

National Youth Violence Prevention Week Aims to End Youth Violence in Tennessee

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PHOTO: As National Youth Violence Prevention Week continues, research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates youth violence is the second-leading cause of death for youth ages 10 to 24 in Tennessee, and around the nation. Photo credit: Mconnors/Morguefile.

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. - As [National Youth Violence Prevention Week](#) continues, health and education leaders in Tennessee say families, schools and communities each play a role in preventing violence before it occurs.

According to the CDC, youth violence is the second-leading cause of death for people ages 10 to 24. Carleen Wray, executive director of [Students Against Violence Everywhere](#), says children should be taught respect, anger management and effective conflict resolution starting at an early age.

"So many times they are desensitized to the violence that's happening because they've grown up with it," says Wray. "Whether through the media and TV, music or violence in their own homes, they need some help and guidance on what is appropriate behavior and what's not appropriate behavior."

Wray says schools, churches, law enforcement, medical providers and social service programs can be a part of the solution [by creating a safe community](#).

At the policy level, she says strategies that reduce youth violence include ensuring children have access to high-quality education and recreation programs, equitable access to mental health services and common-sense approaches to gun violence prevention.

Wray says young people learn what they see, so it's important for parents, educators and other adults to be good role models. And she says the more trusted adults a child has in his or her life setting high expectations and showing support, the better the child will do.

"Violence doesn't have to happen, it can be prevented," says Wray. "But it takes all of us working together to create a safer community and safer schools for our youth to attend."

All this week, schools and organizations around the Volunteer State are holding events to mark National Youth Violence Prevention Week.