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so you want to...



... END RACISM  
ACTIVITY PLANNER

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**YWCA**  
CANADA

A TURNING POINT  
FOR WOMEN  
UN POINT TOURNANT  
POUR LES FEMMES



Canadian  
Heritage

Patrimoine  
canadien

Canada

**THINK  
BIG**  
*(start small)*  
V ACT UP

Race is a term that is commonly used to describe groups of people of similar ancestry or physical characteristics. The concept of race is socially and legally constructed, which means that there is no scientific or genetic basis for dividing people along these lines.

While there is no scientific basis to race, the effects of racism are very real and measurable. Racism has been used to control populations of people, and maintain systems of inequality. Colonialism (the attempt of settlers to control Indigenous populations) and slavery, for example, still dictate many of our assumptions about people and influence many of our institutions (government, education system, etc.).

Racism exists in three main forms:

**Individual racism** is the easiest to spot because it's about a person's attitudes and behaviours.

**Systemic racism** has to do with the policies and practices of institutions that take advantage of peoples of certain races — it's often unconscious.

**Cultural racism** comes from the value systems embedded in society that support discriminatory actions based on perceptions of racial difference and cultural superiority or inferiority.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Racial ethnicity and “blood purity” were used as justification by European settlers to wipe out entire Indigenous populations all over the Americas.
- Half of all racially-motivated hate crimes in Canada in 2006 were property-related offences, while 38% were violent crimes.
- At least seven organized white supremacy groups across Canada have operated brazenly in the past decade or continue to. In 2009, a group of white supremacists in Vancouver poured kerosene over the sleeping body of

a Filipino man and then set him on fire. Later, the police found out that their organization had been assaulting Indigenous, Hispanic, and Black people all over Vancouver.

- Many people continue to believe the myth that people of color steal jobs from “more deserving” Canadians
- Because of racial discrimination, people of colour in Canada are more likely to be unemployed and to have lower incomes. In 2001, the unemployment rate among visible minorities was nearly double the national average (12.6% vs. 6.7%).

## ROOTS AND SOLUTIONS

Racism is rooted in history and lives through our systems today. The hatred, ignorance, and fear behind racism gets passed through generations of families, communities, and societies. Ending racism means stopping that cycle.

As individuals on a day-to-day basis, we need to call out racism when we encounter it (when we feel safe to do so) and advocate zero tolerance for it.

At a community level, we need to not be intimidated by hate groups that spew racism. We must constantly work to create communities that are so respectful and equal, groups like that couldn't even exist because there's no one to recruit.

Governments must proactively intercept racism through policy and legislation, while law enforcement should be more vigilant in addressing hate crimes.

It's important to do anti-racism work with cultural sensitivity and respect. That means being aware of cultural differences and similarities, and realizing that they have an effect on values, learning, and behaviour.

In general, more needs to be done to counter racism — through public awareness and educational curricula, by challenging systems that continue to fuel racism, and by learning more about its historical roots.

For more information and resources visit [www.thinkbig-startsmall.ca](http://www.thinkbig-startsmall.ca)

# I am...

## ... WORKING TO END RACISM

# Pledge

### I WILL...

- challenge the assumptions I make about others
- speak up against racist comments or actions, in person and online
- become more conscious of privilege and racism where it exists
- start and contribute to conversations about racism and human rights
- acknowledge that racism still exists and we have a long way to go

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

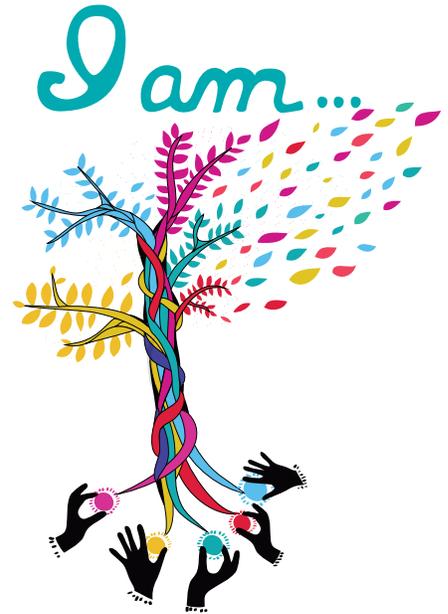
**\*Anti-racist work starts by recognizing the different power structures in action everywhere. For example, major power differences between white people and people of colour give advantages to white people that many can take for granted — that's called privilege.**



## ... WORKING TO END RACISM

Let's work together to make this a racism-free zone.

[THINKBIG-STARTSMALL.CA](http://THINKBIG-STARTSMALL.CA)



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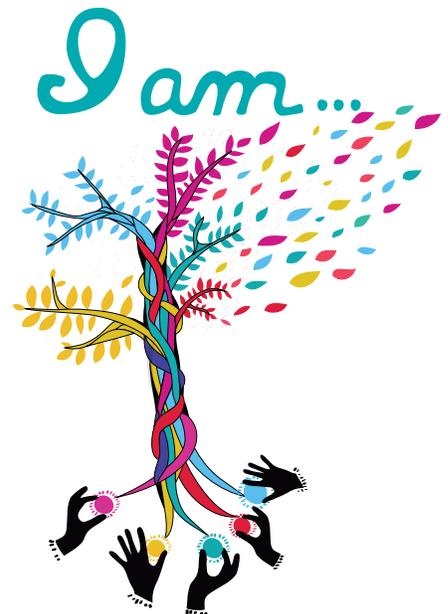
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