

# Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere

## About STRYVE



### STRYVE's goals are to:

- Increase awareness that youth violence can and should be prevented.
- Promote the use of youth violence prevention approaches that are based on the best available evidence.
- Provide guidance to communities on how to prevent youth violence.

Youth violence is a public health crisis in the United States (U.S.). Based on the most recent statistics, approximately 20 percent of high school students report being bullied at school, and over 30 percent report being in a physical fight. More than 656,000 young people, ages 10 to 24, were treated in emergency departments for injuries sustained from violence in 2008. Homicide is the second leading cause of death of young people, with an average of 16 youth murdered every day.

Youth violence destroys quality of life and diminishes the freedom, health, and prosperity of individuals, families, and communities. And, as recognized by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, "We can't arrest our way out of this problem. Prevention is the key to long-term success."

STRYVE, or Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere, is a national initiative led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prevent youth violence **before it starts**. STRYVE's vision is safe and healthy youth who can achieve their full potential as connected and contributing members of thriving, violence-free families, schools, and communities.

## STRYVE – Achieving the Vision of Safe and Healthy Youth

**Youth violence is preventable.** Research clearly demonstrates that the reduction of factors that place youth at risk for violence and the strengthening of factors that protect youth from violence can occur. Approaches proven to effectively address these factors are available, and a growing body of evidence indicates these approaches can be cost-effective and have long-lasting benefits.

Putting an end to youth violence, however, is neither simple nor quick. To be effective, communities need a continuum of approaches that span from prevention to response and that are applied from early childhood through adulthood. Prevention strategies work to keep violence from starting by promoting youth's skills, supportive relationships, and healthy and safe communities and society. Approaches implemented after violence occurs help to slow or stop violence from continuing and lessen the social, emotional, and physical damage that violence creates.

STRYVE helps communities make prevention a vital and complementary part of their overall strategy to address youth violence. Such communities can realize multiple benefits over communities that rely solely on reacting or responding to violence after it occurs. Prevention enables communities to avoid youth violence and its tragic consequences. In addition, preventing violence can lower the risk for related problems, such as alcohol and substance use, obesity, and academic failure, and contribute to significant cost savings for numerous service systems, including justice, education, and health care.



## Key Components of STRYVE:

**STRYVE takes a public health approach.** Violence jeopardizes the health and safety of the public, and public health must be part of the solution. Public health, with its emphasis on a science-driven approach and collective action, maximizes the benefits for the largest number of people. This approach applies scientific and programmatic expertise to preventing violence before it occurs.

**STRYVE is multi-sector.** Youth violence prevention is a shared responsibility among all those who help shape the many relationships and environments in which youth develop. STRYVE emphasizes collaboration among multiple sectors and disciplines, including justice, education, labor, social services, public health and safety, and youth-serving organizations. Each sector has a unique and important role to play in prevention, but no sector acting alone can do everything needed to prevent youth violence.

**STRYVE is comprehensive.** Violence is a learned behavior that is strongly influenced by factors that place youth more or less at risk of violence at the individual, interpersonal, community, and societal levels. These factors change over time as youth, their relationships, and their environments change. STRYVE offers communities an array of culturally and developmentally appropriate approaches to prevention at each level that are based on the best available evidence through its four key strategies:

- **Strengthen the personal capacity of youth to resist violence**, such as helping youth develop the social, emotional, and behavioral skills that lead to healthy, peaceful relationships and that help provide critical skills for success at school and employment.
- **Build and support positive relationships between youth and adults**, such as through family, school, and mentoring approaches that provide youth with positive role models and nurturing connections with others.
- **Promote thriving, safer, and more connected communities**, such as by designing safer environments, fostering economic growth, and taking other approaches that enhance the settings in which people interact and affect the likelihood that youth violence will occur.
- **Create a safer and healthier society**, such as through collaborative strategies at the national, state, and local levels that ensure that all youth have equal access to preventative services and to educational and vocational opportunities.

**STRYVE is action-oriented.** Effective youth violence prevention requires effective action, which—in turn—requires information on what has worked and how successful efforts can be replicated and sustained. A cornerstone of STRYVE is guidance on actions that communities can take to plan and implement prevention approaches that are based on the best available evidence. STRYVE provides community tools through a variety of mechanisms, such as STRYVE Online at [www.SafeYouth.gov](http://www.SafeYouth.gov). This online resource center offers:

- **Interactive training** on key concepts and strategies of youth violence prevention.
- **Resources** for a public health approach to youth violence prevention, including up-to-date data, research documents, educational materials, and effective policies, programs, and practices.
- **Customizable workspaces and tools** to use in building local coalitions, moving step-by-step to develop, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive strategic plan, and networking with other communities to learn from others.

**STRYVE is building partnerships.** CDC is forging connections with national organizations that represent key sectors in preventing youth violence. These multi-sector partners have a common focus on preventing youth violence but vary in their approaches to promoting safety and health. Through their collaboration, these partners will raise awareness about the potential and benefits of preventing youth violence and will help develop the tools communities need to prevent youth violence before it starts.

**Visit [www.SafeYouth.gov](http://www.SafeYouth.gov) for more information about STRYVE and its online resources. Visit [www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention) to learn more about CDC and youth violence prevention.**