

# INCREASE THE PEACE

## AUMENTANDO LA PAZ

Volume 1, Number 1  
Summer 1996 ■ Donations

# DON'T GIVE UP ON US!



Nane Alejandre, Director and a Youth Organizer of Barrios Unidos.

PHOTO/ELLA SENERES

*By Inene Correa, Youth Struggling for Survival*

We know that at times it is hard being a parent and that it is a struggle. Everyday there are a lot of issues that are being confronted by the youth and many of your very own sons/daughters feel that parents are giving up too easily. We feel that parents have no hope for us.

But there is!

You must not give up on the youth because that's the only hope we've got. Your sons and daughters are the coming generation and we're the only thing you have to try to make positive changes in this world. We must come together and form bonds to let the youth know that our parents really care for us.

Parents have to be open-minded and realize that their children are struggling too! We, as one, have to come together and face these issues slowly but surely. Hopefully parents reading this newsletter can have a better understanding of how their children feel towards our society-based problems, and to know that we really care about these situations.

Through this, we can finally fill in the gap that is missing with loss of communication between parents and children.

Remember — Don't give up! We are the future.

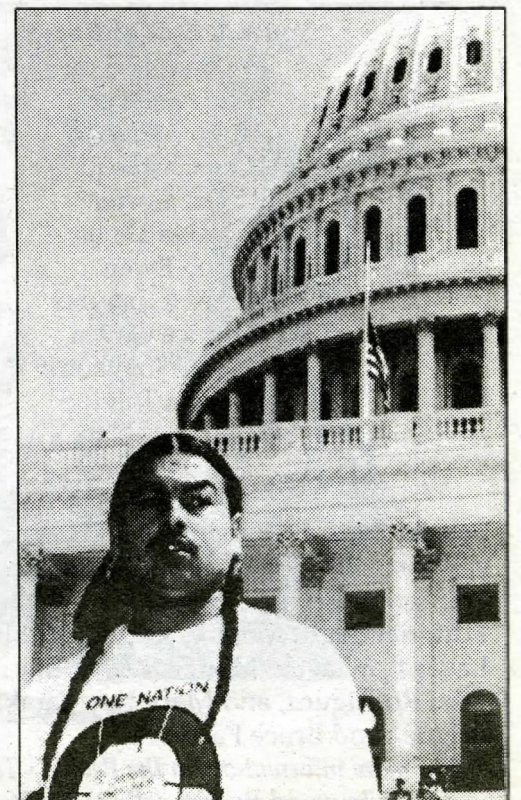


PHOTO/ELLA SENERES

Participantes  
en las  
diferentes  
conferencias  
por la paz.



The faces of  
youth at various  
peace summits.



PHOTO/ELLA SENERES

## ¡No nos abandonen!

*Por Inene Correa*

Sabemos que a veces es duro ser padre/madre de familia y que es una lucha. Todos los días hay muchos asuntos que la juventud enfrenta. Muchos de sus hijos/hijas sienten que los padres de familia nos están abandonando demasiado fácil. Sentimos que no tienen esperanza para nosotros.

¡Pero sí la hay! No deben de abandonarnos, porque esa es la única esperanza que tenemos. Sus hijos e hijas son la generación futura y somos la única cosa que tienen para hacer cambios positivos en este mundo. Tenemos que unirnos y formar vínculos para dejar que la juventud sepa que nuestros padres y madres de veras nos quieren.

Los padres/madres de familia tienen que tener la mente y el corazón abierto y realizar que sus hijos están luchando también. Nosotros como ustedes debemos que unirnos despacio pero seguramente. Esperamos que los padres de familia al leer este boletín puedan tener un mejor entendimiento de como sus hijos/hijas se sienten hacia nuestros problemas generados por esta sociedad, y saber que nosotros verdaderamente estamos interesados acerca de éstas situaciones.

Esperamos que por medio de esta carta podamos llenar el vacío por la falta de comunicación que hay entre los padres/madres y los hijos e hijas. ¡Recuerden no nos abandonen! Somos el futuro.



# Young people possess the greatest social power for change in America

## Author, Luis Rodriguez speaks out for youth

Young people possess the greatest social power for change in America. They can, if properly prepared and guided, point us to a future of true equity, justice and peace.

The youth in Chicago with the help of the community through the Increase the Peace Network are flowering into empowered and active community leaders.

Consisting of a dozen agencies and organizations, the Increase the Peace Network is a voluntary instrument for urban peace. In almost two years of our existence, we have shared resources, ideas, and energies to carry out innovative collaborative projects.

Parents, activists, churches and young people are involved. We are connected to peace movements across the country such as Barrios Unidos. The young people we work with include gang members and non-gang members, drop-outs as well as college students. They are preparing themselves with knowledge of the vast

economic, political, social, and cultural forces that are shaping their lives.

They are on a spiritual quest that the community — through organizations such as the Increase the Peace Network — must attend to. They are also learning organizational and technical skills, including video production, computers, organizational strategies, and language expression. And they are reaching back to indigenous traditions from which they've been uprooted.

These youth are aiming to become consciously active in transforming the violence, injustices and intolerance surrounding them. Here in these pages, the young people speak for themselves. We know that around the country there are currents for change coming together into a mighty torrent against the increasing madness. These young people armed with vision, with political and spiritual clarity are ready to meet the challenge.

*Luis Rodriguez*



PHOTO/ELLA SENERES

Luis Rodriguez

***The young people we work with include gang members and non-gang members, drop-outs as well as college students. They are preparing themselves with knowledge of the vast economic, political, social, and cultural forces that are shaping their lives.***

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For more information on the People's Tribune and Tribuno del Pueblo, call (312) 486-3551.

#### Ordering Information for Increase the Peace:

- Increase the Peace Newsletter
- National Peace Summit Video

Increase the Peace  
c/o Youth Struggling for Survival  
P.O. Box 477446  
Chicago, IL 60647

Or call (312) 409-6696 and leave your name and phone number

Donations will be negotiated when orders are placed



## La juventud posee el más gran poder social para hacer cambios en América

***Autór Luis Rodriguez habla sobre la juventud***

La juventud posee el más gran poder social para hacer cambios en América. Si están bien preparados, pueden dirigirnos a un futuro de igualdad, justicia, y paz. En Chicago, los jóvenes con la ayuda de la comunidad traves The Increase The Peace Network, están floreciendo en hacerse un grupo de líderes muy poderosos y dedicados a la comunidad. Ese grupo consiste de, por lo menos 12 agencias y otro individuos. The Increase The Peace Network es un instrumento voluntario para la paz. Hace 2 años que hemos compartidos recursos, ideas, y enegiás para llevar a cabo algunos proyectos inovadores y colaborativos.

Padres, activistas, iglesias, y la gente joven están participando. También estamos atados a otros movimiento de paz que existen por otras partes del país tal como los grupos Barrios Unidos, entre otros. Los grupos de jóvenes con quien estamos trabajando incluyen los pandilleros, juventud que se hán salido de la escuela, y tambien estudiantes de colegio. Van preparándose con el conocimiento de las esfuerzas económicas, políticas, sociales, culturales, y psicológicas que están formando sus vidas.

Están en una búsqueda espiritual con que The Increase The Peace Network se ocupa.

*Luis Rodriguez*



# MOSAIC MESSAGES

Stop ... Look ... Listen

I once heard a 9 yr. old say " I WANNA STOP KILLINGS." He was from, what some call, the hood or should I say our community. Doesn't this tell us something?

The want to make changes in our environment has and always will exist.

But what about taking action to make these changes?

We can do simple things like reaching out a hand, setting examples, willing to mentor & being a peer to those in need?

What's so hard with giving a hug, a smile, or just listening?

It may seem impossible or far away, but it's really not that hard.

We can start in our own community, with an organization, a neighbor, a brother or sister.

Everyboby has ideas, dreams, and necessities.

But are these ideas put to use?

Are dreams turned into goals we can accomplish?

Are the necessities fulfilled?

The answer is up to us.

We have the opinion to stay down or get back up after we fall.

"You won't succeed until you try,"

isn't that how it's suppose to be?

As our own leaders we must try not to fall again.

To belief enough is to make time to invest in something or someonee today to make a better tomorrow for her, him, you, me.

"IT CAN BE DONE! SI SE PUEDE!"

— Claudia Balderas (OLAS)  
April 1996

## HOMEBOY

On the night of July 26 my homeboy was chilling at 19 street when someone had shot him. The bullet went through his head. He didn't survive, so now our homeboy is dead.

His family and friends miss him a lot, but there is nothing that we can do about it now. Not even out of high school and he is already visiting the pearly gates. I remember his baby face in the coffin, stiff and pale, dreams drained.

A tear falls down my eye "Please come back"

"I don't want to see you in a coffin."

"I don't want to see you die."

It hurts to see a brother all because he entered the wrong side. What do I do now except cry, maybe he's better where he's gone now. I just sit here helpless with all this hate inside of me, so I start to cry and pray in vain that it won't happen again. You don't realize what a good thing you had until you lose someone you love by drugs, alcohol, or gangs.

— A Crazy Ruca  
(Latino Youth)

There is a fountain of youth, it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life.

We can do no great things, only small things with great love.

Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still fight for peace.

Even though this world is full of violence we have to live one day at a time, but we are living for eternity in that one day.

A smile happens in a flash, but with a violence so tragic the memory of it can last a lifetime. See into life, don't just look at it. Don't be afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living, and your belief will help create the fact.

Every person in this world is a person with great qualities, but don't let anybody change your mind into bad habits.

Guadalupe Govea  
(Ourside-Senn/YouthNet)

Untitled

We preach, the world has become,  
A melting pot full of crime,  
But what about the positive, the other  
picture we fail to see,  
The picture of two lovers on a moonlit  
beach,  
I know the world has a new look,  
Violent at times, and lives being took,  
I just can't imagine this world  
without...  
Without music, education, and  
children about,  
Not to leave out the monuments and  
scenery,  
This is a pro's and con's world...  
That is if we accept both views,  
THINK ABOUT IT!!!

@1996  
Robert E. Ewen

## Faces of Youth

by Tinishia C. Davis  
(Ourside/Senn Youth Net)

Faces of the young youth  
Bringing out exposing truth  
Laughter cheering everywhere  
look around there's nothing there  
no smiling cheeks only frowns  
like the skies all around  
breaking fast like the wind  
where do they start or begin  
hearing the silence in their voice  
making their decision to a choice  
now unraveling their little tone  
not knowing to be grown  
facing the lives of dirty deeds  
never getting what they need  
no health for them or no care  
times seeming real unfair  
leaving them out w/out a clue  
not telling the young what to do  
soaring like the birds up high  
leaving no room for a lie  
cherish them by and by



# Remembering/Recordando

Passion is true,  
 love is false;  
 reality is to blame.  
 But to live or die,  
 I wonder why in death I can never cry.  
 To live and die;  
 I heard my mother  
 as my brother lies, I heard my sisters cry,  
 as I feel my brother dead.  
 There was something to be said  
 even though my brother died.  
 I wonder why I never cried.  
 So tell me this and tell me why  
 this little boy never did cry.

*In loving memory of Eric Arellano,  
 (February 20, 1978 — August 18, 1995)*

— Gloria Acevedo



Eric Arellano, February 20, 1978-August 18, 1995.

Friends we are,  
 even when we are near or far.  
 I had a violent life;  
 somehow, I managed to survive.  
 We were brought together  
 to stay friends forever,  
 but trouble started  
 and I soon departed.  
 Someday, we will meet again,  
 to say "Hello, my dear friend."  
 This place I know not where,  
 but I know it will be in the  
 freedom of the open air.

— Marcos Cordova  
 Born August 17, 1978  
 At rest June 25, 1995

## Alfredo R.I.P.

BY RAIMIRO RODRIGUEZ  
*(Youth Struggling for Survival)*

CHICAGO — Even though I am alone, I know I am not. His soul and spirit surround me, protecting me from the harsh reality of the night. His craziness crashes against the street like lightening. The sound of his laughter is exhilarating.

Back to reality. I notice the broken glass on the street. I realize that it symbolizes our lives, the broken pieces of our love and hatred. His death was our future foretold by society.

He meant so much to us. His family turned their backs on us, forgetting that we loved him too.

Now, two years later, as we go back to the remembrance of our struggling path, the death toll has risen. Not just in flesh, but also in spirit.

Because of Alfredo's death, every one of us who was involved in his life has changed. More funerals have come and gone. More tears have been shed. More prisons have been entered.

This is the outcome of the death of a 16-year-old, caught short by the disease of our inhabitation: the cold, heartless bullet.

### In remembrance of:

David A. Sanchez, Filberto Santoya, Adrain Santoya, Victor Carrasco, Edison Rodriguez  
 Eddie Ramos, Nichole Mendez, Arlene

### Let us remember those who are in jail:

Edgar Vera, Edgar Sanchez, Fernando Perez, Jesse Ponce, Julio C. Mendiola,  
 Guillermo Gutierrez, Sammy Villalobos, Isreal Gonzalez, Noel Torres, Timothy Galvan,  
 Milton Roman, Marcos Gonzalez, Andres Garcia

And those youth who are not named. You are in our hearts, minds and actions.





# Barrios Unidos holds peace summit...

By NYDIA HERNANDEZ.

*Youth Struggling for Survival*

**W**ASHINGTON, D.C. — How far have we come today as a society? Do we want to continue killing our own people? My answer is "No!"

Violence has affected our society as a whole. It has taken control of our communities and our everyday lives. We need to find alternatives to violence — solutions that work.

Barrios Unidos, a not-for-profit organization out to end barrio warfare, called a National Peace Summit which was held in Washington, D.C. from March 31 until April 3. The purpose of this summit was to introduce a peace plan that — with strong effort and dedication — would work.

The Cesar Chavez Peace Plan was established to address the causes of violence, and to outline solutions to violence in our communities. When I was invited to attend the Summit, my first impression was: "Damn, finally, we get to discuss these issues with those in power in Washington, D.C." It was time to hold these so-called Congressional representatives accountable for their many empty promises of solutions to the problems in

our communities.

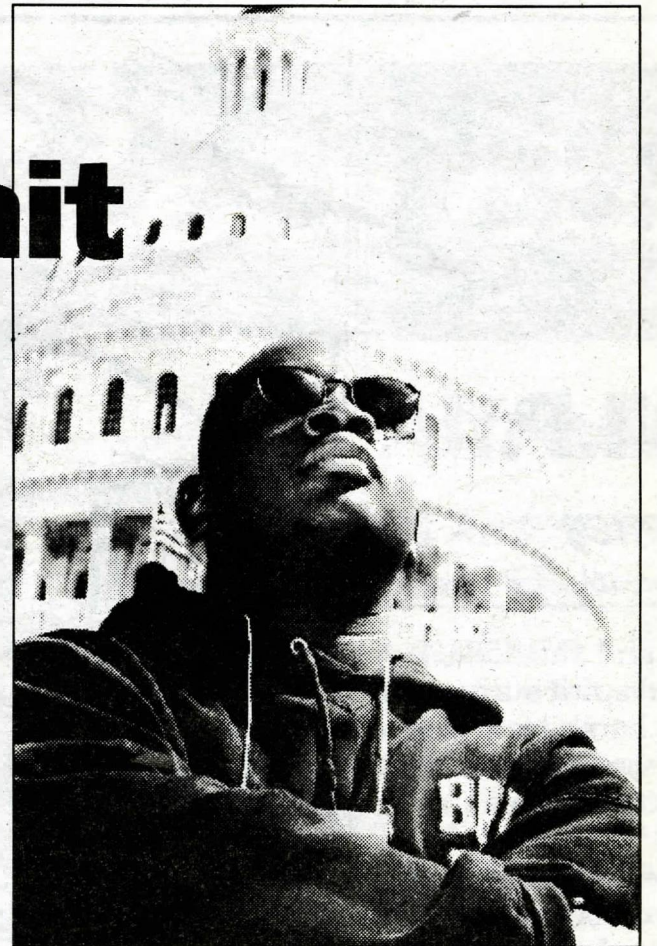
This was not the first National Peace Summit I attended, but I felt it was the most important. The setting where it was held had a lot to do with why I felt this way.

Barrios Unidos has had previous conferences in Texas, Washington state and California, in addition to the most recent one in Washington, D.C. I was honored to have been invited to three of the conferences. Each brought a message never to be forgotten.

The conference had many workshops. Speakers recounted their own experiences in the "hood." There were many mothers who had lost sons and daughters to "the pen" or the grave because of the madness. They felt that discussing their experiences would help save lives.

For me, the experience which had the most impact was seeing rival gang members, enemies, actually overlook colors. Whether they were "Folks" or "People" no longer mattered. They were all striving for one thing, and that was to find peace within themselves and in their communities.

We need to take a stand and make changes, not only for ourselves but for our future. This change can be done. ¡Sí se puede!



*Washington, D.C. summit. Shawn from Chicago's South Side addressing the Peace Summit.*

PHOTO/ELLA SENERES



*YSS group from Chicago in El Paso, Texas.*



*Chicago group, Latino Youth-P.O.D.E.R. along with Luis Rodriguez from Y.S.S., Alejandro Vilchez and Homer from California at the Washington, D.C. summit.*



*Chicago group, Y.S.S. and Ourside at the Washington, D.C. summit.*

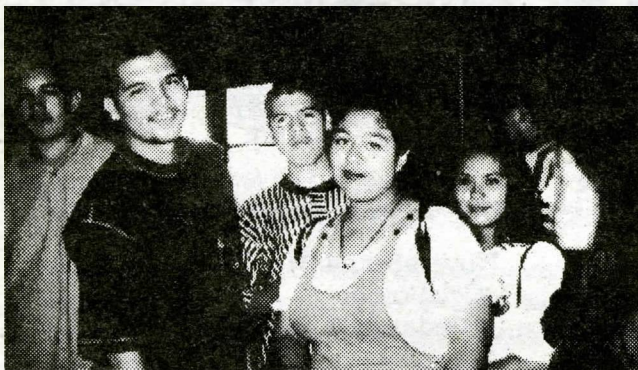


**'Necesitamos encontrar alternativas y soluciones que trabajen.'**

# Barrios Unidos: Conferencia por la Paz



*Barrios Unidos staff at the Santa Cruz summit.*



*Chicago groups, U.S.S. and Neighbors Against Gang Violence in Santa Cruz, California.*



*Santa Cruz, California summit. Chicago groups: Latino youth-P.O.D.E.R. and Neighbors Against Gang Violence. Opposite gang members united.*

*Nydia Hernandez  
Youth Struggling  
for Survival*

**¿C**ómo hemos avanzado como sociedad? ¿Queremos seguir matando nuestra gente? Mi contestación es no! La violencia ha afectado nuestra sociedad en general y ha tomado control de nuestras comunidades y vidas diariamente. Necesitamos encontrar alternativas y soluciones que trabajen.

El 3 de abril de 1996 Barrios Unidos, una organización no lucrativa llamó por una Conferencia Nacional de Paz, en Washington, D.C. para terminar la violencia en el barrio. El propósito de esta conferencia era de presentar un plan de paz fuerte y que podamos llevar a cabo. El Plan de Paz de Cesar E. Chávez fue establecido para tratar con las causas de y soluciones a la violencia en nuestras comunidades. Cuando yo fui invitada a asistir a esta Conferencia, mi primer impresión fue, "Por fin, podremos discutir estos asuntos con los que tienen el poder en Washington, D.C." Ya era tiempo de hacer a estos tal llamados representantes en el Congre-

so responsables por sus soluciones falsas y promesas a la comunidad.

Esta no fue la primera Conferencia por la Paz Nacional, pero yo sentí que fue la más importante. Mucho tuvo que ver el lugar donde se llevo a cabo.

Barrios Unidos ha tenido conferencias en Texas, el Estado de Washington, y California y la más reciente en Washington, D.C. Me sentí honrada de ser invitada a tres de las cuatro conferencias. Aunque todas las conferencias fueron patrocinadas por Barrios Unidos cada una trajo un mensaje que nunca olvidaremos.

La conferencia tuvo muchos talleres y oradores que hablaron de sus experiencias en los barrios. Muchas madres que perdieron sus hijos e hijas en la cárcel o en la muerte debido a la locura y sintieron que discutiendo sus experiencias podrían salvar una vida.

Lo más importante fue ver miembros de pandillas rivales, "enemigas", de diferente colores, "Folks" y "People" luchando por una sola cosa, paz entre ellos y en la comunidad. Necesitamos tomar una posición y hacer cambios no sólo para nosotros pero para el futuro. Este cambio podemos hacer. SI SE PUEDE!



*People from all over the country come together.*

**'We need to find alternatives to violence — solutions that work.'**



## INCREASE THE PEACE IS:

"The Increase the Peace Network is a network of community organizations and church leaders which focus their work on youth and violence...we cannot do it all and must rely on one another for each others programs and expertise, strengthening the work of each."

*Nidza Chavez, Churches in Community Unit of the Community Renewal Society*

"It offers us an opportunity to learn from each other and share our visions and expectations. We have a clear goal in mind that we can break the chains and have hope for the future generations by accepting each other as we truly are without prejudice."

*Marilu Gonzalez — Neighbors Against Gang Violence*

"Increase the Peace means to us putting aside our prejudices so that we can love, respect and honor each other and stand united as one."

*Liz Monje and Gabriela Trevino — El Pueblo Unido*

"Peace towards our society coming as one in a neighborhood, taking a whole village to raise our generations until peace is united through the world's community."

*Tinishia C. Davis — Ourside/Senn YouthNet*

"Our mission is to increase the peace not only in Chicago but throughout the country. It has been a great experience to have youth from all over the country come together and talk about peace. Gang members from opposite gangs have been able to come together and talk about a peace plan. This is only the beginning of the Peace Movement. Getting these youth together was the hardest part, now the process can begin with everyone's support and collaboration of all organizations that are serious and have the same mission of increasing the peace. Together we can work by empowering our youth and giving them resources and alternatives. We cannot give up! There is hope! "Si Se Puede"!!!!

*Shirley Carrasquillo — Latino Youth-P.O.D.E.R.*

"A bridge for artistic and creative expression of the youth. Shows in detail the issues the youth face everyday to struggle in society."

*Ramiro Rodriguez — Youth Struggling for Survival*

"Peace to us is human beings living in harmony, regardless of the color of our skin, our creed or gender. The foundation of peace is a society that puts our children, our youth, our future, first and foremost."

"To increase the peace we have to begin by listening to the voices of the youth — the voices of hope. We'll find the answers and solutions in those that are struggling to maintain the peace."

*Editorial Boards, People's Tribune & Tribuno del Pueblo*

## Video Machete

*By Eric Torres (Video Machete)*

Video Machete is a group using video to help young men and women in inner Chicago to examine their own lives and their world. We produce tapes in complete collaboration with the youth, many of whom belong to or have belonged to gangs. Our work neither condemns nor condones gangs, but promotes a more complex understanding than that of the mainstream myths constructed to criminalize them. The group also works with those who are equally affected by bad schools, lack of employment and health care, police harassment, racism in the courts, and other forms of vio-

lence. Our main focus is to challenge the way that young people are represented by the mass media by giving the youth themselves an opportunity to present their reality in their own voices.

Video Machete has been working as a group for more than two years. During this time, we've made short tapes in the form of self-portraits and poetry videos. We have participated in conferences and a gallery exhibition. Our collaboration includes many organizations and individuals working with youth and related issues. To contact Video Machete call us at (312)862-4932.

## INCREASE THE PEACE [ITP] NETWORK ACTIVITY CALENDAR

June 1 & 2: Cub Food Fundraiser/Elston Ave  
Saturday & Sunday  
11:00 am - 8:00 pm  
(Volunteers Welcome!!)

June 8: Increase the Peace (ITP) Network Meeting  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm

June 21 & 22: ITP Training Organization/Church/Leaders  
Friday & Saturday  
9:00 am - 3:00 pm

June 25: Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome Training  
Organizational/Church/Leaders  
10:00 am - 2:00 pm/Lunch inc.

July 13: ITP Network Meeting  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm

July 20 & 21:  
Community Building  
Ritual/Retreat  
100 youth, plus leaders, plus observers  
Saturday - 10:30 am - 7:00 pm

August 10: ITP Network Meeting  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm

August(17-18): ITP Training on Violence/25 Parents  
Bi-lingual - Childcare provided

September 14: ITP Network Meeting  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm

September 21-22: Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome Training for Youth/Parents  
Saturday:  
Youth: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
Parents: 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm  
Bi-lingual - Childcare provided  
Sunday:  
Youth/Parents: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
Bi-lingual - Child care provided

October 5: Week Without Violence  
Saturday: Town Meeting  
Roberto Clemente HS  
10:00 am - 12:30 pm  
Theme: Breaking the Silence of Violence: An Institutional Challenge

October 12: ITP Network Meeting  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm  
October 19-20: ITP Training on Violence/25 youth  
Saturday & Sunday  
10:00 am - 4:00 pm

November 9: ITP Network Meeting  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm

November 24: ITP (Thanksgiving) Celebration  
Sunday 2:00 pm - 7:00 pm

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For more information contact any of the Increase the Peace members in your neighborhood:

**Aspira**  
2435 N. Western Ave  
Chicago, IL 60647  
(312)252-0970  
Elida Hernandez/Marta Caldero

**BUILD, Inc.**  
1223 N. Milwaukee Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60822  
(312)227-2880  
Freddy Calixto

**Community Renewal Society**  
332 S. Michigan Ave  
Chicago, IL 60604  
(312)427-4830  
Rev. Art Waidman/  
Rev. Nidza Chavez

**El Pueblo Unido**  
c/o Office of University  
Resources for Latinos  
515 Garden Rd.  
DeKalb, IL 60115  
(815)753-1986  
Liz Monje/Gabriela Trevino

**Latino Youth**  
2200 S. Marshall Blvd  
Chicago, IL 606  
(312)277-0400  
Shirley Carrasquillo/Sandra Lopez

**Neighbors Against Gang Violence**  
2657 S. Lawndale  
Chicago, IL 60623  
(312)277-3255  
Marilu Gonzalez/Beth Ascher

**Ourside/Senn YouthNet**  
c/o Alternatives, Inc.  
1126 W. Granville  
Chicago, IL 60606  
(312)973-5400 or 989-0288  
Bridget Gainer/Pat Zamora

**Youth Struggling for Survival**  
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Luis Rodriguez/Camila Barros

**Video Machete**  
(see article on this page)

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Chris Robles