



Montana Board of Crime Control

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TO: All Participating Middle School Educators
FROM: Natalia Bowser, DWT State Chair
SUBJECT: 2021 "Do the Write Thing Challenge"
DATE: October 29th, 2020

Dear Educators,

You are cordially invited to participate in Montana's **Do the Write Thing Challenge**, a violence prevention program that targets 7th and 8th grade students and asks them to take a stand against violence in their schools and communities. 2021 marks the 14th anniversary of Montana's participation in the National program. 6th grade students may also participate if they are in the same building as the 7th and 8th grade students.

By participating you will be joined by hundreds of other school principals from across the United States in a coordinated, unique effort to give students the opportunity to communicate their thoughts on the impact of youth violence on their lives and to make personal commitments to reduce violence. **All costs for this program are generously paid for by our sponsors.**

Youth who participate in the challenge answer the following questions:

1. How has violence affected my life?
2. What are the causes of youth violence?
3. What can I do about youth violence?

Do the Write Thing allows students to express their concerns about the violence that many youth face at school and at home in a supportive environment. The process empowers youth by giving them a voice with key decision-makers and stakeholders at the state level.

More than 1,000 Montana middle school students have submitted thought-provoking, insightful essays and poems. Each year Montana's **Do the Write Thing** committee selects one boy and one girl to represent Montana as our ambassadors to Washington, D.C. accompanied by a parent and the sponsoring teacher to attend a four-day gathering of other ambassadors. Parents, teachers, and students attend workshops and visit Capitol Hill. A leather-bound book containing the ambassadors' writings is presented to the Library of Congress; our students have been invited to read their essays aloud at the Library of Congress and the Supreme Court.

The following link, [Instructions for Classroom Teachers](#), explains this year's **"Do the Write Thing"** in more detail.

The **links** below include: a letter to participating teachers, information about rules, deadlines, selection criteria, and student recognition; and a classroom discussion guide regarding violence prevention linked to Common Core application.

- [Montana DtWT Lesson Plan](#)
- [Parental Signature Page](#)
- [Invitation to Educators 2021](#)

Information can also be downloaded from our website, <http://mbcc.mt.gov/Programs/Juvenile-Justice/Projects/Do-the-Write-Thing>. A video highlighting the National Recognition Week can be viewed at www.dtw.org. If you have any questions, please contact DtWT Coordinator and Juvenile Justice specialist Rachel Gemar at 406-444-2056 or rachel.gemar@mt.gov.

Sincerely,



Natalia Bowser
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