Violence is a daily occurrence that affects millions of people in a multitude of ways. It is a growing issue in this world that is only propelled by new social standards and constant advancements. Although I have not personally witnessed an act of violence being committed, I see the daily repercussions and gargantuan effect it can have on both families and individuals via mass media outlets, and even as a bystander, it is truly devastating. Youth violence cannot be easily prevented, but it is such an execrable issue that we must expend all power possible to end it and ensure the safety of our nation’s citizens. Thus, youth violence plays a pivotal role in society today.

Despite not having a monumental impact on my immediate personal life, violence is nonetheless an issue that greatly concerns me. My heart shatters at the mere thought of people being beaten or murdered by members of their own species – and even more horrifying is the indifference displayed after the crime is committed. Not only does this promote an unsafe environment and atrocious behavior, but it also makes me feel unsafe, as if at any moment I might be attacked or subject to witnessing a crime. For example, a mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut recently took place. To see helpless children and a ruthless murderer who displayed total insouciance in killing over twenty seven individuals is terrifying; it makes me question what society has become, and what direction we are headed in. How many more have to die before violence is eradicated? How much more can parents tolerate, knowing that at any time the greeting murmured over the breakfast table that morning would be the last? Even as a student myself, I am old enough to understand the imposing threat of violence that looms before us. Unless we take a stand against violence, these habits will never be subjugated. Certainly, I don’t want anyone to feel unsafe under any circumstance; not only is school supposed to be a positive learning environment to learn in, but also America, the place where so many desire to live in, should be civilized and live up to the standards it is attributed to. Therefore, we must all aim to obliterate this plague.

The causes of youth violence are plentiful. However, a poor upbringing is a major contributor to this crime. A child who grows up in an impecunious community without any opportunities to thrive would understandably have low self-esteem and feel unloved, as usually in such an environment parents don’t have the time or empathy to really get involved in their children’s lives. Furthermore, peer pressure is another factor that might induce a feeling within kids to commit crimes. As teens, we all feel pressured to fit in and want friends, and thus many feel the need to conscientiously follow current trends. This includes but is not limited to willingly doing drugs, drinking alcohol, and committing theft. The possibilities are endless; in short, the yearning to have friends can far outweigh a child’s moral scale and in turn destroy his/her sense of right and wrong. Usually, the common “initiation” into violence occurs when one is about to be accepted into a certain group. Mere teens are expected to physically abuse a public transportation worker or threaten a loved one with a gun; if such violent behavior is being displayed at this age, the outlook for the future is entirely bleak. Moreover, depression and isolation from
society can also be a major cause of youth violence. Briefly, this usually sets the background for a willing teen subject to peer pressure – now that the children understand what it’s like to be in a state of perpetual sadness, they are all too ready to succumb to any steps necessary to gain friends. In addition, becoming detached from society also changes one’s perspective on life; without anything worth valuing, one feels as if there is nothing worth living for.

Because youth violence is rapidly becoming a much more prevalent issue in this day and age, society as a whole must do all that is possible to put an end to it before it becomes the new norm. Personally, I have an advantage, as I am around the same age as kids who have just adopted committing acts of violence as their new hobby. Thus, as a peer, I believe that my words will carry a greater impact than that of an adult’s. In an effort to stop this egregious affliction, I can speak with members of my community that are struggling to change their ways and do my best to persuade them that a brighter future is in store. Furthermore, I can encourage my local mayor or state representative to build more family centers. Thus, children who do not have a parent readily available to help them can complete homework with proper aid from adults and seek advice if needed. From personal experiences, I know that many of my peers enjoy going to the local Boys and Girls Club, which is located about five minutes away from my school. It is a more relaxed environment than the daily pressures presented in a rigid setting, but similar in the fact that one is surrounded by his/her classmates. Therefore, a comfortable yet productive space is produced. In addition, multiple sports teams and classes should be readily available to kids, as this is an alternate way for kids to gain friends. Not only will this provide another way to spend time, but it will also allow teens to make genuine companions.

Youth violence is an issue that we can no longer take lightly. It is truly alarming to see our generation’s youth destroy itself in such a terrifying way; countless relationships, friendships, and families have all suffered from the consequences of violence. It has greatly impacted my life and I will take all the necessary steps to ensure that it doesn’t destroy any more promising futures and lives.