

## COVID-19

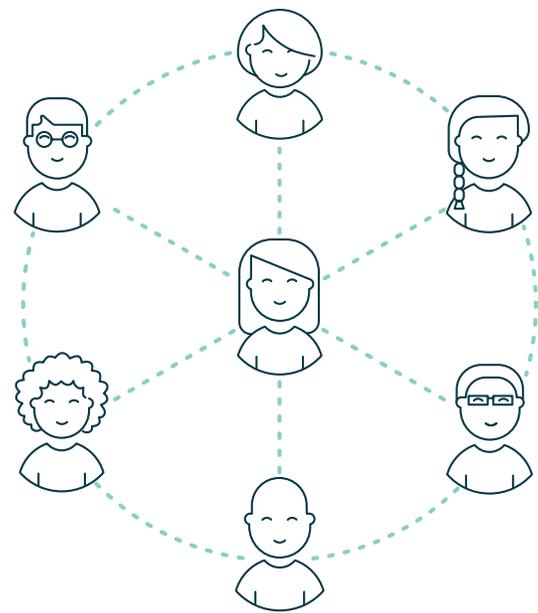
# Pushing back against stigma

Stigma is a negative feeling based on a belief about a group of people. Stigma often occurs when there's a disease outbreak. It's a normal human reaction to look for someone to blame when we feel afraid.

In the case of COVID-19, some people have blamed it on people of Asian descent or people who have traveled. Some have even blamed health care workers. The fact is, this virus has spread around the world because of our global economy. No one person, group, or country is to blame.

It's important to know the facts so that we don't hurt people by stigmatizing them. Stigma can lead to social rejection, trouble getting healthcare, job loss, and even physical violence.

If the spread of COVID-19 has shown us anything, it's how connected our world is. We are all in this together. We can find ways to support each other and push back against stigma.



## What you can do to fight stigma

- ✔ **Speak up.** Don't be silent if you hear people repeating negative stereotypes. Challenge social media posts that blame people or groups.
- ✔ **Provide good information.** People who are blaming others may be getting their ideas from unreliable sources and social media. Point them to trustworthy sources like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- ✔ **Be careful what you share online.** Be sure that images and posts don't fuel negative thinking about countries or groups of people.
- ✔ **Be kind.** Reach out through social media to people who have been stigmatized. Let them know they are not alone. Tell doctors, nurses, and emergency responders that you appreciate how hard they are working to keep us all safe.