



"Hip-Hop Against Gun & Gang Violence" Week

POVERTY + ILLITERACY = GUN/GANG VIOLENCE

WHY DO WE NEED THIS PROJECT?

Poverty and illiteracy are the *root causes* of Gun & Gang Violence, which are the symptoms of the problem. The data below is proof of our statement. When 1 in 5 children under 18 live in poverty and another 1 in 4 live in "food insecure" homes the seeds for failure are being sown. Sometimes they go to school or bed hungry. They may be living in a shelter or facing foreclosure. When students are hungry and homeless they can't function properly in school or at home. Children that are illiterate and can't compete in school are forced to drop out. Upon dropping out of school they take a low paying job, apply for welfare, join a gang, sell drugs and/or live a street life surrounded by crime, gun and gang violence.

1. **Gun Deaths:** In 2008, 2,947 children and teens died from guns in the United States and 2,793 died in 2009 for a total of **5,740—1 child or teen every 3 hours, 8 every day, 55 every week for 2 years.**
2. The leading cause of death amongst Black teens ages 15 to 19 in 2008 and 2009 was gun homicide. For White teens 15 to 19 it was motor vehicle accidents followed by gun homicide in 2008 and gun suicide in 2009.
3. 90% of gun deaths of Black children and teens in 2009 were homicides (1,092); 6% were suicides (72). Amongst White children and teens almost half of all gun deaths in 2009 were homicides (730) while 46% were suicides (698). White children and teens have double the chance of committing suicide by a gun than Black children and teens.
4. **Gun Injuries:** 6 times as many children and teens (34,387) suffered nonfatal gun injuries as gun deaths in 2008 and 2009. **This is equal to 1 child or teen every 31 minutes, 47 every day, and 331 children and teens every week.**
5. FBI reports there are **33,000 gangs with 1.4 million** members in the U.S.
6. Today's gangs are very sophisticated and recruit members as young as **10 years old** knowing that children under 13 cannot go to jail.
7. Gang members use graffiti to mark territory to warn off rival gangs.
8. Kids join gangs for family love, attention, identity and status, in return they show devotion and loyalty to the gang.
9. Gangs smuggle, produce, transport, and distribute illegal drugs as a source of income.
10. Gangs are responsible for most violent crimes in U.S. cities including assault, burglary, drive-by shootings, extortion, homicide, identification theft, money laundering, robbery, sale of stolen property, and weapons trafficking.
11. Gangs are increasingly engaging in non-traditional crime such as: alien smuggling, human trafficking, and prostitution, along with white-collar crime such as counterfeiting, identity theft, and mortgage fraud.
12. To win the "*War on Gun & Gang Violence*" you have to understand the "**4 R's**" which represent the "*core principles*" of gang culture: **RULES; REPUTATION; RESPECT; RETALIATION.**
13. More than **1.2 million** students drop of school each year (7,000 a day; 1 every 26 seconds).
14. More than **1 in 5 children** in the U.S. lives in poverty according to 2010 Census data, rising from 14.7 million children in 2009 to 15.7 million in 2010.
15. There are about **75 million** children under 18 in the U.S. **About 1 in 4 children** or as many as 17 million nationwide are struggling with what is known as "**food insecurity**" or **hunger** in 2011. They **go to bed and school hungry**. Many can't wait to go to school **to eat in the free lunch** program.
16. Black children had the highest rates of poverty with 38.2%, Hispanic children had 32.3%, while White and Asian children were below the national average.
17. More than **8.3 million children** are directly affected by the ongoing foreclosure crisis as single-family homes and rental properties continue to enter foreclosure.
18. About **3 billion** citizens worldwide, close to half the world's population, live on less than \$2.50 a day.

SOURCE: Children's Defense Fund; Notre Dame University; USDA; First Focus and the Brookings Institution; Center for Economic Opportunity; FBI:2008 National Youth Gang Survey; DoSomething.org; US Census

RISE UP; GET INVOLVED; END GUN & GANG VIOLENCE NOW!

