



Youth With A Passion For Service

"And some have compassion, making a difference"- Jude 1:22

**For Immediate Release:**

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## **Stop The Violence Awareness Campaign 2007**

### **Youth Challenge Each Montgomery Resident To Ask Can I Make A Difference To Help "Stop The Violence" in Montgomery**

In our country today, the greatest threat to the lives of youth is not disease or starvation or abandonment, but the terrible reality of violence. Although, studies suggest that youth violence has improved over the past decade, youth violence continues to be a widespread problem in city of Montgomery, the state Alabama as well as the United States.

Difference Makers youth members believe that knowing the extent of the problem can motivate youth to choose alternatives to violence. The group believes that violent prevention workshops and other resources, especially for teens, will provide them with the information they need to prevent or deal with difficult situations involving bullying, dating violence, gang and drug related, and other kinds of violence among young people.

During National and Global Youth Service Day 2006 Difference Makers Youth organization kicked off a "Stop The Violence" awareness campaign project. The group provided needed resource information for youth and adults to help them with making right choices and avoiding difficult situation. The group continually strives to unite Montgomery together as one to fight against Violence in the city.

The youth agree "that tackling violence is everyone's responsibility." Darryl Price, the organization's media relations director, states that "violence prevention is essential to the prevention of family and community violence. It is the job of the community, city officials, and law enforcement to send a clear message that violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated - there is no excuse for any type of abuse."

The group is appealing for the city of Montgomery to help with this awareness effort. By letting your actions challenge each and every person of Montgomery to ask can we make a difference. We will work

with the City of Montgomery, the Montgomery public school system, churches, community organizations, law enforcement, judicial system and the media to educate and train our youth and adults on Violence Prevention. It will take each Montgomerian to work to decrease violence in our city. We ask that you join Mayor Bobby Bright, local officials, Pastor Ed Nettles of Freewill Missionary Baptist and others as they take on the challenge of decreasing crime in our community.

Below is the organization's "7 Steps To A Violent Free Community" plan:

## **A NONVIOLENCE MOVEMENT TO RESTORE THE BREACH**

This movement is aim at progressively changing the culture of violence which seems to be the norm in our communities. The movement is a process designed to transform the lives of our youth and adults who are engage in a life of violence.

The goals of this movement will be achieved by following the steps listed below:

### **Seven (7) Steps To A Violent Free Productive City**

**Step 1:** Build a "Stop The Violence" dialogue between churches, community organizations, public and private schools, colleges, city officials, judicial system, law enforcements and media.

- **Those involved have to accept that there is a problem.**
- **Those involved have to know the extent of the problem.**
- **Those involved have to take responsibility and accountability.**
- **Those involved must have a passionate desire for change.**
- **Those involved have to first "become the change they want to see".**
- **Those involved must be compassionate.**
- **Those involved must support each other.**

**Step 2:** Begin planning strategy

**Step 3:** Ask the people to put down their weapons and other negative things in their life like abuse of drugs and alcohol.

**Step 4:** Provide those who are willing to change with community services that will give them life skills, job skills, and social skills. Educate them on good ethics and morals. Teach them about making right choices. (Every church and community center must open its doors to provide community services throughout the week.)

**Step 5:** We must work with youth on a daily basis. (College students, homemakers, retired workers and seniors will have to help; we must train those who have overcome their situations to give back to the community)

**Step 6:** Clean up the community of those who refuse to change. Break up the crack houses, report the drug dealers and those who illegal distribute/sale weapons no matter who they are, family or not, or their social status.

**Step 7:** Provide recovery programs for the addicts and prostitutes. Bring hope to the hopeless.

**These strategies and programs must be community initiated to be successful.**

### **Taking Action**

To address this issue we must work at two levels: **education and action**. Addressing one without the other will not be effective nor will it have a lasting effect.

#### **1. Education:**

Education should involve correcting misconceptions, incorrect and misconstrued beliefs, as well as learning how violence impacts the individual, family and community. The focus at this stage is recognizing the damage abuse causes and at correcting oneself.

Our first step should be in being very clear in the stance that violence in any form is unacceptable. This must be our first priority. **VIOLENCE MUST STOP! VIOLENCE IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.** This message should be loud and clear. To achieve this goal we need to have seminars and workshops. The ministers need to address the issue of violence during church services. Silence implies condoning abuse.

#### **2. Action:**

##### **a. Church Taking an Active Role In Violence Prevention**

The church must become street ministers. The church must take an active, visible and responsible role in addressing the issue of violence. It is a church and community issue. Those who are abused need the support of loving, caring, gentle and compassionate children of God; and the abuser needs to be shown how to respect their fellow man or loved ones. Being around caring men and women starts the process of healing.

##### **b. Volunteers & Training Programs**

We need to implement these plans, and need the help of the church and community to be actively involved. The nature of this issue is such that we need volunteers, who are willing to go through a training program, can be available consistently and for fairly large amounts of time. This process of restoration will not happen in a day.

##### **c. Rehabilitating the Abuser**

Abusive men and women need to be rehabilitated. They need to learn how to deal with their anger in appropriate and acceptable ways. Generally this is a resistive and difficult group to treat and the success rate is low, since they can and many times get away with abuse they do not have the incentive to change their ways. Only under pressure from the community, constant monitoring and intense treatment is there any possibility of rehabilitation.

##### **d. Hotline and Shelter**

We need to have an active 24-hour hotline service, with trained staff that can guide the abused women and children in the steps needed to be taken to protect the woman or the child. Know for a fact that by the time the victim is calling for help, she or he has tried all other measures, is in danger and immediate action is needed. In most situations this means she or he needs to be removed from the situation.

Therefore, it is extremely important that we work with local shelters for abused women and children in the process of developing a safe-family system to provide protection to the women and children.

**e. Being Accountable**

If WE (the church) minimize, disregard and ignore the abuse occurring in our community, if we do not help the victim and the abuser, then we are condoning abuse, we are supporting abuse, and we will be held accountable for our passivity and lack of action

**f. Make a commitment**

If you are willing to make this commitment to restore our community, please join us today. Contact Difference Makers at 334-309-6014. You can also complete the form below and mail the form to: P.O. Box 9131, Montgomery, AL 36108.

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**I would like to join Difference Makers & other concerned citizens of Montgomery in the Nonviolence Movement to Restore the Breach**

**Contact information:**

<b>Name:</b>
<b>Organization:</b>
<b>Address:</b>
<b>Phone:</b>
<b>Email:</b>

*Difference Makers is a youth led faith based organization that focuses on youth leadership and community service learning projects. All projects and programs are developed and initiated by youth. The group consists of youth from the ages of 11 to 17 years old.*

*To find out more information about Difference Makers email us at [arprice@bellsouth.net](mailto:arprice@bellsouth.net) or write us at Difference Makers, P.O. Box 9131, Montgomery, AL 36108. Check out the organization's website at [www.neighborhoodlink.com/org/differencemakers](http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/org/differencemakers).*