

Teens Advocating a Global Vision

1486 Dorchester Ave.
Dorchester, MA 02124

Teens Advocating a Global Vision (TAGV; aka Teens Against Gang Violence) is a volunteer, youth led community-based program located in Dorchester, Massachusetts. It provides peer leadership development, peace and justice educational services to youth, families and youth service providers. Our mission is to promote the vision of youth as leaders in the elimination of violence in all its forms, such as racism, guns, sexism, crime, homophobia, drugs and fighting, thereby developing our neighborhoods into healthier communities that strive for peace and justice. We work towards this goal by providing youth leaders with culturally appropriate knowledge, skills, tools and relationships so they can educate others about non-violence through peace and justice.

The program is comprised of youth ages 11 to 20 and their families from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, who primarily reside in the urban neighborhoods of Boston. The majority of these youth live in single parent households and are subject to the pressures of urban environments such as gang violence, racism, drugs, guns, crime, and poor economic conditions. Children Against Gang Violence (CAGV), the siblings of TAGV, aged 8-12, and Parents Against Gang Violence (PAGV), the parents of TAGV and CAGV were established in 1994 as a means of providing support for the whole family. All three groups receive training as trainers and educators.

Dr. Ulric Johnson, then Director of Boston's Department of Health and Hospital Gang/Drug Prevention Program founded TAGV in 1990. Through his local and national travel and presentations on gang/drug violence prevention, and his work as a diversity trainer and educator, Dr. Johnson saw the need to start a youth-based program built on a strong ideology that encompasses the positive aspects of gang and group membership while addressing four myths he continues to encounter:

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| MYTH 1: | Gang violence is only an issue for inner city youth of color. |
| MYTH 2: | Any youth of color who wears a black hooded sweatshirt is automatically a member of a violent gang. |
| MYTH 3: | Youth of color are the problem and do not want to be part of the solution. |
| MYTH 4: | Parents of inner city youth do not care enough about their children. |

**We pledge to
Reject hate and embrace love
Serve and care for others
And make a difference with our lives.**

This pledge was adapted from the "Youth Against Violence Pledge" of the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Social Change in Atlanta, Georgia and the "Count on Me Pledge" of the Fair Housing Committee of Weymouth, MA, by Patti DeRosa of Cross-Cultural Consultation in Randolph, MA, the Cambridge Youth Peace and Justice Corps, and TAGV, Boston, MA, 1994.

For more information: Dr. Ulric Johnson
(617)242-3361
ujohnson@spfldcol.edu