



YOUTH DAY (YOUTH AND VIOLENCE)

CULTURAL RESOURCES

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I. Youth Day Historically

Traditionally, Youth Day in the black church was a day set aside once a year to celebrate young people, promote camaraderie among youth, and, sometimes, to reach out to young people who might never attend a church service. Primarily, the day was designed to provide the youth of the church with opportunities to have leadership roles in the worship service. For many of us, this was where our oratory skills were developed. Youth formed committees to assist them in the planning of Youth Day services. Thus, they also learned many leadership skills. They presided over every aspect of the worship service. In many churches, a special choir was created, so all of the youth in the church could participate. Often, a young minister was invited to bring the message. In a few churches, the youth engaged in youth evangelism in the general community. In other cases, they participated in community service projects.

Some churches continue to follow this Youth Day tradition. Unfortunately, too many have forgotten the historical significance of this ritual. Consequently, the participation and attendance of youth in church programs has fallen off. In addition, the rote following of this old ritual in exactly the same old way also has fostered church youth cliques that alienate un-churched youth seeking a spiritual community. This ritualistic, unadoptable fellowship is unwelcoming to youth that don't fit within the defined church parameters for youth participation. This enslavement to tradition reminds me of a story that exists in black folklore:

A young girl was helping her mother with the holiday dinner. As the mother prepared the ham to be baked, she cut off both ends of the ham, threw them out, and placed the ham in the baking pan. The girl inquired of her mother, "why did you cut the ends off the ham?" The mother replied, "I don't know, that is the way my mother prepared her ham, so that is the way that I have always done it. Ask your grandmother, she will tell you why." The girl found her grandmother and she inquired, "Grandmother why does my mother cut off the ends of the ham before

baking it?” The grandmother replied, “I don’t know, that is the way my mother prepared her ham, so that is the way I always prepared mine. Why don’t you go upstairs and ask your great-grandmother, she will tell you why.” The girl goes upstairs where her great-grandmother is resting and she inquires, “GG, why does my mother cut off the ends of the ham before baking it?” The elder woman replied, “Well, when I was a little girl, when my mother prepared her ham, she cut off both ends of the ham because it was too big to fit in the baking pan.”

It is time we realize that the pan that holds our traditional Youth Day menu is larger than our old ways of doing things. Our pan is large enough to provide our youth with a more meaningful Youth Day experience and youth programs with more depth. For Youth Day to be effective and reach all of today’s youth, our vision must be large enough to allow inclusion of all youth (churched and unchurched); bold enough to include non-traditional forms of worship (rap sessions and collaboration with other youth groups); innovative enough to embrace new genres of youth-centered music (Christian Hip Hop, Rap, Contemporary Praise/Gospel, Blues, Jazz. etc); and, quite importantly, holistic enough to address with depth the real problems faced by today’s youth (such as violence, incest, pedophilia, rape, poverty, drugs, HIV/AIDS, etc.). **What impact do we expect twenty-first century youth programs to have that consist only of songs, Bible Study, and videos?** Everything in our religious and cultural arsenal must be brought to bear upon raising a generation that will not succumb to all of the evil and seductive messages that are asserting themselves in the lives of our youth, and killing them and us. Counselors are needed, parents are needed, teachers are needed, police officers are needed, doctors are needed, psychiatrists are needed, mentors and church leaders are all needed to raise our children! These revised and updated Youth Day and Youth Program approaches will aid our churches in moving beyond form and tradition. They will also help churches provide youth with alternatives to the alienation, disaffection and violent behavior that is plaguing them.

II. Information, Statistics, and Lessons

1. Definition

Any discussion of black youth violence, to be informative, must include a foundational definition. For our purposes, violence, according to Webster, is any “intense, turbulent, or furious and often destructive action or force.”¹ It can be a vehement feeling or an expression of that feeling. Violence is also spiritual affliction that requires a spiritual remedy, if healing is to occur.

2. Roots of Youth Violence

For the last years, I have worked with young men and women who have been charged by the judicial system with incidents of violence. They are mandated by the court to participate in anger management classes for 26 to 52 weeks. In my experience, some of the causes of violent youth behavior are:

a. Absentee Fathers

I believe that the absence of fathers is the most harmful demographic trend of this

generation due to a lack of others to step in to fill this void. It may well be the leading cause of declining child well-being in our society. It is also the engine driving some of our most urgent social problems, from crime to adolescent pregnancy, to child sexual abuse and domestic violence.² In the African American community, the crisis of absent fathers is even more profound.

b. Role Models Needed

The lack of a sufficient number of role models adds to the despair and hopelessness. Youth can only process a small number of voids while also being riddled with negative or death-dealing media images and little societal appreciation for the depths of their problems. Since we cannot undo the absence of all fathers, nor change the media images overnight, nor put an immediate end to the violence in communities, we can at least remember that it does “take a village to raise a child,” and each of us can be the best role model that we can for every child who is watching us. This requires less than we think in the way of time and money. The main thing that it requires is willingness.

c. Media

Youth exposure to violence in media is becoming more pervasive every day, and our young people are not immune to the negative effects. Our young people see so much of it on the television, in the movies, and music videos, that their viewing violence and violent behavior is the norm, not the exception. Because violence is so prevalent in all forms of media, it is perceived by some youth as acceptable behavior. Coupled with all of the other plagues that combine to thwart the progress of our youth, it should not be surprising that violence in the black community has become a way of life. The sounds of gunfire are commonplace, and I suspect that many of our youth live with undiagnosed post traumatic stress. Almost daily, I am troubled to see makeshift shrines of empty liquor bottles and teddy bears on street corners, offered up as memorials to those who have been murdered in our communities--many by youths!

d. Violence in Homes

Violence is a learned behavior. Most youth learn how to interact in relationships by modeling the healthy or unhealthy behaviors of the adults in their lives. As a result of violent influences, many of our young people have become frustrated, angry, alienated, and impatient with adults and the church. We have taught them to distrust our words and our actions. Fear, doubt and insecurity have resulted in our young people adopting a posture of aloofness, emotionlessness, fearlessness and toughness, because they believe this will allow them to survive.³ Often, these defensive behavior traits lead to violence and the senseless deaths of our youth.

3. Grim Statistics

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) provides the following statistics for the year 2005 for violent crimes committed by persons ages 10-17. A racial breakdown is not provided. These statistics are estimates that account for missing data and may differ from other published sources. The county-level files which are the source of this information are not official FBI releases and are being provided for research purposes.

The Coverage Indicator refers to the relative size of the sample from which these estimates are based. A coverage indicator of 90% means that data covering 10% of the jurisdiction's population are estimated and that data from 90% of the jurisdiction's population are based on actual reports.⁴

Murders committed – 1,260

Rape – 3,940 incidents

Robbery – 28,900 incidents

Aggravated Assault – 61,200 incidents

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs (Bureau of Justice Statistics) for the period 2003:

- On average, juveniles (ages 12-17) were more than twice as likely as adults (age 18 or older) to be the victim of violent crime from 1993 to 2003.
- Older teens (15-17) were about 3 times more likely than younger teens (12-14) to be the victim of a violent crime involving a firearm.
- Juveniles were involved as victims or offenders in 38% of all violent crimes in which the victim could estimate the age of the offender(s).⁵

Reflecting on these grim statistics, a young minister shared with me that Stanley “Tookie” Williams stated in his memoir, Blue Rage, Black Redemption; A Memoir, that when the infamous Crips were founded, “there were hundreds of young men in that first meeting looking for something to belong to.”⁶ This is still true today. The question he posed to me was, “couldn’t they belong to the Kingdom of God?”

These statistics present the church with an opportunity to win these young people for the Kingdom of God. The Church in the African American Community is uniquely positioned to assume responsibility for these young people. In fact, in fulfillment of the “Great Commission,” the church has an absolute obligation to reach and serve these youth. The Church remains the most consistent and familiar institution in urban and rural communities. Residents still turn to the church for support, assistance and guidance. We are the best option for our youth. We can provide the guidance and support to our young people, as they attempt to navigate the difficulties of life. We’ve been flexible and creative during the worst of times. We know how to do more with less. Remember apathy and hopelessness are bigger enemies than violence. Although we are presenting this day on the calendar in May, you want to be aware that **March 23-27, 2009 is Youth Violence Prevention Week. It will be celebrated in 2010 around the same period.**

III. Helping Children See Visions and Achieving Transcendence over Violence

In his D. Min dissertation,⁷ John Guns, who works with parents to help them model discipleship behavior for their children, using the work of Dr. Fred Smith,⁸ posited ways

to help youth overcome violence. Guns wrote:

Smith believes that there is need for adults to help children “see visions” which will help avoid nihilism which “regards all values as baseless” and “typifies the rejection of all authoritative certainty in moral values.”⁹ Smith says that he is defining “seeing visions” in its widest prophetic sense, as seeing the “revelation of God’s will, as the word, or law, directing the course of events in human history” which is to be “coordinated with secular authority.”¹⁰

Smith posits that one important method of helping African American youth avoid violence is to transform the nihilistic threat into a praxis of love. According to Cornel West, the nihilistic threat is “numbing detachment from others, a self-destructive disposition, and a cold-hearted mean-spirited outlook that destroys both the individual and the community.”¹¹ Nihilism consists of “a loss of hope, an absence of meaning and a deficit of love.”¹² Even more than providing children with Christian education, Christian traditions, or even a safe community in which to live, all of which are extremely important, the parent who fails to offer hope to their child will fail to produce a Christian disciple. Without hope, children will find no interest in being part of a Christian community or any constructive community. They will be unconcerned with the building up of themselves as Christian disciples, or as productive members of their community. Accordingly, parents as models and prophets have as their major task: exuding hope, surrounding their children with hope, and placing their children in hopeful surroundings with hopeful people. And Christ is the reason that believers live in hope. Although youth may not always become what they see, they will never become what they never see. African American youths must see hope, since so much of everything else that surrounds them is not hopeful. The African American youth is the one who gets shot. The African American youth is the one who gets pulled over by police. The African American youth goes to jail. The African American youth is not the one on television for heroic achievement, academic achievement or receipt of community accolades. Where are the pictures of hope for an African American child? They are there; but not nearly enough. The prophetic parent Christian educator and the church must produce more images of hope for African American youths, beginning with the model of Christ since this is the only model that will never fail our youths. Also, love and compassion are developed out of a hopeful heart; an end to nihilism is possible if a heart is filled with hope.

IV. Music for this Moment

The rapper Twista (with Faith Evans) offers the song “Hope” to encourage young people who are tired and feel defeated to press ahead and trust God to work things out--tall orders for today’s youth.

Hope

Wish the way I was living could stop, serving rocks,

Knowing the cops is hot when I'm on the block, And I
Wish my brother woulda made bail,
So I won't have to travel 6 hours to see him in jail, And I
Wish that my grandmother wasn't sick,
Or that we would just come up on some stacks and hit a lick, And I (I wish)
Wish my homies wouldn't have to suffer,
When the streets get the upper hand on us and we lose a brother, And I
Wish I could go deep in a zone,
And lift the spirits of the world with the words with in this song, And I (I wish)
Wish I could teach a soul to fly,
Take away the pain out cha hands and help you hold them hi, And I
Wish my homie Butch was still alive
And on the day of his death we had never took that ride, And I (I wish)
Wish God could protect us from the wrong
So that all the solders that were sent overseas come home
We will never break, though they devastate, we shall motivate,
And we gotta pray, all we got is faith.
Instead of thinking about who gonna die today,
The Lord is gonna help you feel better, so you ain't gotta cry today.
Sit at the light so long,
And then we gotta move straight forward, cuz we fight so strong,
So when right go wrong,
Just say a little prayer, get ya money man, life go on!!!
Let's HOPE!

[Chorus (Faith Evans)]

Cuz I'm hopeful, yes I am, hopeful for today,
Take this music and use it
Let it take you away,
And be hopeful (hopeful) and he'll make a way
I know it ain't easy but that's okay.
cause we hopeful

[Verse 2 (Twista)]

I wish that you could show some love,
Instead of hatin so much when you see some other people commin up (I wish)
I wish I could teach the world to sing,
Watch the music and have 'em trippin of the joy I bring, (shit)
I wish that we could hold hands,
Listen instead of dissin lessons from a grown man, And I (I wish)
Wish the families that lack, but got love, get some stacks
Brand new shack and a lack that's on dubs, And I
Wish we could keep achieving wonders,
See the vision of the world through the eyes of Stevie Wonder, (you feel me) (I wish)

And I hope all the kids eat,

And don't nobody in my family see six feet, (ya dig)
I hope them mothers stain' strong,
You can make it whether you wit him or your mans gone, And I (I wish)
Wish I could give every celly some commissary,
And the po po bring the heat on them priest like they did R. Kelly, And I
Wish that DOC could scream again
And bullets could reverse so Pac and Biggie breath again, (shit) (I wish)
Then one day they could speak again,
I wish that we only saw good news every time we look at CNN,
I wish that we could never get the blues,
Wish I could bring back the people that died, Eddy too
I wish that we could walk a path, stay doin the right thing
Hustle hard so the kids maintain up in the game,
Let's HOPE

[Chorus (Faith Evans)]

Cuz I'm hopeful, yes I am, hopeful for today,
Take this music and use it
Let it take you away,
And be hopeful (hopeful) and he'll make a way
I know it ain't easy but that's okay.
cause we hopeful

[Verse 3 (Twista)]

Wish the earth wasn't so apocalyptic,
I try to spread my message to the world the best way I can give it,
We can make it always so optimistic,
If you don't listen gotta live my life the best way I can live it,
I pray for justice when we go to court,
Wish it was all good so the country never even went to war
Why can't we kick it and just get em on,
And in the famous words of Mr. King "Why can't we all just get along",
Or we can find a better way to shop and please, And I
Hope we find a better way to cop a keys, And I
Wish everybody would just stop and freeze,
And ask why are we fulfillin these downfalls and prophecies,
You can be wrong if it's you doubting,
With the faith of a mustard seed you can move mountains,
And only the heavenly father and ease the hurt,
Just let it go and keep prayin on your knees in church!!
And let's HOPE

[Chorus (Faith Evans) X2]

Cuz I'm hopeful, yes I am, hopeful for today,
Take this music and use it
Let it take you away,

And be hopeful (hopeful) and he'll make a way
I know it ain't easy but that's okay.
cause we hopeful.¹³

In the song, "I Can," rapper Nas, joined in the video that accompanies this song by a throng of beautiful children, provides what could be a mantra for all who want to help all youth soar. We conclude the songs for this cultural resource unit with the song "Self Destruction." This is the song featured in the video that accompanies today's material. The message is self-explanatory and although the song was written more than twenty years ago, the message is still so timely.

I Can

[Kids]

I know I can (I know I can)
Be what I wanna be (be what I wanna be)
If I work hard at it (If I work hard it)
I'll be where I wanna be (I'll be where I wanna be)

[Nas]

Be, B-Boys and girls, listen up
You can be anything in the world, in God we trust
An architect, doctor, maybe an actress
But nothing comes easy it takes much practice
Like, I met a woman who's becoming a star
She was very beautiful, leaving people in awe
Singing songs, Lena Horn, but the younger version
Hung with the wrong person
Gotta astrung when I heard when
Cocaine, sniffing up drugs, all in her nose
Coulda died, so young, no looks, ugly and old
No fun cause when she reaches for hugs people hold they breath
Cause she smells of corrosion and death
Watch the company you keep and the crowd you bring
Cause they came to do drugs and you came to sing
So if you gonna be the best, I'm a tell you how

[Chorus - 2x (Nas and Kids)]

I know I can (I know I can)
Be what I wanna be (be what I wanna be)
If I work hard at it (If I work hard it)
I'll be where I wanna be (I'll be where I wanna be)

[Nas]

Be, B-Boys and girls, listen again
This is for grown looking girls who's only ten
The ones who watch videos and do what they see

As cute as can be, up in the club with fake ID
Careful, 'fore you meet a man with HIV
You can host the TV like Oprah Winfrey
Whatever you decide, be careful, some men be
Rapists, so act your age, don't pretend to be
Older than you are, give yourself time to grow
You thinking he can give you wealth, but so
Young boys, you can use a lot of help, you know
You thinkin life's all about smokin weed and ice
You don't wanna be my age and can't read and right
Begging different women for a place to sleep at night
Smart boys turn to men and do whatever they wish
If you believe you can achieve, then say it like this

[Chorus]

Save the music y'all, save the music y'all
Save the music y'all, save the music y'all
Save the music

[Nas]

Be, be, 'fore we came to this country
We were kings and queens, never porch monkeys
It was empires in Africa called Kush
Timbuktu, where every race came to get books
To learn from black teachers who taught Greeks and Romans
Asian Arabs and gave them gold when
Gold was converted to money it all changed
Money then became empowerment for Europeans
The Persian military invaded
They learned about the gold, the teachings and everything sacred
Africa was almost robbed naked
Slavery was money, so they began making slave ships
Egypt was the place that Alexander the Great went
He was so shocked at the mountains with black faces
Shot up they nose to impose what basically
Still goes on today, you see?
If the truth is told, the youth can grow
They learn to survive until they gain control
Nobody says you have to be gangstas, hoes
Read more learn more, change the globe
Ghetto children, do your thing
Hold your head up, little man, you're a king
Young Prince thats when you get your wedding ring
Your man is saying "She's my queen."

[Chorus]¹⁴

Self Destruction

Chorus: Self-Destruction, ya headed for Self-Destruction 2X

[KRS-One]

Well, today's topic, self destruction
It really ain't the rap audience that's buggin
It's one or two suckas, ignorant brothers
Trying to rob and steal from one another
You get caught in the mid
So to crush the stereotype here's what we did
We got ourselves together
so that you could unite and fight for what's right
Not negative 'cause the way we live is positive
We don't kill our relatives

[MC Delight (Stetsasonic)]

Pop pop pop
when it's shot who's to blame?
Headlines, front page, and rap's the name
MC Delight here to state the bottom line
That black-on-black crime was way before our time

[Kool Moe Dee]

Took a brother's life with a knife as his wife
Cried cause he died a trifling death
When he left his very last breath
Was I slept so watch your step
Back in the sixties our brothers and sisters were hanged
How could you gang-bang?
I never ever ran from the Ku Klux Klan
and I shouldn't have to run from a black man
cause that's

Chorus

[MC Lyte]

Funky Fresh dressed to impress ready to party
Money in your pocket, dying to move your body
To get inside you paid the whole ten dollars
Scotch taped with a razor blade taped to your collar
Leave the guns and the crack and the knives alone
MC Lyte's on the microphone
Bum rushin and crushin, snatchin and taxin
I cram to understand why brother's don't be maxin

There's only one disco, they'll close one more
You ain't guarding the door
so what you got a gun for?
Do you rob the rich and give to the poor?
Yo Daddy-O, school em some more

[Daddy-O, Wise (Stetsasonic)]
Straight from the mouth of Wise and Daddy-o
Do a crime end up in jail and gotta go
Cause you could do crime and get paid today
And tomorrow you're behind bars in the worst way
Far from your family, cause you're locked away
Now tell me, do you really think crime pays?
Scheming on taking what your brother has?
You little suckers.. you talkin' all that jazz.

[D-Nice]
It's time to stand together in a unity
Cause if not then we're soon to be
Self-destroyed, unemployed
The rap race will be lost without a trace
Or a clue but what to do
Is stop the violence and kick the science
Down the road that we call eternity
Where knowledge is formed and you'll learn to be
Self-sufficient, independent
To teach to each is what rap intended
But society wants to invade
So do not walk this path they laid.
It's

Chorus

[Ms. Melodie]
I'm Ms. Melodie and I'm a born again rebel
The violence in rap must cease and seckle
If we want to develop and grow to another level
We can't be guinea pigs for the devil
The enemy knows, they're no fools
Because everyone knows that hip-hop rules
So we gotta get a grip and grab what's wrong
The opposition is weak and rap is strong

[Doug E. Fresh]
This is all about, no doubt, to stop violence
But first let's have a moment of silence

Fresh beatboxes... swing
Things been stated re-educated, evaluated
THoughts of the past have faded
The only thing left is the memories of our belated
and I hate it, when
Someone dies and gets all hurt up
For a silly gold chain by a chump; WORD IP
It doesn't make you a big man, and
To want to go out and dis your brother man, and
You don't know that's part of the plan
Why? Cause rap music is in full demand.
Understand

Chorus

[Just-Ice]
My name is Just-Ice a man not a prankster
I was known... as the gangster
But believe me that is no fun
The time is now to unite everyone
You don't have to be soft to be for peace
Robbin and killin and muderin is the least
You don't have to be chained by the beast
But party people it's time I release!

[Heavy D]
Aiiyo here's the situation: Idio[di]cy
Nonsense, violence, not a good policy
Therefore we must ignore, fightin and fussin
Hev is at the door so there'll be no bum-rushin
Let's get together so we'll be fallin apart
I heard a brother shot another. It broke my heart
I don't understand the difficulty, people
Love your brother, treat him as an equal
They call us animals mmm mmm I don't agree with them
I'll prove them wrong, but right is what your proving them
Take heed before I lead to what I'm sayin
Or we'll all be on our knees, prayin

[Fruitkwan (Stetsasonic)]
Yo Heavy D, deep in the heart of the matter
The self-destruction is served on a platter
Makin a day not failing to anticipate
They got greedy so they fell for the bait
That makes them a victim, picked then plucked
New jack in jail, but to the vets they're a duck

There's no one to rob, cause in jail you're a number
They never took the time to wonder about

Chorus

[Chuck D, Flavor Flav (Public Enemy)]
Yes we urge to merge we live for the love
Of our people the hope that they get along
(Yeah, so we did a song)
Getting the point to our brothers and sisters
Who don't know the time (boyyyee, so we wrote a rhyme)
It's dead in your head, you know, I'll drive to build
And collect ourselves with intellect, come on
To revolve to evolve to self-respect
Cause we got to keep ourselves in check
Or else it's...

Chorus¹⁵

V. Cultural Response to this Day on the Calendar

When I was growing up, there were church activities that engaged and elevated young people, like the Baptist Young People's Union (BYPU), and Baptist Training Union (BTU). These auxiliaries provided us with a forum to build our confidence and gave us a place of significance in the church community. These forums still exist in some churches.

But, what about those youth whose parents are uninvolved in their upbringing and do not take them to church, and what about the thousands of young people growing up in the foster care system? Doesn't the "Great Commission" apply to them too? What can we do to reach those youth? Who will teach them that mourning a loss should not be marked by empty alcohol bottles? What should we do? Perhaps, instead of waiting for parents to bring the youth to us, the church should take the message of God's love to them. This Youth Day we should not just engage the youth that attend our church, we should take God's message to the streets. Why not celebrate all of our youth, by planning inclusive events that lead up to the actual Youth Day worship celebration. Those events should speak to the unchurched and the church of our community.

These events may include: a block party held at a local park or community center; a lock-in with invitations given to the kids living in foster care, group homes, shelters, and projects; or a worship service held at a Juvenile detention facility. Showcase Christian rap, contemporary gospel music, and spoken word, with a gospel message. Invite speakers to speak to issues and concerns that youth are confronted with everyday. Use the young members of the church to plan, lead, and implement this experience.

Once we have engaged these young people and have their attention, we must be prepared to meet some of their needs and address some of their concerns and issues. These

concerns and issues might include: poverty, homelessness, illiteracy, anger management, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, domestic violence, HIV and AIDS, or other needs identified by the participants.

All churches also need a community resource guide to make referrals to local community-based organizations that are equipped to address these concerns if a church cannot. The church should partner with such organizations and other churches, state, county, city, and educational intuitions and agencies to build capacity and enhance the ability of the church and the community to support and save youths.

This model will enable the church to create new ways to engage youth already in the church and those not connected to any church. Also, it will break the mold and free the church of the limitations of the traditional Youth Day services. When this is accomplished, I believe our “Great Commission” obligation will be pleasing to God, and the violence plaguing our youth will be curtailed. The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center is a resource that can help.¹⁶ There are also many resources in your local area. Go on the web and call your local governmental offices. If there is something the youth in your community need that does not exist, consider making it a church project that you can create. Such efforts make great Youth Department Projects, Mission Projects and Men’s Department Projects. In fact, why not engage in projects on which all of these groups can work collaboratively:

The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center

Since a lack of literacy (see drop-out statistics) and poverty are often part of the story of violent youth, a resource to assist with the drop-out rate in your community and with poverty among children is The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center. This resource can also help you **plan a Youth Summit for your community**. The website contains information on the following topics:

Adoption and Foster Care; Adult Court; After School Programs; Aggressive Behaviors; Alcohol Abuse; Anger Management; Antisocial Behaviors; Anxiety Disorders; Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); Bullying; Child Abuse and Neglect; Child Welfare; Community-Based Programs; Conflict Resolution; Corrections; Crisis Management; Depression; Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence; Drug Abuse; Education; Faith-Based Programs; Fighting; Gangs; Girls and Boys and Violence; Harassment; Hate Crimes; Health Care; Homicide; Intervention; Juvenile Justice; Media Violence; Mentoring; Missing and Exploited Children; Model Programs/Best Practices; Poverty; Protective Factors; Risk Factors; Runaways; School Violence; Sex Offenders; Sexual Abuse; Sexual Assault and Rape; Suicide; Teen Dating Violence; Truancy; Youth Development; and Youth With Disabilities.

Notes

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 4. Puzzanchera, C., Adams, B., Snyder, H., and Kang, W. "Easy Access to FBI Arrest Statistics 1994-2005." Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. 2007.
 5. National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center. Online location: <http://safeyouth.org/scripts/index.asp> accessed 12 February 2009
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 8. Smith, Fred. "A Prophetic Christian Education for Black Boys: Overcoming Violence." Black Theology. 1.2 (2003): 175-187.
 9. *Ibid.*, p. 177.
 10. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
 11. West, Cornel. Race Matters. New York, NY: Vintage Press, 1994. pp. 14-15.
 12. Smith, Fred. "A Prophetic Christian Education For Black Boys: Overcoming Violence." p. 185.
 13. "Hope." Twista (featuring Faith Evans)
 14. "I Can." Nas
 15. "Self Destruction." By The Stop the Violence All-Stars: KRS-One, Stetsasonic, Kool Moe Dee, MC Lyte, Just-Ice, Doug E. Fresh Heavy D, and Public Enemy. Self-Destruction. New York, NY: Jive Records, 1988.
 16. The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center

Youth violence is a significant problem that affects thousands of young people each day, and in turn, their families, schools, and communities.¹ Youth violence and crime affect a community's economic health, as well as individuals' physical and mental health and well-being. Homicide is the third leading cause of death for youth in the United States.² In 2016, more than 530,000 young people ages 10-24 were treated in emergency departments for injuries sustained from violence.³ Youth violence typically involves young people hurting other peers. It can take different forms. Examples in