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# Teen Talk

A quarterly newsletter from the Children's Hospital League's Resource Center

## Summer 2006

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The Center for  
Young Women's Health  
Children's Hospital Boston



Children's Hospital Boston

### Newsletter Coordinator

Freedom Baird, MS

### Consulting Editors

S. Jean Emans, MD

Phaedra P. Thomas, RN, BSN

### Written by

The Youth Advisors

### Layout by

Pauline Chin & Freedom Baird

Center for Young Women's Health

Children's Hospital Boston

333 Longwood Avenue, 5<sup>th</sup> floor

Boston, MA 02115

(617) 355-2994

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## Stop the Violence... Increase the Peace!

by Asharee

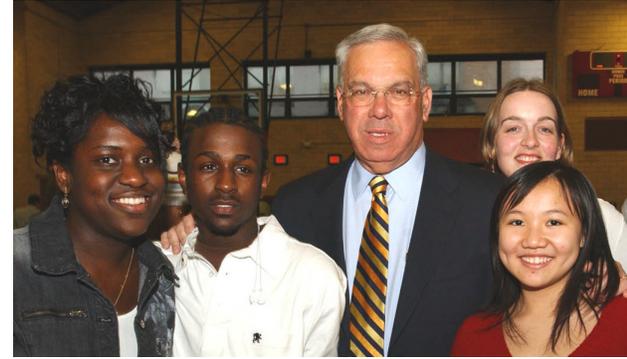
Violence, by definition is "the exertion of physical force so as to injure or abuse, an often destructive action." We know this word is powerful, one that makes us think of images that are emotionally charged with feelings such as rage, mourning, suffering, and resentment. The thought of violence in our neighborhoods, schools and our communities makes us feel vulnerable and scared. The BIG question is: When will it stop?

According to the **Boston Youth Survey** (a survey taken every 2 years by youth in Boston public high schools), over 87% of students who took the survey reported witnessing one or more acts of violence in the past year and 44% reported personally experiencing one or more types of victimization. Additionally, over half of the students reported witnessing or being victimized by at least one type of violence: at their school, in their neighborhood, or on the street.

This is shocking! It's time for a change! Mayor Thomas M. Menino as well as the Boston City Council's special committee on Youth Violent Crime Prevention has a plan to reduce violence and create peace. The committee recently held a forum in which nearly 250 youth attended. Teens had the opportunity to voice their concerns as well as speak out on ways to reduce violence and create peace in the city. The goal of the committee is to listen and respond to what people have to say about bringing peace to their neighborhoods.

Many teens feel that **violence CAN be decreased** if we work on eliminating the causes of it and raise awareness about prevention. That is exactly what a group of teenagers in

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CYWH peer leaders were excited to meet Mayor Menino at the Mission Hill Youth Forum on April 5th. From left to right: Asharee, Raheim, Mayor Thomas Menino, and Pauline. Behind Pauline is Kate Weldon LeBlanc from the Children's Hospital Boston Office of Child Advocacy.

## Louis' Legacy

by Asharee

Peace is what we all hope for. That's exactly what Louis D. Brown hoped for but at 15 years old he was innocently shot while he was on his way to an event sponsored by Teens Against Gang Violence, a group he was an active member of. He was determined to raise awareness about the effects of violence in his community, and he aspired to be the first black president of the United States.

One year after his death, Louis' parents created the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute in honor of their son's memory. The mission of the organization is to create and support an environment where families can live in peace and unity. One of the ways this organization teaches the value of peace is through a Peace curriculum that is offered to many sophomores in Boston and surrounding area high schools. To learn about the Peace curriculum and the many workshops they offer that teach the value of peace call: 617-825-1917 or check out at web site: [www.louisdbrownpeaceinstitute.org](http://www.louisdbrownpeaceinstitute.org) ☺

## Leadership for Guys

by Maria-Paz

Here in the Adolescent Medicine department at Children's Hospital Boston, we are expanding our resources for adolescent males. As part of that effort we recently hired a male youth advisor to help us raise awareness about health

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Dorchester are doing: taking action to restore peace within their community. The teens are a part of the Alliance for Community Health, an organization that focuses on health promotion and prevention. They recently sponsored "Youth Fight Back," a forum that took place at Northeastern University on April 29th. The event focused primarily on: violence prevention, and alcohol and substance abuse prevention. The forum also provided teens with resources on a variety of programs in and around Boston so that teens can stay active and off the streets! The CYWH youth advisors gave a workshop at the forum titled, "Safety on the Streets". Through this interactive presentation, girls talked about their fears and created a plan to stay safe in their neighborhoods.

You can find out more about *how to stay safe* at: [www.young-womenshealth.org/teensafe](http://www.young-womenshealth.org/teensafe) and learn more about the free workshops we provide to youth by calling 617-355-2994 (CYWH). ☺

# Violence Prevention Resources by Caitlin

## LOCAL RESOURCES

### Boston Crime Stoppers

1-800-494-TIPS  
Call this number to confidentially report a crime. They will not ask for your identity and the calls are not recorded or traced.

### Boston Police Department

Youth Violence Strike Force  
364 Warren Street  
Roxbury, MA 02119  
This is a citywide effort to reduce crime in our neighborhoods. Teens can stop by and talk to a police officer and report crimes anonymously.

### Louisdbrownpeaceinstitute.org

Their mission is to create and support an environment where families can live in Peace and Unity. Check this web site out for events happening around the Boston to raise awareness about violence.

### www.Safeyouth.org/scripts/teens.asp

This web site provides resources and tips on: preventing school violence, what you should know about gangs and offers ways to manage anger.

### SeeItAndStopIt.org

Check your violence IQ and help prevent relationship abuse. Created by teens, it provides tips and tricks to help you and your friends out of sticky situations. ☺

## NATIONAL RESOURCES

### JaneDoe.org

The Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence page includes links and tips on how to deal with abusive relationships.



In May the CYWH peer leaders gave a presentation to girls at the Hyde Park YMCA. The girls learned about how to build high self-esteem – a necessary ingredient to keep yourself safe!

## BOSTON SUMMER FUN

by Pauline

**1~ New and exciting events, celebrating different types of cultures and ethnicities, are happening all over Boston.** The link below shows a calendar of all the events available in Boston from late spring through summer. Best of all they are all free!  
[www.cityofboston.gov/calendar/calendar.asp](http://www.cityofboston.gov/calendar/calendar.asp)

ing on the season. Have a picnic, go on a hike, or simply bask in the sun. Don't forget to bring food, water, and sunscreen.  
[www.bostonislands.com](http://www.bostonislands.com)

**4~ You can go kayaking, sailing, or windsurfing on the Charles River all summer for just a \$1.** For this small fee you get a membership to the Community Boating Inc. which offers lessons from basic sailing through advanced racing. They are located near Mass. General Hospital on the red line.  
[www.community-boating.org](http://www.community-boating.org)

**5~ If you think the word museum sounds boring, you've never been to Boston.** The Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of Science, and the Harvard Museum of Natural History are fun and stimulating places to spend an afternoon in an air-conditioned environment! Don't be a couch potato! Go to a museum and learn about history and science by playing interactive games. The New England Aquarium is also a great place to visit. You can get free tickets at the Boston Public Library. Check out the link below:  
[www.bpl.org/general/circulation/museum\\_passes.htm](http://www.bpl.org/general/circulation/museum_passes.htm) ☺



**2~ Bored? Why not fly a kite in your neighborhood's parks** such as Moakley Park, Castle Island, the beach in South Boston, Boston Common, Piers in East Boston, Millennium Park in West Roxbury, Pope John Paul II in Dorchester, and Charles River.  
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/parks/default.asp>

**3~ Want to spend your day on an island? No problem.** There are islands just off the coast of Boston connected by ferries that run back and forth from the islands to Long Wharf (adjacent to New England Aquarium, blue line). Ferry prices differ depend-

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issues that effect young men. We are happy to introduce Rahiem Crawford! Rahiem, a 16 year old sophomore at Dorchester High School, will receive specialized training and provide presentations with the other CYWH youth advisors on topics such as: Safety in Relationships, Safety on the Street and Safety on the Internet. In his new role, he will help train medical doctors on how to interview teens, assist clinicians with updating the young men's web site: [www.adolescenthealth.com](http://www.adolescenthealth.com), and write articles for Teen Talk.



As a male adolescent living in the city of Boston, Rahiem has experienced the direct and indirect impact of violence on adolescents. When asked about what his concerns were for himself and other teens, he responded; "Violence is a huge issue affecting our neighborhoods, our families, and our feelings of personal security. In order for this to stop, we as teens need to be proactive through education and awareness. Our generation needs to take the first positive step in becoming a safer community." ☺