



# SAFE SOCIAL NETWORKS

A guide to  
resisting racism & queerphobia online



# Contents

1. History of racism and colonisation in Australia	4
2. Starting with yourself	8
3. Navigating online discrimination	12
• Homophobia, queerphobia and transphobia in online multicultural spaces	14
• Racism in online LGBTQ spaces	19
4. Responding to online discrimination	23
5. Creating safe online spaces	28
6. Finding your community	30
7. Building solidarity	31
Services and resources	32
Glossary	34



## Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which this resource was developed, the Gadigal and Darug peoples.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are reading this resource.

We acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded.

Always was, always will be  
Aboriginal land.



SUPPORTED BY  
**CITY OF SYDNEY**



## About

This resource was written by and for LGBTQ+ people of colour (and their allies) to understand the workings of racism, homophobia, queerphobia, and transphobia in online spaces. In this guide, you will find practical tips on how you can be resilient, resistant and support your communities.

ACON would like to thank the City of Sydney for funding this project through their Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship grant.



Illustrations by Amelia Mertha

# 1 History of racism and colonisation in Australia

So, what exactly is ‘racism’?

**Racism** is the act of discriminating or holding prejudice against people based on their race, ethnicity or skin colour. This discrimination can be direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional, and based on perceived biological and cultural inferiority or differences. We can all hold biases, prejudiced beliefs or assumptions about people without realising that it is racist. For example, the beliefs and assumptions we have about people based on their name, the way they speak, the food they eat, or the clothes they wear.

Racism has been largely present in many horrible events in human history, including colonisation, slavery, genocide, war and apartheid, which continue to influence the structures and systems our society operates within.

To understand racism and the way it operates in Australia today, we need to look at how the concept of race and racial prejudice were brought to Australia by the British colonies in the late 1700s. When the first colonial explorers – The French and the British – came to Australia they saw and recorded that there were Indigenous peoples living here. In order for the British government to treat Australia as terra nullius (nobody’s land), Indigenous people were portrayed as ‘savages’ and/or ‘barbarians’ on the false grounds

that they had not ‘progressed’ in civilisation because they didn’t have legal, social and political systems worthy of recognition under international law. This is despite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders occupying and caring for these lands for over 60,000 years through their own culture, customs and lore.

You might hear the phrase “Sovereignty was never ceded” in Acknowledgement of Countries. This means that Indigenous people never gave their permission for

British people to be on this land and have not forsaken their ownership and right to govern this land despite the colonial history told in schools, in our political institutions, and in society.

These racist ideas against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were used to justify the forced removal of children from their families and kinship networks (known as the ‘Stolen Generations’), as well as the violence and genocide that was committed by British colonisers.

It is important to remember that colonisation is not an event in Australian history that happened long ago, but it is an ongoing process and structure that continues to this day.

The Australian government continued to embed racism within our laws such as the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, also known as the ‘White Australia Policy’. Which forbid non-white immigrants from entering the country, particularly those from Asia and the Pacific Islands. This law was not abolished until 1973.

It is important for us as a community to acknowledge the history of how race and racism has operated in Australia to fully understand how its legacies continue to impact us today.



# MIGRATION TIMELINE



## 65,000+ years

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been on this land caring for Country.

### 1606

Dutch East India Company came across the north coast of Australia but believed the terrain was too harsh to settle.

### 1788-1868

160,000 British convicts were transported by ships from overcrowded prisons in England.

## 1793-1850

200,000 settlers from England, Ireland (potato famine), and Scotland.

### 1850-60

Gold rush brought 600,000 immigrants, mostly British and around 7% Chinese (this was the beginning of anti-Asian sentiment, xenophobia, and racially targeted policy banning Asian immigrants).

### 1860-1900

62,000 Pacific Islander people kidnapped and made indentured labourers (slaves).

## 1975

*The Racial Discrimination Act* makes racial discrimination illegal.

### 1980s

Refugees from Afghanistan and Africa arrive, as well as Indian migrants finding opportunities in emerging tech industry.

### 1990s

Temporary migration overtakes permanent migration in numbers. Increase in Chinese (Tiananmen massacre) as well as Sri Lankan (Civil War) migrants.

## 2020

COVID-19 pandemic, Australia closes borders and instances of racism and xenophobia rise.

1600

### Prior to 1700s

Yolgnu people from Northern Australia traded with Muslim fishermen from Makassar, in Sulawesi (now Indonesia). It is estimated that this contact predates British colonisation and occurred annually each trepang (sea cucumber) season.

### 1150-1450

Remains and artefacts found in Norfolk Island suggest a period of Polynesian occupation.

1800 1900

### 1901

The six separate British colonies federate and the nation of 'Australia' is born. A national 'White Australia policy' is introduced. Majority of Pacific Islander population deported.

### 1860-1930

2,000-4,000 cameleers brought in from British India and Kingdom of Afghanistan (India, Pakistan, Afghanistan).

### 1970-1980s

Waves of refugees from East Timor, Vietnam, Cambodia, Lebanon fleeing war, revolution, genocide and unrest in their home countries.

### 1945

'Populate or perish' scheme introduced encouraging British (and later other European) migrants to move to Australia in the wake of World War II.

2000

### 2000s

Refugees fleeing war from South Sudan, Iraq, Syria. Temporary work and student visas increase. Detention of refugees arriving by boat gains international attention.

### 1990-2000s

Yugoslav wars see an influx of refugees from Albania, Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia.

Sources:

- <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/a-brief-history-of-immigration-to-australia/cs4rmu3sr>
- <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/timeline-australias-immigration-policy/pc9vzxd1>
- <https://museumsvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/resources/identity/timeline/>

# 2.

## Starting with yourself

### Be antiracist

To challenge racism, we must all practice *anti-racism*. **Antiracism\*** means actively seeking to learn about race and racism, and taking action when we see racial inequities in everyday life. Being antiracist is different to being “not racist”. While most people believe that all people deserve to be respected, accepted and celebrated, we unfortunately live in a world where social attitudes, behaviours and beliefs have been shaped by racialised and heteronormative structures. Even if you are not racist you may be complicit in upholding structural racism, even if it is not your intention. We must be antiracist and have real strategies to actively combat racism when we see it.

### Reflect on our own

As LGBTQ people of colour living in a society that preferences

whiteness, **cisgenderism\***, and **heteronormativity\***, we must recognise that we can take on negative social beliefs, stereotypes and prejudices about our own racial and cultural groups, genders and sexualities. This is called **internalised racism\*** and **internalised homophobia\***, **queerphobia\*** or **transphobia\***. We might not be aware we are doing this and it can create a negative sense of ourselves and our own racial or LGBTQ+ communities.

For example, believing you are not beautiful if your physical features do not live up to Western beauty standards, or thinking that someone is not intelligent because they speak English with an accent.

### Challenge lateral violence

When these internalised negative beliefs are directed towards people in our own communities or who are part of other oppressed groups, this is called **lateral violence\***.

Everybody (people of colour and white people) needs to be an ally for other marginalised groups that we are not a part of because our struggles are interconnected! Being an antiracist and inclusive LGBTQ+ person of colour starts with ourselves.

\* See glossary on p. 33-35 for definitions



# FIVE STEPS

## 1. REFLECT

to unlearning internalised racism, homophobia\*, queerphobia\* and transphobia\*:

**Reflect on your views** and judgements about yourself, people in your communities, or those in other communities based on race, gender or sexuality. Do you have any **privileges\*** based on your own experiences of race, gender, or sexuality?

\* See glossary on p. 33-35 for definitions

## 2. EDUCATE

**Educate yourself** on the impacts of racism, homophobia, and transphobia on people whose identities are at these intersections through books, videos, website or social media.

## 3. ACCOUNTABILITY

**Hold yourself accountable** when people bring to our attention that something we are thinking, saying or doing may be rooted in racism, homophobia or transphobia - even when we did not intend it. This can be confronting but it's important to sit through the discomfort and listen.

## 4. ACTION

**Take action** to challenge the racism and queerphobia that we see in ourselves or the people around us when it is safe to do so.

## 5. CONTINUE

**Understand the ongoing process** of unlearning our biases when it comes to racism, homophobia, queerphobia and transphobia.

## CHALLENGING INTERNALISED RACISM, HOMOPHOBIA, QUEERPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA IN ONLINE SPACES:

- What types of pages, videos or influencers are you following?
- Are you following any First Nations, multicultural, and/or gender diverse content creators?
- Do you create posts or leave comments that uphold negative views of people based on their race, gender or sexuality?
- Do you only reshare images that preference light-skin, cisgender or able bodies?
- Do you share content or videos that make fun of people based on their cultural background, race, gender or sexuality?



### LEARN MORE

through the 'Australian Antiracism Toolkit' here: [www.antiracismkit.com.au](http://www.antiracismkit.com.au)

# 3.

## Navigating online discrimination



### INTRODUCING INTERSECTIONALITY

**Intersectionality** refers to the experience of having multiple, overlapping identities which belong to minority or socially disadvantaged groups (e.g. being a person from a racial minority who is also LGBTQ+). As multicultural LGBTQ+ people, we have intersecting identities which are not always understood or appreciated by the different communities that we belong to. For example, LGBTQ+ spaces and groups in Australia that are mainly attended by white people can be unwelcoming or racist. Meanwhile, multicultural community groups and family members can be homophobic or transphobic. As queer people of colour, we often find ourselves in situations where we 'choose' an aspect of our identity that best fits the context. Intersectionality is the idea that we should not have to choose, but embrace all aspects of ourselves, all the time! Which is a lot easier said than done!

\* See glossary on p. 33-35 for definitions

# Homophobia, queerphobia and transphobia in online multicultural spaces

## Coming out and inviting in

In some cases, multicultural spaces (including extended families, religious groups, or cultural community groups) can be less understanding and accepting of LGBTQ+ people and identities than their Western counterparts. This could be because in some non-Western cultures, overt displays of sexuality are not commonplace and can be looked down upon.

The Western narrative of ‘**coming out**’ does not always apply to people of colour, as being ‘out and proud’ or loud about sex, sexuality and/or gender identity may not be culturally appropriate or safe. It can be difficult to ‘come out’ in extended families or tight-knit community groups – an alternative way of thinking about sharing your sexuality or gender identity is the concept of ‘inviting in’.

‘**Inviting in**’ is where an LGBTQ+ person gradually, and in their own time, aligns their identities by inviting in trusted friends and family members to know and celebrate all aspects of their identity.

Just because we may only share our LGBTQ+ experiences with fewer, selected and trusted people does not mean we can’t still continue to be proud of who we are!

## Before coming out or inviting people in think about the following:

- Is it safe for me to come out now?
- Am I financially dependent on my family and will coming out jeopardise my safety, stability or living situation?
- Do I have close, trusted friends who I can share my experience with one-on-one?
- Do I know any other LGBTQ+ people I can talk to?
- Do I have a back-up plan in case coming out does not go well?
- Is there a safe space or friend’s home I can go to if I need to?
- Am I connected to services like ACON, **Twenty10\*** or **QLife\*** who can support me?

\* See glossary on p. 33-35 for definitions

- Am I prepared to wait for my friends and family to take time to understand and accept my experience?

## Things to be aware of if you are coming out or inviting in online:

- Is it safe for me to share my experience publicly as a post? Is my account set to public or private? Who will see this?
- Can I find online LGBTQ+ community groups, pages or forums where I can comfortably share my experiences?
- Do I only message people I trust about my experience of being LGBTQ+? Do I have to worry about screenshots of my conversations being shared?
- Am I logged onto social media accounts on multiple devices where other people can access and see my private messages? Am I remembering to log off my accounts after use?



## READ

Minus18’s ‘Out Now: Coming Out Guide’ here: [www.minus18.org.au/resources/out-now-coming-out-guide](http://www.minus18.org.au/resources/out-now-coming-out-guide)

## Transphobia

In some multicultural communities, there can be more understanding and acceptance of gay and lesbian folks than trans and non-binary identities. Gender diversity can wrongly be perceived or understood as a ‘white’ or Western phenomenon. It is important to remember that there is a long history of gender diversity, and that the trans experience is vast and varied! The **binary\*** understanding of gender which is prevalent today originated from European Enlightenment thinking when the ‘two-sex model’ was popularised. So, we can think of the gender binary as a byproduct of Western colonialism, as it was spread throughout the world, along with many other European ways of thinking (such as racial hierarchy, Christianity, and capitalism) through colonisation. Prior to European colonisation, gender and sexuality were often considered to be a lot more fluid. We can all do our part in decolonising LGBTQ+ history by learning more about trans and gender diverse people across the globe!

- Learn about gender diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – brotherboys and sistergirls: [www.transhub.org.au/trans-mob](http://www.transhub.org.au/trans-mob)



- Find out more about the history of trans people in this map of gender diverse cultures around the world: [www.pbs.org/independentlens/content/two-spirits\\_map-html](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/content/two-spirits_map-html)

Even within LGBTQ+ multicultural spaces, transphobia and lack of understanding around non-binary and genderqueer identities can persist – from queer multicultural people! Trans and non-binary people of colour experience more discrimination, as well as structural and social barriers than white trans folks. So, it is important for both multicultural and LGBTQ+ communities to be good allies, stand up and protect First Nations and multicultural trans and non-binary folks when they come under attack!



## LANGUAGE, CLASS, AND EDUCATIONAL BARRIERS

For some migrant and multicultural people, there can be language and/or educational barriers to understanding LGBTQ+ people and issues. It is important to remember that language, class, and education can also be barriers to information, understanding, and inclusive language. For example, using the correct **pronouns**\* can be difficult when English is not your first, second, or third language, if pronouns operate differently in your culture or language, or if you did not go to school in Australia!

Being university educated is also a privilege which can create division within families or cultural groups – as some people within our communities may not have been exposed to ideas related to sexuality and gender diversity.

In these cases, we need to be mindful of a person's background and lived experiences and try to understand where they are coming from instead of ignoring, attacking, or leaving them behind. They may not have had anyone take the time to explain these concepts to them in a way that they can understand!

\* See glossary on p. 33-35 for definitions

Online discrimination can take multiple forms beyond racism and queer/trans/homophobia. It can also be ableist, faith-based, colourist, classist, **whorephobic**\* and/or fat-phobic to name a few.

### Disability

Multicultural LGBTQ+ people with disabilities face higher levels of **minority stress**\*. Within multicultural communities, there can be less awareness and understanding about disability, and communities can hold prejudiced and incorrect beliefs about people with disabilities. Cultural stigma also increases risk factors and leads to poorer health outcomes. Less than 10% of people with disabilities in Australia access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Of this group, less than 1 in 10 people accessing NDIS are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, despite the group making up almost half of the Australian population in the latest census. People of colour with a disability often face higher rates of isolation and difficulty accessing services because disability service providers may not be culturally and/or LGBTQ+ safe. Higher rates of isolation lead to poorer mental health outcomes, which can further disadvantage people with physical and psychosocial disabilities, creating an ongoing cycle.

Ways of breaking the cycle perpetuated by some of these issues include educating cultural leaders and families on how to treat people with disabilities. Other solutions include creating and collating services that can provide services that are culturally appropriate.

Some organisations that may be able to provide more targeted services include:

- Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association
- National Ethnic Disability Association

See our Services and Resources section on p. 32-33 for more information.

### Religion

In multicultural and migrant communities, religion and culture often go hand in hand. For this reason, it can be difficult for some multicultural LGBTQ+ people to question certain religious values and beliefs, which do not affirm their LGBTQ identity. For some, this may feel like they are also rejecting their cultural values, which have given them comfort and support throughout their lives. So, it is important to recognise that everyone has their own complex individual relationship with faith and to be respectful of this, whilst still creating a space that is safe and inclusive for everyone.

\* See glossary on p. 33-35 for definitions

## ONLINE TIPS

### Filter out the noise

- Platforms including Facebook and Instagram have ‘mute’ or ‘snooze’ functions for friends and followers who you do not wish to see posts from. This is handy for family or community members you don’t want to see posts from but do not want to unfollow or block. They will not be notified if you choose to remove their content from your feed.

### Choose who sees your content

- You can control who sees your posts, status updates, stories and photos! On Facebook, you can use the ‘Audience Selector’ tool by clicking the drop down above the ‘Post’ button and choose whether you want to share publicly, with friends, friends except (to make sure certain people don’t see this content), specific friends (for a select smaller group to view this content), or only me. On Instagram, you can directly message people in private through the chat function, as well as create a ‘Close Friends’ list – this can be found on the top-right menu of your profile.

### Accessibility

- Check whether your profiles, pages, and other online spaces are accessible. Australian government guidelines include:
  - Providing text alternatives for any non-text content so it can be adapted into other accessible formats including braille, large print, speech, etc.

- For audio or video only content, provide captions, audio descriptions, and/or sign language.
  - Make it easier for people to see and hear content, including separating foreground and background. For example, use higher contrast, and choose colours which will be more accessible for people with vision impairment or low vision.
  - Make all functionality available from a keyboard to ensure people with different mobility can access all functions.
  - Do not create or design content in a way that is known to cause seizures. A general guideline is no more than three flashes per second.
- To find out more about accessibility guidelines: use this free accessibility checker tool: [www.accessibilitychecker.org](http://www.accessibilitychecker.org)

### Find faith-based LGBTQ+ groups

- Connect with community groups specifically for LGBTQ+ people of faith. Rainbow Cultures has a list

of Sydney-based LGBTQ inclusive groups for Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, and Christian communities: [www.rainbowcultures.org.au](http://www.rainbowcultures.org.au).

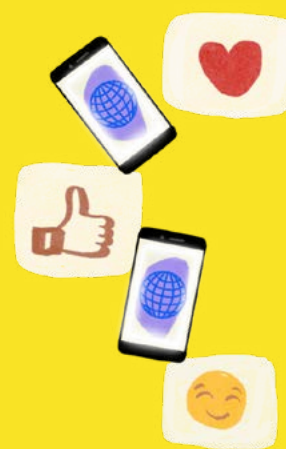
### Take digital breaks

- It is a good practice to monitor how much time you are spending online. Both iPhone and Android phones allow you track your screen time, as well as set time limits for specific apps.

## Racism in online LGBTQ spaces

As LGBTQ+ people of colour, we may unfortunately come across instances of racism within LGBTQ+ spaces both in person and online. In online LGBTQ+ spaces, you may come across negative social media posts, videos or comments that are culturally, ethnically, or racially discriminatory. This can be disheartening especially when you feel like you should be safe and welcomed in LGBTQ+ spaces regardless of your background.

It’s important for us to know when and how to respond to online racism and seek further support from the people around us. We’ve put together a guide in the next section with practical steps for responding to online racism.



### RACISM ON DATING AND HOOK-UP APPS

LGBTQ+ people of colour may also encounter online racism on the dating and hook-up apps in the form of sexual racism and fetishisation. Both sexual racism and fetishisation can have negative impacts on LGBTQ+ people of colour’s sense of self, self-esteem, mental health, as well as personal and online safety.

**Sexual racism** is a form of prejudice where someone chooses not to date or hook-up with another person because of their race, ethnicity or skin colour. Some people may label this as a ‘preference’ but it is important to reflect on what or who we desire and how this has been shaped by the society we live in. For example, if we live in a society where white beauty standards are upheld, then we may be influenced to desire people whose bodies align with **Eurocentric\*** bodies or features.

People of colour can also enact sexual racism, racial fetishisation and colourism even within their own communities, so it’s important for us all to reflect on our own views and how we interact with other people in online spaces.

\* See glossary on p. 33-35 for definitions

### Examples of sexual racism in online spaces:

- “I don’t date Aboriginal or Asian people.”
- “I do think people from my own cultural background are pretty! But only the light-skinned ones.”
- Saying “White only” on a dating profile.
- Not replying to messages from people of certain racial groups.

**Fetishisation** is when a person is made to be an object of sexual desire based on their race or skin colour. Although on the surface this might not sound harmful and can even sound complimentary to people of colour, it can uphold stereotypes and racist views about certain racial groups. Fetishisation can make people of colour feel objectified, dehumanised or even over-sexualised based on our racial identities.

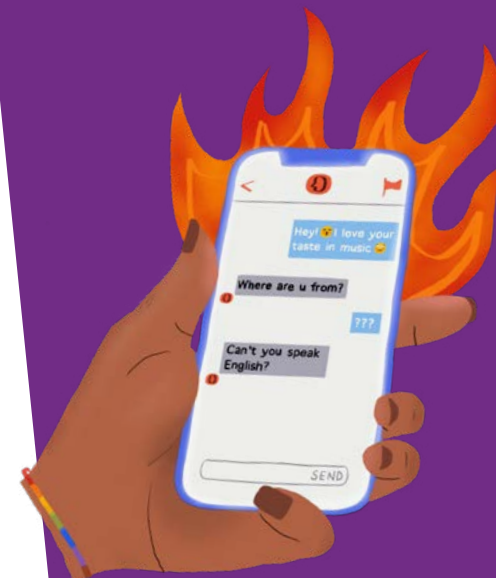
### Examples of fetishisation in online spaces is:

- “I only date Middle Eastern people because they look so exotic to me”.
- “You look really hot for an Indian person.”
- Using racist phrases such as “yellow fever” or “jungle fever” to describe your desire for East Asian or Black people.
- Reducing racialised people to stereotyped perceptions of their bodies or behaviours. For example, believing that Asian people you date or hook-up with will be submissive or that Black people will have a higher sex drive.
- Only or predominantly engaging in conversations centred around a person’s culture or “where are you from?”.



### Ways to respond to online sexual racism and fetishisation:

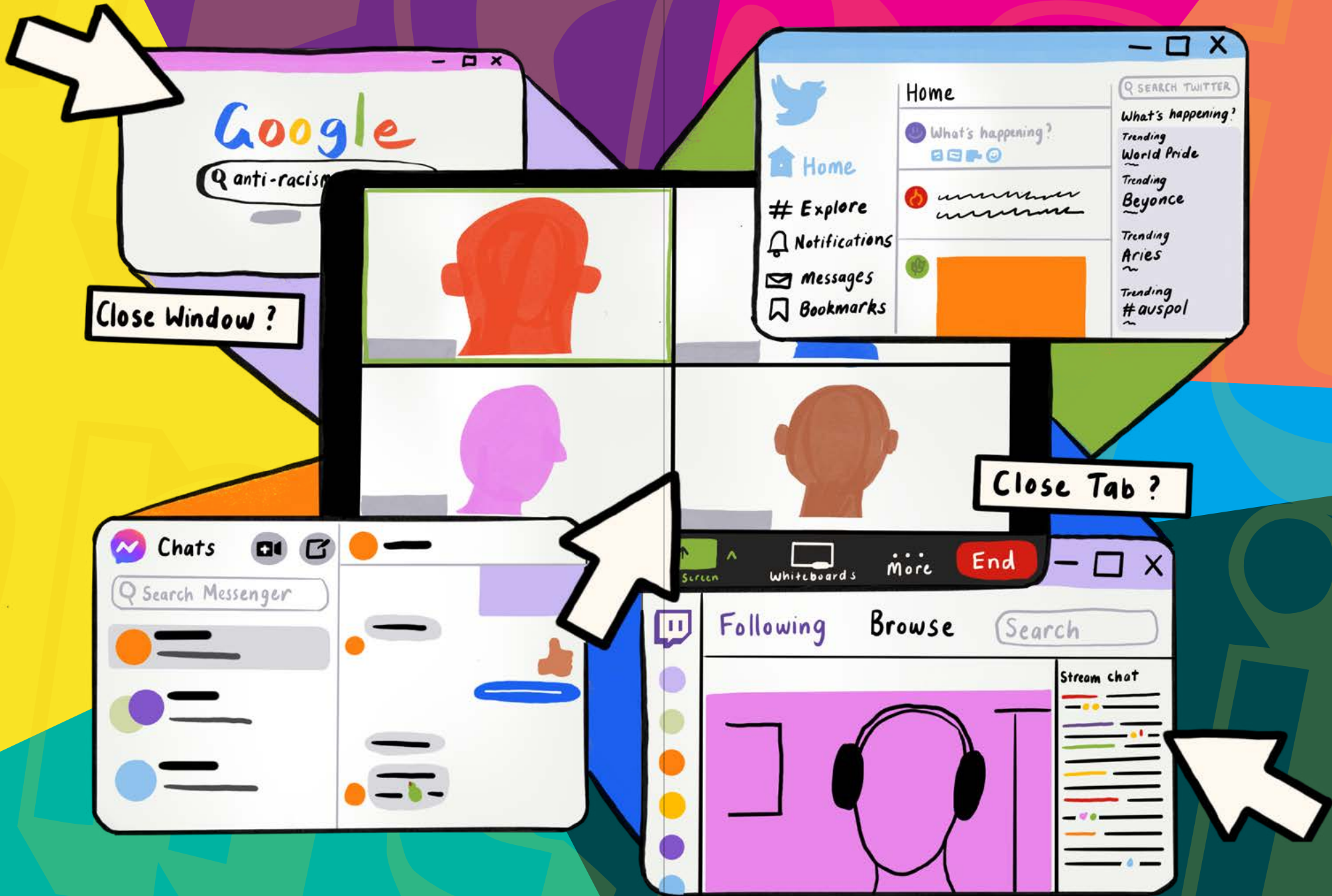
- **Let the person know** – sometimes people may not know that their behaviour is hurtful or discriminatory. If it is safe to do so, then it might be a good opportunity to share that you are uncomfortable and how the person can be more respectful in the future. If they are not listening or are responding with hate, then it is best to disengage.
- **Screenshot** – collect evidence in case you need to file a report for online discrimination to the E-safety Commissioner ([www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au)).
- **Report and block** – alert the platform you are using of users who are being harmful.
- **Take a break** – it’s okay to deactivate or delete your apps until you feel ready to get back on them.
- **Find support** – talk to friends who understand your situation, find other spaces where you can connect with other LGBTQ+ people of colour and seek further counselling if the racism is deeply affecting you.



### ‘KINDR’ BY GRINDR

Grindr’s ‘Kindr’ campaign has resources and videos sharing how you can be more respectful in online spaces while still getting to enjoy the pleasures of connecting with people and meeting up for dates or hook-ups.

Find out more here:  
[www.kindr.grindr.com](http://www.kindr.grindr.com)

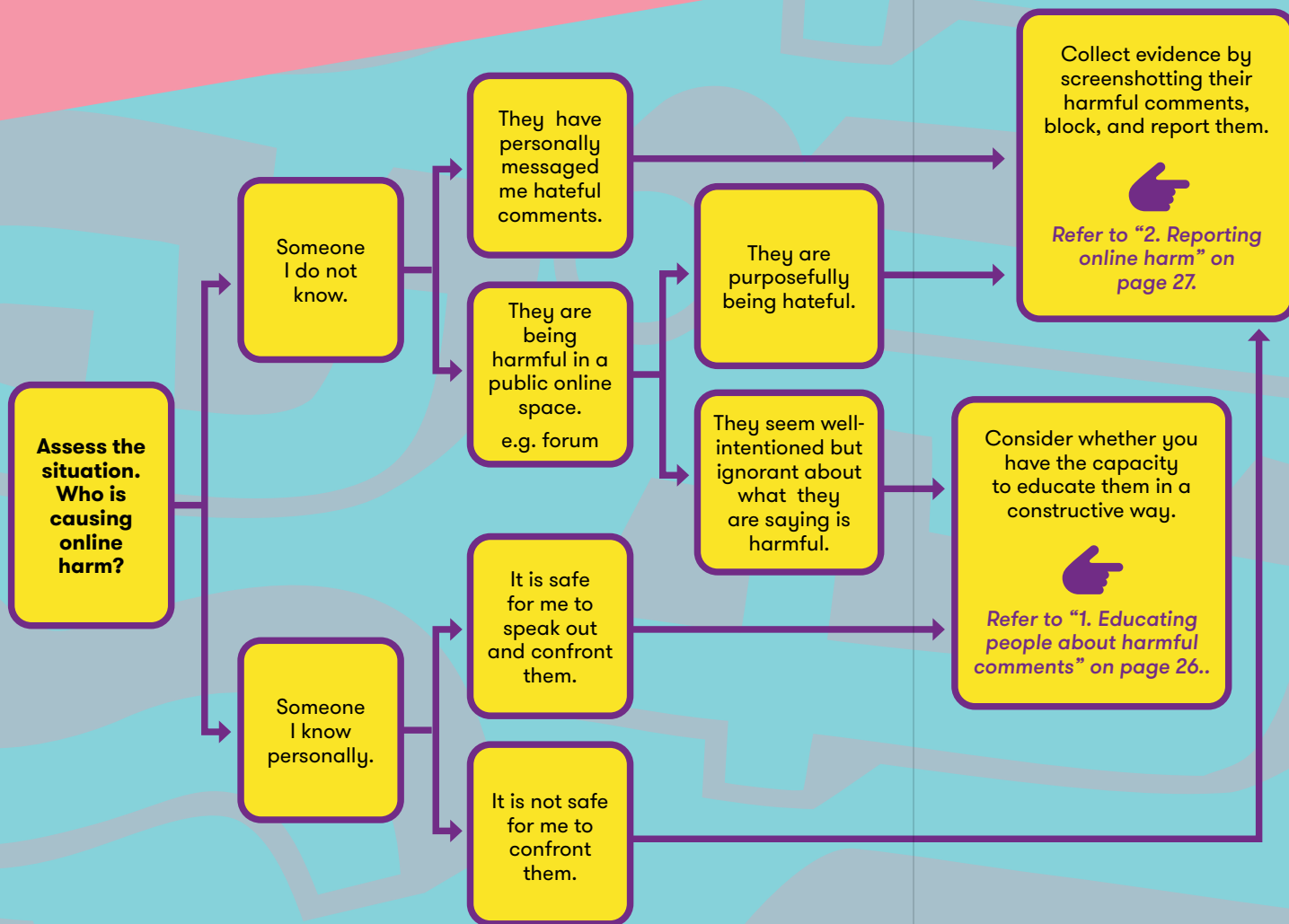


Close Window?

Close Tab?

# 4.

## Responding to online discrimination



### 1. Take care of yourself offline

Experiencing discrimination, whether it is homophobic, transphobic, racially motivated, or both, can be a distressing and painful experience. When you have experienced online harm make sure to take care of yourself offline. Reach out to friends and family, and connect with services and support groups.

See our list of resources and support services on pages 32 & 33.

### 2. Educating people about harmful comments

This can be an emotionally taxing option so before you go down this path, make sure that you have the capacity and time to do this in a constructive and educational way. It is important to remember that even if you can't change a person's mind, you have tried to educate them, and you are standing up for what is right!

However, it's also important to not feel burdened to respond to online hate at the expense of your own mental health.

It is important for allies to show up and respond to hateful comments and misinformation online, as responding to discrimination is an emotional, psychological, and intellectual burden for LGBTQ+ people of colour.

### Some tips on responding to discrimination online.

- Ask questions about their racist and/or queerphobic comment. This may prompt the person to think a little more deeply about why they hold this belief or why they have made such a statement.
- Stick to the facts! It can be difficult not to get emotional and retaliate when someone has said something discriminatory. However, the best way to educate is by sharing knowledge. If they have said something that is blatantly wrong, correct them, and share links to reliable sources including statistics, government reports, journal articles, etc.
- Let them know why what they have said is harmful and unacceptable.
- Stay cool and collected. If the person does not respond well, responds aggressively or continues to be discriminatory, protect yourself and others by disengaging from the conversation, collecting evidence, blocking, and reporting the person.

### Unhelpful ways of dealing with discrimination

- Replying immediately and emotionally. When you see or receive a harmful comment online, take a step back. Think about why this person may have these harmful ideas. Come back to the comment when you are calm and can see a way to respond constructively.
- Responding to hate with hate! It can be difficult not to strike back at racists, homophobes and transphobes on the internet. However, causing harm (even to harmful people) is still wrong, and ultimately it will not help to change people's minds.



### 3. Reporting online harm

If the person making discriminatory comments is doing so intentionally and you do not think that they are willing to listen and learn, the best course of action is to report the person and prevent them from causing you and others harm. Here is a step-by-step guide on how to report online abuse and harm:

- **Collect evidence:** write down their name, social media handle, date and time of their comments, and take screenshots.
- **Block them:** most platforms have a function to block users. Sometimes this will also have a list of reasons as to why you are blocking them – select the most relevant response.

- **Report them to the platform:** providing the evidence you have collected.
- **Take further action:** If the platform has not responded, or the abuse escalates, report to the Australian Government's eSafety commission (Refer to page 32 & 33) – who have relationships with major online platforms and can accelerate the process of getting harmful users removed.



# 5. Creating safe online spaces

## Protect your online space

- Privacy settings - social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram have different levels of privacy for your account. You can switch your account from 'public' which is accessible to anyone on the platform to 'private' which is only accessible to friends and followers.
- Control who sees your content – on Instagram this can be done through a 'close friends' list, and on Facebook you can use the 'audience selector' function to choose whether you share posts publicly, to friends, to select people, or just for yourself!
- Filter out words, phrases, or emojis you do not want to see, and they will be hidden from your feed. On Instagram, this can be found in the 'manual filter' function, and on Facebook, the 'profanity filter' tool.
- Mute, unfollow/unfriend or block harmful phrases and users!
- Follow queer **BIPOC\*** creators who uplift community!



## Create safe community spaces

- Make a private page, group, or chat for community. Be sure to check the privacy settings when creating the group to ensure the safety of yourself and other community members who may be discrete about their sexuality/ gender identity.
- Specify who the group is for and who can be a member (e.g. Is the group for all multicultural people, is it for LGBTQ+ people and allies, or is it a space for people who are both multicultural and LGBTQ+?).
- Create group guidelines and a code of conduct specifying what will and will not be tolerated in the group.
- Implement screening questions to get to know who is trying to join your online community.
- Have multiple administrators or moderators for groups to share the work load! This is important because discussions around racism and homophobia can be mentally and emotionally taxing!
- Join established groups for multicultural LGBTQ+ communities of all backgrounds and identities.
- Report online discrimination and hate speech using the guide on page 25.

## 6. Find your community

A great way to look after ourselves when we are faced with racial, sexual or gendered discrimination is finding people who share similar lived experiences who we can talk to and get support from. This includes friends, family, social groups or support services who understand our experience of being LGBTQ+ and a person of colour.

Rainbow Cultures is an online directory of LGBTQ+ multicultural services and community groups in NSW: [www.rainbowcultures.org.au](http://www.rainbowcultures.org.au).

You can use this tool to find your communities and continue to build your support networks.



## 7. Building Solidarity

Building solidarity with other LGBTQ+ people of colour and allies helps create safer online spaces for all of our communities. Some ways of building solidarity include:

- **Listen** to and support people who share their lived experiences of racism or queerphobia, especially if someone has come to you to let you know that something you have shared or posted online could perpetrate racist or queerphobic views.
- **Hold yourself accountable**, learn from your mistakes, and take action to constantly learn how to be a better antiracist and LGBTQ+ ally. We all need to do the work!
- **Support** positive content you see by commenting, liking and sharing things written by First Nations, POC, and LGBTQ+ creators!
- **Share** educational resources to help other people learn about anti-racism, colonisation, as well as LGBTQ+ terminology and issues.
- **Join** or create networks with other QPOC and allies who you can talk to or message to support each other.



## Services and Resources

### ACON

ACON is a NSW-based LGBTQ+ health organisation that creates opportunities for people in our communities to live their healthiest lives

[acon.org.au](http://acon.org.au)

### Advance Diversity Services

Advance Diversity Services (ADS) is a leading non-profit organisation that builds community, brings cultures together and promotes justice, equality and respect.

[advancediversity.org.au](http://advancediversity.org.au)

### All Together Now

All Together Now is a not-for-profit organisation that seeks to achieve a racially equitable Australia.

[alltogethernow.org.au](http://alltogethernow.org.au)

### Anti-Discrimination New South Wales

Anti-Discrimination NSW is the state government body that administers the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977.

[antidiscrimination.nsw.gov.au](http://antidiscrimination.nsw.gov.au)

### Australian Anti-Racism Kit

A tool kit made by Australian high-school students, for Australian high-school students, that we can use to take down racism brick by brick.

[antiracismkit.com.au](http://antiracismkit.com.au)

### Australian Human Rights Commission

The Australian Human Rights Commission is the national human rights institution of Australia.

[humanrights.gov.au](http://humanrights.gov.au)

### Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council

AGMC is the national peak body for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer individuals and community groups of multicultural and multifaith backgrounds.

[agmc.org.au](http://agmc.org.au)

### BlaQ

BlaQ Aboriginal Corporation is committed to empowering the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIA+SB community through innovation, inclusion, understanding and advocacy.

[blaq.org.au](http://blaq.org.au)

### E-Safety Commission

The eSafety Commissioner (eSafety) is Australia's independent regulator for online safety.

[esafety.gov.au](http://esafety.gov.au)

### Forcibly Displaced People Network

Forcibly Displaced People Network (FDPN) is the first organisation in Australia to dedicate its work to the issues of LGBTQIA+ forced displacement and be driven by the lived experience of it.

[fdpn.org.au](http://fdpn.org.au)

### Lifeline

A national charity providing all Australians experiencing emotional distress with access to 24 hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

[lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)

13 11 14 (24 hours, 7 days a week crisis support)

### Minus18

Minus18 is leading change, building social inclusion, and advocating for an Australia where all young people are safe, empowered, and surrounded by people that support them.

[minus18.org.au](http://minus18.org.au)

### Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association

Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association (MDAA) advocates for the rights of people with disability from CALD/NES backgrounds, their families and carers for better outcomes and improved access to services, opportunities and participation in the disability sector.

[mdaa.org.au](http://mdaa.org.au)

### National Ethnic Disability Alliance

National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) is a national Disabled People's Organisation (DPO) that advocates federally for the human rights of people with disability, and their families, from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB).

[neda.org.au](http://neda.org.au)

### QLife

QLife provides Australia-wide anonymous, LGBTI peer support and referral for people wanting to talk about a range of issues including sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings or relationships.

[qlife.org.au](http://qlife.org.au)

1800 184 527 (3pm to midnight everyday)

### Rainbow Cultures

A directory of LGBTQIA+ multicultural community groups and services in NSW.

[rainbowcultures.org.au](http://rainbowcultures.org.au)

### Safe and Strong: The LGBTQ+ Guide to Facebook and Instagram

[minus18.org.au/resources/safe-and-strong-an-lgbtq+-guide-to-facebook-and-instagram](http://minus18.org.au/resources/safe-and-strong-an-lgbtq+-guide-to-facebook-and-instagram)

### Transcultural Mental Health Centre

The Transcultural Mental Health Centre (TMHC) works with health professionals and communities across New South Wales to support positive mental health for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

[dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/transcultural-mental-health-centre](http://dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/transcultural-mental-health-centre)

### TransHub

ACON's digital information and resource platform for all trans and gender diverse (TGD) people in NSW, our loved ones, allies and health providers.

[transhub.org.au](http://transhub.org.au)

### Twenty10

We are a Sydney based service working across New South Wales, providing a broad range of specialised services for young people 12-25 including housing, mental health, counselling and social support.

[twenty10.org.au](http://twenty10.org.au)

## Glossary

### Ableism

A form of discrimination and social prejudice against people with disabilities. These harmful beliefs and attitudes perpetuate negative views of disability.

### Ally

An ally is someone who supports people from marginalised communities. This can include LGBTQ+ people, First Nations people, people of colour, women, people from refugee, migrant and multicultural backgrounds, and people with disabilities.

### Anti-racism

Anti-racism is a conscious and active effort to work against the multiple dimensions of racism. It involves examining one's own biases and challenging both overt racism, which is experienced directly or can be observed, and other structural forms of racism, oppression, and exclusion, including systemic racism and white privilege.

### BIPOC

Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour

### Binary

Something that is binary consists of two things, or can refer to one of a pair of things. When talking about genders, binary genders are male and female, and non-binary genders are any genders that are not just male or female, or aren't male or female at all.

### Brotherboy

A term used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe gender diverse people who have a male spirit and take on male roles within the community.

### Cisgender

A term used to describe people whose gender is the same as what was presumed for them at birth (male or female). 'Cis' is a Latin term meaning 'on the same side as.'

## Colonialism/colonisation

Colonialism is the practice of domination or political control by one nation, country or power over another nation(s) and groups of people. Historically, this has most often been perpetrated by Western societies over Indigenous peoples. This happened all over the world, spanning large parts of Africa, South America, and Asia.

**Settler colonialism** is a system of oppression based on genocide that aims to displace the Indigenous population, occupy the country with settlers, and exploit it economically. Australia, America, Canada, and New Zealand are examples of this.

## Colourism

A form of racial prejudice or discrimination that favours people with lighter skin tones. This can be from Western societal ideals and white people, as well as from people that belong to the same racial or ethnic groups.

## Culture

Culture is a social phenomenon which indicates the features of a particular society. Culture comprises of fields such as habits, values, art, music, beliefs, knowledge, etc, and almost all the members of a specific society share these cultural traits. Culture is not a biologically inherited phenomenon; it is socially acquired.

## Ethnicity

Ethnicity is the identification of a person based on their common ancestry, social and cultural identity, race, language, country of origin, etc. Factors such as religion, physical appearance, a way of dressing, food patterns, etc. characterize one's ethnicity.

## Eurocentric

Eurocentrism is the attitude, belief, or worldview that favours and focuses on European culture or history while excluding a wider view of the world. This ideology became prominent in the 19th century in many colonial societies, where it was often used as a tool to justify imperialism and colonialism.

## Gender

Who you know yourself to be. This may be called gender identity, or simply gender. (e.g. man or male/woman or female/non-binary/ agender/genderqueer/etc).

## Heteronormativity

Heteronormativity refers to the assumption or belief that heterosexuality is the 'preferred', 'normal' or 'default' sexual orientation. It assumes that sexual or romantic relationships are only between cisgender men and women and erases other forms of sexuality and between people of different gender identities or expressions.

## Homophobia

Culturally produced fear, hatred, discomfort or of prejudice against homosexual people. It can look like different forms, including negative attitudes or stereotypes, prejudice, harassment, bullying or discrimination.

## Intersectionality

Intersectionality emerged from black feminist, Indigenous feminist, queer, and postcolonial theories. It was first coined by American sociologist Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. Intersectionality is an idea that recognises that people's experiences are shaped by multidimensional and overlapping factors such as class, sexual orientation, race, immigration status, ethnicity, age, ability.

## LGBTQ

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer

## Minority stress

The negative effects and pressures experienced by people who belong to stigmatised minority groups, including ethnic and racial minorities, LGBTQ people, and people with disabilities.

## Multicultural

An umbrella term used to describe people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

## Non-binary

This is an umbrella term for any number of gender identities that sit within, outside of, across or between the spectrum of the male and female binary. A non-binary person might identify as gender fluid, trans masculine, trans feminine, agender, bigender etc. There are many examples of non-binary gender identities across different cultures prior to British colonisation before its efforts to erase this history.

## POC

Person Of Colour

## Pronouns

The words that we use to refer to people when we're not using their name. In the English language, there are gendered third person pronouns (he/his, she/hers), and gender neutral pronouns (they/theirs). For many trans people, having people know and use correct and affirming pronouns is an important and validating part of their gender affirmation.

## Privilege

The social advantages, benefits and respect that is granted to individuals who are part of a dominant social group (e.g. being white, male or heterosexual) at the expense of oppressed groups. Privilege is often invisible to people who have it.

## QPOC

Queer Person Of Colour

## Queer

Queer refers to a sexuality or gender identity that does not correspond to (and is more expansive than) heterosexual norms. It is increasingly used as an umbrella term to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (LGBTQ) people.

## Queerphobia

An umbrella term for fear of anything that does not conform to heterosexuality and cisgenderism.

## Race

Race is the idea that the human species can be divided into distinct groups on the basis of physical differences. The concept emerged from Eurocentric pseudo-science to categorize non-white people and justify colonisation, genocide, and war. Genetic studies have since shown that humans cannot be separated into biologically and genetically distinct races, and that this idea is scientifically ungrounded. However, 'race' continues to exist as a social and cultural construct.

## Racism

Racism is prejudice against, and discrimination of, people based on their perceived 'race' or ethnicity. This can be enacted by individuals, groups, or by societal institutions, and produces inequitable outcomes for people of colour.

## Sexual Orientation (or Sexuality)

Sexual orientation is about who you're attracted to and want to have relationships with. Sexual orientations include gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual, pansexual, and asexual.

## Sistergirl

A term used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe gender diverse people that have a female spirit and take on female roles within the community, including looking after children and family.

## Trans and gender diverse

Transgender and gender diverse are umbrella terms that describe people whose gender is different to what was assigned to or presumed for them at birth.

## Transphobia

Transphobia consists of negative attitudes, feelings or actions towards transgender people. It is often rooted in prejudice and can lead to harassment and discrimination directed towards trans people.

## Whiteness

Whiteness is an historically variable and vague concept of race that emerged through Europe's contact with non-European countries. Historically, this concept has marked out European countries' national and cultural dominance by naturalising it through the colour of someone's skin. Whiteness operates through the production of images, discourse, and representations that 'construct' the idea of race as an ideal. By asserting this ideal as the standard by which other, non-white people ought to be judged, whiteness has historically been used as a tool for justifying violence against non-white bodies and for hierarchically placing non-white people below white people.

## Whorephobic

Whorephobia describes the stigmatisation of, and discrimination against, sex workers and the sex work as a profession, which is largely driven by fear, hatred and lack of understanding.



# SAFE SOCIAL NETWORKS

A guide to  
resisting racism & queerphobia online



SUPPORTED BY

**CITY OF  
SYDNEY**