

Eliminating Violence in Today's Young Generation

I would like to shed light on the prominent issue that is haunting our young generation. There is a plunging decline in self-respect, hard work, and self-discipline among our generation today. Don't get me wrong, there are still respectable young people who are striving to become an asset to society. Unfortunately, majority of my peers have gone astray. In this essay, I will give you a glimpse into our generation's lives but also paint a picture of hope that we can offer them, as peers and positive role models.

Our ancestors can tell us how violence affected their lives. Our parents can tell us how violent they were in their days. I want to tell you how violence and crime are bringing down our generation. Teen violence is real, and is a big part of a teenager's life in the society we live in. From abusive relationships, abusive homes, bullying at school and gangs...teens are exposed to violence everyday! Last year during our school break where everyone hangs out in the Commons Area between class and lunch, another cat fight broke out between two freshmen black girls. Of course, everyone crowded around to see who would win, like a boxing match, but then the girl that was losing did the unthinkable. She pulled out a knife on the other girl. She started slashing the other girl's face and neck...and soon everyone on the front row of the match backed up...with blood flying everywhere. That girl ended up in Intensive Care while the other girl remains in DJJ. Honestly, I had never witnessed anything so violent before, and I can only imagine what the city schools are exposed to each day. Young men and women are losing their lives today at the hands of other young men and women. Our parents are afraid when we go to school and fellow students are constantly looking over their shoulders. I ask you, is this how we want to live for the rest of our lives? No? Because it can get worse...unless we make a change. The problem isn't the area you live in or the guns and drugs. The problem is the people. Until we as a people look within ourselves and kill the hatred in our hearts, violence will only worsen. It starts in the homes...with families and in our hearts. I want to tell my peers who feel like they have to prove themselves: "It's okay to walk away from an altercation! It's okay to be the bigger person!"

Finally, I came across a powerful quote by Ghandi saying, "You must be the change, you wish to see in the world". You. Must. Be. The. Change. You. Wish. To. See. In. The. World. It's more than easy for us to criticize the next person, but it is even harder to look at ourselves with the same critical eye. If there is something wrong, instead of looking for someone else to fix it, WE must fix it. We need to eliminate violence out of our communities and work towards building up our homes and schools. I have this theory that I expressed to my mom: we have over 6 billion people on this planet right now, and it is sad that we can write a few textbooks on the historical figures that have impacted religion, science, literature, politics, and entertainment. Honestly, every single person should try to impact the world as much as possible before they leave this earth. Whether it is standing up for something you believe in or even creating an invention. There are too many people on this planet for us to have a few prodigies and geniuses every decade! Once again, to my peers I want to personally say: "It's okay to want more for your world...change your community. Anyone can better themselves, but it takes more heart to help better someone else. We are all put in this world, not to

emphasize our differences but to embrace our diversities and use them to do great things.
So, I challenge everyone: **TO BE THE CHANGE THAT YOU WISH TO SEE IN THE
WORLD!**

~Deja Frederick, White Knoll High School, 12th Grade