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Youth-Led Conference Empowers Students to Put a Stop to Violence in Schools Nationwide

The National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere Hosts 17th Annual Summit and National Youth Violence Prevention Week Activities

Raleigh, North Carolina – Feb. 23, 2017 – The [National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere](#), a nonprofit dedicated to decreasing the potential for violence in our schools and communities, will work to empower students from across the country to create safer schools at its youth-led SAVE Summit April 1. The annual conference and workshop, which will be held in Raleigh, leads into National Youth Violence Prevention Week April 3 to 7. SAVE is a founding partner of the week-long initiative and works alongside many other nonprofit sponsors to encourage students, teachers, administrators and other community leaders to use effective methods to prevent violence in schools.

According to [StopBullying.gov](#), 70 percent of students report witnessing bullying at school, however, only less than one-third of students who are bullied actually notify an adult. Now more than ever, it is imperative our youth are engaged in conversations on how to react to violent situations, educated on tactics to prevent them before they start and encouraged to do both. SAVE works to do just that by equipping students with conflict management skills through peer-to-peer mentoring, which empowers them to help create safer environments.

“The National SAVE Summit gives student and community leaders from across the nation the chance to come together to discuss effective tactics in preventing violence and fostering safer school environments,” said Carleen Wray, executive director of SAVE. “The impactful peer-led presentations and workshops throughout the day allow youth to learn from each other’s different perspectives, and also arms them with strategies to combat every day youth safety issues such as bullying, dating violence, substance abuse and teen safe driving.”

A Mother Theresa quote inspired the 2017 Summit theme: “Peace begins with a smile.” Attendees will learn beneficial tactics to inspire peace, such as how to proactively promote good and spread positivity, rather than only focusing on the bad once it happened. The nonprofit founders, featured speakers and youth leaders will train participants on ways to incorporate kindness and implement other motivating strategies to create peaceful environments in their schools and communities. This event is a time for youth voices to be heard and encouraged by teachers, counselors, administrators, law enforcement, parents and more who attend the Summit.

Since its inception in 1989, SAVE has grown from one school group to more than 2,100 chapters located in seven countries and 48 states. The organization mentors and provides resources, confidence and support to empower student leadership to help prevent school shootings, eliminate bullying and make their schools and communities safer for everyone.

The SAVE Summit leads into National Youth Violence Prevention Week, which is a week-long campaign elementary, middle and high schools, colleges and community organizations across the country will

participate in to raise awareness and prevent youth violence. Each day of the week presents specific challenges from partnering sponsors, including:

- **Monday, April 3: Promote Respect and Tolerance** day is hosted by [Teaching Tolerance](#), an organization dedicated to reducing prejudice and improving intergroup relations among children. Schools can hold a respect and tolerance essay contest and mix it up at lunch by encouraging students to sit with someone new.
- **Tuesday, April 4: Manage Your Anger, Don't Let It Manage You** day is hosted by [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), which brings together pediatricians committed to the health of all children. Students are challenged to perform role plays or skits to show positive tactics in dealing with tough situations.
- **Wednesday, April 5: Resolve Conflicts Peacefully** day is hosted by [GLSEN](#), a group that works to make sure all students are treated equally regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Schools are encouraged to establish a peer mediation program where students can learn how to lead others to identify triggers, listen actively and talk differences out.
- **Thursday, April 6: Support Safety** day is hosted by [STRYVE Action Council](#), which works to end youth violence in families, schools and communities through education and prevention strategies. Schools will host safety fairs with exhibits and activities in collaboration with first responders, medical agencies, community groups and local health departments.
- **Friday, April 7: Unite in Action** day is hosted by [Youth Service America](#), an organization that supports engaging youth in volunteer opportunities to impact communities. Schools are challenged to encourage peace through art by painting a mural over graffiti or hosting a sidewalk art event.

For more information on the SAVE Summit, visit www.nationalsave.org/summit. For more information on National Youth Violence Prevention Week, visit www.nationalsave.org/NYVPW.

About the National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere:

SAVE started at West Charlotte High School in Charlotte, North Carolina in 1989 following the tragic death of a student who was trying to break up a fight at an off-campus party. Students met first to console each other, then as an organization to promote youth safety and to work together to prevent future incidents from occurring. SAVE provides education about the effects and consequences of violence and helps provide safe activities for students, parents and communities. For more information on SAVE or starting a SAVE chapter, visit www.nationalsave.org, or contact SAVE at (866) 343-SAVE to receive free startup materials and guidance.

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