



Winnipeg
Committee For
Safety

FAST FACTS

on Implicit Bias & Racial Profiling

Implicit bias refers to the unconscious assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and stereotypes that human brains have about different groups. These learned mental short-cuts affect how we perceive and respond to people. ¹

Unexamined implicit biases can result in racial profiling.

Racial profiling includes “any action undertaken for reasons of safety, security or public protection that relies on stereotypes about race, color, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, place of origin, or combination of these, rather than on reasonable suspicion, to single out an individual or group for greater scrutiny or different treatment.” ²

Its like being found guilty without any cause, evidence, or justification.

Just some examples:

Being followed by staff in stores, being passed up for tenancy/employment due to stereotypes, being harassed in public spaces for wearing religious symbols, being subjected to unlawful street checks/carding. ^{3,4}

Greater scrutiny + being perceived as a threat + unnecessary surveillance = pervasive sense of being unsafe.

Harms

- Fear, anxiety, anger, shame, a sense of powerlessness and/or inferiority, embarrassment, self-doubt, lack of sense of belonging; ^{4,5}
- Internalization of stereotypes;
- Restricts mobility throughout public space which limits opportunities and freedom;
- Increased pressure and anxiety for parents/caregivers to protect and educate their children who are racialized;
- Creates mistrust in systems and social institutions (i.e.: education, child and family services, law enforcement, healthcare and criminal justice);⁴
- Can result in a sense of defeat in which individuals feel that no matter what they do, they are going to be judged and presumed to be guilty of something;
- Creates a sense of hyper-vigilance that negatively impacts mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health and wellbeing;^{5,6}
- Fosters division within communities (i.e.: encourages an 'us versus them' mentality);
- Violates human rights and principles of diversity and inclusiveness^{2,3}
- Further marginalizes those who are already stigmatized (i.e.: through disability, income status, immigration status, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation).



ABC - Action Steps

We all have a role to play in understanding implicit bias & ending racial profiling.

Here are action steps we can take if we have racially profiled someone:

- **A**cknowledge and own up to our actions.^{7,8} Strong emotions such as defensiveness, anger, guilt and shame are common. It is important to recognize these and try our best not to fester in feelings that keep us stuck.
- **B**e open to being corrected by people with lived experience. Embrace the potential discomfort. Communicate with compassion and respect for ourselves and others.
- **C**onsider the inherent dignity of the person who was profiled. Put yourself in their shoes. Have you been ever been unfairly judged based on your (perceived) identity? How did this impact you?
- **D**evelop an understanding that it is not the responsibility of the person/people who have been profiled to comfort, educate or forgive others. Racialized people are preoccupied with surviving and managing the ongoing effects of discrimination.
- **E**ducate ourselves. ^{7,8} Seek counter-narratives to challenge implicit biases about groups we do not identify with/relate to. We are all learning and when we know better - we do better.
- **F**ocus on what those who are profiled need to feel safe. Ask them what, if anything, they need from you. Listen to and respect their wishes. They are the experts.
- **G**ive ourselves permission to examine and challenge our implicit biases. Because they are learned, they can be unlearned too.
- **H**elp out where and how we can (i.e.: donate, raise awareness, challenge racist "jokes" and assumptions, advocate for policy changes, volunteer.) These small actions add up to big differences.

Being an ally is:

an active, consistent, and arduous practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a person in a position of privilege and power seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group. ⁸

Only people in a marginalized group can defined who is an ally.

Allyship & Educational resources

Anti-Racism Resource List

<https://tinyurl.com/y8hv2lqn>

Guide to Allyship

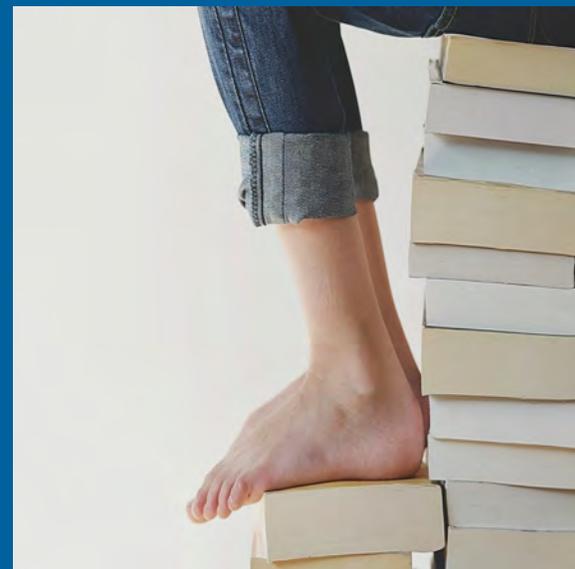
www.guidetoallyship.com/

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

<https://tinyurl.com/j6hrvrs>

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry - Calls for Justice

<https://tinyurl.com/y8k7yeek>



If you or someone you know has experienced racial profiling, these local resources may be of assistance:



Black Space Winnipeg

Project Heal - Black Mental Health Support Group
www.Blackspacewinnipeg.ca

Black Youth Helpline

1-833-294-8650 (9 AM - 10 PM every day)
E: info@blackyouth.ca
www.blackyouth.ca

Law Enforcement Review Agency (LERA)

420-155 Carlton Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3H8
P: (204) 945-8667 or 1-800-282-8069
E: lera@gov.mb.ca
<https://www.gov.mb.ca/justice/lera/>

Manitoba Human Rights Commission

700-175 Hargrave St
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3R8
204-945-3007 or 1-888-884-8681
E: hrc@gov.mb.ca
www.manitobahumanrights.ca/v1/

1 *Unconscious Bias*, University of Victoria, 2020.

2 Ontario Human Rights Commission. *What Is Racial Profiling?* (Fact Sheet). 2020

3 The Racialized Communities and Police Services Project. *Community Consultations on Police Services to Members of Racialized Groups in Winnipeg*. Interim Report, Manitoba Human Rights Commission, 2007.

4 *Bias Free Policing*, Winnipeg Police Board, April 1st, 2016.

5 Foster, L., et al. *Racial Profiling and Human Rights in Canada: The New Legal Landscape*. Irwin Law, 2018.

6 Laurencin, Cato T., and Joanne M. Walker. "Racial Profiling Is a Public Health and Health Disparities Issue." *Journal of Race and Ethnic Health Disparities*, vol. 7, 2020, pp. 393-97.

7 Lamont, Amélie. "Guide to Allyship." *Guidetoallyship.com*, n.d., www.guidetoallyship.com/

8 The Anti-Oppressive Network. <https://theantioppressionnetwork.com/allyship/>, n.d.

**For more tools in the WCFS
Community Safety & Wellbeing
Toolkit, please visit:
winnipegssafety.ca & follow us on
Twitter:**



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