

## DISABILITY HATE CRIME



*Roving Reporters from Bangor TILII interview Terry McCorry; Disability Hate Crime Advocate from the Leonard Cheshire to interview*

Bangor TILII thought it would be really important to raise awareness of disability hate crime and make sure that everyone knows it is not okay and what they should do to get help.

If you have a learning disability, or any kind of disability, you could be a victim of disability hate crime. A disability hate crime is any crime that you or someone else thinks has happened to you because you have a disability. Crimes are bad things people do that are against the law.

Figures for Northern Ireland, published by Victim Support, show that there were some 111 hate crime incidents against people with disabilities reported to PSNI between July 2017 & June 2018, and 49 disability hate crimes over the same period. 'Incidents' refer to 'lower level' incidents that fall below the criminal offence threshold such as name calling and anti-social behaviour. 'Crimes' are where actual criminal offences have been committed

Hate crime does not just affect people with a disability. A hate crime or incident is any behaviour that is caused by hatred of something. It can be over religion/faith, Sexual Orientation or gender identity, cultural background/race. The person who does it could be someone you know or a stranger.

TILII contacted the Leonard Cheshire Society and met with their hate crime advocate Terry McCorry. Terry explained that hate crime sometimes starts off with name calling which is not recognised as a crime but is upsetting to the person who is the victim and often the name calling can get worse until it does eventually turn into a crime. Terry explained that hate crime can be many different things from stealing belongings to being violent or destroying a person's property. People who are the victim of a hate crime can be too scared to say anything to anyone. Terry said that you can go to the Police and they will help

but sometimes people are too nervous to go to the Police so Terry is a hate crime advocate. What that means is Terry is there to be your voice. He will speak out and get you the right help that you need. This could be talking to the police for you or just going with you to the police station so you feel like you have a friend by your side when you are talking to the police. Terry explained that the police are working hard to help stop hate crime and have recently done a campaign called #Voices to highlight Hate Crime in Northern Ireland. It is a series of short videos narrated by victims describing their own personal experiences of hate crime. The Police not only want to raise awareness but also want to encourage people to think about the human impact of these wholly unjustified and unacceptable attacks and the long lasting emotional damage they can cause.

Terry also talks to groups to explain what hate crime is and Terry not only talked to TILII but also did an activity to make sure we understood what hate crime was. This was a great activity as it was not only interesting as well as fun but more importantly it helped us to understand exactly what hate crime is.

As TILII members, we are all advocates and speak out about what matters to us and we want to make a difference so that everyone with a learning disability has the chance to live a safe, fulfilled and happy life. We all need to be part of our local community and have fun with our friends and family. We do not want to scare anyone, we just want everyone to understand what hate crime is and make sure they do not let people treat them badly because they have a learning disability. In fact, whoever you are and wherever you are from, you all have a right to be treated with respect and dignity and TILII want to make sure you do not become a victim of hate crime.

We hope you have found our report interesting and don't forget to read our TILII TIPS to help you be safe.

### **TILII TIPS**

You can go to the Police or you can contact Leonard Cheshire Disability Hate Crime advocate Terry McCorry on 028 9066 1281 or email [advocacy@leonardcheshire.org](mailto:advocacy@leonardcheshire.org)

If you are not sure speak to someone you trust, a parent/carer, support worker, family or friend.

We all have a right to be safe and happy and Hate Crime is wrong. Do not be a victim of hate crime. You must speak out.



**WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED OUR STORY AND LEARNT ALL ABOUT HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF  
FROM DISABILITY HATE CRIME**