



Anti-Asian Hate & Mental Health: Visibility, Empowerment, and Culture

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Zoom



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Disclaimer

Today's presentation is part of the work of the 'Ohana AANHPI Behavioral Health Center of Excellence. However, this webinar focuses on Anti-Asian hate and does not present information or trends on the behavioral health impacts of hate and discrimination on Native Hawai'ians and Pacific Islanders. All of our communities have a distinct trajectory of systemic racism and colonialism that deserves responsible disaggregation and analysis.





Muwekma Ohlone Tribal Land Acknowledgment for Cal State University East Bay located in Hayward, CA Jalquin/Yrgin Ancestral Muwekma Ohlone Territory

We would like to recognize that while we gather at Cal State University East Bay located in Hayward, CA, we are gathered on the ethno-historic tribal territory of the intermarried Jalquin (hal-keen) / Yrgin (eer-gen) Chochenyo-Ohlone-speaking tribal group, who were the direct ancestors of some of the lineages enrolled in the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area, and who were missionized into Missions San Francisco, Santa Clara and San Jose.

The present-day Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, with an enrolled Bureau of Indian Affairs documented membership of over 600 members, is comprised of all of the known surviving Indian lineages aboriginal to the San Francisco Bay region who trace their ancestry through the Missions San Jose, Santa Clara, and San Francisco, during the advent of the Hispano-European empire into Alta California beginning in AD 1769. They are the successors and living members of the sovereign, historic, previously Federally Recognized Verona Band of Alameda County now formally known as the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of San Francisco Bay Area. Muwekma means La Gente – The People in their traditional Chochenyo-Ohlone language.

The land on which CSUEB in Hayward has been established, was and continues to be of great importance and significance for the Muwekma Ohlone Tribal people. This region extends to surrounding areas that held several Túupentaks (too-pen-tahks) (aka Temescals), traditional semi-subterranean spiritual roundhouses. Túupentaks were places of celebrations, healing, rituals, dances, intertribal feasts, and religious ceremonies. Nearby ancestral heritage “shellmound sites,” such as those located at Máyyan Šáatošikma ~ Coyote Hills, Berkeley, and Emeryville, served as the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe’s territorial monuments and traditional cemetery sites for high lineage families, craft specialists, and fallen warriors.





Anti-Asian Hate: Fear and Discrimination



- 80% of Asian Americans do not feel they fully belong and are accepted
- More than half don't feel safe in public places (transportation, own neighborhood, schools, workplace, local market)
- 1 in 5 Americans believe that Asian Americans are partly responsible for COVID-19

***The Asian American Foundation 3rd Annual Survey on Asian Americans 2023**

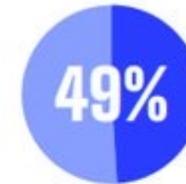


Righting Wrongs: How Civil Rights Can Protect Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders Against Racism (Study commissioned by STOP AAPI HATE). National study of AAs.

Key Findings

1. Nearly half (49%) of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders nationwide have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment that may be illegal.

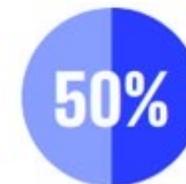
- This discrimination, which is usually based on race or ethnicity, happens when they dine at restaurants, shop for groceries, and ride public transit, as students at school and employees at work, when renting and buying homes, when voting, and when interacting with government employees, including members of law enforcement or staff at the Department of Motor Vehicles.



of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders nationwide have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment that may be illegal

2. Discrimination negatively affects the mental health and well-being of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

- Half (50%) of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders experiencing discrimination report feeling sad, stressed, anxious, or depressed as a result.
- 45% say it negatively changed their sense of belonging to their school, workplace, or other community, and nearly a third (31%) say it negatively changed their behavior, such as switching schools, jobs, or where they shop.



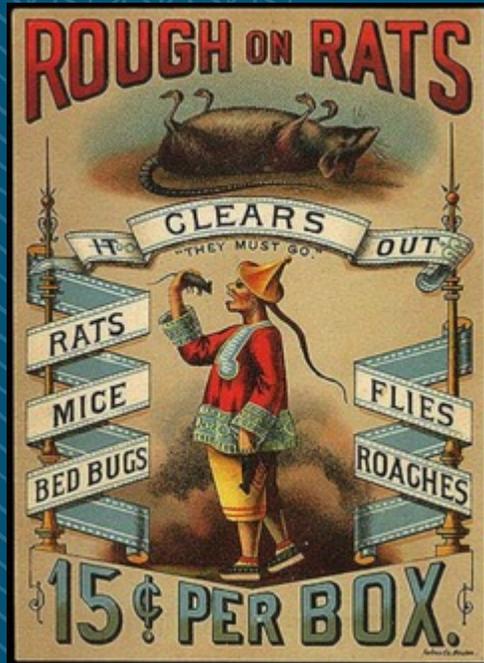
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Anti-Asian Hate is Systemic and Not New

“The consequence of only covering violent attacks puts the focus on individual attackers and survivors rather than on structural racism and the systematic harm it does to Asians and other people of color, at so many different levels, from their health and interpersonal relationships to access to justice and education and economic opportunity.”



Sia Noworjee, Sr. Director
Global Community
Girl Up
2021



Anti-Asian Hate-Recent Trends

Between March 2020 and March 2022, more than 11,400 hate incidents against Asian Americans have been reported across the United States.

The vast majority of reports to Stop AAPI Hate do not involve a crime, let alone a hate crime. Instead, they are hate incidents involving harassment, bullying, shunning, and discrimination.

STOP AAPI HATE



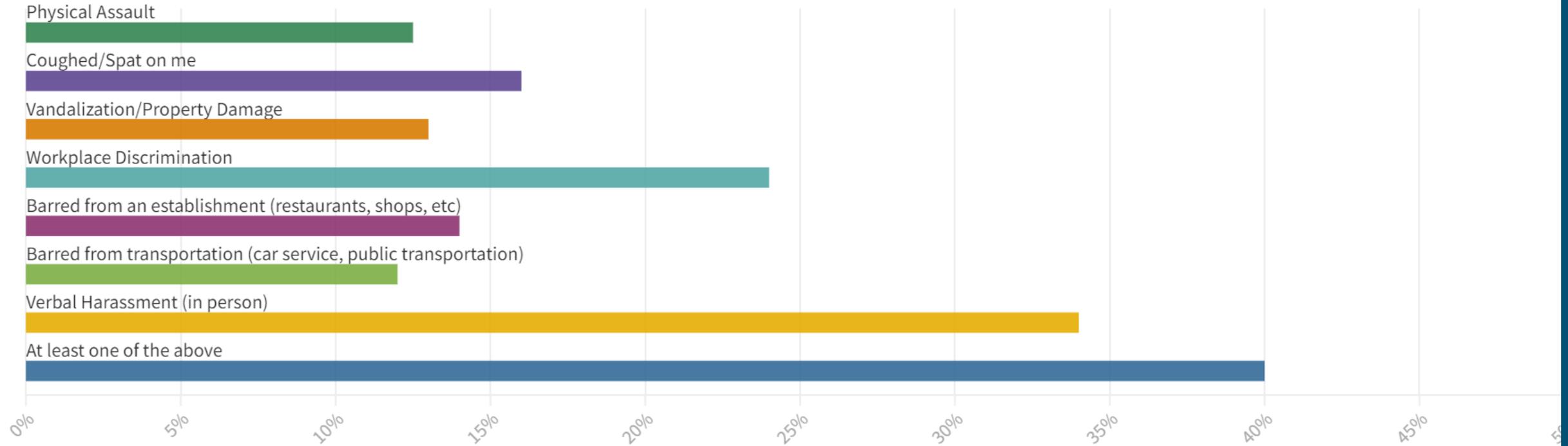
In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Asian Americans have disproportionately experienced a rise in mental health challenges, partly due to the increase in anti-Asian racial discrimination.

American Psychological Association



Anti-AAPI hate incidents reported by respondents

Researchers from NYU surveyed a diverse sample of 689 Asian American adults ages 18-80 from across the country, and asked them if they had experienced any incidents of COVID-19-related harassment, discrimination or violence in 2020.



Source: NYU CARA Study (Covid-19, Asian Americans, Resiliency, and Allyship) • The study is ongoing.



Anti-Asian Hate: Different Types of Hate & Mental Health Impacts



Social interactions of being shunned or treated suspiciously in everyday transactions and relationships

Associated with depressive symptoms

Verbal and physical assaults including spitting, name calling, hate speech, and violent attacks.

Associated with anxiety and sleep difficulties. “

Lee, S. & S. F. Waters (2021)



Mental Health Impacts of Anti-Asian Hate

Survey of 1,697 AAPI university students found that over a quarter reported experiencing COVID-related racial or ethnic discrimination — of these respondents, over two-thirds met the criteria for at least one clinically significant mental health condition.

COVID-related discrimination was also associated with higher odds of having depression, anxiety, self-harm and suicidal ideation.

Encountering racism is a traumatic experience that becomes integrated into narratives and identity formation.



Racism Functions to Silence Asian Americans When They Experience Anti-Asian Hate

Racism through the form of repeated silencing or ignoring of Asian voices may be yet another reason why Asians rarely report incidents of hate....If you go to Asia, there are plenty of Asians who advocate for themselves just fine. The problem is that when we speak up [in America] and it's silenced, we then internalize this message that my speaking up has no effect, White toxicity and racism have put an inordinate amount of pressure on Asians living in diaspora communities to cope with the trauma of being in an environment that does not see them and does not protect them."

Wang says that might lead to some Asian Americans feeling that racism against us would be ignored. In order to cope, she thinks many numbed themselves to injustices and, under the threat of white supremacy, tried to diminish themselves to survive. Wang says that can have pronounced mental health consequences.

"I have seen this play out clinically in that a lot of my [Asian] clients really struggle with speaking up for themselves, expressing their emotions, being vulnerable," she says.

Jenny Wang, psychologist based in Houston, author of "Permission to Come Home"



Anti-Asian Exclusion, Hate, & Discrimination: Gender, Objectification, and Sexualization

In 2020, AAPI women reported nearly 70 percent of all anti-Asian hate crimes. A 2010 survey also found one in five Asian American women had experienced intimate partner violence.



Depictions of Asian women as temptresses or sexual servants took root in American popular culture. It's no coincidence AAPI women experience high rates of harassment and violence.

When we are overrepresented in ways that dehumanize us, it's no coincidence AAPI women experience high rates of harassment and violence.

AA women are victims of street harassment, sexual battery, stalking, and verbal and violent assault.



Anti-Asian Exclusion, Hate, & Discrimination: Impact of Social Isolation on Elderly

47% of elderly Korean immigrant participants in a survey study indicated changes to routine activities due to anti-Asian racism or discrimination related to COVID-19.



Image courtesy of History.com

Most common changes include avoiding:

- walking alone or physical activities outside
- public transportation
- leaving the house to go to any public places such as grocery stores, churches, or schools
- usual social activities
- health care appointments.

Those who reported changes to routine because of Anti-Asian hate were five times more likely to report negative mental health symptoms than those who did not.

*Han, H-R., Min, D., Yun, J-Y., Joo, J.H., Lee, H., Kwon, S.
(2023)*



Anti-Asian Hate: Impact on Youth

- Suicide is the first leading cause of death for Asian American young adults—accounting for one-third of the deaths among Asian Americans aged 20–24. This is the only racial group within this age demographic for whom this is true (CDC, SAMHSA).
- *Suicide was the leading cause of death among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, ages 10 to 19 and the second leading cause of death among those ages 20-34(SAMHSA)*
- Stressors on Asian American young adults have multiplied in the last 3 years:
 - affected by the pandemic’s impact on employment, education, and well-being
 - subjected to the emotional burden of increased discrimination and racially motivated attacks.
- Having a substance abuse disorder significantly increased the risk of suicide among ages 18 and up. Steady increases of substance use since 2017.



Anti-Asian Hate: Impact on Youth

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Asian American Parents Need to Talk to Their Children About Racism

We need to give our kids permission to talk about racism. If we're not speaking out about it and not giving our children agency to speak out about it, then we're not acknowledging racism,"

***Erica Lee, psychologist
Dept. of Psychiatry
Boston Children's Hospital***

As of September 2020, one in four Asian American youths reported experiencing racist bullying.

- Break the silence
- Empower kids to speak up
- Talk to your kids about racism
- Share your own experiences of racism
- Support your child's ethnic identity
- Find similarities, celebrate differences

Stop AAPI Hate

Center of Excellence for Multicultural and Global Mental Health (CMGMH)

Boston Children's Hospital

<https://answers.childrenshospital.org/anti-asian-racism/>



Asian American Parents Need to Talk to Their Children About Racism

Helping your kids understand and cope with anti-Asian racism

Posted on May 12, 2021 by Ellen Greenlaw | Health and Parenting
Tags: health equity, mental health, racism



Boston Children's Hospital

Korean

[Korean - Guide for Parents of Asian/Asian American Adolescents](#) (PDF)

[아시아계/동양계 미국 청소년 자녀들과 부모들을 위한 안내서](#)



Center of Excellence for Multicultural and Global Mental Health (CMGMH), William James College



Anti-Asian Exclusion, Hate, & Discrimination: AAs with Social Support Report Fewer Depressive Symptoms



Asian Americans with higher levels of social support reported fewer depressive symptoms even at higher levels of reported discrimination.

Asian Americans with lower levels of social support reported more depressive symptoms even with lower levels of reported discrimination and higher levels of reported discrimination.

Lee, S. & S. F. Waters (2021)



Asian Americans Report Inadequate Social Support in Networks for Experiences of Anti-Asian Hate or Discrimination

A qualitative study of 193 Asian Americans from 32 US states were asked open-ended questions about their informal support systems and the quality of social support they received after experiencing an incident of anti-Asian hate. Found inadequate social support that made them feel re-victimized.

Inadequate Social Support Type	White Peers	White Partner/ Spouse	Family	Asian Friends	Non-Asian POC Friends	Unspecified “others”
Being unable to relate	X	X	X			X
Encouraging silence			X	X		
Minimizing anti-Asian racism	X		X	X	X	X
Denying anti-Asian racism	X	X			X	X
Victim blaming	X		X		X	X



Asian Americans are Often Denied the Ability to Process

Lisa Wong, a public official in Massachusetts was the victim of racist Zoom bombing during a public meeting. She was verbally assaulted, called a slur and threatened with a bomb at her home.

But when she finally talked to other people who were on the call about what she'd heard, they shook their heads.

“I started hearing things like, ‘No, no, you weren’t the target. No, no, I didn’t hear that. That didn’t happen,’ ” she says. “And that was very traumatizing. Then, to start to talk about it as part of my healing process and get denied was equally, if not more, traumatizing.”



Recommendations for Increasing Social Support for Asian American Social Networks to Process Experiences of Anti-Asian Hate or Discrimination

- Teach Asian American History-Stronger racial/ethnic identity is protective of mental health against experiences of being targeted by hate/discrimination.
- Destigmatize mental health resources to make them accessible for Asian American families
- Create intergenerational spaces for discussions about racism
- Promote bystander intervention training
- Build cross-ethnic and cross-racial solidarity to dismantle racism
- Increase media attention on anti-Asian racism
- Elect political leaders who will advocate for Asian Americans



Psychosocial Support for Racial/Ethnic Identity, Community Activism, Advocacy, and Visibility

Multi-pronged approach to supporting Asian Americans in the face of Anti-Asian Hate :

- interpersonal
- familial
- racial/ethnic community
 - Cultural relevancy
 - Linguistic relevancy
- societal
 - Allyship
 - Solidarity
 - Visibility
- Structural support



Balancing the Unit of Intervention at the Individual, Familial, and Community Level

Community-based support groups, behavioral health (culturally relevant)

- reduces stigma which normalizes help-seeking at the community and group level
- based in values of collectivism
- builds social support network

Pair social support group activities with larger cultural community programming

- Increases racial/ethnic social identity and cultural ties which are protective of mental health.



Offer Familial and Group Therapy Along with Individual Therapy

- Asian Health Services
– Oakland, California



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13
CLINIC
LOCATIONS

14
LANGUAGES

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Provide Structural Support to Address Anti-Asian Hate and Harassment

One of the strategies from: **White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI)**

Structural support



U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division



U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights

May 2021

Confronting COVID-19-Related Harassment in Schools A Resource for Families

Harassment and other discrimination stemming from prejudice and unfounded fears about the coronavirus (COVID-19) is wrong and can have devastating effects on students and their families.

During the pandemic, false information and harmful statements about Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities have led to increasing acts of intolerance across the nation—from verbal harassment to violence. In schools around the country, AAPI students have reported bullying and harassment by classmates because of their race or national origin, including their ethnicity, ancestry, and language.

Public elementary and secondary schools as well as colleges and universities have a responsibility to investigate and address discrimination, including harassment, targeting students because of their race or national origin. When schools fail to take appropriate steps, the Educational Opportunities Section of the Civil Rights Division (CRT) at the U.S. Department of Justice and the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education can help by enforcing federal laws that protect students from discrimination.

Examples of the kinds of incidents CRT and OCR can investigate:



Directly Focus on Racism and Anti-Racism Along with Cultural and Language Relevancy

Behavioral health care providers AND health care providers themselves need to understand their own social location in relationship to historical and systemic racism.

Resources and websites reflect an understanding that Asian Americans experience racial trauma that is systemic over the generations.

Work hard to provide social support that is empowering rather than diminishing of Asian American experiences of systemic racism.

Develop meaningful partnerships and programming with community-based organizations that have a history of addressing civil rights issues for Asian Americans just as behavioral health organizations already work with Black and Latine/Latinx community-based civil rights organizations.

