

Extension: Hate Crime

Hate crime

Overview

Reporting of hate crimes against disabled people is on the rise. There was a 25% increase in such incidents between 2020 and 2022, but only 1% of these reports were referred to the CPS (Leonard and Cheshire United Response, 2022).

Many respondents reported experiencing hate crimes. This was a key theme in the focus groups for people with learning disabilities in particular, but this also affected other respondents.

Evidence and reflections

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...I was shouted at for thirty minutes outside of my house and they banged on my door while screaming things like, 'You're not disabled!' and, 'I've seen you walk, there's nothing wrong with you!', etc. I was terrified, and still sobbing and shaking when the police arrived - only to receive no support. This should have been reported as a hate crime. The police told me they were entitled to their opinions!

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...My car was vandalised, and threatening notes were put through my letterbox.

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...I had my stick grabbed from me in the roadway by a young man

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A lack of police action was cited by a number of people in their responses - for instance, one respondent said, *"The police did nothing - even when the attack was witnessed by independent witnesses."*

The perspective respondents have on police involvement is summarised by one respondent, who said, *"...No one helps. It seems disabled people are expected to shut up and suffer in silence, because they are not entitled to protection of the law."*

It is clear from these responses that there is a need for hate crime initiatives which focus on tackling and reducing hate crime against disabled people.

This also involves significant institutional change within police handling of hate crime reports from disabled people. It is notable that nobody described a positive experience with reporting hate crime to the police.

To tackle this problem, training for the police on types of hate crime experienced by disabled people is required, with a focus on bringing these cases to CPS in order to increase the low prosecution rate.

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My son experienced two episodes of attack; one where he was kicked in the back, and the second time, screamed and sworn at by the same person.

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...No one helps. It seems disabled people are expected to shut up and suffer in silence, because they are not entitled to protection of the law.

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...I have been a victim of a crime I believe was motivated both by my disability and my colour. I did not report this as I feel the police are not as proactive when crimes are reported by people of colour.

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