

## NATIONAL YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION WEEK

Minneapolis, Minnesota

March 22-26, 2010

### Objective

To raise the broader community's awareness of effective ways to reduce or prevent youth violence by uniting efforts around a core number of practical strategies.

### Strategy

The attached electronic tool-kit has been created to provide meaningful activities for youth-serving organizations and other stakeholders to implement, support or champion and blend with existing planned programming.

### Background/Talking Points

Youth violence continues to be a critical issue that has a debilitating impact on communities. Exacerbating the issue is the havoc violence exacts by tearing at the social fabric of neighborhoods as well as the devastation that extends to the families of the victims and perpetrators. Youth violence does not merely confine itself to a few neighborhoods, zip codes, areas, or cities. Recent incidents have demonstrated that it is an issue that extends from the inner city to rural communities.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, youth violence is the second leading cause of death between the ages of 10 to 24. In 2006, 5,958 youth age 10 to 24 were murdered—an average of 16 each day. From 2003-2006 in Minneapolis, 80 residents between the ages of 15 to 24 died as a result of homicide. Homicide was the leading cause of death for Minneapolis residents in this age group, accounting for almost half of all deaths.

Youth violence can be prevented using a holistic, multi-faceted approach. Multiple factors contribute to the development of violent attitudes and behaviors; there is not one approach or one group that can effectively prevent violence. Often times, youth violence prevention efforts in communities are limited in their potential effectiveness owing to a lack of coherent strategy that intentionally organizes them.

It is for this reason that in 2006 the Minneapolis City Council issued a resolution that declared youth violence a public health concern. It subsequently created the *Blueprint for Action*; a policy framework that focuses more on prevention than on rehabilitation. Since 2007, city-wide juvenile crime incidents have declined by 35% and, since 2008, 19% in the Fourth Precinct, which encompasses the four target neighborhoods in the *Blueprint*.

While there has been a considerable reduction in youth violence, the tragic spate of homicides that have met the start of 2010 underscore the fragility of any success as well as the critical need for more engagement from many community members who want to see healthy vibrant youth in safe communities.

To encourage universal support and engagement in activities meant to promote healthy, peaceful and vibrant communities devoid of violence; this tool-kit was developed to provide ideas and resources that allow for common action items and broad participation. These ideas can be modified and either expanded on or minimized depending on the unique needs of every participant.

We hope that youth, in particular, can be a part of the solution and are equipped with all the tools they need at their disposal to make real changes.

## MINNEAPOLIS TOOLKIT

### Press/Media-Related Activities

- E- tool-kit Release: 03/10/2010
- Media Advisory: 03/18/2010
- Press Release: 3/22/2010
- Daily Events/Initiatives to Highlight 03/22-03/26
  - 03/22: Peace Pledge and Rally: Community Power Against Violence
  - 03/23: Blueprint for Action: Speak-Up Minneapolis/Hospital Protocol
  - 03/24: Violence Prevention through Youth Development Resources (contact [bass.zanjani@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:bass.zanjani@ci.minneapolis.mn.us) for list of featured programs)
  - 03/25: Social and Emotional Learning in Schools
  - 03/26: Family Support Programs: Project Murua/Kwanzza Church

### Activities for Youth, Families and Community Partners

- *Activities for Youth*
  - Take the Peace Pledge and wear a “Peace 24/7 It Begins with You” wristband. To get one contact [saito015@umn.edu](mailto:saito015@umn.edu)
  - Peace Print your own cards using the attached PDF or contact Community Power Against Violence at [saito015@umn.edu](mailto:saito015@umn.edu) to get copies of the pledge card, wristbands and user guide.
  - Host a mini “Mix It Up Day” (<http://www.tolerance.org/mix-it-up>)
  - Create a quilt of diversity using fabric or other mediums that represent each students’ cultural heritage
  - Host a poster, Public Service Announcement (PSA), spoken word, or mural contest for youth on the theme of Peace and the role of Youth in Peace-making. Submit a digital photo or electronic copy of the winning entries for a citywide contest to: [bass.zanjani@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:bass.zanjani@ci.minneapolis.mn.us) by April 5. Winners to be announced by mid-April.
  - Conduct facilitated discussions on Youth Violence Prevention-related topics: stress management, resolving conflicts without violence, busting the myth of snitching, avoiding peer pressure. Use youth as facilitators or invite specialists. For more information about possible speakers, contact Julie Young-Burns, MPS Department of Student Support Services at: [jyb@mpls.k12.mn.us](mailto:jyb@mpls.k12.mn.us)
  - Make a Peace Makers Hall of Fame bulletin board in your school that pays tribute to local, national and international figures who have resolved conflict peacefully
  - Offer your time to community based organizations working on violence prevention
  - Utilize various social networking mediums (YouTube, Facebook, MySpace) to raise awareness of violence prevention. Create your own video/tool or support others that have created one
  - Organize a service project where you and your friends volunteer with youth-serving organizations that promote violence prevention.
  - Ask your teacher to have a classroom discussion on ways to reduce violence in school
  - Ask your school principal or park supervisor if you could paint a peaceful mural over graffiti in school or parks

- *Activities for Families*
  - Talk to your kids about ways to avoid violence and what you have done in your life to resolve situations which could have led to violence
  - Ask your kids to visit resources/organizations on the web that promote youth violence prevention and have them talk to you about them
  - Have a discussion with your kids about ways to “cool down” when angered
  - Offer your time, talent and energy to help out with local events during the week
  - Start or join a neighborhood discussion on violence prevention
  - Become a mentor. Call the Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota **(612-370-9148)**
  - Contact your legislator and ask what the state is doing to implement the Youth Violence Prevention Act of 2009
  - Take the Peace Pledge and wear a “Peace 24/7 It Begins with You” wristband. To get one contact [saito015@umn.edu](mailto:saito015@umn.edu)
  
- *Activities for Community Stakeholders/Partners*
  - Promote Youth Violence Prevention week throughout your organization
  - Encourage your staff to become mentors or to volunteer this week with youth-serving organizations that promote violence prevention
  - Promote Youth Violence Prevention week in your department/company newsletter
  - Contact the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support or the Minnesota Department of Health to see how your company can support the Youth Violence Prevention Act of 2009
  - Adopt a school or organization that promotes violence prevention activities
  - Add a web banner that supports Youth Violence Prevention week. Add a link to web-based violence prevention resources
  - Encourage a brown bag lunch and invite a guest speaker or parents to discuss unlearning the culture of violence being promoted to youth
  - Faith groups can hold prayer gatherings or peace vigils that promote violence free communities and/or violence prevention strategies in religious sermons/gatherings
  - Faith groups can ask congregation members to support local youth violence prevention activities

## Web Resources

- *Minneapolis*
  - Minneapolis Blueprint for Action: [www.minneapolis.mn.us/vyp](http://www.minneapolis.mn.us/vyp)
  - Minnesota Youth Intervention Programs: [www.mnyipa.org](http://www.mnyipa.org) or [www.kidschange.org](http://www.kidschange.org)
  - Youth Coordinating Board: [www.ycb.org](http://www.ycb.org)
  - Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota: [www.mpmn.org](http://www.mpmn.org)
  - Community Power Against Violence: [www.peace247.org](http://www.peace247.org)
  - Minneapolis Public Schools: [http://sss.mpls.k12.mn.us/Safe\\_and\\_Drug\\_Free\\_Schools.html](http://sss.mpls.k12.mn.us/Safe_and_Drug_Free_Schools.html)
  
- *National*
  - Prevention Institute: [www.preventioninstitute.org](http://www.preventioninstitute.org)
  - National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center: [www.safeyouth.org](http://www.safeyouth.org)
  - Centers For Disease Control and Prevention:  
[www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/youthviolence/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/youthviolence/index.html)
  - Students Against Violence Everywhere: [www.nationalsave.org](http://www.nationalsave.org)
  - National Youth Violence Prevention Campaign: [www.nyvpw.org](http://www.nyvpw.org)
  - Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center: [www.hsph.harvard.edu/hyvpc](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/hyvpc)
  - *In the Mix: Reality Television for Teens* (PBS): [www.pbs.org/inthemix](http://www.pbs.org/inthemix)
  - National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention:  
[www.promoteprevent.org/publications](http://www.promoteprevent.org/publications)
  - Office of Justice Programs – Youth Violence Prevention:  
[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/programs/youthviolenceprevention.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/programs/youthviolenceprevention.htm)
  - Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence: [www.colorado.edu/cspv/index.html](http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/index.html)



## Peace Pledge



I pledge to respectfully address conflict with my peers and family.

I pledge to have an open mind to making changes in myself, others, and community.

I pledge to respect people different from myself and try to understand where they're coming from.

By committing to this pledge I will become a positive productive, engaged member of my community.



[www.peace247.org](http://www.peace247.org)



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Community Power Against Violence

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Extension Center for Youth Development  
200 Oak Street, SE  
270B McNamara Alumni Center  
Minneapolis, MN 55455

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