



Do the Write Thing Springfield



2021

Springfield City School District
middle schoolers share how
violence has touched their lives
and how they choose peace



DAVE YOST
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

As Ohio's Attorney General, I am so pleased to have partnered with the Springfield City School District to bring *Do the Write Thing* to our state. As the first ever district in Ohio to participate in the program, Springfield hit it out of the park!

I am amazed by the passion, thoughtfulness and self-awareness these middle school students brought to their writings. Their words are powerful, and their commitment to making this world a better place is inspiring.

Thank you to all the students for their honesty and courage in sharing their stories and ideas.

Talking about violence isn't easy. But shining light on the uncomfortable reality in many of our homes, schools and communities is critical to turning the tide and creating a brighter tomorrow. These students are our future, and we need to listen to their voices. In Springfield, we hear you loud and clear!

I encourage everyone to take time to read the essays in this book. You may be surprised by what you learn, but I know it will leave you proud and optimistic about the generations to come.

Yours,



DAVE YOST
Ohio Attorney General



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

To say I am proud of our students for participating in the *Do the Write Thing* Challenge, would be an understatement. Every day, they show us the true definition of resiliency. This challenge has proven to be a great way to find their voices, organize their thoughts and share them through writing.

I hope that you see the passion, heart and courage as you read each of their essays. Although they may only be beginning their teen years, I believe we can all learn something from their experiences and unique perspectives.

Being able to express our feelings through writing is a powerful skill. While writing about a very serious topic, like violence, is not an easy task — it is an important one.

No community is immune to violence and its devastating effects, but turning the tables and creating positive change in our schools, neighborhoods and cities should be commended and acknowledged. Our students are already making an impact in the SCSD community and in the State as well. The SCSD is thankful for Attorney General Dave Yost and his staff for realizing the many talents of our middle school students and what a wonderful fit this program is for our District. Through this challenge, many adults have had their eyes opened for the first time to what our students experience on a daily basis.

To our students: we see you, we hear you and we are here to support you.

As the first school district in Ohio to participate in this program, the SCSD is paving the way for other students across the state to have their voices heard as well. We look forward to the two ambassadors virtually representing us in Washington, D.C. and our next group of middle school students participating in the DtWT challenge next year. We are all capable of making a difference — sometimes it starts with just the stroke of a pen and finding a way to put the words on paper.

Go Wildcats!

Sincerely,



ROBERT F. HILL, Ed.D.
Superintendent and CEO
Springfield City School District



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

This book contains a compilation of writings by Springfield City School District middle school students who were selected as the top ten finalists of the 2021 Springfield *Do the Write Thing* challenge. This book will be shared across the community to recognize all of the students who accepted the challenge to share their voices and help create a safer, more peaceful society.

Overview of the Do the Write Thing Challenge

Do the Write Thing is a unique, national program designed to give middle school students an outlet to communicate in classroom discussions and then in writing how violence impacts their daily lives. In addition to exposing the causes and effects of violence, students are asked to share their ideas for how to reduce violence in their community.

The *Do the Write Thing* challenge asks students to express in stories, poems and songs, or any other written forms the violence they've faced, with an emphasis on exploring key questions:

- How does violence affect your daily life?
- What are some of the causes of youth violence in your community?
- What can you as an individual do to reduce youth violence in your community?

The benefits of the challenge are many. Students gain a greater empathy and understanding for victims of violence and realize their positive actions can make a difference in their own home, schools, and neighborhoods. Teachers gain a better awareness of what is happening in their students' lives and in the school culture. Community leaders benefit from greater understanding of the impact that violence has on youth and learn from the students' stories and ideas for reducing violence.

Do the Write Thing in Springfield, Ohio

During the 2020-21 school year, Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost partnered with the Springfield City School District for the first-ever *Do the Write Thing* challenge in Ohio. The program was well received, with more than 660 seventh- and eighth-grade students submitting essays.

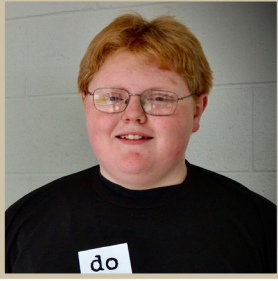
Springfield community and business leaders volunteered their time to read each essay and choose the ten submissions most responsive to the key questions. From the top ten, two students were selected to become Ohio's ambassadors to the national *Do the Write Thing* conference.

A special thank you to all of the community volunteers, teachers, principals, and school administrators who helped make *Do the Write Thing, Springfield* such a great success.



Do the Write Thing is organized by the National Campaign to Stop Violence and has been in existence for 25 years. It operates programs in 26 cities in 13 states. Over the past 25 years, 1.2 million middle school students have participated in the program.

National sponsors include the Kuwait-America Foundation, the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science, the Marriott Foundation and Southwest Airlines.



ESSAY 1

CALEB BEVERLY

Schaefer Middle School

Remember when you hit that kid
And made him feel like it was something he did
None of it was actually his fault
But because of you, that's what he thought.

Those kids didn't see,
Those kids didn't hear
But did they care?
Not one of them did.

Was it all their fault?
You wouldn't know
Because there may be things in their life
That they had to let go
What if they're mad?
What if they're sad?
And take it out on you
Of which the ending could be bad.

Try to help them
Try to let them know
That you'll be there for them, for nobody else
was long ago.
This will help them
This will help you
This will show that kindness
Can push you both through.

Listen to these words
Even if you don't believe
Because in the end
You'll be their friend
That's something to achieve.

Even if they mean it
Even if it's true
All the power of your true self
Will always be held by you.

Don't let them take your confidence
Don't let them take your happiness
Instead, help them overcome
Their painful, agonizing sadness.



ESSAY 2

CLAYTON BRIM JR.

Hayward Middle School

For years youth violence in Springfield, Ohio, has been on the rise. It is very sad that our younger generations will have to witness what goes on around them without fully understanding why these crimes happen, some of them even may be victims of these crimes being realistic here in Springfield. All of us younger generations have to make changes in all societies when it comes for us to run this world, it starts here.

First off let me tell you about how youth violence and this very unstable community in Springfield has drastically affected my life to this day to ever since I was younger. I've been shot at in front of my own house, I've saved my mom from almost being raped, my house has been robbed many times, a lot of my family members are till this day drug abusers, drug dealers, or alcohol abusers, which lead me to think that it was okay to drink, smoke, do drugs, sell drugs, etc. I was also abused a lot, I was pretty much the punching bag for my family to take their anger out on because they have messed up. Which led to me having depression, anxiety, and also an eating disorder which may have led to diabetes because I stopped too late, but I never got the results back from my doctor.

Youth violence is started with just a little hatred. That little hatred expands to your community and next thing you know that hatred has built up so much and so fast that that little peace left in the community is erased and replaced with shooting, riots, protest, rape, robbery, kidnapping, deadly drive-bys, drugs, achol, its just so much things happening so fast that no one can handle it which causes mental health problems for others people to repeat these things over and over. Then the youth begin to follow in these crimes which leads to depression, anxiety, bullying, school shootings, drop-outs, lower grades, youth drinking, youth drug abuse, youth smoking, youth gangs, youth pregnancies and more. They all do this because of the lack of guidance leads the youth to think this is all just life. A big chain-reaction that needs to be snapped before it kills all of us.

This is how we all could snap this deadly chain-reaction for not just the youth but everyone, is for us to mainly stop the hate which probably is not really possible but there is always a possibility. But let's be serious. We need to grow awareness of this problem and get more people involved to help everyone more than ever. Even if it won't fully end all violence it will give us younger people a head start for the kickoff of the beginning ending a lot of problems people have. We will change this world forever for the better. So in the future there will be no such thing as violence in general toward anyone or anything.

Thank you, DTWT.



ESSAY 3

BENJAMIN BROWN

Roosevelt Middle School

It is scary how fast youth violence grows. Each day there is an average of about 12 homicides. With my experience I've seen some of my friends being bullied at school. My friend Mark was bullied by a couple of other boys by putting him down because of how he dressed. Mark's family was not very wealthy and couldn't afford the best of clothes. Mark would come to school wearing shoes that weren't on brand and these boys would make fun of him for it. I went up to the boys and kindly asked them to stop and then they laughed and walked away. I assumed that they ignored me so I told a teacher. The teacher said that he would watch the boys and if anything happened again he would call their parents.

Bullying is a type of youth violence. There is a rise in schools and playgrounds all over the world. Bullying is caused by children seeing adults arguing in their home life and thinking that is either okay to do or is "cool" to do. When children see actions like fighting they would more than likely do it when they are older or might start at a young age which isn't very healthy or good for a child to do. Fighting is never a healthy thing to do. I am saying this because I see children bullying other little kids. One of my little sisters from my dad's side used to call me words I wasn't allowed to say and she was three years old going on four. I tried to tell my dad "that if she were to keep doing that she would get in a lot of trouble by her teachers and her classmates' parents." He did not take me seriously and ignored me about two days later she got in trouble for calling teachers bad names and was sent home. My dad said that "they were lying." He did this because he was standing up for her. I heard that she still calls kids bad names even today.

Some ways to help stop youth violence is to be nicer to others. Youth violence made me nicer by making me think before I speak because I would hate to say something but it didn't sound right and they thought I was being mean. Youth violence made me nicer because I don't like making people feel like I'm being mean or bullying them so I try to not sound rude and I try my best not to be rude either. Other ways we can reduce youth violence is by contacting adults or authorities and asking them to assist us to help slow down youth violence.



ESSAY 4

ANNA DENTON

Hayward Middle School

"Do not judge me by my success. Judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again."

— Nelson Mandela

"Do not judge me by my success. Judge me by how many times I fell down and got back again." A meaningful quote with more to it than one may see. Many people will tell you to try harder, do this, do that. Although? They don't understand what it takes to mentally succeed, and feel worthy.

As a 13-year-old I can tell you all about social media. The toxic, the positive, the drama, but most importantly how it all affects today's generation. My generation to be exact. Many teens are struggling currently in a way adults don't understand, actually, many don't care. But before I begin, thank you all for listening to this. This is my story, and maybe I can be the change to open people's eyes into a new perspective.

As a 'child' I was a naturally good student, energetic, had confidence, and didn't really have social problems. Then when I was 7 my life took an unexpected turn. Here's some background information; my dad was a drug and alcohol abuser, because of this he wasn't in my life. My mom was now married in this current time and place (to a man whose name I won't dare to say) I lived in Fort Campbell, Kentucky and was used to moving because of the man being in the army. He did things to me I don't think anyone deserves. At the age of 7 I mentally matured. Childhood was a thing I didn't really have.

We moved and he received 40 years in prison. My mom really had nowhere to go since this was a very different twist, we lived with my great grandma for about a year. Then my mom met Dave, he was nice at first but a cheater. We moved back with my grandma. During this whole time period I was going back and forth between counselors and suffering from depression. I've had 8 different counselors in the last 3 years. I felt as if no one was there, and this is when I tried killing myself. The third time I was almost successful.

I finally started to reach for help, I told my mom and she immediately got me a councler and I was on

suicide watch. It took me a while to start getting better since I was very mentally gone. My grades had slipped and I had no motivation. I remember crying a lot actually. I started to focus back on school, and we moved out of that toxic situation. My mom got her own house and my grades and mental health improved a lot.

I gradually lost my social skills though, but since I had actually started to find a motivation for school I got diagnosed as gifted and talented. I was so happy, it put me in a good community and opened my mind set to think positive. Although I still had my moments. I have been diagnosed with PTSD, anxiety, depression, and I actually developed asthma (which sucks during panic attacks). But I didn't stop trying.

I worked on my confidence, my social skills, and started doing what I wanted to do without really caring what people said. In 2018 I can proudly say that I started to practice art, focus on school, and genuinely cared about my health. I met many people and opportunities that have me where I am today.

The most important thing out of my story is I don't let my past define me. Who I am today and who I was 5 years ago are completely to different people. Now let me introduce myself and the message I have.

I am Anna Denton, an 8th grade student at Hayward middle school. I'm an older sister who loves anime, reading, music, and skateboarding. I am part of the lgbtq+ community and think everyone's opinions are important. I am a young woman who inspires to be an architectural engineer. But most importantly I am a person who wants change. You have a voice, you have the ultimate tool of change. Use it. Starting today I want you to do something good, it doesn't have to be huge. Tell someone you love them, compliment someone, just make a change.

This community is so full of drugs, racist comments, and just bad stuff. Also, if you're hearing this and need help, reach out. I know you're scared but it will be the best thing to do. Thank you for listening.



ESSAY 5 | NATIONAL AMBASSADOR

LILY HATTON

Roosevelt Middle School

I've seen and heard violence everywhere.
I've heard a friend explain how scared she was
To go home
Scared of her mother throwing a hair dryer at her.
Again.

I've seen and heard
Of shootings in homes and schools
Bullets in friends, moms, dads
I've heard "friends" talking to other "friends"
Convincing them to fight with
The guy who flirted with his girlfriend
Or made fun of his brother.

Stabbings. Beatings. Shootings.
a gun threat made by a student in my school
a knife threat made by another young student
an 8-year-old who brought a gun to school,
not knowing what he really held in his hand.
Fights that ended in blood and broken bones
Fights that ended in death.

More and more i hear and see
Violence getting the best of us.
A part of life but it doesn't have to be.

Maybe it's because we are
being taught to fight instead of
talk
judge instead of
Empathize
Guns instead of words
being taught that this is the way
didn't know there was
another.

Not knowing how to deal
With grief,
With anger,
With sadness.

Peer pressure and bad influences
Growing up around something makes it seem normal
But
Violence kills,
And spills
Into the next generations.

What can I do?
What can you do?
What can we do?

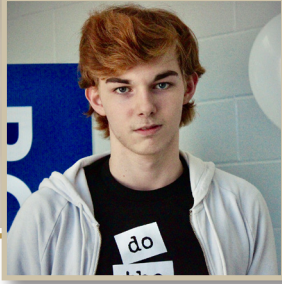
Empathize
Try to understand
We all grow up differently
Doesn't make you less
Human.

Go into someone's shoes
Try to feel how they are feeling
Reach out a kind hand
Lift others up.

Don't joke and smile while spewing hate
Be kind be kind be kind
No stereotypes
No bringing others down.

Just think before you speak
No superiority
No one is better,
No one is worse.

Empathy
It's your choice
Pay attention
Don't ignore someone who is struggling
Don't jump to conclusions
Ask questions
Be there for people
You have no idea what someone has dealt with,
What someone is still dealing with.



ESSAY 6 | NATIONAL AMBASSADOR

CORBIN LAMBERT

Roosevelt Middle School

One way that violence has personally affected me is that I've been suspended and punched in the face a few times. The aggression itself I try not to show too much but I let that stay inside of me and that violence and aggression can cause me to do stupid things like argue with my parents, say harsh things to friends and teachers which gets me in trouble. This gets me more riled up in a perpetual cycle of aggression and loneliness. This is also the case with some people I live at home with. They'll cuss each other out, bully each other, choke each other, and their dad doesn't do nothing about it, which is utterly disgraceful. Although I don't get involved so much it gets me feeling like I need to be violent so that way I can stand up for myself and be like them because that's what I've been shown what should be. This violence and aggression and hatred inside of me hasn't exploded yet but if someone were to set me over the edge, I don't know what could happen. I've said stupid things to my friends and peers which has caused me to lose almost everyone and I keep putting up a wall to keep new people out and keep the hatred in which is cutting my soul and heart right out of me.

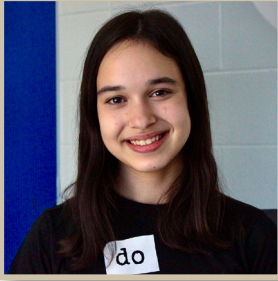
A big cause of youth violence is the community and society that these youths are surrounded with. These kids aren't accepted by many of their peers and teachers for who they are which makes them hang out with other people like them. They then can use fighting and violence to show that they aren't weak and they may even join gangs and other violent groups. Another factor could be these kids' parents and home lives possibly getting beaten, shunned and neglected so they have to put up a hard shell and be tough and rough to assert themselves and hide their feelings of weakness, pain, and sadness perpetuating them to hang out with rough people. Also there is the beef and murdering and the rules that are placed out for these kids. With the rules and the beef, the fighting, and murdering which keeps people going

back-and-forth thinking they are doing what they are supposed to get even for what others did to their family and their brothers and sisters. A lot of these kids don't even know why their families and gangs have beef. They just know they do and that being in gangs and groups will give them a backbone and a feeling of power and security in a dangerous environment but this doesn't help anybody it only hurts the communities and everybody involved.

Something I could personally do to try to reduce youth violence would be to try to work on my own anger and aggression. I could also befriend people like this, find out what's up with them. Show them that they don't have to hurt other people or bully or any other harmful things because they are human too and they mean something and they need to realize that for themselves.

When I'm older and could work at youth violence prevention hotlines or go to therapeutic things for youth. I can visit their communities and speak out to them, write short stories of my own and give these kids some affirmation and reassurance of themselves. These stories could show them that if they show empathy and love for one another, maybe they can stop the violence and hatred and better themselves each other their community. Hopefully they will grow up to visit other communities and other kids and help them grow our country as a place and teach less violent more productive and peaceful ways of dealing with their problems.

Finally we need to make it easier for kids and people in juvie to get love and support, and show them that we don't want them in the system. Show them that through proper work and education that they can better themselves and even their communities and cities and states and maybe even the country as a whole. Overall we just need to spread love and compassion and empathy for people and whatever situations they have.



ESSAY 7

KAYLA MILLER

Roosevelt Middle School

It's February of 2020. The day started out fairly normal, but by now, my second period class, everything changes. Everyone was texting their parents. People were being called down to the office to go home. There was a shooting threat. It started with a kid just joking around, not knowing the severity of his words. His joke spread like wildfire, but the bullets of his words couldn't kill a rumor. Kids were scared, parents were scared, and no one knew anything. During fifth period my principal went from room to room explaining what had happened, and that it was just a joke, and a cruel one. No one was hurt. No one was shot. There wasn't even a gun. Just the fear of what could happen. I have never been a victim of physical violence, but every member of my generation experiences the fear. I hear every few months of a new school shooting, and I wonder if my school is next.

I was raised in a good home. I have a good mother with a good job, and never had to worry about my safety as a young child. I know people who weren't raised with the same. So many children my age aren't given much. They have to steal, deal drugs, and learn to defend themselves in order to survive. It's not their fault, it's just what they are taught. Some are taught that they need to kill a man in order to be considered strong. They live with these expectations because their parents were taught these things when they were kids as well. It goes in a constant cycle, from generation to generation. Also, there's the internet. My generation is the first generation to be completely raised by the internet. The internet is good for many things, but the amount of bullying outweighs the positives. The children who are bullied are more likely to be violent. Kids learn things from the internet and the media. They are told that if someone hurts them to hurt them back. Youth violence isn't something that is there by nature, it is created by the environment that kids are in.

One of the biggest issues in the media today is a lack of empathy. It can be politically, celebrities fighting on a gossip TV show, and so much more. This lack of empathy that we see daily affects how we empathize with other people. The first step to reducing youth violence is understanding. We have to understand that kids who have done anything violent think that they are doing the right thing. Secondly, we have to help kids feel safe. Even though home might not be a safe place for these kids, school can be. People my age can just be nicer in general. We can use the internet to spread positivity rather than hate. We can be supportive of our peers in school, and offer help when other students need it. The younger generation is the key to helping our society to grow and change, but we need to help them out. And when I say we need to help them out, I mean you, me, the government, teachers, adults, kids, anyone. The world we live in is amazing, but it can hurt people if they aren't careful. We need the younger generations to feel safe as they are handed the beautiful rose bush that is society.



ESSAY 8

NEVAEH MYERS

Roosevelt Middle School

Violence has affected my life directly as a youth. When I was younger, my mom and dad would argue and fight all the time. It was to the point where my mom even took us in and out of women shelters and nothing changed. Their fights were so bad sometimes the fights would be physical. It was very scary. I started getting older and noticed them drinking every day. Them drinking affected me because they stayed up all night drinking and arguing. My brother would cry every night, and want to sleep in my room. We were scared and worried all the time about what was happening. My mom noticed how miserable me and my brother were. I could tell it made her sad too. Because all of the sudden she went to rehab. I missed her like crazy but I knew she left to get better. She stayed there for a month and now her and my dad are not drinking anymore. My life has improved, because my parents don't argue as much. My brother, and my parents and I are a much happier family. Things are still not perfect, but they continue to try. I think it helps that they don't drink anymore. In those bad situations I was never hurt physically but always mentally. Today my parents do everything they can to make sure me and my brother are happy.

Some causes of youth violence are a child in a neglected home, a child who feels left out and alone, or a child with abusing parents or siblings they feel that them bullying others will lift the pain from there shoulders, which is not true. Deep inside it hurts the bully even more. In my opinion a big part of Youth Violence is bullying at school. A child who comes from a neglected home and is always bullied by a sibling or parent is going to think "oh that's normal I'm going to bully my peers at school too." That student is going to go to school and bully a student not knowing his life at home and hurt him/her a lot physically and mentally. We will never know that student being bullied might become a bully himself. Youth violence at school is also caused by rumors. Rumors are "a currently circulating story or report of uncertain or doubtful truth". Rumors are drama starters that cause ruined self-esteem, fights, and falling outs.

To reduce youth violence I can go to a trusted adult if I see bullying or am being bullied. If I hear a rumor ignore it and not spread the word around. I can also follow the golden rule to treat others the way you want to be treated. Bullying can be prevented by no one getting left out for being different and not having the nicest clothes or nicest car. Bullying can be prevented by no bystanders instead of bystanders who watch people get bullied and do nothing to help. Be that person to help a friend or peer. You never know what could help a person a smile or wave in the hall could change someone's life. A smile or wave in the hall could change someone's life for the better because you never know how someone's life really is they could feel alone or have a mental illness such as Clinical Depression, Anxiety disorder, Bipolar disorder, etc. In conclusion these are some of the ways you can prevent youth violence.



ESSAY 9

KARSON SPURGEON

Schaefer Middle School

Thursday, May 28, 2020. My older brother, PJ, had gone over to his father's house because his father had not been answering any calls of his or my mother's that day. He was soon then overwhelmed with a feeling of despair, as he had walked into his father's house to find him dead. My mother went into panic-mode as I had no clue what was going on because I was with friends just right across the street. She had called me and the only thing I remember from that call is the words "Pete's gone." Me and one of my friends had rushed over to my house and watched our dogs while my mother went to the house to get my brother and wait for the police. We found out days later that Pete (my brother's father) was murdered over money and drugs, someone had laced his drug paraphernalia. The detective that was working on the case had brought in a few suspects but realistically wasn't looking enough because my mother had found out who had brought him the paraphernalia due to a phone call this woman had made to my mother. She had stated she brought him the drugs because he needed a "fix" but the person she had gotten it from stated that Pete owed him money so he had laced it so the woman who brought it to him could take his money. My mother had not thought to record the phone call so the only action the detective had taken was he brought her in for questioning and of course she denied everything. Due to not having evidence other than the phone call in my mother's recent call list, she and the dealer had gotten away with it and to this day Pete (Petey) Collier has not gotten the justice he deserves.

This is just one of many many ways that violence has affected my life. I deal with a daily struggle of not feeling safe in my own home due to my outside neighborhood and someone that lives inside the home. I've grown up around violence and it was hard for me at a young age but I'm sort of getting used to it now. After a while you really do start getting used to it, and that's definitely not a good thing. In my city (the city of Springfield) there is violence around every corner, whether it's physical, violence over drugs or alcohol, or just simple public disputes. Personally, the neighborhood I live in has had

a few shootings and 2+ deaths. This really does scare me because what if I'm outside at the wrong time and I get caught up into that. I've also been around people who use self-harm as a coping mechanism and there was a point in time I had gotten so depressed and hated myself so much I had resulted in self-harm and other unhealthy coping mechanisms. I am very proud to say I am several months clean and am in a good place.

These things I have to deal with on a daily basis take a part of a huge role in youth violence. Youth violence isn't just about physical fights you and your friends or foes might have, it goes way deeper into that. It consists of things on social media, the neighborhood they live in, some of the video games and movies we watch, alcohol and drug abuse around them or in their personal life, PTSD from past trauma that they really can't get rid of and etc. These things can really take an impact on a youth's life whether they recover from these experiences or not. Some of these causes may even lead into young adulthood or stay with you all your life if you don't get the right help.

What can I do about youth violence? This question right here is something I think about almost every day. There is a certain level of things I can do to help prevent or lessen youth violence around me or in my life because youth violence will always be a thing no matter how many people participate in trying to help lessen it. There will always be people who cause/create trauma, use drugs or alcohol, watch bad movies or play bad video games etc, these things cannot and will not be stopped but they can be lessened. You just have to be willing to take part in the change that needs to be made all around the world if you think of youth violence as being a bad thing. Me, as a person could talk to some of the people around me and talk them through some of the things that they do or participate in because these things could really change them into something I don't want to see them change into, but I also have to be careful as to not say the wrong thing that might set them off and cause them to participate in these things more. It really all depends on if you're willing to help make a change.



ESSAY 10

BREYANNA WARD

Roosevelt Middle School

Have you ever experienced some type of violence in your city? Not every city is perfect. Each has their own highs and lows, such as youth violence. Youth violence is when a young teenager or child does harmful acts from the outcome of their emotions. Youth violence and violence in general around Springfield, Ohio, has impacted my life.

First, how violence has affected my life. In certain areas around our town I feel unsafe and uncomfortable. This is from events of violence that have occurred in our city. There was a day that I was walking around the South Side of Springfield and heard some type of loud bang. Everyone reassured me it wasn't anything serious and with that being said I went on with my day. The day after the event, I was watching the news and the loud bang was actually someone getting shot. This event caused me to feel very unsafe in that certain part of town. Another example of how violence has affected my life is when I had to witness domestic violence. I witnessed people fighting and screaming around me. It has caused me to fear people that live in our city because as others say "watch your back, you never know that could happen" I try and keep my distance from strangers. Violence has affected my life in different ways than others.

Second, what are the causes of youth violence. One cause of youth violence is that some kids don't have the outlet to try and control their emotions. This causes the kids to take their emotions out on other people. The actions of children trying to let out their emotions range from bullying to physical fights. This is the child's way of trying to let go of whatever emotions they experience. A second cause of youth violence is their home lives. The children are products of their environment. When

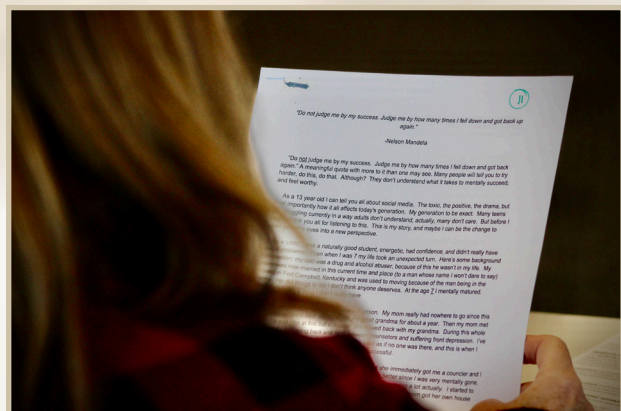
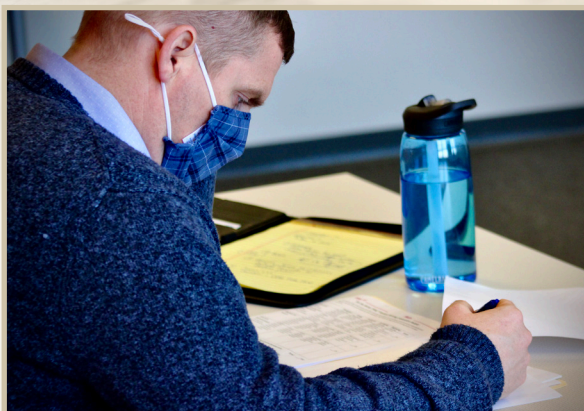
they see violent things happening with no explanation they start to think that those things are okay. Without the proper home structure or parental figure a child adapts to the unhealthy environment. This causes the child to copy the actions of their parents/guardians. With the mindset of thinking these actions are okay, they go out and start doing them. With no parental figure or structure, they'll never learn what's right from wrong. Youth violence isn't always the child's fault.

Third, what could I do about youth violence? One thing I could do about youth violence is reach out. I could reach out to the children in need of an outlet to let their emotions out. Talking to someone could help their mental health. With reaching out it makes the children not feel alone in their battle with emotions. A second thing I could do about youth violence is encourage others to help the fight of youth violence in our town. This will create more awareness inside our city. With more people other than myself, a new chapter of this story might come along a little better. A third thing I could do about youth violence is create a program to help people with their mental and physical issues. This will provide people with the help they need. With the help they need, they will become better citizens. This will decrease the amount of youth violence in Springfield, Ohio. There are a few things I could do about youth violence.

Violence and youth violence has affected my life living in Springfield, Ohio. Whether it is a very small case or a very big case of youth violence, it needs to be addressed in our community. The normalization of violence needs to be fixed in our society. In conclusion, Springfield, Ohio has been through its stages of youth violence.



A community united to help stop violence





DAVE YOST

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL

Do the Write Thing 2021

OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

30 E. Broad St., 17th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
800-282-0515

www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov

SPRINGFIELD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of Teaching, Learning and
Professional Development
700 S. Limestone St., Suite A
Springfield, OH 45505
937-505-2800

www.scsdoh.org

