

ABC's OF PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

PREJUDICE:

Attitudes or opinions about a person or group simply because the person belongs to a specific religion, race, nationality, or other group. Prejudices involve strong feelings that are difficult to change. **Prejudice is pre-judging.** A person who thinks, "I don't want (name of group) living in my neighborhood." Is expressing a prejudice.

STEREOTYPE:

Oversimplified generalization about a group of people. When people say that all members of a specific nationality, religion, race or gender are "cheap," "lazy," "criminal" or "dumb", they are expressing stereotypes. **To label an entire group based on the actions of some is to engage in stereotyping.** Even when a stereotype is positive, such as when people in one racial group are thought to be superior athletes, the consequences of stereotyping are negative because they depersonalize.

DISCRIMINATION:

When people **deny justice and fair treatment to others** on the basis of their prejudices or stereotypes, they are discriminating. Discrimination may mean putting other people down, not allowing them to participate in activities, restricting their access to work or to live in certain neighborhoods, or denying them something they are entitled to by right and law.

SCAPEGOATING:

Targeting another person or group as responsible for problems in society because of that person's group identity. Blaming an individual or group for something when, in reality, there is no one person or group responsible for the problem. Prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory acts can lead to scapegoating.

ANTISEMITISM:

Antisemitism is a prejudice and/or discrimination against Jews. Antisemitism can be based on hatred against Jews because of their religious beliefs, their group membership (ethnicity) or sometimes on the erroneous belief that Jews are a "race."

RACISM:

Prejudice and/or discrimination based on the social construction of "race." Differences in physical characteristic (e.g., skin color, hair, texture, eye shape) are used to support a system of inequities.