

## PRESS RELEASE

Feature: Evergreen story:

# Teens Use the Performing Arts to Fight Gang Violence

Release Date: N/A

Release When: Immediately

Contact: MoriEl Randolph

Teens Express

Phone: 301 877-0592

Cell: 301 537-0205

9506 Silver Fox Turn Clinton, MD 20735

Email: [programs@teensexpress.org](mailto:programs@teensexpress.org)

Prince George's County Maryland | In 1996, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Youth Gang Center conducted a National Youth Gang Survey. The results from the survey estimated that there were 4,824 jurisdictions throughout the country with active youth gangs during that period. It was also projected that 30,818 gangs and 846,428 gang members were active in these jurisdictions. The survey also revealed that fifty-three percent of respondents in the United States had active gangs in 1996.

When all was said and done, the survey results showed that the vast majority of gang members (71 percent) were reported to be from 15 to 24 years old.

These statistics, together with the number of young lives destroyed today due to gang violence, made the issue one that Teens Express would address in an original DVD titled *Bad Choices Ruin Lives*. Both a full and short version of the DVD was produced by youth ages 10–16, most of them residents of Seat Pleasant, Maryland's Central Garden Apartments, an area often struck by crime and violence. In 2005 the youth gave a live performance of the production for an event sponsored by the Prince George's County Department of Family Services. Today, the public service announcement or the short version of the DVD can be seen on the Teens Express Website or on YouTube.

Teens Express is a Prince George's County-based, nonprofit, youth development and performing arts organization. Its program provides teens with life skills and artistic training designed to empower youth with the ability to address our nation's most newsworthy topics.

Teens Express serves youth in Prince George's County, Maryland, and Washington, DC. For more information about Teens Express, its productions, and how you can help, visit <http://www.teensexpress.org>.