



I will never bring a gun to school;



**I will never use a gun
to settle a personal problem
or dispute;**



**I will use my influence with
my friends to keep them from using
guns to settle disputes.**



**My individual choices and actions,
when multiplied by those of young
people throughout the country,
will make a difference.**

**Together,
by honoring this pledge,
we can
reverse the violence
and grow up in safety.**

Did You Know?

Every three hours and eighteen minutes, an American child or teen dies from a firearm. Between 1963 and 2012, firearm deaths among US children were three times greater than combat deaths among American soldiers during the same period.

Though most schools are safe places, it is also true that guns are easily accessible to people of all ages. School shootings, though rare, are frightening to young people. The Student Pledge empowers them to take an active stand against gun violence and raises awareness about things they can do to remain safe.

The Student Pledge is a non-political initiative that provides a vehicle for beginning the conversation with young people about gun violence and appropriate vs. inappropriate ways of solving personal problems and disputes. It offers a rich variety of curriculum suggestions, awareness-building activities, and student leadership opportunities.

By taking part in a national campaign that culminates with the signing of a common pledge on a common day, students can envision the power of one, multiplied.

You Can Make A Difference!



Student Pledge Against Gun Violence

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History of the Student Pledge Against Gun Violence

The Student Pledge Against Gun Violence began in 1996, supported by unanimous U.S. Senate Resolution and Presidential Proclamation, both calling for a Day of National Concern about Young People and Gun Violence and national distribution of the Student Pledge.

Participation in the Student Pledge sends an important message: that violence is neither inevitable nor an abstract force against which young people are powerless. Violence is, rather, the sum total of individual decisions, and reversing the violence will occur individual decision by individual decision.

This campaign affords the opportunity for linking networks both within and across communities, for complementing rather than replacing existing prevention efforts, and — perhaps most importantly — for honoring the role that young people themselves can play in helping to reverse violence.

Since 1996, more than ten million students nationwide have signed the Pledge.

How can you participate?

A sample of awareness-building activities that can build towards the Day of National Concern or be used throughout the year.

(see www.pledge.org for many other examples):

In Schools:

- **Gather statistics** about young people and gun violence and post them in the school's corridors.
- **Sponsor poster, poetry, and essay contests** about gun violence, with a different focus for each grade level.
- **Plan an all-school assembly** where speakers may include gunshot survivors, emergency room physicians, reporters who cover gun violence, or other community leaders.
- **Draw from the VOW Project's curriculum** suggestions, available at www.pledge.org. Read and discuss age-appropriate books such as Sherri Chessen's The Gorp's Gift for elementary-aged children, and Walter Dean Myers' Scorpions for older students.
- **Assign students to conduct group interviews** with people who deal with gun violence on a daily basis: an emergency-room physician, an ambulance driver, or a police officer. Ask each group to report back to the class.
- **Organize Pledge rallies and candlelight vigils** near the school to symbolize taking students' commitments out into the world.
- **Create public service announcements in media classes** promoting the Student Pledge and have a local television station run the best.



In Your Community:

- **Hold a youth summit on the Day of National Concern** and invite local officials, law enforcement, youth representatives, and parents to pool their best ideas for reducing youth gun violence. Invite participants to form an on-going task force.
- **Hold a community celebration** honoring students who have signed the Pledge.
- **Send local officials to schools** on the Day of National Concern to witness the signing of the Pledges.
- **Collect signed pledges** and have students take them to the family of a young person who was shot. Tell the family about the students' and community's pledge to work to see that other families will not suffer similar losses.
- **Ask a local radio station to host a show** about young people and gun violence. Get elected officials, young people, and popular role models to participate. For example, Chicago's B-96 radio station contributed an hour of commercial-free time for many years on the Day of National Concern.

