

# Keeping the Community Safe

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With the recent sentencing of the Poway synagogue shooter, I was reminded of the importance of our mission to fight hate and bigotry, along with the crucial need for proactive efforts to protect our community, from security to education. This is where ADL plays a role in our Jewish community from convening the Jewish Community Security Group to working in K-12 schools with bigotry and prevention programs.

ADL's No Place for Hate® initiative provides K-12 schools with a proactive and student-centered framework to fight hate while building inclusive and safe communities in which respect and equity are the main goals. No Place for Hate inspires students and educators to increase their appreciation for differences, build communities of respect, and create sustainable, long-term positive school environments. No one is born a bigot and our education programs are the best way to create a world without hate. Even so, we cannot ignore the safety and security of our institutions.

Almost since ADL's inception, we have worked closely with law enforcement to prevent hate crimes and classify incidents as hate crimes when relevant. Each quarter, ADL Orange County/Long Beach convenes the Jewish community to hear from security experts and various branches of local and national law enforcement to assess current threats and discuss security needs. Naturally, one of these meetings focused on lessons learned from Poway, featuring the border control agent who was at the Chabad during the shooting and pursued the assailant.

During the past year, we have met with the FBI to discuss cyber security and the need for a cultural shift in organizations to focus on an entire community's role in proactive protections. We've also liaised with the Secure Community Network regarding our respective efforts to monitor extremism and supremacy in our county and leverage each of our organization's experience and expertise in keeping the Jewish community safe and secure.

The community was shaken after a 2017 bomb threat, where hundreds of people were evacuated from the Alpert Jewish Community Center (AJCC), from one of several threats reported across the country on the same day. In response, ADL gathered together with Long Beach Police and AJCC leaders to share the threat assessment and what we were all doing to keep everyone safe.

It's easy to forget the importance of proactive measures when the world gets quiet – and it isn't until hate rears its ugly head that we are reminded of just how critical policy, data and reporting are. We know that if we want to make change, we need strong policy. The foundation of strong policy is robust data on hate and bigotry. To harness this data, we need adequate reporting, which can only be obtained by working closely with law enforcement, schools, the community, synagogues, other faith-based organizations, and you.

We all have a role in keeping our communities safe and creating a world without hate:

- Never be indifferent to hate and always speak up when you witness bigotry
- Bring ADL to your community for a talk and/or workshop on how to respond to antisemitism
- Make your school is a No Place For Hate® school (*more info: [orangecounty.adl.org/education](https://www.adl.org/education)*)
- Report incidents of antisemitism, bigotry, and bullying at [adl.org/reportincident](https://www.adl.org/reportincident)

Because of thousands of people like you who have reported incidents, we have been able to help communities across the country by reporting on trends, educating lawmakers and law enforcement and advocating for stronger protections from incidents and crimes. 