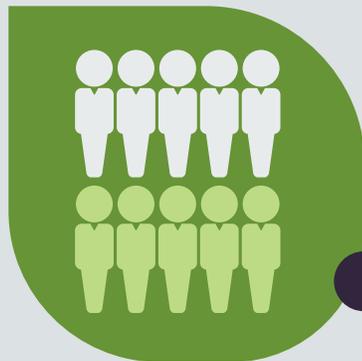


A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence and Abuse



Between January and June of 2021, there were **22** hate crimes and bias incidents reported to Bellevue Police Department.

1 in **3** homeless youth will be recruited by a trafficker into commercial sexual exploitation.



50% of transgender individuals are sexually abused or assaulted at some point in their lives.

The Bellevue Police Department recorded **1,137** incidents in 2020 where domestic violence was indicated.



In 2020, the Count Us In report found **1,211** individuals experiencing homelessness were fleeing from domestic violence.

Goal #3

A Safe Haven from All Forms of Violence and Abuse

This chapter includes data about:

- Domestic Violence
- Sexual Assault
- Child Abuse & Neglect
- Human Trafficking

This chapter discusses these topics as they pertain to the broader community. For more information about how this goal area relates to specific populations (Older Adults, Refugees and Immigrants, People with Disabilities, School-Aged Children and Youth, and Veterans) within our community, please see their respective chapters.

In addition, we recognize that disparate outcomes based on race exist regarding prevalence of and responses to the issues covered in this chapter. As part of the City's ongoing efforts to continue growing as a culturally competent and racially equitable organization and city, we have, when possible, highlighted racial disparities throughout this report, denoted by the phrase **Racial (In)Equity Data Point**.

While gender is a spectrum that includes transgender people and those who identify as neither male nor female, the sources referenced in this chapter reported data by male and female and did not report data encompassing the entire gender spectrum.

Key Findings

- Survivors of Domestic Violence (DV) face barriers to housing and legal services. The high cost of housing in Bellevue creates a serious challenge for survivors who want to remain in the community to maintain their jobs, stay close to support systems, and for children remain in the same school. More shelter beds and affordable permanent housing options with services are needed. Pro-bono or affordable legal representation for child custody, protection orders, immigration, and financial issues is another huge challenge. Without these services, it becomes much harder for survivors to maintain their safety, maintain or return to employment, and sustain or establish self-sufficiency.
- Child abuse occurs in approximately 70% of families experiencing domestic violence.¹ Holistic programs including prevention and earlier interventions are needed to break the cycle of abuse for future generations. For children and youth who have witnessed abuse, support groups and individual counseling need to be available to address the resulting trauma.
- Sexual assault continues to be a public safety issue. It is critical to support community education about sexual assault, rape, child sexual abuse, and consent workshops for youth.
- Poverty can be a correlating factor in child abuse and neglect. Parents and caregivers experiencing economic hardship have day-to-day challenges providing the basics for their

children; therefore programs offering basic needs assistance to families with children, outlets for stress, and supportive services are needed.

- Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents are increasing issues in our community along with increased reports of racial and ethnic discrimination and other types of discrimination.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence (DV), specifically intimate partner violence (IPV), profoundly affects the lives of survivors as well as the entire community. DV incidents involve family or household members; traditionally the term has referred to altercations between partners and former partners, but it also includes roommates with or without a romantic relationship, and parents or children. Individuals may be of the same gender. Domestic violence includes dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking. Domestic violence is drastically underreported; therefore these statistics do not capture actual the number of individuals that have experienced DV but the number of individuals that reported experiencing it. In addition, COVID-19 resulted in isolation for many residents, which led to a reduction in reported domestic violence cases at the beginning of the pandemic, but an increase number of cases overall.

Community voice

- Although domestic violence remains as a second-tier community problem by respondents in 2021, 27% of survey respondents rated DV as a minor or moderate community problem which is a 9% increase from 2019 (18%).²
- Despite survey results, the rise in domestic violence emerged as a constant theme during community conversations. Many participants discussed that that people have been isolated over the last year and half due to COVID-19, which has led to increased stress for many households. This stress has resulted in more reports of domestic violence.
- BGLAD is a weekly drop-in social support group for youth at Youth Eastside Services, established as a welcoming and affirming space for people exploring or seeking support for their identities. In a community conversation with BGLAD, participants reported that DV cases in the LGBTQIA+ community are often not taken seriously, and frequently there are no police records of incidents.

Prevalence

- Prior to the pandemic, 1 in 4 women and nearly 1 in 10 men in the US reported having experienced intimate partner violence during their lifetime. DV has a severe impact on its victims, including adverse physical and mental health outcomes and a high risk of homicide (1 in 6 homicides are perpetrated by an intimate partner). Pandemic and disaster response literature suggest this pandemic increases risks, particularly for individuals who have already experienced DV.³
- Data from the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office indicates that DV homicides nearly doubled in 2020 compared to prior years; from 7 each in 2018 and 2019 to 13 in 2020 (data only available through September 2020). DV had also been linked to an additional 15 deaths in 2020. This included murder-suicides, homicides committed by convicted DV perpetrators, and officer-involved shootings of DV suspects.⁴
- In Washington State, Domestic Violence offenses made up 49.7% of all Crimes Against Persons and 2.7% of all Crimes Against Property.⁵

Bellevue Police Reports Indicating Domestic Violence

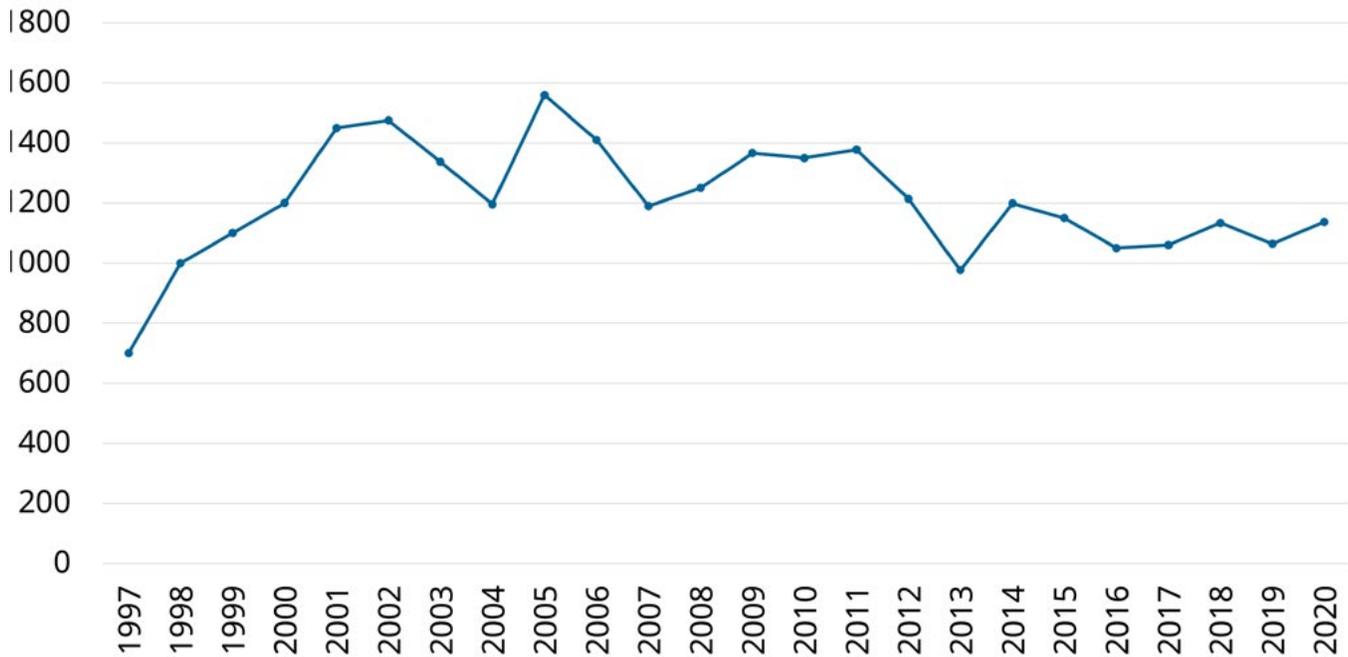


Figure 1 | Source: Bellevue Police Department

- The Bellevue Police Department recorded 1,137 incidents in 2020 where domestic violence was indicated. As Figure 1 shows, the number of reports of domestic violence to the Bellevue Police Department has remained relatively steady since the large drop in 2013. From 2014 to 2020 the City averaged 1,113 domestic violence reports per year. Note: The data collected reflects reports where domestic violence was indicated - which includes all case types, not just assaults. In addition, the data does not include cases where domestic violence occurred but was not reported to the police.⁶
- LifeWire is a DV agency that provides an array of services to domestic violence survivors in East King County. They reported that their Helpline calls for survivor advocacy increased 33% between 2019 and 2020: from 2054 to 2174. They stated that calls to the helpline reduced significantly the first two months of COVID-19 as survivors were trapped with abusers, and thus, may not have been able to reach out for help. During this time LifeWire advocates used a variety of means to connect with current participants when the phones went silent, being very careful to assess safety. This included email, text, and even use of “code words” that represented safe times to talk with clients. The Helpline provides safety planning and short-term advocacy, as well as a gateway to all LifeWire services.⁷
- On the day of the National DV count 2020:
 - 1,206 adult and children DV survivors were in emergency shelter, transitional housing, or other housing program provided by a DV providers in Washington.
 - 1,100 adults and child survivors received non-residential assistance and services (counseling, legal, advocacy, and children’s support groups).
 - 603 individuals had unmet requested services and approximately 62% of the unmet requests were for housing or emergency shelter.⁸

- LGBTQ members fall victim to domestic violence at equal or even higher rates compared to their heterosexual counterparts.
 - 3.8% of lesbian women and 61.1% of bisexual women have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime, as opposed to 35% of heterosexual women.
 - 26% of gay men and 37.3% of bisexual men have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime, in comparison to 29% of heterosexual men.
 - Only 26% of men in a male same sex relationship called the police for assistance after experiencing near-lethal violence.⁹
 - 31% to 50% of transgender people have experienced domestic violence, compared to the general population at 28 to 33 percent.¹⁰
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Black and Indigenous people of color (BIPOC) individuals are disproportionately impacted by DV. Black women experience DV at a rate 35% higher than White women. They are also more likely to be killed by their intimate partner. Between 21% and 55% of Asian and Pacific Islander women have experienced DV. More than 1 in 3 Native and Indigenous women will experience DV in their lifetime. Hispanic and Latina women experience DV at rates similar to White women, but Latina immigrants are more likely to experience DV after moving to the U.S.¹¹
- Housing is a major concern for DV survivors and their families. In 2020, the Count Us In report (formerly One Night Count) found 1,211 individuals experiencing homelessness were fleeing from domestic violence. This is about 10% of the total homeless population and an increase of about 700 individuals since last year. About 69% of domestic violence victims are unsheltered and 15% have children with them.¹²
- LifeWire states that the needs of DV survivors continually outweigh capacity and that demand for services has increased during the pandemic. The organization served more survivors last year with shelter and housing solutions than in any year prior, yet they are still having to turn away one survivor household for every one served. They also reported about a three-week wait to respond to non-urgent/non-lethal requests for advocacy services, and they still have waiting lists for mental health and legal advocacy services.

Service Trends

- The Bellevue Police Department (BPD) works closely with and relies heavily on LifeWire's services. In all cases of domestic violence involving police, an advocate works with the individual identified as the victim, explaining the complicated justice system, providing them with information on No Contact and Protection Orders, and planning for safety. The advocate accompanies the victim to court, works closely with the city attorney's office, and is in weekly contact with the prosecutor's office. In 2019, the BPD Domestic Violence Victim Advocate worked with 282 misdemeanor cases with an average caseload of 23.5 cases per month. The average case load in 2020 was 19.75 per month with a total of 237 misdemeanor cases. The City's victim advocate reported that fewer misdemeanor cases were filed in 2020 due to COVID-19, particularly during the spring and summer months. Between January and August of 2021, 161 cases have been filed, averaging 20 cases per month.¹³
- BPD DV Victim Advocate reported that the biggest challenges for individuals experiencing domestic violence are lack of shelter, affordable housing, access to free/reduced fee legal services, and financial resources.¹⁴

- LifeWire reported that their primary growth has been in shelter/housing services as this continues to be the greatest unmet need for survivors. In 2020, LifeWire provided some form of shelter or housing to 386 households. By providing more housing assistance in 2020, they were able to reduce their turn-away rate to 1:1. Much of this assistance was in the form of flexible funding to survivor households who were directly impacted by the economic downturn as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic vulnerability and homelessness directly impact a survivor’s ability to escape DV and remain independent after having left an abusive partner.¹⁵

“There is not enough shelter and housing for DV survivors. They often end up going back to their abuser because there is nowhere for them to stay while they wait for a shelter or housing opening at LifeWire or another DV provider.”

~ Participant, Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network (BDAN) Community Conversation

- Legal assistance remains a primary need for survivors of domestic violence. LifeWire added a third Legal Advocate position in 2021, and partners with Eastside Legal Assistance Program to facilitate pro bono legal services. LifeWire’s legal advocates have helped file twice as many DV protection orders (DVPO) in 2020, compared to previous years. Requests for DVPOs increased dramatically during the pandemic as survivors were forced to spend more time at home with abusive partners and lost many of their opportunities for independence, escape and support. Yet, the agency still has a waiting list and it typically takes about three months to meet with a legal advocate, except in cases of serious emergency.¹⁶ In 2020, 209 survivors accessed legal advocacy services for issues ranging from DV protection orders to marriage dissolution and parenting plans.¹⁷
- Mental health counseling is included in the full range of services needed for survivors. Providers report that many survivors are experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and suicidal ideation as a result of their abuse. There is still typically a waiting list to access services. 158 survivors and youth utilized LifeWire’s mental health services in 2020.¹⁸

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is unwanted sexual activity, including taking advantage of victims not able to give consent, making threats and/or with the perpetrators using force. Most victims and perpetrators know each other. Long-term symptoms include anxiety, fear, or post-traumatic stress disorder.¹⁹ Sexual abuse occurs in all communities and among all socio-economic groups.

Prevalence

- In Washington State, 5,432 sexual offenses were reported in 2020.²⁰ A rape occurred every 3.7 hours and for all other forcible sex offenses, there was an occurrence every 1.7 hours.²¹
- Over the past ten years (2011-2020) the Bellevue Police Department received an average of 23 reports of rape per year. On average, approximately 23% (5 out of 23) of the reports of rape per year are related to domestic violence.²²
- Adults who have been sexually assaulted or raped have a likelihood of suffering negative health consequences, including depression, suicide, and alcohol abuse. Ninety-four percent of women who are raped experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

during at least the two weeks following the rape. 33% of women who are raped contemplate suicide and 13% of women who are raped attempt suicide. Approximately 70% of rape or sexual assault victims experience moderate to severe distress, a larger percentage than for any other violent crime. People who have been sexually assaulted are more likely to use drugs than the general public.²³

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Indigenous Americans are twice as likely to experience a rape/sexual assault compared to all races. 41% of sexual assaults against American Indians are committed by a stranger; 34% by an acquaintance; and 25% by an intimate partner or family member.²⁴
- One in two transgender individuals are sexually abused or assaulted at some point in their lives. This indicates that the majority of transgender individuals are living with the aftermath of trauma and the fear of possible repeat victimization. ²⁵ Twenty-one percent of transgender, genderqueer, and/or nonconforming (TGQN) college students have been sexually assaulted, compared to 18% of non-TGQN females and 4% of non-TGQN males. ²⁶

Service trends

- King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KCSARC) provides services to children, youth, and adult victims of sexual violence and their families. These services include legal advocacy, helping the victims navigate the criminal justice system, connections to needed services, and building the skills to support their loved ones who have been victimized. In 2020, KCSARC reported that 4,560 King County individuals and their families accessed direct services for a total of 18,565 legal and general advocacy services. This included 219 Bellevue residents who received 1,138 legal and general advocacy services.²⁷ Twenty-three percent of KCSARC's client services were provided to East King County residents.²⁸
- Harborview Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress Services (HSATS), provides a full range of services, including crisis response, advocacy, counseling for child and youth victims of sexual assault and assistance for parents/caretakers.²⁹ In 2020, they provided 112 hours of counseling to 30 Bellevue residents. They have locations located in both Bellevue and Redmond.³⁰

Child Abuse & Neglect

Child abuse is the physical, psychological, sexual mistreatment of children, and/or neglect of children by their parents or guardians. Neglect is the most common form of child abuse, but rates are hard to establish because neglect is often unreported.

Prevalence

- Nationally during Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019, CPS agencies received an estimated 4.4 million referrals involving the alleged maltreatment of approximately 7.9 million children. More than half (54.5%) of referrals were screened in for investigation or assessment by CPS agencies in the 45 States that reported statistics. Approximately one-fifth (16.7%) of the children investigated were found to be victims of abuse or neglect — a rate of 8.9 per 1,000 children in the population.³¹ Note: Being screened out does not necessarily mean that abuse did not occur. When a report is “screened out,” no action is taken, or the report is transferred to a more appropriate agency. Usually, a report is “screened out” when there’s not enough information on which to base an investigation, CPS or police judge the information to be inaccurate or false, or the information in the report doesn’t meet definitions for child abuse or neglect used by the protective authorities. ³²

- In King County, Child Protective Services (CPS), a state agency, responds to reports of suspected abuse involving children. In 2016, a total of 8,238 households in King County were investigated. This has declined from a high of 9,756 in 2007. In 2015, about 30 out of every 1,000 households in King County were investigated or assessed by CPS.
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Households of the following racial and ethnic groups were most likely to be investigated or assessed by CPS in 2015, American Indian/Alaska Native (145 per 1,000 households), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (80 per 1,000) and Black/African American (77 per 1,000). Looking across all demographics, Asian households were much less likely to be investigated or assessed, with only 11 investigations or assessments per 1,000 households.³³ There are a variety of factors that may contribute to racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparity in the child welfare system; including but not limited to structural racism (e.g., historical policies and cultural dynamics); disproportionate and disparate needs of children of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, particularly due to higher rates of poverty, which is also fueled by systemic racism; racial bias and discrimination exhibited by individuals (e.g., caseworkers, mandated reporters), child welfare system factors (e.g., lack of resources for families of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, caseworker characteristics).³⁴
- 1 in 15 children are exposed to intimate partner violence each year.³⁵
- By age 12, 83% of homeless children have been exposed to at least one serious violent event, and nearly 25% have witnessed acts of violence within their families.³⁶
- A majority of child sexual assault victims are ages 12-17. 34% of child victims of sexual assault and rape are under age 12, and 66% of child victims of sexual assault and rape are age 12-17.³⁷
- Adults abused as children, who receive no treatment, may experience psychological distress many years after the abuse. These traumatic childhood experiences, which are examples of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), become significant risk factors for serious challenges later in life (substance abuse, depression, suicide, parenting problems). Without intervention or help for the child, typical psychological development can be negatively affected.³⁸ Eighteen percent of children in Washington State have two or more ACES. ³⁹

Service trends

Children living in LifeWire’s shelter or transitional housing programs participate in services with an advocate to develop emotional intelligence, healthy ways to express themselves, positive communication skills, and healthy relationship skills. LifeWire reported that during the pandemic it has been much harder to serve children with direct advocacy. However, children in their shelter and transitional housing did receive direct advocacy services and they worked hard to create technology access for survivors and children, including the creation of a “Zoom Room” at their transitional shelter which also allowed the children in that program to participate in an art therapy group.”⁴⁰

Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents

A hate crime occurs when someone maliciously and intentionally commits physical assault, poses threats to a person or group of people that causes the victims to have “reasonable fear” that the attacker will cause physical injury or property damage, and/or damage or destruction of a victim’s property based on the attacker’s perception of a victim’s race, color, religion, ancestry,

national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, or mental, physical, or sensory disability.

Bias incidents are acts of prejudice that are not criminal in nature and do not involve violence, threats, or property damage. Threatening words do not constitute a hate crime offense if it is apparent to the victim that the person does not have the ability to carry out the threat. Just because these incidents cannot be criminally charged does not mean they are not important to report. These kinds of incidents have negative impacts on whole communities and deserve to be elevated and understood by the public. Some examples of bias incidents include yelling profanity and insults; distributing racist flyers in public places; and displaying hateful materials on private property.

Community voice

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Thirty-five percent of community phone/online survey respondents rated racial or ethnic discrimination as a major or moderate community issue, a 10% increase from 2019 and 22% increase from 2009.
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Twenty percent of the consumer survey respondents reported that someone in their household is experiencing racial or ethnic discrimination most of the time or sometimes. 31% of respondents reported that someone in their household is experiencing discrimination other than racial or ethnic discrimination.
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Seven percent of community phone/online survey respondents rated experiencing racial or ethnic discrimination as a major or moderate household issue, a 2% decrease from 2019 and the same as 2009.
- Nine percent of the community phone/online survey respondents rated experiencing any other type of discrimination as a major or moderate household issue. This question was asked for the first time, so data from past years is not available for comparison.
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Both racial or ethnic discrimination and other types of discrimination is a community issue discussed in the majority of community conversations; it was also brought up by several providers in the provider's survey. During a community conversation with Bellevue Mini City Hall staff, it was reported that racism has increased since the beginning of the pandemic, especially for the Asian community. "We've seen it beginning with people throwing stuff at them and escalated to violence. People are hesitating to report these incidents. Many older adults have reported fear to go into the community because they don't feel safe."

Prevalence

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** In 2020, 468 hate crime incidents were reported in Washington State.⁴¹
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Between January and June of 2021, the Bellevue Police Department received reports for 10 hate crimes and 12 bias incidents, for a total of 22 hate crimes and bias incidents reports. In 2020, there were a total of 23 reports: 18 hate crimes and 5 bias. Hate crimes and bias incidents often go unreported.⁴²

Hate Crimes Reported to Bellevue Police Department

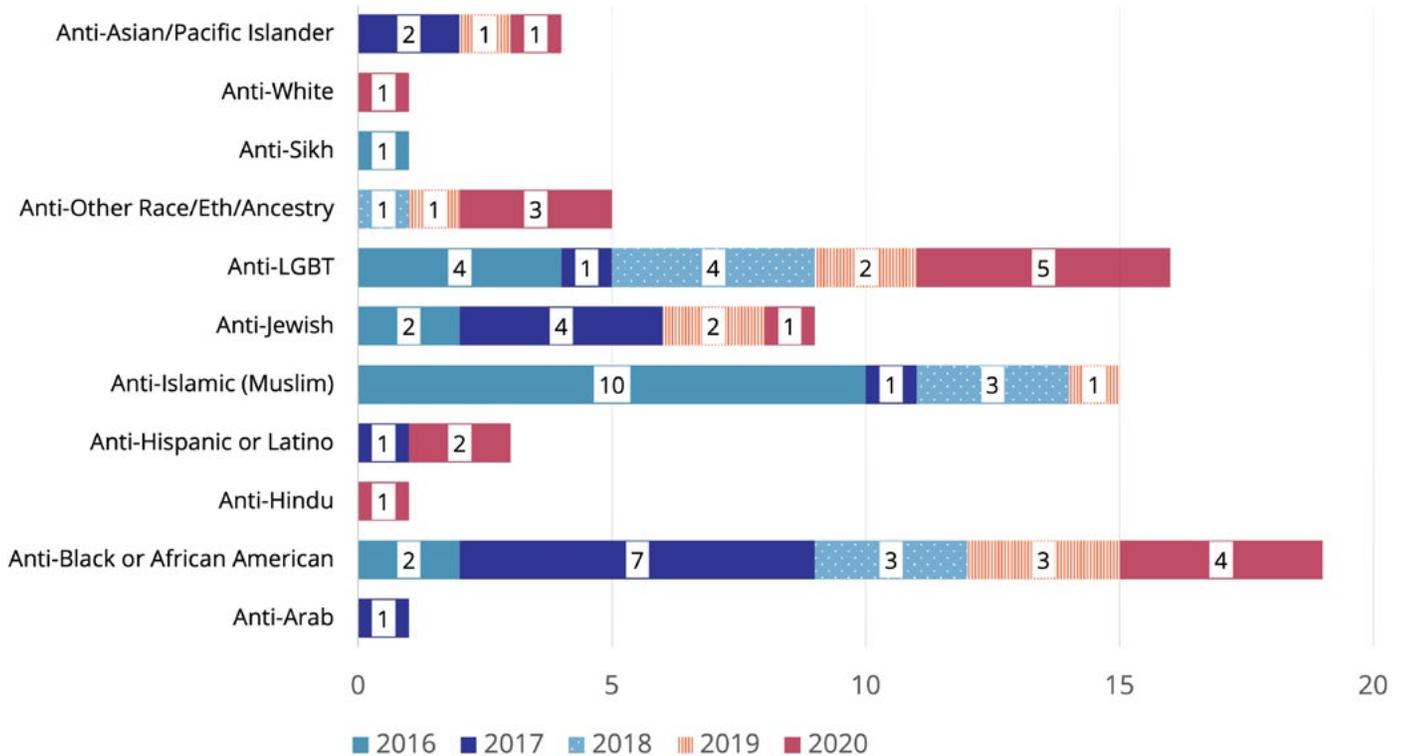


Figure 2 | Source: Bellevue Police Department⁴³

- Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Figure 2 displays the total number of hate crimes in Bellevue since 2016, breaking down both whom the crime was committed against and the total for each year.⁴⁴
- Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** King County Coalition Against Hate and Bias (KCCAHB) is a community-led initiative to address hate and bias incidents by strengthening and networking communities who experience racist and bigoted treatment and all forms of oppression. The coalition was formed because traditional law enforcement remedies disproportionately affect communities of color; hate and bias crimes and incidents go largely under-reported; the data collected is limited in its utility; and visibility and community empowerment have deterrent effects on hate and bias crimes. The Coalition Partners are also the administrators of the Hate and Bias Incident Response Survey which collects data from communities affected by hate and bias. Eight agencies are participating in KCCAHB with 7 collecting response surveys. These include three agencies with an Eastside presence: Chinese Information and Services Center (CISC), Eastside for All, and Muslim Community & Neighborhood Association (MCNA).⁴⁵
- Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Eastside agencies participating in KCCAHB (CISC, Eastside for All, and MCNA) and partnering Eastside Agencies (Eastside Embrace, Indian American Community Services, Immigrant Women’s Community Center, and 4 Tomorrow) are focusing on collecting data and addressing hate and bias incidents in EKC. Between April 2020 and May 2021, KCCAHB received 87 hate and bias incidents in East King County. This includes 53 reports to Eastside providers, 17 reports to CISC, and 8 reported to United Indians of All Tribes.⁴⁶

- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** CISC has an in-house Anti-Bias/Anti-Hate Program that was started in response to rising anti-Asian sentiment during COVID-19. They provide outreach, support, referrals to resources and education. Since July 2020, CISC has collected over 200 reports in King County in six languages: Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Russian, Spanish, and English.⁴⁷
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** Eastside KCCAHB members (besides CISC) and partnering Eastside agencies reported that the majority of the hate crimes and bias incidents reported to them occurred in the following places: private business or workplace (32%), school K-12 (15%), street or sidewalk (15%), and hospitality (restaurant, hotel, retail, etc.) (13%).⁴⁸ CISC reports the majority of the hate crimes and bias incidents reported to them occurred in the following places: street or sidewalk (25%), other - airport, preschool, library, while driving/on road, etc. (14%), public transportation (11%), and hospitality (9%).⁴⁹
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** In 2021, there have been two very public instances in Eastside King County where hackers posted racial slurs and white nationalist messages. The first occurred in June 2021 on Lake Washington School District’s website. Then the second event happen in September 2021 at the Welcome Week event “Equitable Economic Development: Embracing Opportunities for Our Region” held over Zoom that was cosponsored by East King County Cities, including Bellevue, and OneEastside. Eastside for All Founder, Debbie Lacy wrote “We need the racist terrorism and violence to stop. Eastside For All is committed to supporting community members experiencing hate and bias through awareness-building and advocacy efforts.”⁵⁰

“This happened in a city in East King County: “My sister-in-law had a horrifying experience at a gas station. When she tried to prepay with cash, the cashier refused to take her money. She asked why and he yelled, ‘I don’t need your money or business!’ He continued yelling, ‘Get out of here now!’ She felt shaken and left without gas. She felt that her hijab and the color of her skin are what motivated this man to threaten her.”

~ Shared by Eastside for All
- **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** In the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) 2016 report on hate violence there were 28 reported LGBTQ and HIV-affected hate violence homicides. 79% were people of color: 18 people who were Black and 4 who were Latinx. Nineteen of the homicides (68%) were transgender and gender non-conforming people. Of the total number of homicides, 17 (61%) were transgender women of color. Seventeen (61%) of the victims were below the age of 35.⁵¹

For more information about refugee and immigrants and fear and discrimination, please see the section Refugee and Immigrants.

Human Trafficking

Human Trafficking is defined as the inducement of a person to perform a commercial sex act, labor, or services, through force, fraud, or coercion. Human trafficking can also occur if a person under 18 years old of age has been induced or enticed, regardless of force, fraud, or coercion, to perform a commercial sex act.⁵²

Prevalence

- Human Trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery. Victims are coerced to prostitute and often subjected to physical and psychological dangers, such as severe beatings, rape, drug addiction and other forms of violence.⁵³ In Washington State, 272 cases of human trafficking were reported in 2019, an increase from 229 cases in 2018 and twice as many reported cases as in 2015 (135 cases). Since 2007, there have been 1,449 cases reported in the state.⁵⁴
- The typical age of entry into prostitution is between 13 and 15 years old. Most of these youth are American. Most of them are trafficked in hotels.⁵⁵ **Racial (In)Equity Data Point:** In King County, 52% of all child sex trafficking victims are Black and 84% of youth victims are female, though Black girls only comprise 1.1% of the general population.⁵⁶
- Forty-six percent of homeless LGBTQ youth report running away from home due to family rejection of their sexual orientation and 17 percent ended up on the streets after they aged out of the foster care system. 1 in 3 homeless youth will be recruited by a trafficker into commercial sexual exploitation. There is a disproportionate number of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) youth in the commercially sexually exploited population. LGBTQ youth's entry into commercial sexual exploitation often begins with survival sex or the exchange of sexual favors for basic needs like food, shelter, or clothing. Homeless LGBTQ were three times as likely to engage in survival sex than their heterosexual peers. Homeless LGBTQ youth are roughly 7.4 times more likely to experience acts of sexual violence than heterosexual homeless youth.⁵⁷

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