TAKE ACTION
Here are a few ideas of things you can do to improve your school and neighborhood.

- Teach younger kids anti-violence or anti-drug strategies.
- Put on art shows or performances with prevention themes.
- Set up a group for teens to share problems and solutions.
- Join a group that builds and renovates houses for low-income or homeless families.
- Do peer counseling.
- Start a teen court program in your school.
- Film anti-crime commercials and deliver them to your local television station.
- Clean up and repair a playground or build a new one in an area that lacks one.
- Be a tutor or mentor to a younger person.
- Develop a “street smarts” section for your school’s Web site.
- Volunteer at a homeless shelter, preschool, or senior center.
- Put on drug- and alcohol-free events to celebrate holidays or other special events.
There are hundreds of problems teens can solve to make their school, neighborhood, and community safer. Teens have talents and skills that can be put to use. If you're an active listener or a problem solver you can help settle arguments. You just need to fit your skill to a problem you want to solve.

**STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

1. **Decide what your project is going to be.** List the problems that you and your group believe you can change in your neighborhood or school. For example, are there too many fights in your school? Or can you find a neighborhood at which you can change the way police interact with kids?

2. **Plan what you're going to do and how you're going to do it.** Decide who's going to do what and set deadlines for completing each step. Split the work evenly so no one will get burned out. Remember to plan how you'll be able to tell if your project was successful. Are there fewer fights at school? Has the school remained free of graffiti?

3. **Get what you need.** Basically, you need people to do the work, materials (remember to include things like transportation, meeting space, food, photocopies), money, and support from parents, the school, community organizations, or places of worship to provide resources. The support of adults, like school counselors, business owners, and local businesses, is important. Include things like transportation, meeting space, food, photocopies, and money when you're planning your project.

4. **Check your progress.** Once your project is underway, check your progress. You want to be able to see if what you are doing is working. Ask people what they think—do they feel safer with less arguing in your school? Have you found a way to decrease fights?

5. **Tell people about your success.** And when you've got things moving, share your success in your school or local newspaper. Then celebrate and thank everyone involved.

- Are you tired of walking by playgrounds that are filled with trash and broken equipment? You know kids won't play there because it's such a mess. There is something you can do. You can make a difference by cleaning up.
- In Jefferson City, Missouri, teenagers audition to be in the cast of the Safety Kids program. They get to travel to other schools to make presentations about drugs and alcohol.
- In Rolla, Missouri, you can find a way to get involved in the community. Teens have learned how to make their school, neighborhood, and community safer. Teens have learned how to make their school, neighborhood, and community safer.