

This information sheet answers questions for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT+) people about what to do if you are targeted by online hate crime. It also gives advice about how to stand up to hate online, and how to support LGBT+ friends experiencing online hate crime.

You have a right to be who you are and to live without fear of violence, abuse or harassment, both online and offline. If you experience or witness hate speech or hate crime online, remember:

- Stay calm and don't retaliate with abuse or insults
- Tell someone: a friend, the platform, Galop, and/or the police
- Keep a copy of everything.

### Keep a record

Whether or not you want to report to the police or another agency right now, it can be useful to keep a record of the abuse you are experiencing in case you decide to take action at a later date. Seemingly one-off or trivial occurrences can sometimes multiply over time into a pattern of behaviour that is an offence, such as stalking or harassment. It is really useful to have evidence of all the instances to build a complete picture, so that agencies can take action. It is best to document the abuse as it occurs, as the content or user profile may be later removed by the abuser or the platform.

### Gather evidence

Take a screenshot of the abusive content, and a URL link to the poster's profile where possible.

### Click for: How to take a screenshot

Make a note of:

- the date/ time
- any details about the abuser
- what the abusive content was
- the impact it had on you
- details of any action you took.

### Report to the application or website

Most apps and websites have built in reporting features, or an email to contact the administrators. Keep your privacy settings updated, and find out how use the untag, block and report features on applications and websites you use:

Click for: Facebook

Click for: Twitter

Click for: YouTube

Click for: Google+

Click for: LinkedIn

Click for: Instagram

Click for: Tumblr

Click for: Flickr

Click for: Reddit

Click for: Pinterest

Click for: Snapchat

Click for: Whatsapp

### Verbal abuse in public

You don't need to know if something is a crime before you speak to the police. You can report an incident to the police by:

## A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO TACKLING ONLINE ANTI LGBT+ HATE CRIME

**HOMOPHOBIA  
TRANSPHOBIA  
ABUSE**

**TELL US ABOUT IT**

**020 7704 2040  
www.galop.org.uk**

**making life  
safe, just and fair  
for LGBT people**

- calling 999 for emergencies or 101 for non-emergencies
- reporting in-person to a local police station
- online through True Vision: <https://beta.met.police.uk/true-vision-report-hate-crime/> you can report anonymously if you choose, the crime will still be recorded.

## Injunctions

Depending on the relationship or contact you had with the person being abusive, you may be able to apply for an injunction to prevent the abuse continuing. For example:

- If the abuser is an ex-partner or relative you could apply for a non-molestation order under the Family Law Act 1996 forbidding your abuser from threatening, harassing or pestering you online.
- If your abuser is a stranger or you do not have a close connection to them you may be able to apply for an injunction under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 forbidding your abuser from continuing the online abuse.
- At the end of criminal proceedings, whether there has been a conviction or an acquittal, where appropriate a CPS lawyer can make an application for a type of injunction called a restraining order.

## Galop and other third party organisations

If you do not wish to speak to the police, you can also use a third party reporting agency. These are independent organisations trained to make reports about hate crime to the police on behalf of victims and witnesses. If want to report a hate crime anonymously, or would like advice and information about the support in your area, visit our National LGBT+ Hate Crime Reporting page:

[www.galop.org.uk/report-hate/](http://www.galop.org.uk/report-hate/)

## Standing up to hate

Some derogatory content falls outside the protection of the law but reinforces inequality and creates a hostile social climate. You do not have to be the target of the hate speech or hate crime to take action against it. Each of us can be an ally for people experiencing online abuse, and challenge abuse and discrimination when we see it. Even if it's not unlawful and/or the application or website will not take it down, you can still do something about it:

- Post your own statement in support of the

targeted group, and promoting equality, fairness, dignity and the right of everyone to live free from abuse and discrimination. Positive messages are retweeted/ reblogged more, and for longer, than abusive ones.

- Make it known online that you disagree with abuse. Good-hearted humour, targeted at the content of the abuse rather than the abuser, can be a powerful tool. Don't fuel the abuse by giving attention to the abuser or their comments, and definitely don't be abusive or insulting in return.
- Join positive campaigns that aim raise awareness of LGBT+ identities and issues.

## Supporting your friends

Online abuse can make people feel isolated. People may cut themselves off from online networks and support because they don't know if they can trust people online. The stress of online abuse may lead people to become withdrawn and make it harder to maintain friendships, activities and work.

Support from friends, family and other online users can be very helpful. If you know a friend, family member or colleague who is being targeted online you can help by:

- Treating them with the respect and care that the abuser is denying them
- Reassuring them that you believe them and will support them
- Keeping their confidence and keeping the information they tell you private
- Offering to help research useful information and resources
- Offering to help them to get advice and report to the website, Galop or the police.

Remember, privacy and agency are key. Don't assume that because your friend is out as LGBT+ to you, they are out to everyone in their lives. Replying to the abuse without checking with them first may risk escalating the abuse by making it more public, or inadvertently disclose more private information. Everyone is individual and will want to deal with what is happening in their own way- ask *them* what approach *they* want to take and how best you can support them.

**Always dial 999 if it is an emergency and you think you are in immediate danger.**