

TAKING ACTION: SCENARIOS FOR DISCUSSION

Scenario #1

While looking at recent Instagram posts, you notice that a student at your school has posted an image of a Star of David and a raised middle finger with the caption “Damn Jews.” You notice that the post has close to 100 “likes,” some by people you know.

Discussion questions:

1. If you saw this post from a friend at your school, how might you react?
2. If you saw this post from an acquaintance in your school, how might you react?
3. If you saw this post from someone at your school that you don't know, how might you react?
4. Do you think our relationships (e.g., friend, acquaintance, stranger) influence the way we respond to situations like the one in this scenario? Explain why some relationships may make it more difficult to speak out against certain types of behavior.
5. Who has a responsibility to respond to this post, someone who is Jewish? Does it matter? Explain.

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Scenario #2

Students at your school decide to form a diversity club to promote mutual respect and offer a safe-haven for all students who want to openly celebrate what makes them diverse. You join the club, which meets weekly to share ideas, plan events, and discuss issues facing the school community. You notice that the group never discusses the concerns that may be affecting Jewish students. You have mentioned that you have heard insensitive and hurtful jokes and comments about people who are Jewish, but the general response has been, “It’s not that big a deal. Other groups have it a lot worse.”

Discussion questions:

1. In addition to what you have already done, what are some other ways that you might help the group understand that Jewish students should be represented in discussions about “diversity,” and that the club should be open to discussing the concerns of all students, including Jewish students?
2. If you still feel you are not being heard, what else might you do?
3. What message is sent to Jewish students specifically if the issue of antisemitism is not included in the topics to be addressed? What message is sent to students in general if this topic is not included?
4. Who has a responsibility to raise this issue with club members, a Jewish student, a non-Jewish student, or both? Explain.

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Scenario #3

There have been several recent incidents of anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim graffiti in your community, something that has not occurred before. These displays are appearing near businesses owned by Jews and Muslims and in public recreational areas including playgrounds. While local authorities are working to respond to the incidents and the graffiti is removed as quickly as possible, the problem persists.

Discussion questions:

1. What are some possible reasons why graffiti like this might suddenly be appearing? Why would it be important to uncover what is behind such displays of bias?
2. What impact do displays like this have on the groups being targeted? What impact does it have on the community at large?
3. Who in the community is responsible for addressing this issue?
4. What are some possible actions that individuals in the community can take to not only address the graffiti but also the underlying anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim sentiment?