



## TURNING TRAGEDY INTO STRATEGY

Everyday shooting are everyday problems.

This is the cry of BRAVE members at rallies, marches, and discussions all across the nation and the world. Over the past nine years, they have devoted their time, talents, and efforts to stopping the gun violence the plagues not only the city of Chicago, but our entire nation. Walking valiantly into their tenth year, BRAVE continues to do whatever is necessary to ensure the safety of their fellow Chicagoans.

BRAVE accepts youth as young as six years old into their program as "Baby BRAVE", which then expands to "Junior BRAVE" for youth up to age 12, and "BRAVE" which involves youth in high school and college. This year, BRAVE has almost 50 participants across their three councils. They recognize the vital role young people play in advocating for change in our community and fostering their growth.

They focus their weekly teaching on four major areas: peer-to-peer support, public speaking, leadership, and activism. These behind-the-scenes lessons are integral in preparing them for creating outward change events like the End-Of-School March, Shutting Down the Dan Ryan, town hall meetings and more.

Coordinator Lamar Johnson expressed how proud he was of the BRAVE Youth Leaders. "They have their own ideas. They are willing to and care about using their voices and lives to create change and promote peace and justice." He explained that his role is mostly supportive, and he encourages the youth to take the helm in all that they can in the program.

This has certainly been a year of action and recognition for BRAVE, and they are prepared to continue to work and fight, gathering as many youth as they can along the way. This is their future. This is their home. And they will be heard.

