



## The White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **FACT SHEET: Launch of the “Act To Change” Public Awareness Campaign to Prevent Bullying Among Asian American and Pacific Islander Youth**

Every day, kids of all ages suffer from being bullied in schools across the country. In the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community, this problem is often compounded by cultural, religious, and linguistic barriers that can keep AAPI youth from seeking and receiving help. Anecdotal evidence has shown that certain AAPI groups – including South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Micronesian, LGBT, immigrant, and limited English proficient youth – are more likely to be the targets of bullying.

#### *AAPI Bullying Prevention Task Force*

In November 2014, on the fifth anniversary of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, the White House [announced](#) several new initiatives to address hate incidents and hate crimes, including a new Interagency Initiative on Hate Crimes. Additionally, the [White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders](#), in partnership with the [U.S. Department of Justice](#), the [U.S. Department of Education](#), and the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#), [launched the AAPI Bullying Prevention Task Force \(AAPI Task Force\)](#). In light of concerns about the high rates of bullying and harassment targeting Sikh youth and incidents such as the attacks on immigrant Asian students at South Philadelphia High School in December 2009, the AAPI Task Force has been charged with raising awareness among the AAPI community of federal resources and remedies available to them.

The AAPI Task Force brings together federal experts in civil rights, language access, education, community relations, public health, mental health, and data to work closely with community stakeholders to:

- Identify barriers to reporting bullying and harassment
- Understand obstacles to full and equal access to remedial and support resources
- Analyze data on bullying and harassment in the AAPI community
- Improve the federal government’s outreach and resources

The AAPI Task Force has collected and disseminated information through convening listening sessions between federal experts and community members. To date, the AAPI Task Force has conducted more than [25 listening sessions](#) in cities across the country to facilitate discussions with youth, parents, and educators and learn more about issues of bullying in the AAPI community.

Additionally, to address a lack of data on bullying as it affects AAPI youth, the AAPI Task Force is conducting an [informational survey](#) of community leaders through the end of 2015. The survey is gathering information about what bullying of AAPI students looks like, who is being bullied, on what basis, and whether AAPI students are talking to adults and peers in their schools and communities about the bullying they experience. The responses will help inform recommendations of the AAPI Task Force for its May 2016 report.

### *Launching “Act To Change”*

Today, the [White House Initiative on AAPIs](#), in partnership with the Sikh Coalition and the Coalition of Asian Pacifics in Entertainment, is launching “**Act To Change**,” a public awareness campaign to address bullying, including in the AAPI community. “Act To Change” aims to empower students, families, and educators with the knowledge and tools to help prevent and end bullying in their communities. In addition to raising awareness, the campaign encourages AAPI youth and adults to share their stories, engage in community dialogues, and take action against bullying. The campaign website, [ActToChange.org](#), includes video and music empowerment playlists and an organizing toolkit, and encourages visitors to “Take a Pledge” to join the #ActToChange movement and stand up against bullying. As one out of three AAPIs does not speak English fluently, resources will be available in Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Punjabi, Urdu, and Vietnamese. “Act To Change” will also feature video testimonials of AAPI celebrity athletes, artists, and entertainers.

### *Coalition of “Act To Change” Supporters*

The “Act To Change” campaign builds a broad, diverse coalition of supporters and forges public-private partnerships across media platforms, and through nonprofit organizations, celebrities, and other stakeholders. “Act To Change” supporters will champion the campaign by:

- **Promoting “Act To Change” content, using the brand and logo on their platforms.** This includes using media space online, on television, and on other platforms to spread the word about “Act To Change.”
- **Sharing resources with “Act To Change.”** This includes cross-promoting bullying prevention resources.

- **Making influencer and personality commitments.** This includes integrating “Act To Change” content on different influencers’ and personalities’ platforms to spread the word.
- **Creating original content for their audiences and promoting it through their own platforms and talent.** This includes creating content that resonates with their particular audiences and doing what they do best: communicating with, engaging, and mobilizing communities to act.
- **Developing new or expanding upon existing programs.** This includes building upon existing programming and youth outreach efforts to include bullying prevention themes and messaging.

Examples of commitments by “Act To Change” supporters include:

- **Innovation session of thought leaders:** Socket Group will convene a brain trust of leading experts from diverse fields to determine a collaborative and creative solution to help AAPI youth identify bullying.
- **Teach For America:** Teach For America’s Asian American & Pacific Islander Initiative will host a listening session with its corps members and alumni to discuss AAPI bullying in their classrooms. In addition to promoting “Act To Change” content on its various platforms, Teach For America will develop a blog campaign to elevate the voices of both teachers and former educators who have dealt with AAPI bullying in their classrooms.
- **Twitter:** As part of its mission to create a safe, secure, and enjoyable environment for users, Twitter will promote “Act To Change” on its Safety Center webpages, blog, and handles, as well as create new translated materials about safety and cyberbullying.
- **YMCA of the USA:** YMCA of the USA, working to strengthen more than 10,000 communities through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility, will disseminate “Act To Change” content to Ys across the United States to build awareness and encourage participation in the campaign. They will also contribute Y-USA-owned tools and materials to the “Act To Change” resources page.
- **National Education Association:** The National Education Association will promote the “Act To Change” campaign to its 3 million members as part of its ongoing national campaign to raise awareness and engage adults and educators in stopping bullying whenever or wherever it occurs, and to make the nation’s schools and classrooms safe, bully-free environments for all students.
- **Islamic Networks Group:** Islamic Networks Group (ING), a nonprofit organization whose mission is to counter prejudice and discrimination against Muslim Americans, will promote “Act To Change” across its platforms and incorporate “Act To Change” resources in its INGYouth Program for young Muslim Americans.
- **Hindu American Foundation:** In addition to promoting “Act To Change” through its various platforms, the Hindu American Foundation (HAF) will

publish survey data on anti-Hindu bullying and bias in schools. HAF is working with other AAPI and faith-based groups, including Sikh and Muslim organizations, on educating teachers on how to combat bullying.

- **Center for Asian American Media & PBS:** The Center for Asian American Media, in association with the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), will promote and amplify the message of “Act To Change” through their web and social media platforms.
- **GLSEN:** GLSEN has contributed materials to the “Act To Change” resources page and will promote “Act To Change” on its social media platforms.
- **National Council of Asian Pacific Americans:** The National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA), a coalition of 35 national nonprofit organizations representing diverse AAPI communities, will promote “Act To Change” through social media platforms and targeted youth outreach engagements.
- **ISAtv:** ISAtv, founded by Asian American entertainment groups Wong Fu Productions and Far East Movement to elevate Asian Pacific American lifestyle and culture, will host video content on its YouTube channel, involve its digital space personalities, and promote “Act To Change” on its social media platforms.
- **#ActToChange Live Event in Los Angeles:** The campaign partners in collaboration with local organizations in the greater Los Angeles area will host an #ActToChange live event at the Japanese American National Museum on November 21. The public live event will feature armchair dialogues and performances with distinguished personalities. Prior to the event, **OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates**, a national civil rights organization, will host a high school advocacy training, expanding upon its existing “APA Y-Advocate” program to include a bullying prevention curriculum.

“Act To Change” supporters include: *18 Million Rising; 8Asians.com; Angry Asian Man; Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC; Asian American Journalists Association; Asian American Psychological Association; Asian Cinevision; Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies; Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance; Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum; Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund; Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations; Boat People SOS; Brown Girl Magazine; Bystander Revolution; The California Endowment; The Center for Asian Pacific American Women; Center for Asian American Media; Council on American Islamic Relations – CA; East Coast Asian American Student Union; Empowering Pacific Islander Communities; FLAWD/WeStopHate.org; Global Grind; GLSEN; Hindu American Foundation; Hmong National Development, Inc.; ISAtv; Islamic Networks Groups; Japanese American Citizens League; Japanese American National Museum; Laotian American National Alliance, Inc.; Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics, Inc.; MTV; Muslim Advocates; National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association; National Asian Pacific American Bar Association; National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse; National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum; National Council of Asian Pacific Americans; National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians; National Education Association;*

*National Federation of Filipino American Associations; National Korean American Service & Education Consortium; National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance; OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates; PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center; Public Broadcasting Service (PBS); Scholastic; Socket Group; Sons & Brothers; Teach For America; Traktivist.com – Asian American Music & Radio; Twitter; Vietnamese American Media Network; and YMCA of the USA.*

For more information on the campaign, visit [ActToChange.org](http://ActToChange.org).

*The White House Initiative on AAPIs, co-chaired by Education Secretary Arne Duncan and Surgeon General of the United States Dr. Vivek Murthy and led by Executive Director Kiran Ahuja, is housed within the U.S. Department of Education.*