

# Hate Crime Statistics and Prevention

By Diego Sanchez

The Transgender Day of Remembrance in November 2015 marked the most violent deaths in the U.S. of transgender women of color ever since counting formally began in 1998, and it was more than double the number from 2014. Violence against trans women of color is at crisis level.

On November 16, 2015, the FBI released its most recent annual report on hate crimes. On the surface, the numbers would seem to tell an encouraging story since the 5,462 incidents reported in calendar year 2014 were fewer than the 5,922 incidents reported the year before.

Looking beyond the aggregate numbers, however, reveals some troubling trends. While hate crimes based on sexual orientation are down slightly (to 18.6% from 20.8%), hate crimes based on gender identity rose year over year, from .5% to 1.8%. Worse still, those numbers are only the tip of the iceberg; not all crimes against the LGBTQ community are reported as hate crimes by official sources.

The trend toward under-reporting is exacerbated by the fact that individuals may not report incidents for fear of retaliation, discrimination, harassment, or the fear that their sexual orientation or gender identity will be revealed to families or employers.

Based in New York, the [National Anti-Violence Project \(NAVAP\)](#) seeks to remedy this problem by gathering, collating and analyzing data on bias crimes, assaults, and domestic violence against LGBTQ people. Because this data is gathered from LGBTQ anti-violence programs across the United States, it differs from, and tends to paint a clearer picture than, data from official sources.

While we applaud the heightened visibility of LGBTQ issues and increased acceptance of people who are LGBTQ, hate crimes remain a sobering and unfortunate reality for too many people. While recent years have seen tremendous strides, there have also been ample reminders that we still have a long way to go. That's why PFLAG's efforts, and your help, have never been so vital.

## What We're Doing

The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act was signed into law on October 28, 2009 after more than a decade of lobbying. It strengthens hate crimes legislation that was passed 40 years ago, adding federal protections for disability and gender, as well as the first protections for gender identity and sexual orientation. It empowers the Department of Justice to investigate and prosecute crimes when state and local authorities cannot or will not act. Just as important, it encourages cooperation between state and federal law enforcement officials to address violent hate crimes.

The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act authorizes the Department of Justice to investigate and prosecute certain bias-motivated crimes. PFLAG works with other national organizations and local chapters to provide training and guidance on the law and new resources provided by the DOJ to address and prevent hate crimes, particularly if a local law enforcement agency is unwilling or unable to investigate.

PFLAG and the DOJ have put the finishing touches on a multi-year project that will culminate in a Local Law Enforcement training about transgender people in an effort to address the gap between behavior and how most trans women of color are approached by local law enforcement.

Stay abreast of the latest trends and statistics using the links below.

- [NAVAP website](#)
- [FBI Hate Crimes Statistics](#)
- [Anti-LGBT Hate Crimes Statistics](#)
- [Hate Crimes Laws](#)
- [Help Stop Hate Crimes](#)
- [Families United Against Hate](#)

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