultural, and social impacts that witnessing and experiencing discrimination may have on individuals and communities. It provides guidance for supporting both those who have experienced harm “the harmed” and those who have caused harm “the harmer” during and after a discriminatory incident. This resource applies to all forms of discrimination, including but not limited to race, Indigenous identity, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, and ability.

This guidance is intended to complement existing district and school policies and procedures related to incident response. District and school personnel should continue to follow established policies and protocols when responding to incidents or allegations involving racism, discrimination, threats or other safety concerns.

When addressing discriminatory incidents in schools, it is essential to prioritize both healing and accountability. Support is needed not only for the person harmed and the person who caused harm, but also for those indirectly affected, such as witnesses, staff, and students. Accountability should include appropriate consequences as well as opportunities for education, reflection, and growth. Once the safety needs of the harmed individual have been met – and with their consent – restorative practices can help foster repair and contribute to a safer, more inclusive environment.



Ministry of
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Steps	The Harmed	The Harmer
Immediately	☐ Remove from the harm	☐ Remove from the situation
	☐ Provide a safer and supportive space	☐ Connect student(s) with a trusted adult
	☐ Connect student(s) with a trusted adult	☐ Consult counsellor/provide counselling support as needed
	☐ Consult counsellor/provide counselling support	☐ Listen and remain neutral
	☐ Listen to understand and believe	☐ Phone parents/caregivers
	☐ Phone parent(s)/caregivers	☐ Remember: the harmer may have been harmed
	Before contacting parents/caregivers, reassure student(s) that their safety is the priority. Consider connecting with appropriate support as needed (e.g., local First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities; cultural organizations; 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations).	
During	☐ Allow the harmed to communicate with agency and hold space for their voice and emotions	☐ Hold supportive space for their perspective of the incident
	☐ Document—take notes. Student(s) should not have to repeat their harmful lived experience	☐ Document—take notes
	☐ Listen to understand and believe	☐ Listen to understand and remain neutral
	☐ Inquire about online activity	☐ Inquire about online activity
	☐ Preserve privacy	☐ Share the immediate impact for the harmed with the harmer and their parents/caregivers. ☐ Consider what accountability might look like

Steps	The Harmed	The Harmer
After	☐ Consult and collaborate on a safety plan as needed	☐ Determine appropriate consequence(s) • Connect to school/district code of conduct and other relevant policies • Consult and collaborate on a safety plan as needed
	☐ Communicate with the harmed student(s)' parents/caregivers and share supports: • Communicate that an appropriate consequence was given—cannot share details	☐ Communicate appropriate consequences: • To school community members impacted—cannot share details • Connect to the impact on the harmed and the school community
	☐ Inform classroom teachers and appropriate staff to support student safety	☐ Meet with parents/caregivers • Share consequences and supports • Connect to school/district code of conduct, other relevant policies and B.C. Human Rights Code
	☐ Provide ongoing counselling support as needed	☐ Provide ongoing counselling support as needed
	☐ Check in with the student(s) the next day, in a few days, a week later, a month later, months later (can be through their trusted adult)	☐ Check in with the student(s) the next day, in a few days, a week later, a month later, months later (can be through their trusted adult)
	☐ Check in with staff on their awareness of relevant online activity	☐ Check in with staff on their awareness of relevant online activity
	☐ When appropriate, invite student(s) to take part in a restorative process ☐ Ensure student(s) on-going safety needs are addressed	☐ When appropriate, invite student(s) to take part in a restorative process ☐ Consider providing focused education and reflection based on the incident
	Before contacting parents/caregivers, reassure student(s) that their safety is the priority. Consider connecting with appropriate support as needed (e.g., local First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities; cultural organizations; 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations).	