I remember the first time I witnessed youth violence. It was very late at night 3AM from what I recall. I heard sirens and jolted up in bed. I reassured myself the police cars were just going to pass by but when I heard the sirens again getting louder I got out of bed tiredly and crossed the hallway to my parents’ room. Once there I could see my mother at the window the red and blue lights flashing on her face. She looked as confused as I felt. I walked across the dimly lit room and stood at my mother’s side. “Mom what on earth is going on?” I ask as I rub my half closed sleepy eyes.

“Just watch.” She replied softly. I glance out the window to see the police cars, officers, and neighbors standing on the sidewalks. In the dark night I could make out two police officers running into one of the houses across from my house. Soon the officers came out holding a young man in handcuffs. I couldn’t see his face because it was so dark out and the distance between us. I finally got a good glance at him when he was pushed into the back of a cop car. He was one of the many people I saw around the neighborhood. I even said “hi” to him on more than one occasion. I thought he was a really nice person he was always helpful and over all had the nice guy personality. But I guess that was just a cover, or maybe there was a misunderstanding. As the cop cars left one by one I said goodnight to my mom and went to bed. The next day I could remember still wondering what he could have done to get arrested. It could have been an accident, or he was forced into doing whatever he did. Perhaps he was in a gang and someone told on him and just maybe he was doing drugs. All these ideas were jumbled up in my head. It is normal now days to be walking down the street and see someone getting arrested or a bunch of
people in corners acting all threatening and making people feel unsafe. It surprises me how a majority of society thinks this is expectable. The kids in school think it's "cool" and it gives you "street cred". Everybody just jokes about it and think it's nothing big until there are victims. But not all people are like that there are many people who realize what youth violence is doing to our nation and they are building organizations to help reduce youth violence. I can't build organizations nor can I have laws passed restricting violent behavior. What I can do is not be a part of youth violence. It takes one person to start a chain reaction. It takes one person to say enough! I am going to be that person. I'm going to do whatever I can to steer my friends, family, and others around me away from youth violence and violence in general. I can also talk to the teachers and principal at my school to prevent youth violence in my school and maybe even other schools. This is what I can do to help reduce youth violence but you could possibly do something different. It all counts if you are civilly fighting against youth violence and violence in general. Youth violence needs to come to an end and I plan on doing the best I can to help with this mission to make our communities a safer and happier place to live for everyone.