

People often say that teenagers and young people in general are the future of our world, which is correct. Young people have been passed the baton and it's America's job to make the world for future generations a better place. Violence comes in all forms, shapes and sizes. People have become so accustomed to it, they barely notice it anymore. Young people see and experience violence in the media, schools, and sometimes in families & relationships -- but the normalization of cruelty and injustice does not make it any more right or justifiable. It is imperative that people recognize that violence on any level is wrong, and even though it seems to be an abstract issue with no solution, individuals can reduce violence on a day to day basis by spreading awareness, modifying their own behavior towards others, and standing up for those who can't defend themselves.

VIOLENCE

American society is certainly not a stranger to police brutality. In 2017, only 14 of the 365 days did not involve a police officer killing someone. In 2014, less than 33% of blacks killed by police were suspects of a crime and armed. Almost no officer is ever accountable for their crimes as 99% go unpunished by the court. Some police departments have adopted force policies which they hope will prevent more deaths from occurring. Others have not, however.





Domestic/Sexual violence against women is no strange concept. According to the Department of Justice, 1 in 4 women and 1 out of 6 men are sexually abused in their lifetime and in 8 out of 10 rape cases, the victim knows the attacker. 1 in 4 women have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner (National Intimate Partner & Sexual Violence Survey). 1 in 4 victims of intimate partner violence are gay, lesbian, transgender or queer (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs). These statistics show that an assault can happen to anyone anywhere.



This photo depicts a woman (who was amongst many other counter-protestors; advocating the removal of the statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee) being carried away in a stretcher after being mowed down by a car by white supremacists in Charlottesville, VA late last year. About 15 men were reportedly stomping and kicking this black woman. Racial violence may be attributed to the 60s, but it is still evident in society today. In 2015, 59.2% of victims in single-bias incidents were targeted because of a race or ethnicity bias. Hate crimes are one way violence in our country is prevalent.

School violence is also a major factor in teen violence. This includes bullying, fighting, weapon usage, aggressive language, and gang related violence. In 2017, nearly 8% of students had been in a physical fight on school property.

Nationwide, about 6% of students had not gone to school at least 1 day during the school year because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on their way to or from school. Someone who is bullied can quite possibly become aggressive and angry and perform acts of violence in the future.





Gang violence can consume teenagers, especially in urban areas. 772,500 people are members of gangs in the U.S. with 31% of those members being teens. Violent crimes are associated with these gangs and because of a “no snitching” policy, a large percentage of cases go unsolved. Most of these kids join gangs because of home life or just to impress their peers. In detention facilities, 90% of boys have some level of gang affiliation. Every city in the U.S with a population of 250,000 or more has some type of gang activity.

