# Words that Challenge Prejudice and Discrimination

It's not always easy to know what to say when you witness someone being discriminated against. However, it's important to challenge discrimination so others understand that any behavior based on prejudice is unacceptable. Challenging discrimination also provides support to those who are targeted. This support can make a big difference to anyone who feels rejected, embarrassed, helpless, or angry because of the discrimination directed at them.

**Below are some examples of words you can use to challenge discrimination. Consider these words and then answer the questions that follow.**

*"It's not okay to treat someone disrespectfully based on his or her [looks/race/religion/sexual identity]."*

*"Being mean to someone because he or she is different from you shows a lack of confidence. After all, everyone is different and unique. That's what makes our world interesting."*

*"There's no one way to be a girl or a boy. Making fun of someone because of how he or she looks isn't right. We each get to choose what kinds of things we like and don't like. No one gets to choose for us."*

*"It's wrong to tell people they don't belong here because of their race or ethnicity. Every person has the right to be a member of our community."*

*"The names you're calling that person are untrue and hurtful. They're based on prejudice, which is never acceptable. If you really got to know that person as an individual you might feel differently than you do now."*

- Which of these statements might you feel comfortable saying?

- What other statements can you come up with to challenge prejudice and discrimination?

- In what kind of situations would it be fitting to use any of these statements?

- Can you think of another way of letting your peers know that you don't approve of prejudice and discrimination of any kind, including in jokes?

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