

Ten Ways to Fight Hate

submitted by the Social Justice Committee

The following is taken from the Southern Poverty Law Center publication *Ten Ways to Fight Hate, A Community Response Guide*. Founded in 1971 by Morris Dees, (look for his biography in the church library) the SPLC is dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry and to seeking justice for the most vulnerable members of our society.

In light of what has happened in Charlottesville, and right here in Bloomington at the Dar Al-Farooq Islamic Center, we on the Social Justice Committee encourage all Oak Grovers to read these recommendations and do what you can to stand up against this growing problem in our country.

To find out more about the important work being done by the SPLC visit splcenter.org.

1. **Act:** Do something. In the face of hatred, apathy will be interpreted as acceptance by the perpetrators, the public and — worse — the victims. Community members must take action; if we don't, hate persists.
2. **Join Forces:** Reach out to allies from churches, schools, clubs, and other civic groups. Create a diverse coalition. Include children, police, and the media. Gather ideas from everyone, and get everyone involved.
3. **Support the Victims:** Hate crime victims are especially vulnerable. If you're a victim, report every incident — in detail — and ask for help. If you learn about a hate crime victim in your community, show support. Let victims know you care. Surround them with comfort and protection.
4. **Speak Up:** Hate must be exposed and denounced. Help news organizations achieve balance and depth. Do not debate hate group members in conflict-driven forums. Instead, speak up in ways that draw attention away from hate, toward unity. Goodness has a First Amendment right, too. We urge you to denounce hate groups and hate crimes and to spread the truth about hate's threat to a pluralistic society. An informed and unified community is the best defense against hate.
5. **Educate Yourself:** An informed campaign improves its effectiveness. Determine if a hate group is involved, and research its symbols and agenda. Understand the difference between a hate crime and a bias incident.
6. **Create An Alternative:** Do not attend a hate rally. Find another outlet for anger and frustration and for people's desire to do something. Hold a unity rally or parade to draw media attention away from hate.
7. **Pressure Leaders:** Elected officials and other community leaders can be important allies. But some must overcome reluctance — and others, their own biases — before they're able to take a stand.
8. **Stay Engaged:** Promote acceptance and address bias before another hate crime can occur. Expand your comfort zone by reaching out to people outside your own groups.
9. **Teach Acceptance:** Bias is learned early, often at home. Schools can offer lessons of tolerance and acceptance. Host a diversity and inclusion day on campus. Reach out to young people who may be susceptible to hate group propaganda and prejudice. See the website for free resources to teachers through their Teaching Tolerance project.
10. **Dig Deeper:** Look inside yourself for biases and stereotypes.
11. **Commit** to disrupting hate and intolerance at home, at school, in the workplace, and in faith communities. Acceptance, fundamentally, is a personal decision. It comes from an attitude that is learnable and embraceable: a belief that every voice matters, that all people are valuable, that no one is "less than."