



RACIAL PROFILING & ANTI-RACISM FOR YOUTH EDUCATION

(Based on Educaloi 2022 “Be the Change: Arrêt Racism” and updated to 2026 standards)

1. Introduction

Racial profiling and discriminatory policing practices continue to affect Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities across Canada. These practices undermine trust, violate human rights, and create long-term harm for individuals and communities.

This toolkit helps youth and educators understand:

- What racism and racial profiling are
- How policing practices can reinforce systemic racism
- How identity, culture, and privilege shape experiences
- How to recognize and challenge bias
- How to safely respond to racism
- How to support others experiencing discrimination
- How to take action in schools and communities

2. Understanding Racism

2.1 What Is Racism?

The United Nations defines racial discrimination as:

“Any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin that has the purpose or effect of impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

Racism is not only individual acts of prejudice, it is also embedded in systems, institutions, and everyday interactions.

2.2 Types of Racism

Individual Racism: Personal beliefs, actions, or attitudes that express prejudice or discrimination.

Interpersonal Racism: Racist comments, slurs, microaggressions, or harmful behavior between individuals.

Institutional Racism: Policies or practices within organizations that disadvantage racialized groups.

Systemic Racism: The combined effect of history, culture, institutions, and policies that maintain racial inequality.

3. Identity, Culture & Bias

3.1 Culture and Identity

Culture includes:

- Language
- Religion
- Food
- Clothing
- Values
- Traditions
- Behaviours
- History
- Worldviews

Much of culture is invisible, like beliefs, communication styles, and assumptions. Understanding this helps reduce conflict and improve cross-cultural relationships.

3.2 What Is Bias?

Bias is a tendency to think a certain way, often without realizing it.

Types of Bias:

- **Explicit bias:** Conscious beliefs or attitudes
- **Implicit bias:** Unconscious associations learned from society

Everyone has biases, what matters is recognizing them and preventing them from causing harm.

3.3 What Is Privilege?

Privilege is an unearned advantage based on identity (race, class, gender, etc.).

Examples of racial privilege include:

- Not being followed in stores
- Not being stopped by police without reason
- Not being told to “go back where you came from”
- Seeing your identity positively represented in media

Privilege does not mean someone has not worked hard, it means they do not face certain barriers others do.

4. Systemic Racism

Systemic racism refers to the ways racism is built into the structures of society.

Examples include:

- School discipline policies that disproportionately punish racialized students
- Hiring practices that favour certain names or accents
- Policing practices that target Black and Indigenous communities
- Health care systems that ignore cultural needs
- Historical laws that excluded or harmed racialized groups

Systemic racism is not about individual “bad people”, it is about systems that produce unequal outcomes.

5. Racial Profiling

5.1 Definition

The Quebec Human Rights Commission defines racial profiling as:

“Any action undertaken for reasons of safety, security or public protection that relies on stereotypes about race, colour, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, or place of origin, rather than on reasonable suspicion.”

Racial profiling is **illegal** and violates human rights.

5.2 Examples of Racial Profiling

- Police stopping a Black youth because they “look suspicious”
- A store employee following a racialized shopper
- A school punishing a Latino student more harshly than others
- A bar refusing service to Indigenous patrons
- A Muslim employee being subjected to extra security checks

- A landlord evicting a Chinese tenant due to COVID-19 stereotypes

These actions are based on **stereotypes**, not facts.

5.3 Stereotyping

Stereotypes are oversimplified beliefs about groups.

Examples:

- “All Black people are good at sports.”
- “All Arabs are terrorists.”
- “All Asians are good at math.”

Stereotypes become dangerous when people act on them, leading to profiling, discrimination, and violence.

6. Policing & Racial Profiling

6.1 Historical Context

In Canada:

- The RCMP was originally created to control Indigenous populations
- Black and Indigenous communities have faced over-policing for generations
- Racialized people are disproportionately stopped, searched, and arrested

These patterns continue today.

6.2 Modern Policing Practices

Racial profiling can occur through:

- Street checks
- Traffic stops
- Surveillance
- Use of force
- School resource officer interactions
- Emergency calls involving racialized individuals

In Québec, random street checks are banned, but racialized youth still report disproportionate stops.

7. The Impact of Racial Profiling

Racial profiling causes:

- Fear and anxiety
- Loss of trust in police
- Emotional and psychological harm
- Barriers to education and employment
- Criminalization of youth
- Increased likelihood of negative police encounters

It affects entire communities, not just individuals.

8. Responding to Racism & Profiling

8.1 Calling Out Racism

Calling out racism means addressing harmful behavior respectfully and safely.

Strategies include:

- Naming the behavior, not the person
- Asking open-ended questions
- Expressing how the comment made you feel
- Reminding others of zero-tolerance policies
- Encouraging reflection rather than shame

The goal is behavior change, not punishment.

8.2 What To Do If You Witness Profiling

- Stay calm
- Observe details (badge number, location, time)
- Record the interaction if safe
- Support the person afterward
- Help them file a complaint

8.3 What To Do If You Experience Profiling

- Breathe and stay calm
- Ask: "Am I free to go?"
- Ask for badge number
- Write down what happened
- File a complaint
- Seek community support

9. Bill C-22 and Criminal Justice Reform

Bill C-22 aims to reduce systemic racism in the justice system by:

- Repealing mandatory minimum sentences for certain offences
- Increasing access to conditional sentences
- Encouraging alternatives to criminal charges for drug possession
- Reducing over-incarceration of Indigenous and Black Canadians

This is part of a broader effort to make the justice system more fair and effective.

10. Black History & Anti-Racism in Canada

Understanding racial profiling requires understanding Canada's history:

- Slavery existed in Canada for over 200 years
- Black and Indigenous people were excluded from schools and professions
- Segregated schools existed until 1983
- Black medical students were barred from Montreal hospitals
- Anti-Black and anti-Indigenous policies shaped policing and institutions

Black History Month reminds us that Black history is Canadian history.

11. Taking Action: How Youth Can Be Leaders

Youth can:

- Challenge stereotypes
- Speak up against racism
- Support peers experiencing discrimination
- Educate themselves and others
- Join anti-racism groups
- Advocate for policy change
- Participate in community initiatives

Change begins with awareness and grows through action.

12. Glossary (Plain Language)

Racial Profiling: Targeting someone based on race instead of behavior.

Systemic Racism: Racism built into institutions and society.

Bias: A tendency to think a certain way, often unconsciously.

Privilege: Unearned advantages based on identity.

Stereotype: A simplified belief about a group.

Discrimination: Unfair treatment based on identity.

Microaggression: Small, everyday actions that cause harm.

Calling Out: Addressing harmful behavior respectfully.