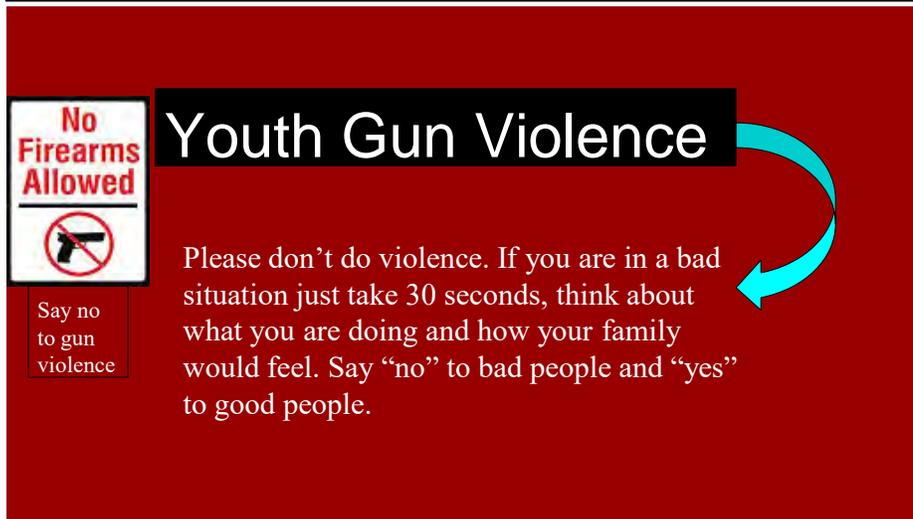


# WARING HEALTHY TIMES

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 1

WINTER 2021



The graphic features a red background. On the left, there is a white box with a red border containing the text "No Firearms Allowed" and a red circle with a slash over a black handgun icon. Below this box is a smaller white box with the text "Say no to gun violence". To the right of these boxes is a black banner with the text "Youth Gun Violence" in white. Below the banner is a paragraph of text: "Please don't do violence. If you are in a bad situation just take 30 seconds, think about what you are doing and how your family would feel. Say 'no' to bad people and 'yes' to good people." A blue curved arrow points from the banner towards the text.

Graphic by Mya Tyler

## No one wins Principal says to steer clear of violence

Gun violence harms families because it takes away family members and leaves them in despair and sadness, said Waring Principal Ms. April Brown.

"It cheats daughters and sons out of having fathers and mothers, it cheats mothers and fathers out of raising and caring for their sons and daughters," said Ms. Brown in a recent interview with the *Healthy Times*. "It's a no-win situation."

She said gun violence often occurs in places where there are fewer opportunities for people.

"Youth are involved with gun violence and dangerous situations because their options are limited," she said. "They may not have the skills to function as productive citizens. They may feel as though they can get more money or wealth faster by participating in dangerous situations, inclusive of selling drugs, or robberies. So a lot of it has to do with instant gratification."

Ms. Brown said she also believes that there has been an increase in gun violence because of the pandemic. "I think in particular we saw a spike in gun violence

## Speaking up against guns

In late October 2020, Philadelphia police shot a 27-year-old African American man who was having a mental health crisis in West Philadelphia.

According to news reports, Walter Wallace Jr. was shot in front of his mother who was yelling and crying for the police to leave him alone. But he was not the only Black person who has died in the past year in encounters with the police.



CBS News reported in September that 164 Black people in the United States had been killed by police in the first eight months of 2020. The reporting was based on data from the *Washington Post* and the Mapping Police Violence Organization.



According to the City of Philadelphia, there were a total of 1,745 nonfatal and 373 fatal victims of gun violence in the city as of early December. Of the fatal shootings, 22 were children, according to the City Controller's report.

(See **Stand up** on Page 2)

(See **Education** on Page 2)

# Education can help reduce violence

*(Continued from Page 1)*

because people were at home and not engaged in productive activities,” she said.

**Violence is a ‘no-win situation,’ says Ms. Brown**

As of January 1, Philadelphia police reported that 2,240 people were shot in the past year, according to a report in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

*Philadelphia Inquirer*.

“Any type of shooting is a concern right now and I absolutely think that our Waring family is affected by gun violence,” said Ms. Brown.

Ms. Brown said she believes the police can help reduce gun violence. She said they need to have dif-

ferent types of training. She said that includes “includes de-escalation training bias and anti-racist training as well as a foundation in mental health training.”

Ms. Brown said that to reduce gun violence people need to focus on four areas:

1. Adequate education
2. Relevant extracurricular activities
3. Mental health
4. Funding for all of the above

She also said that schools play a role in “creating an environment where students are able to thrive academically, behaviorally, and socially. I think we as teachers are willing to understand students, and be flexible enough to meet students where they are.”

—By Aritra Kundu, Mya Tyler & Healthy Times staff

# Stand up against violence!

*(Continued from Page 1)*

This is important to know because you will never know when your child, brother, sister, dad, or mom could be the next victim of gun violence.

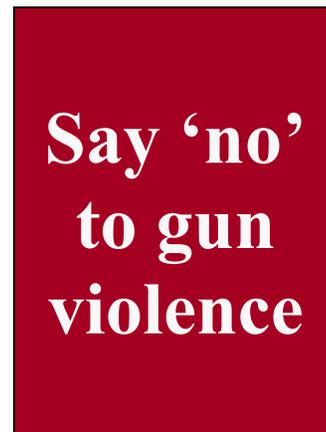
There are so many broken homes because of these deaths. There are many kids and teens who are hurt and have something to say about this situation. We think that kids and teens should be able to speak to federal, state, and local governments about gun violence and say what they think about what is happening in our country.

We invited fifth through eighth grade students at Waring Elementary School to share their thoughts. You can view more about their thoughts on the school’s Dojo.

We feel as though people never ask a child how they are feeling about gun violence. We believe that children should have a say in this because all of this violence is slowly affecting our future. If we can’t solve this problem now, then when are we going to? Kids are our hope for a new and better future. So if we don’t speak up, who will?

Although gun violence is happening in Philadelphia and nationwide, many people manage to forget why African Americans are still fighting for their rights and why we are angry.

History is full of examples of injustices. For example, African Americans managed to build a well-off community in Tulsa, Oklahoma, known as Black Wall



Street. In 1921, the community was burned to ashes during racial violence by people who were resentful about Black citizens’ success.

I believe that no matter what happens we are always going to be fighters. All citizens of the United States no matter what race or color need to stick together and fight against gun violence, including violence that occurs as a result of interaction with the police.

—By Mya Tyler  
and edited by Aritra Kundu

## Answers to Word Scramble

1. stand up
2. violence
3. post
4. speak up
5. education
6. youth
7. pandemic
8. stress
9. reflection
10. friends

# Reflections on a challenging year

My life is different from a year ago because of the pandemic. The pandemic has a big impact on my life because I no longer go to school and I'm stuck at home all day. Normally on a weekend my family and I would go out and just go for a walk but now we can't do that because we have to social distance and wear masks. I lost my grandmother on my dad's side during COVID and I have been very sad. I also had to deal with an extra kid in my house because her mom has to work.

A year ago I was at school with my friends playing around and traveling during holiday breaks and on nice summer days. My grandmother and I would go on nice long bike rides and we would stop at Whole Foods to get lunch. On nice hot summer days me, my mom, my dad, and my little brother would go to the beach and play in the sand and go in the water.

—By Mya Tyler

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I never understood how much social interaction I experienced at school until the end of the first week of my self quarantine. I had been trapped in my house with my family for about five days at that point, when my reading and Composition class had a Zoom conference. I had done them for other classes so I wasn't exactly excited for the opportunity. It was just another Zoom lecture.



Illustration by E'vah Mitchell-Ross for the *Healthy Times*

As it turned out, it wasn't a lecture, it was a conversation. It was a discussion about our last current events assignment that I didn't know I desperately needed. The conversation was explosive. Differing opinions flew left and right, people brought their cats to join in the fun, family members popped in and out of the frames, and the controlled chaos felt incredible. I relished in the opportunity to argue and challenge their opinions. I didn't even realize how isolated I was feeling until I was able to talk to them in a creative and intellectual setting once again.—By Siani Wright

## Start thinking about high school now!

Getting into the right high school involves hard work. And you should start preparing in fourth grade or even earlier, Ms. Manness, Waring school counselor, recently told the *Healthy Times* staff.

"I don't think it's ever too early to think about it," she said. "Everything you do has an impact on the high school you get into."

The guidance counselor helps eighth graders find the right high school for them. The right high school depends on the student's academic records, personality, interests, and skills, Ms. Manness said.

She said any high school could set students on a path to be successful in life. "The amount of work you put into it will determine how" successful you will be, she said.

When she helps students apply for high schools, she said she reviews with them possibilities based on

their grades and test scores. Ms. Manness also suggests what information students should include in their high school application essays.

Some of the benefits of attending a high school that fits your interests can include opportunities such as advanced placement classes, Ms. Manness said. Advanced placement classes are classes you can take in high school that can help you earn college credits.

Ms. Manness said it's important to find an environment where you feel comfortable and challenged.

She said being nervous about your high school selection is common. Ms. Manness said she welcomes students to schedule a time to talk with her. Together, she said, she and the student can create a plan to reduce the stress. —By Aritra Kundu,

Mya Tyler, and *Healthy Times* staff

# Check out your smarts!

*Unscramble these words found in this issue (Answers on Page 2)*

TDSNAPU (two words)	opposite of sit down
LICEVELENO	when someone harms someone else
OTSP	put an article or picture on social media
PUEASKP (two words)	make your feelings known
CUNEDTAOI	learning
OTUYH	time of life when one is young
ADENMICIP	disease over the whole world
TSSRES	what you can feel when you are frustrated
LTNERFCEOI	what you see when you look into the mirror
ENSFID	your pals or buddies

## Stress is normal during pandemic

Ms. Manness, Waring's school counselor, said learning virtually is difficult for everyone.

"Everyone's feeling a little worried, a little anxious," Ms. Manness said.

A pandemic is "something that no one in our lifetime has dealt with so I think there is a lot of stress."

She said the challenges of learning virtually include missing your friends and feeling isolated.

If you miss your friends try to "stay in close contact with people as much as you can," she said. "Maybe go to the park and hang out with each other."

In these times, it is a struggle to learn and do activities which can make you feel alone, Ms. Manness said.

"If you're feeling isolated and disconnected, you can come to me," she said. "It can be lonely staying inside all the time."

She said one good resource is the Philly HopeLine if you need to talk with someone about your feelings such as sadness, anxiety or depression. The phone number is (1)-833-745-4673- Hours: Monday-Friday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Ms. Manness also has a Google form available on her Google classroom if you want to talk to her.

—By Aritra Kundu

### The Healthy Times wants to hear from you!

We'd love to consider your articles or illustrations for publication in the *Healthy Times* and in the 2021 book created by children in the *Healthy NewsWorks* network of schools. Waring belongs to the network!

Here are two ideas to write about!

1. Describe something you have learned or been able to do that you might not have discovered without the pandemic.

2. What have you missed the most during the pandemic? Have you found something to replace it?

*Waring Healthy Times*

A publication of Laura W. Waring School in the School District of Philadelphia. Eighth grade student staff members include Aritra Kundu, Marcus Lacey, Mya Tyler, and Siani Wright. The *Healthy Times's* faculty advisor is Ms. Mitchell. The school principal is Ms. Brown.

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