

# GREETINGS FROM THE DREF PRESIDENT

### Dear Community Leader:

he Delta Research and Educational Foundation (DREF) is committed to improving the lives of African American women and their families. Through our Center for Research on African American Women, a research project on the impact and consequences of gun violence on African American women and girls was conducted by the Sister Scholars Advisory Council. The results were astounding, indicating how gun violence is an everyday stressor in the African American community. The research project initiated a national conversation between DREF and its constituents, and motivated us to keep the conversation flowing to create ways to lessen the adverse impact that gun violence is inflicting upon the daily lives of families throughout America.



Carolyn E. Lewis PHOTO BY SHARON C. FARMER

Too often these days, we are witnessing gun violence related to mass shootings, criminal activity, domestic violence as well as self-inflicted wounds. Our research study reveals that African American children experience gun-related homicides approximately 10 times more than Caucasian children. Seven children and teens are killed with guns in the United States on an average day. African Americans comprise 14 percent of the U.S. population, but are victims of more than half of all gun homicides. Moreover, African American women are three times more likely than white women to be murdered by a gun. These statistics were an impetus to start our national conversation. We are now ready to embark on the next steps.

DREF is encouraging community-based organizations to join it in taking the lead to be pro-active in our communities to decrease gun violence and related incidents wreaking havoc in far too many lives. We are encouraging community-based organizations to RAISE THEIR VOICE by using a strategy of prevention, advocacy, and education to guide youth and their families in deterring gun violence. This Toolkit was created to steer communities to get in front of the problem and address it head-on to decrease the excessive number of times that we are dealing with the aftermath of gun violence. We encourage you to partner with other community-based organizations, the faith community, and all entities that work to empower communities and mentor youth. Together, we can make a tremendous difference.

Sincerely yours,

Carolyn E. Lewis President, Delta Research and Educational Foundation

# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

 $\P$  o those who are looking to do more in the fight against gun violence, we have developed this Toolkit for you! You will find tangible ideas for how to advocate for and prevent gun violence as well as educate yourself and your communities about the tremendous adverse effects of gun violence on the lives of individuals - especially, our children and the families responsible for them.

We must recognize the scholars who have worked tirelessly to research and develop this Toolkit. On the heels of completing an overview of gun violence literature, this team is complementing that work with an actionable guide for communities.

Because of their work, DREF offers programming ideas and resources to non-profit organizations including educational, civic, faithbased institutions, Greek Letter organizations, etc., which will benefit the communities in which they serve.

Thanks to the following individuals of the Sister Scholars Advisory tasked with creating this document:

- Tchicaya Ellis Robertson, Ph.D.
- Nikisha Horn, M.B.A.
- Wanda Brockington, Ph.D.
- Natalie T.J. Tindall. Ph.D.
- Staff Liaison: Deborah Peaks Coleman, DREF Director of **Programs**



Tchicaya Robertson, Ph.D. Chair, Research Subcommittee



Nikisha Horn, M.B.A. Chair, Gun Violence Toolkit

Please engage with the Toolkit as you think about how to tackle the issue of gun violence in your networks and within your communities. Make the Toolkit a living and breathing document that you refer to when it's time to put your passion about eradicating gun violence into action.

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# Mission Statement

The Delta Research and Educational Foundation (DREF) promotes research which identifies and fashions solutions to issues affecting African American women and their families, nationally and globally, through funding and support of the charitable and educational programs of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and collaborative organizations.

DREF office is located at 1703 New Hampshire Ave., NW, Washington, DC 2009 202-347-1337 • www.deltafoundation.net

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# INTRODUCTION

he impact and consequences of gun violence on African American women and girls is a monumental detriment to their well-being—a problem that cannot be solved with a singular approach. As the author and Presbyterian Pastor Emeritus James E. Atwood expresses in the quote: "We must talk together to heal our land." Organizations, associations, community and civic leaders, the faith-based community, law enforcement, educational institutions, and all who care about humanity must work together to tackle this national epidemic—gun violence. There is no one solution, nor any one entity that can solve all of the ills related to gun violence.

Let the dialogue begin with our civic and faith leaders, educators, parents, community organizers, and local organization leaders who realize the devastation that gun violence brings to many lives. The Delta Research and Educational Foundation (DREF) is committed to creating possibilities and improving the lives of African American women and their families. Upon the completion of a research project on the "Impact and Consequences of Gun Violence on African American Women and Girls" conducted by the DREF Sister Scholars Advisory Council, a need to address the dire issue was evident. With the problem being a pervasive one, DREF decided to focus on engaging youth and, ultimately, their families in creating strategies to decrease the gun violence occurrences in their communities and address the consequences and aftermath.

As a 501 (c) (3) organization committed to charitable and educational programming, DREF has produced the Toolkit, "Raise Your Voice:A Community Guide to Address Gun Violence." This Toolkit was developed as a resource for non-profit entities that offer youth programming, such as mentoring, Rites of Passage, educational development, civic engagement, personal and cultural enrichment andother areas. There is indeed power in partnerships and DREF encourages local organizations to collaborate on addressing the impact of gun violence in their respective communities. The opportunities for non-profit organizations such as the Black Greek Letter organizations, Boys and Girls Clubs, Girls, Inc. 100 Black Men, The Links, Inc, Jack and Jill, houses of worship, after-school programs, and others to collaborate on tackling this problem are vast. Let's get started by connecting with other local organizations that are committed to empowering youth for the future. An overall motivating factor is to ensure that they have a future and do not fall victim to gun violence. Partnering to address the consequences of gun violence can be undertaken in several areas:

- ▲ Advocacy
- Prevention
- Education

Any of the activities presented by local organizations in the aforementioned three areas could easily be incorporated into the annual program calendar designed for youth participation. The activity could be sequenced on a regular, recurring basis or approached on a project basis. For example, an activism project could include several organizations working

together to support their local government's "Buy Back the Gun"—getting guns off the street and out of homes initiative. Or, if the local city government does not currently sponsor such an activity, the community partner(s) could be advocates for implementing the "Buy Back the Gun" initiative in their city government. Getting guns off the market can make a difference in decreasing shooting incidents.

In terms of educating youth and their families about the devastating and long term impact that gun violence brings into their lives, there are many expert authorities who could address the youth. Representatives from the faith-based community, education, law enforcement, criminal justice, health, and other fields could educate youth on topics from their respective fields—sharing information that aims to turn the adverse situation around—being safe, being well, not being a victim, being non-violent, and being vigilant to preserve the community.

Educating youth about decreasing gun violence will require ongoing events, such as workshops and seminars, advocacy programs, activism participation and other special programming. For instance, programming could focus on topics such as:

- Peer Influence
- Reporting Guns at School
- **Criminal Ramifications**
- Health challenges resulting from shootings (mental and physical)
- National Gun Violence Awareness Day (June 1)

"Putting an end to America's gun violence is not an either/or, winner-take-all kind of discussion. To get there, those who hate guns must be willing to sit down with those whose livelihoods depend on them for food or safety and whose culture has praised guns for generations, while those who have never seen a gun they didn't like must be willing to listen to the fears of children in our inner cities who hear gunshots before they go to sleep at night and are afraid to go to playgrounds because that's where kids get shot. We must talk together to heal our land."

James E. Atwood, Gundamentalism and Where it is Taking America

# **GUN VIOLENCE**

## **ADVOCACY, PREVENTION, AND EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES**

# **WEAR ORANGE SOCIAL MEDIA DAY**

## DESCRIPTION:



Following the blueprint of wear orange.org, participate in the social media activities as prescribed. The color orange has been widely adopted to represent gun violence initiatives. There are a tremendous number of resources and additional toolkits available for:

- Supporters
  - (https://wearorange.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/ Supporter-Toolkit-\_-Wear-Orange-2018.pdf)
- Partners
   (https://wearorange.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Partner-Toolkit--Wear-Orange-2018.pdf)
- Influencers (https://wearorange.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Influencer-Toolkit-\_-Wear-Orange-2018.pdf)
- Elected Officials
   (https://wearorange.org/resources/elected-officials/)
- Brand Partners (https://wearorange.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Brand-Partners-Toolkit- -Wear-Orange-2018.pdf)

# LAKEACTION

- 1. Download the Supporter Toolkit
- 2. Read it thoroughly
- 3. Implement Part 1 and Part 2 as described in the Toolkit
- 4. Mark your calendars to participate in the prescribed social media activities during the prescribed time frames:
  - a. Week of May 21
  - b. May 28 May 30
  - c. May 31
  - d. June 1
  - e. June 2 and June 3

# **YOUTH DAY OF ACTION**

### **DESCRIPTION:**





TAKEACTION

The month of June is designated as Gun Violence Awareness Month (GVAM). The Youth Day of Action (YDA) is an in-depth day of action which can be focused on girls ages 11 – 18 to create awareness of the gun violence epidemic and the need to accelerate prevention, advocacy, and education efforts. The goals of GVAM are:

- To promote greater awareness about gun violence and safety
- To concentrate annual heightened attention to gun violence during the summer months, when gun violence typically increases
- To bring citizens and community leaders together to discuss ways to make our communities healthier

The day may include a combination of seminars, panel discussions, keynote speakers, small breakout sessions, or more importantly, a series of activities that engage participants in actions that increase awareness on how to prevent gun violence. Select a topic or topics that can be explored together to create a memorable and engaging experience for participants.

# 1. Decide on a range of engaging activities to fill a span of several hours

- 2. Decide on the prevention focus of the YDA. Examples might include:
  - Conflict Resolution
  - Gun law reform
  - Awareness of how gun violence affects community youth
- 3. Establish a time and book a facility to hold your event
- 4. Invite guest speakers and/or facilitators, or moderators to help execute your event.
- **5.** Create printed materials, social media campaigns, or other tools to advertise your program

Delta Research and Educational Foundation | 7

# **RIDE FOR GUN VIOLENCE**

# **DESCRIPTION:**



Organize a day where a large group of participants ride bikes, motorcycles, or drive cars along a specified route to promote awareness of the need to resolve gun violence epidemic.

The day may include a kick-off or post-event rally where participants gather in the name of finding solutions around the issue of gun violence. This event may be tied to a fundraiser where proceeds are donated toward research, advocacy, or educational efforts for community organizations that have an active gun violence prevention, advocacy, or educational agenda.

Participants should wear orange to commemorate the color designated by some as the color representing gun violence initiatives.

- Decide on a date and time for the "Ride for Gun Violence"
- Decide on the ride route
- 3. Obtain necessary permits
- 4. Decide on an organizational or individual beneficiary(ies)
- 5. Create printed materials, social media campaigns, or other tools to advertise your event

# **GUN VIOLENCE CINEMA**

## **DESCRIPTION:**

Gun violence is a very emotional topic that can elicit emotional reactions via the arts such as film.



This event can capitalize on this medium by showing a range of film and media projects which take a particular stance on the gun violence debate – both for and against – and encourage a meaningful discussion with the audience.

Participants should plan for a two-pronged event, movie/video/ short film screenings followed by a discussion moderated by a subject matter expert/moderator that is knowledgeable about the gun violence debate.

- 1. Decide on a date and time for the event
- 2. Select a collection of movies clips, documentaries, videos that pertain to the topic of gun violence
- 3. Secure space at a local theater or other event space that can accommodate the necessary audio/visual requirements (i.e., movie screen and projector)
- Identify a moderator
- 5. Prepare a list of questions to provoke thought with the participants
- 6. Create printed materials, social media campaigns, or other tools to advertise your event

# **COMMUNITY FORUM ON GUN VIOLENCE**

## **DESCRIPTION:**



A community forum should bring together a group of organizations, individuals, activists, and others interested in eradicating gun violence.

While those invested in this issue may not always be on the same side of an argument, the dialogue between these parties can spark a mutual agenda that fuels successful solutions.

Bringing together those with disparate ideas about guns in the community may lead to reasonable and effective solutions which include a combination of educational, advocacy, and prevention strategies that can be implemented at scale.

The results of the gathering could lead to new policies and ideas for closing gun violence loop holes.

- 1. Decide on a date and time for the community forum
- **Decide on forum participants which might include:** 
  - **Anti-Gun Lobby Groups**
  - Community organizations focused on gun violence prevention
  - **Faith-based organizations**
  - Sororities/Fraternities
  - Community based organizations that serve youth
- 3. Secure a venue to hold the event
- 4. Secure and invite speakers, panelists, targeted participants
- 5. Create printed materials, social media campaigns, or other tools to advertise your event

# **THE GREAT GUN DEBATE**

# **DESCRIPTION:**

An event that takes place over a 2-3 hours period where teams are formed to debate the issue of gun violence. Topics could include:



- Sensible gun laws
- Gun violence prevention strategies
- Impact of gun violence on the community
- Gun violence in the schools

Each participating team researches opposing sides of one argument covering any of the aforementioned topics. Prizes or experiences are to be awarded to winning teams. The debate teams could be carried out in the local school system where school debate teams argue one another. Similarly, church groups, community organizations, or other organizations could form teams to participate in the debates.

Participants can be students in an after-school program, mentoring program participants, members of organizations such as The Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Jack and Jill members, or any other youth group with the capacity to participate and engage in a debate.

- Decide on a date and time for the debate
- Prepare arguments for either side of the debate
- 3. Form teams to create opposing arguments
- 4. Identify a panel of judges
- 5. Decide on how the teams will be rewarded for the winning argument
- 6. Create printed materials, social media campaigns, or other tools to advertise your event

# **DEAR GUN VIOLENCE**



**DESCRIPTION:** An activity where participants write letters to their state and federal legislators about the impact that gun violence is having in their personal lives or in their community. The letters can be about a personal encounter or an encounter of someone the letter writer knows or heard about.

> This activity is meant to evoke emotions via personal narratives that put a face to gun violence that some cannot imagine.

# KEACTION

- 1. Provide a list of relevant lawmakers that represent your state
- 2. Draft a form letter that standardizes the letter template, leaving an area for the personal account to be added
- 3. Decide on the letter-writing campaign format. It could be
  - a. In person where letters are written as part of a group effort
  - b. At a designated day and time with the participants writing independently
- 4. Secure materials including: laptops, printers, paper, envelopes, postage, sponge for sealing envelope, etc.
- 5. Print and mail letters or email letters
- 6. Designate someone to take sealed envelopes to the US Postal Service mailing facility



**DESCRIPTION:** An activity where participants share their personal encounters with any aspect of gun violence using the video format. Videos should be no longer than 2-5 minute vignettes highlighting the impact that gun violence has had on the individual.

> This activity is meant to evoke emotions via personal narratives that put a face to gun violence.

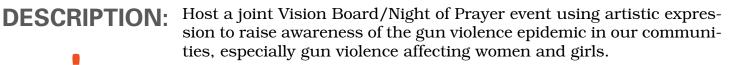
> This activity can be implemented with mobile phones using free video editing software. Depending on available resources, a low-cost video editing professional could also be sourced to help with this initiative. There may also be a professional videographer willing to donate his/her time to this effort. Network to find the best partner.

- 1. Identify video editing software options that could be leveraged
- Decide on the video essay format. It could be

**GUN VIOLENCE: "I SEE YOU"** 

- In person where videos essays are completed as a group effort
- At a designated day and time on the participants' schedule.
- Decide on how the videos will be shared broadly. They could be distributed on a single day on social media to increase an opportunity to trend gun violence with personal accounts or they could be edited into a single video that can be shared with gun violence activists to use in related events

# A VISION BOARD TO REMEMBER



As the designated color, ask participants to wear orange to commemorate the day.

# ACTION AKE

- Decide on a date and time for the event
- 2. Secure a venue for the event
- 3. Secure event materials including; poster board, markers, magazines, glue sticks, tape, glitter, scissors, stencil, etc.
- 4. Identify clergy that can provide adequate prayers for the event
- Identify a vision board facilitator that can keep the night moving
- 6. Decide on whether and how the boards will be leveraged in the fight against gun violence
- 7. Create printed materials, social media campaigns, or other tools to advertise your event

# **SAY NO TO GV CARD SIGNING PLEDGE**



**DESCRIPTION:** The "Say No to Gun Violence Card Signing Pledge" is a collaborative partnership with Students Against Gun Violence. Since 1996, more than 10 million students that have signed the student pledge. There are many ways for schools and communities to join this effort.

> The activity involves students signing a "Stop Gun Violence" Pledge Card. It is suggested to create a day of activities centered around gun violence such as a pep rally featuring a guest speaker and a march around campus.

> Visit the Students against Gun Violence website for more impactful **ideas** on how to execute the card signing pledge.

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- 1. Visit www.pledge.org to familiarize yourself with the Students **Against Gun Violence Organization and their activities**
- 2. Download the pledge (http://www.pledge.org/download-the-pledge)
- 3. Download the brochure (<a href="https://static1.squarespace.">https://static1.squarespace.</a> com/static/53e8f11ae4b0adad9aa82802/t/573a247a62 cd945607227619/1463428222198/Student+Pledge+Brochure+2016.pdf)
- 4. Report your tallies (http://www.pledge.org/report-your-tallies)
- 5. Share your activities on social media to commemorate your partnership with and participation with "Say No to Gun Violence Pledge."

# **END FAMILY FIRE**



**DESCRIPTION:** Family Fire is a shooting involving an improperly stored or misused gun found in the home, resulting in death or injury. Incidents include unintentional shootings, suicides and other gun-related tragedies.

> The "End Family Fire" campaign is a movement aimed at putting safety first, with a mission to promote responsible gun ownership. The campaign aims to put a name to the gun-related injuries that occur in or near the home. With more than 33,000 deaths relating to guns annually in the United States, the End Family Fire national PSA campaign aims to highlight the importance of safe gun storage at home.

# LAKEACTION

- 1. Visit the website and download toolkit: <a href="https://endfamilyfire.org/">https://endfamilyfire.org/</a>
- 2. Implement an event centered on family gun safety within your community.
- 3. Partner with organizations such as the local police department, mental health professionals, and self-defense organizations.
- 4. Target youth groups to educate children on the importance of gun safety and keeping guns safely secured in the home. Use the hashtag #askingsaveskids.
- 5. Support the campaign by spreading the word across social media using approved materials inside toolkit and hashtag #endfamilyfire.

# THESE ARE THE FACTS







# American gun violence statistics are alarming!

Below is just a sampling of what we know based on a summary of literature conducted by the Delta Research and Educational Foundation in 2018 titled "Causes, Consequences, and Critiques of Gun Violence in America: A call to action to save Black women and girls." Please review the paper for a full examination and references for the statistics provided in the table below.

On an average day, 96 Americans are killed with guns	In an average month, 50 women are shot to death by intimate partners in the USA	On average, there are nearly 12,000 gun homicides a year in the USA
Black Americans make up only 14% of the population, but are victims of more than half of all gun homicides	The USA has the 31st highest rate of gun violence in the world	Americas' gun homicide rate is more than 25 times the average of other high-income countries
Seven (7) children and teens are killed with guns in the US on an average day	In a 2015, nationally- representative sample of youth in grades 9-12 researchers found that 16.2% of youth reported carrying a weapon (gun, knife, or club) on one or more days in the 30 days preceding the survey	In 2014, over 4,000 young people ages 10 to 24 were victims of homicide, which averages 12 homicides among our youth each day
Three of the four communities with the highest per capita rate of gun violence have a higher than average % of minority population	Overall United States: 13% Black 3.85 deaths/100,000	Overall population vs. Deaths/100,000 DC: 51% Black (35.4) Louisiana: 32% Black (9.9) Maryland: 29% Black (9.9) (deaths/100,000)
Children exposed to gun violence may experience negative short and long-term psychological effects, including anger, withdrawal, posttraumatic stress, and desensitization to violence	It is estimated that youth homicides and assault-related injuries result in an estimated \$18.2 billion in combined medical and work loss costs	Children exposed to violent conditions are more likely to succumb to a wide range of negative health and behavioral outcomes later in life, including increased risk of perpetrating violence themselves
Homicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for young people 10-24 years old, and close to 9 in 10 were killed with a firearm	Rates of firearm injury death increase rapidly after age 12	Unintentional shootings of children and teens are under-reported in CDC data

# **GUN VIOLENCE RESOURCE GUIDE**

### ORGANIZATIONS

The Presbyterian Church

(https://www.presbyterianmission.org/what-webelieve/gun-violence)

The YWCA

(https://www.ywca.org)

LIPSTICK

(http://www.operationlipstick.org)

**Community Justice Reform Coalition** 

(https://communityjusticerc.org)

Girls for Gender Equity

(http://www.ggenyc.org)

The Louis D. Brown Peace Institute

(http://www.ldbpeaceinstitute.org)

**Violence Policy Center** 

(http://www.vpc.org)

Women Against Gun Violence

(http://www.wagv.org)

Young Women of Color Health Advocacy

Coalition

(http://www.us.ywchac.org)

The American Medical Women's Association

(http://www.amwa-doc.org)

UN Women- Voices Against Violence

www.unwomen.org

**Center for Disease Control** 

(www.cdc.gov)

Wear Orange

(http://www.wearorange.org)

Students Against Gun Violence

(http://www.pledge.org)

National Law Enforcement Partnership to

**Prevent Gun Violence** 

(http://www.lepartnership.org)

The Action Network

(http://www.actionnetwork.org)

Women for Progressive Change

(http://www.southjerseyprogressivewomen.

com/

Americans for Responsible Solutions

(http://www.americansforresponsiblesolutions.

org)

**Gun Violence Awareness Month** 

(http://www.gunviolenceawarenessmonth.com)

The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence

(http://www.bradycampaign.org/)

**Everytown USA** 

(https://everytown.org/)

**Newtown Action Alliance** 

(https://www.newtownactionalliance.org/)

**NAACP** 

(https://www.naacp.org/)

National Urban League

(http://nul.iamempowered.com/)

**Center for American Progress** 

(https://www.americanprogress.org/)

University of Chicago Crime Lab

(http://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/)

Harvard University School of Public Health

(https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/)

John Hopkins University's Bloomberg School of

Public Health

(https://www.jhsph.edu/)

### **LAWMAKERS**

### Hon. Robin Kelly: US House of Representatives (D-IL 2nd District)

Co-chair of Congressional Gun Violence Prevention Taskforce

Co-Chair, Congressional Caucus on Black Women and Girls

Member of the bipartisan Policing Strategies Working Group

Published the first Kelly Report on Gun Violence in America, an in-depth Congressional analysis on the gun violence epidemic in America, in 2014 and has provided updates as recent as 2018.

### Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA)

Chair of the House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force in the House of Representatives Focus on barring individuals on the no-fly list from purchasing guns

Co-sponsored bipartisan legislation with Rep. Peter King (R-NY) to close the loophole that allowed individuals to purchase firearms at gun shows without first passing a background check

### Rep. Peter King (R-NY)

Co-sponsored the background check expansion bill Sponsored the House bill to bar individuals on the no fly list from purchasing guns

### Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-OH)

Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus

### Rep. James Clyburn (D-SC)

Weeks after Dylan Roof killed nine people at a historic black church in Charleston, S.C. with a gun he was permitted to purchase because of a clerical error, Rep. Clyburn introduced legislation aimed at closing the loophole that allowed Roof to acquire the weapon; his Congressional district includes parts of Charleston, SC.

### Former Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ)

Injured on January 2011 when a mentally ill gunman opened fire on a crowd, Giffords launched Americans for Responsible Solutions, a political action committee that advocates for gun law reform, focused on stricter background check requirements, laws preventing domestic abusers from purchasing guns, increased research on gun violence, and stiffer penalties for gun traffickers.

### Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY)

In 2015, Maloney introduced a bill that would require gun buyers to hold liability insurance in order to purchase firearms.

Sponsored legislation intended to close the gun show loophole

# RELEVANT LITERATURE

### **BOOKS**

- "The Gun Debate: What Everyone Needs to Know" by Philip Cook and Kristin A. Goss, (2014).
- "Bullets into Bells: Poets & Citizens Respond to Gun Violence" edited by Brian Clements, Alexandra Teague, and Dean Rader (2017).
- "Shot: 101 Survivors of Gun Violence in America" by Kathy Shorr & Max Kozloff.
- "Invisible No More: Police Violence against Black Women and Women of Color" by Andrea J. Ritchie.

## **POSITION PAPERS/GUIDES**

YWCA "We Deserve Safety: Preventing gun violence for Women and Girls of Color".

Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) "Young Women of Color and Exposure To Violence".

**Delta Research and Educational Foundation** "Causes, Consequences, and Critiques of Gun Violence in America: A call to action to save Black women and girls"

### **ARTICLES**

- "Women are the Hidden Victims of Gun Violence" by Carmen Perez and Jamira Burley, Guest Writers, Huffington Post (5/4/2018).
- "Police Violence affects women of color just as much as men. Why don't we hear about it?", Jonathan Capehart, Opinion Writer, the Washington Post.
- "Why Black Girls are taking a leading role in the fight for gun control" by P. L. Lockhart, VOX (3/26/2018).
- "Is it time for Black Women in America to take up arms?", The Guardian.
- "The Role of the Media in the Disparate Response to Gun Violence in America," The Journal of Black Studies.

# A PRAYER

### from Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie,

Presiding Prelate, 10th Episcopal District, African Methodist Episcopal Church and National Chaplain of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

"Whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door." MATTHEW 6: 6

Merciful God, we have shut the door against the violent intrusions of the day. We are weary of the daily intimidation of gun violence in the streets, at home and at school. We are weary of hugging each other in the morning, not knowing if we will see each other at the end of the day. We are weary of worrying about that one person or that crowd of people who may express their desperation with a gun. We, who are weary from the challenges and changes of this uncertain season, seek rest in your eternal changelessness. Thank God that You are the same yesterday, today and forever more.

Speak now a word that dispels the clouds of doubt and fear. Speak a word that will sustain us in the mundane or monumental moments ahead. Speak a word that will strengthen our hands for the work before us, our hearts for any burdens to bare and renew our minds to make decisions that honor you.

In this shut door prayer, whisper your instructions so that we may emerge to do your will. In Jesus Name, Amen.

## **DELTA RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION**

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