



**ALL PARTICIPATING MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS
2021 DO THE WRITE THING
OCTOBER 2020**

Thank you for taking the time to involve your 6th, 7th and 8th grade students in the 2021 Do the Write Thing (DtWT) program, the hallmark initiative of the National Campaign to Stop Violence. You will be joined by thousands of other classroom teachers from across the United States in a coordinated, unique effort to give students the opportunity to communicate their experiences and insights on the impact of youth violence on their lives and to make personal commitments to reduce violence. This program can make a very positive difference in your relationship with your students and help reduce the level of violence in your school. According to a Chicago teacher, “The *Do the Write Thing* program is responsible for one of the most important things that happened in a classroom during all the years I have been a teacher. After the children had the opportunity to write on the issue of violence, discussion in the classroom became open and extraordinarily emotional. The ultimate result was positive beyond a teacher’s wildest expectations.”

In July of 2021, if your student is selected as a National Ambassador and if conditions exist for safe travel and gatherings with respect to the pandemic, you will be invited by the National Campaign to Stop Violence to attend DtWT’s National Recognition Week in Washington, D.C. (travel and accommodations included). If health and safety is still an issue, you will be invited to participate in a virtual Recognition Weekend, which we will also host in July 2021.

During previous National Recognition Weeks, DtWT National Ambassadors have met with a United States Supreme Court Justice, the United States Secretary of Education, the Attorney General of the United States, the United States Secretary of the Interior, Members of Congress and other prominent Americans to discuss the problem of youth violence. In addition, the students were honored at an embassy reception hosted by the Ambassador from the State of Kuwait to the United States. A highlight of the week is a ceremony at the Library of Congress where their published writing is placed in the Library of Congress, ensuring that the student’s words will be available to all. For more information about the National Recognition Week please go to www.dtwt.org.

Although Covid-19 has disrupted classes across the country, we know it is more important than ever to listen to our young students who are still dealing with the effects of violence. Enclosed is a packet titled Instructions for Classroom Teachers, which explains DtWT in more detail. This packet includes information about program rules, entry deadlines, selection criteria, classroom discussions and student recognition. In addition you will find a brief summary of research from the University of Texas at El Paso outlining the benefits of using DtWT and information on how the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s campaign on “Changing Minds” dovetails with DtWT. All of this information can also be downloaded at our website, www.dtwt.org. **Note we suggest that student writings be submitted to the local coordinator for the National Campaign to Stop Violence by 5:00 PM by Friday, March 12, 2020, but check the website for your local deadlines and coordinator contact information.**

If you have any questions, please call Lisa Cone at 1-800-256-0235 or email info@dtwt.org. Thank you again for participating in this year’s program. We wish your students success and hope to see you and one of your students in Washington, D.C. next July, if conditions permit.