

10 Ways to Help the Black Community Right Now



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Many Americans are hitting the streets across the country to protest against the mistreatment of Black men, women and children. While some march for a change in the systematic oppression of Black lives, others are stuck at home feeling hopeless, overwhelmed and lost. Many ask, *How can I make a difference here? How can I help if I can't go out and protest?* Whether you're on the frontlines or spending time educating yourself about injustice, there are ways to help, support and listen to the Black community. From donating to supporting Black-owned businesses, here are 10 ways to help right now without leaving your home:

1. Donate

Donating money is one of the easiest yet most impactful ways to help out a cause. From raising funds to help post bail for protesters to donating to an organization fighting daily for Black lives, there are a ton of outlets if you have the means. In order to lead by example, PureWow has donated \$5,000 to [Campaign Zero](#), but here are a few other charities and funds you can contribute to that are supporting the Black community:

- [Black Lives Matter](#) was founded after the murder of Trayvon Martin and advocates to end the violence against Black Americans.
- [Reclaim The Block](#) is a Minneapolis organization that works to redistribute the police department budget to increase community-led initiatives.
- [Act Blue](#) provides funds to pay bail for protesters across the country and splits your donation to 39 bail funds like Philadelphia Bail Fund, National Bail Out #FreeBlackMamas and LGBTQ Freedom Fund, to name a few.
- [Unicorn Riot](#) helps journalists who are risking their lives and reporting straight from the protests.
- [NAACP Legal Defense Fund](#) fights social injustices through advocacy, education and communication.

2. Sign Petitions

The quickest way to have your voice heard is by signing an online petition. Just a simple name and email address may be the only thing many petitions ask for. Here are a few examples to get you started:

- [Demand justice for Belly Mujinga](#). She was a Black railway worker from London who was infected and died from COVID-19 after a man assaulted her. The petition fights to hold her employer Gloria Thameslink accountable for denying Mujinga the proper protection as

an essential worker and to make sure British Transport Police identifies the culprit.

- [Demand justice for Breonna Taylor](#). She was a Black EMT who was killed by Louisville police after they illegally trespassed into her home and mistaking her for being their suspect (even though the actual person was already arrested). The petition demands the policemen involved to be terminated and charged for her murder.
- [Demand justice for Ahmaud Arbery](#). He was a Black man who was chased and gunned down while jogging. This petition strives to get the DA to file charges against the men who are responsible for his murder.

3. Contact your representatives

From curbing excessive force to ending racial profiling, your local, state and even national representatives have a chance to enact real change and break away from unjust policies that are in place in your area. Start out small and contact your local reps to start the discussion and encourage them to move these new ideas forward. Begin to research your city's laws, analyze the city's budget and start contacting these individuals (via phone or email) to finally end the mistreatment of Black and Brown individuals. Need help getting started? Here's [a script example](#) (located in a Google doc for New Yorkers to take action) that was created to get NYC Mayor DeBlasio to reconsider slashing the city's social services and education programs and instead defund the police department:

"Dear [rep],

My name is [your name] and I am a resident of [your area]. Last April, NYC Mayor de Blasio proposed major budget cuts for the fiscal year 2021, especially to education and youth programs while refusing to slash the NYPD budget by any significant margin. I urge you to consider pressuring the Office of the Mayor towards an ethical and equal reallocation of the NYC expense budget, away from NYPD, and towards social services and

education programs, effective at the beginning of FY21, July 1st. I am emailing to ask for an emergency council meeting among city officials regarding this matter. Governor Cuomo has increased NYPD presence in NYC. I am asking that city officials lobby the same amount of attention and effort towards finding sustainable, long term change."

4. Create open dialogue

Take a moment to sit with your family or chat with your friends about what's going on in the world. Many of us have grown too scared and nervous to share our opinions on "controversial topics." While many are afraid of what they might learn from the people they surround themselves with, at the end of the day we need to have those uncomfortable conversations. We need to connect, reflect and think of ways to help each other, especially if you're a person of color. What are the ways your family and friends who are people of color can focus on their mental health during this time? What do they *really* think about the injustices and what are they doing about them?

White parents should [consider talking to your kids](#) about racism. Discuss what it means to have privilege, to have bias and how to take action when someone is being ignorant and prejudiced towards others. These tough topics may be difficult for younger children, so try [reading them a book](#) and let them express what they've learned afterward. If we want to be informed, we have to take the steps of learning and growing with each other.

5. Raise awareness on social media

While showering your feed with hashtags or a black square *may* be helpful, you can do even more by reposting, retweeting and sharing information with your followers. A simple tweet or a post on your Instagram Story is a great way to raise awareness and show your support for the Black community. But other than providing solidarity and resources, consider amplifying Black voices and shine a light on your favorite Black creators, activists and

innovators striving to uplift their own communities.

6. Support Black creators and businesses

Speaking of highlighting Black creators, how about spending some money on their businesses? There are many Black-owned [bookstores](#), [restaurants](#) and [brands](#) to check out when you're in the mood to make your next purchase. Plus, it will be helping many small businesses who are suffering due to COVID-19. Here are a few Black businesses you can support today:

- [The Lit. Bar](#) is the only bookstore in the Bronx. Right now, you can [order their books online](#) including a whole selection focused on understanding race and racism in America.
- [Blk+Grn](#) is an all-natural marketplace that sells Black-owned skincare, wellness and beauty products.
- [Nubian Skin](#) is a fashion brand catered to nude hosiery and lingerie for women of color.
- [Legendary Rootz](#) is a retail brand that celebrates Black culture through its apparel, accessories and decor.
- [Uoma Beauty](#) is a beauty brand including 51 shades of foundation and can be found on Ulta as well.
- [Mielle Organics](#) is a haircare brand catered to women with curly and coily hair.

7. Keep listening

If you're a white person, take the time to just listen to the Black community. Listen to their stories, their pain or their anger at the current system. Avoid talking over them and steer clear from using [racial gaslighting phrases](#) like *Why is it always about race? Are you sure that's what happened? In my opinion...* to undermine what they're expressing. For a long time, marginalized communities have felt misrepresented, mistreated and simply

invisible from the bigger conversation. Let them take center-stage and be ready to become an ally.

8. Educate yourself

There's no better time to understand the injustices happening in America than now—pick up a book, listen to a podcast or tune in to a documentary. You probably learned a thing or two in school, but there's more information out there that a textbook just can't tell you. Begin to understand why policies are put in place, how we got to this social movement (and what past movements have inspired this moment in history) or even what some common terms you keep hearing about mean (i.e. systematic racism, mass incarceration, modern slavery, white privilege). Here are a few [books](#), [podcasts](#) and [documentaries](#) to take a look at:

- [13TH](#) is about exploring the issues of race, justice and mass incarceration in the United States.
- [Whose Streets?](#) provides first-hand experiences on the Ferguson uprising after the wrongful death of Michael Brown.
- [When They See Us](#) explains the real-life story of the Central Park Five, a group of Black teenagers who were wrongfully convicted of rape and assault of a white female jogger.
- [Code Switch](#) is a podcast that breaks down race and identity and its impact on the world.
- [Pod Save The People](#) brings together activist DeRay McKesson and other activists, leaders and experts to talk about social justice, politics and activism.
- [Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor](#) is a book that provides readers with 28 days of information, resources and challenges to help them understand white supremacy and how to dismantle it.
- [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Race](#) breaks down how white fragility serves to help protect social

injustice.

9. Register to vote

If you're unhappy with how your representatives are taking action on social issues, then vote. Listen in on debates, research candidates and most importantly, register to vote. Now, you can [register right online](#) and [request an absentee ballot](#) be sent to your home for the presidential primaries. (Only 34 states and Washington D.C. are allowed to do this, so make sure to check if your state allows you to vote at home.) Here are some of the states holding June elections:

- **June 9th:** Georgia, Nevada, North Dakota, South Carolina and West Virginia
- **June 23rd:** Kentucky, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia
- **June 30th:** Colorado, Oklahoma and Utah

10. Use your privilege

Don't be silent. Nothing can be done if you sit on the sidelines while Black people continue to be discriminated against. White people should use this time to educate themselves on white privilege and begin to understand what it means to be white in America versus what it means to be Black in America. Sometimes it's not enough to sign a petition or read a book, so lend your voice to the cause. Speak up during situations when people of color are fearing for their lives or their rights are being pushed aside. This is the time to show your allyship outside of a computer screen. If you're unsure what white privilege is and why it's so important to understand, [here's a breakdown](#):

- You have an easier time navigating the world without being discriminated against because of the color of your skin.
- You actually benefit from the oppression of people of color based on

receiving the majority representation in media, society and opportunities.

- You also benefit from the systematic racism put in place against people of color such as the wealth gap, unemployment, healthcare and mass incarceration rates that affect the Black and Brown community even more.

One more thing you should remember is not to ask a member of the Black community to help you learn or teach you about these issues. Don't add pressure by making Black and Brown people share traumatic experiences. Just spend the time to educate yourself and ask questions only if people of color are comfortable to be a source of information to you.

Regardless of if you try one of these ideas or all 10, just remember that you can make a difference in shaping the future of our country.

[RELATED: 15 Mental Health Resources for People of Color](#)