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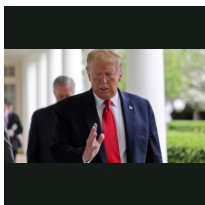
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Donna-Lee Biddle 16:52, May 04 2020

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Putting the blame on China, the US is reportedly looking into taking action against China over the coronavirus outbreak.

A rise in [race-related attacks](#) has seen parents take their child out of school for fear of being bullied.

A number of New Zealanders of Asian descent have reported racism towards them since [coronavirus](#) broke out in Wuhan, China in late 2019, Race Relations Commissioner Meng Foon said.

In the past five weeks alone, the Human Rights Commission has received 252 reports relating to coronavirus.

 Race Relations Commissioner Meng Foon.

*The-Press*

Race Relations Commissioner Meng Foon.

Foon said 86 were considered race-related, with the bulk of those reports geared towards Asian people.

#### READ MORE:

- \* [Coronavirus: Government has 'fallen short' on PPE response - report](#)
- \* [Coronavirus: Dozens of complaints to Human Rights Commission about Covid-19 racism](#)
- \* [Coronavirus: Auckland gym owner says her anti-China comments not 'related to racism'](#)

"They primarily related to [anti-Chinese racism and harassment](#), or to events affecting other people of Asian descent who believe they were mistaken for being Chinese."

Asian Family Services and Netsafe are also gathering data in relation to [racist abuse and hate speech](#).

In one example that happened pre-level 4 lockdown, a student was removed from her Whangārei school after experiencing daily "racist abuse", including bullying, discrimination, and isolation.

Her parents feared she wouldn't be safe if she stayed.

At Hobsonville Point Primary in Auckland, principal Daniel Birch said there were two incidents where Asian

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Netsafe has also seen a 63 per cent increase on reports between January 1 and April 12, compared to the previous six months.

The reports were incidents categorised as having a [hate speech element](#), Netsafe spokeswoman Angela Boundy said.

"This means reports that denigrate a person's colour, race, ethnic or national origins, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability."

The Human Rights Commission has [asked the Government to address racism](#) as part of the Covid-19 response including explicit public messaging, and to prioritise the development of a national action plan against racism.

It has a number of proactive initiatives as well, including an [anti-bullying campaign in schools](#).

Foon said the commission was also meeting with police on Monday to see what information they have in terms of hate crimes.

And recently, he touched base with the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service to ensure it was "[keeping an eye on the right people](#)".

"The last thing we want is for these reports or threats to escalate."

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