

HOW THIS PILLAR WORKS

We have designed this pillar differently as it includes an actual curriculum for the project. We did this so that organizations that have never attempted an art project of this size with youth will have everything they need. We also designed it so that you will have all the necessary information to pull from if you are looking for grant funding or to give to the school or organization that you are partnering with on the mural. Feel free to copy and paste anything you need.

OUR STORY

We discovered when implementing the Student Pledge Against Gun Violence in schools throughout New Mexico that there was a profound need for our youth to have a creative space in which they could communicate their thoughts and emotions on the issue of gun violence and how it affects them. As mentioned in the Pledge pillar, the events the students planned were usually art based. Students communicated to us that they wished they could participate in more art based programs, as many art programs have been cut from curriculums in our schools. We also observed that students wanted to do more in their schools on the issue of gun violence after we implemented the Pledge. From these observations, Murals to End Gun Violence was born. The purpose was to create lasting messages of nonviolence, peace, and gun violence prevention in our schools and communities. We wanted these murals to be youth driven and created by the students. Our only rule was that there could be no guns or bloody images in the mural and that the murals had positive messaging.

HOW TO GET STARTED

MURALS TO END GUN VIOLENCE (BRIEF OUTLINE)

- Hire a facilitating artist or supervisor.
- 2. Identify a school or community and meet with interested parties.
- 3. Secure a wall or create a portable mural (if portable, confirm where it will be installed).
- Meet with youth participants:
 - a) Discuss the project.
- b) Presentation outlining the challenges of gun violence from your project supervisor and/or facilitator. Include a discussion with participants about gun violence in their community, city, and the United States.
- c) Artist presentation demonstrating "how-to" make murals, the importance of murals in activism, etc., making sure to celebrate the community and avoid negative messaging.
- 5. Mural creation (Get approval of final image from the school).
- 6. Unveiling/ celebration (Have an event with media, families, community leaders, etc.).
- 7. Build on the momentum created each time to grow your story across the state.

PROGRAM KIT

What you need before you launch:

- 1. School or other community facility to do mural
- 2. Wall or a place within school or facility for the portable mural
- 3. Group of interested youth to participate
- 4. Mural artist who is also a youth facilitator
- 5. Financing for the project/Potential sources Cost for a mural is approximately \$8,000-\$10,000.
 - a) Individuals
 - b) Grants (Feel free to copy and paste from curriculum for any grant application.)
 - c) Social media/online
 - d) Government funds
- 6. Volunteers for food, organizing, transportation, and a person who will be the supervisor for the entire project.
 This person will be at the mural for the duration of the project to help facilitate.

TOOLKIT

Funding

School or community center, etc.

Application for students (Appendix)

Survey for students (Appendix)

Journals for students

Large white sheets of paper and Sharpies

Roll of butcher paper

Large t-shirts to protect clothing

Projector

Art supplies, including paints, brushes, etc. (Your artist facilitator will help with a list of what art supplies are needed.)



WHY A GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION MURAL

The MURALS TO END GUN VIOLENCE program was developed by New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence in 2016. As of this writing, we have facilitated and funded twelve murals. The purpose of the project is to engage young people in a creative, positive manner to address the problem of gun violence in our state and country. We have produced murals in seven schools, on a large public wall, in a teen treatment facility, at a gang intervention center, and in a Boys and Girls Club. The creation of a gun violence prevention mural is a powerful communication tool that expresses and amplifies every day the vital and much needed message of nonviolence. Along with the enduring message to reduce gun violence comes the added benefit of leaving behind a community beautified, unified, and strengthened. The mural serves as an educational tool for prevention and fosters individual and personal growth for participants.

The mural process provides a space where youth have the opportunity to deeply analyze this issue and then create specific and powerful messaging to educate their peers and the public regarding how gun violence affects our youth and communities, as well as what steps we can take to prevent it. (The majority of youth who have participated in our New Mexico murals live in high-risk situations and have often experienced gun violence firsthand.) The program gives these young people an opportunity to articulate their concerns in a positive environment and encourages their personal ingenuity, knowledge, and creativity as young artists. The process enhances their own personal development and growth as young people by challenging them to articulate their thoughts, to listen and communicate effectively to their peers, and to problem solve. The very act of creating the mural teaches our young people the importance of civic participation and inspires them to be agents of change. Most importantly, the program and finished mural send a clear message to our youth that their lives matter and deserve to be protected.

PEACE IS COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

Collaboration is at the heart of this program. The mural is a shared visual project and incorporates the ideas of all participants. Working together, the group conceives and develops the ideas and messaging of the mural. The process engages everyone's artistic ideas, personal stories, and experiences. Through the collaborative process, participants learn creative problem solving, innovative thinking skills, cognitive development, team building, leadership skills, and conflict resolution.

PERSONAL GROWTH

The program offers an opportunity for personal growth. Participants discover individual potential as well as personal, emotional, and social development. The participatory nature of the program allows youth to take positive risks in communication as they incorporate their own individual ideas in the mural creation. Failure during the process is an opportunity to learn and grow. The participants assume a shared artistic responsibility and a willingness to accomplish the creation of the mural. Because the process is developmental, it has the opportunity to transfer life skills to other areas, including home, peer relationships, school, community, work, etc.

ARTISTIC SKILLS

By working with youth on these murals, we are building opportunities for young people not only to engage in social action and personal development, but also to learn artistic skills that will last a lifetime. Participants acquire valuable drawing and painting skills, including creating a color wheel, learning brush techniques, grid work, and technical skills. They will develop aesthetic awareness and experience the creation of an original work of art from beginning to the final product.

FUNDING

Each mural costs approximately \$8,000-\$10,000. We have included a budget in the Appendix for you to use for grants, etc. The main cost of the mural is to hire an artist and facilitator. We pay our facilitator \$5,000. We also pay our participants \$200.00 stipends. The rest of the cost goes to art supplies and meals.

SUPERVISOR / ORGANIZER

This position can be volunteer or paid. The Supervisor/Organizer will help with all the basic logistics, including securing funding, meeting with the school or organization, confirming the wall or temporary space for a portable mural, organizing meals for participants, creating the contract for facilitator, invoicing youth participant stipends, as well as organizing an event to unveil the mural. In addition, this person will be present for the entire mural process in order to support the facilitator and assist with any needs that arise. The Supervisor/Organizer should be someone who is effective in interaction with young people and good at organizing events. If necessary, an assistant can help with meals and other logistics.

FACILITATOR / ARTIST

It is imperative that the facilitator be a muralist AND an arts educator. Usually, the youth we have worked with have had little exposure to arts education opportunities. These are youth-driven projects and should not be about the facilitator's artistic vision, but about the messaging and imagery collectively determined by youth participants. The Facilitator/Artist should be well versed in teaching artistic skills such as paint wheels, blending, drawing, etc.

MURAL GOALS

- 1. Provide youth a space to explore and problem solve on the issue of gun violence.
 - 2. Connect ideas, experiences, feelings and beliefs.
 - 3. Communicate the need for safety and gun violence prevention.
 - 4. Strengthen partnerships (law enforcement, schools, key stakeholders).
 - 5. Educate community on the effects of gun violence.
 - 6. Beautify, strengthen and celebrate the community.

MURAL OBJECTIVES

- 1. Construction of messaging, ideas and images onto mural and creation of mural.
 - Engage group in arts/creation and new skill sets and abilities.





EXAMPLES OF LANGUAGE TO USE

Clarifician	
Clarifying	Interpreting, clarifying misunderstandings, defining terms
	"Tell us what you meant when you said that it was oppressive. We may not all have the same definition of oppressive."
Encouraging	Being warm, friendly, responsive, respectful "We're all learners in this process."
Evaluating	Asking questions that encourage group members to examine an issue from a different perspective.
	"How does that comment relate to the way others in the room might feel in a similar situation?"
Gatekeeping	Managing time and group participation
	"Let's hear from some of the people who haven't said much today"
Giving	Offering facts or personal experiences to clarify a point
	"That is a relevant observation. In fact, that very thing happened at"
Initiating	Suggesting new ideas, definitions, approaches "Perhaps if we looked at the issue this way"
Orienting	Bringing the group back to task
	"That's an interesting point. Perhaps we can discuss it further later or during a break because now we really need to get back to what we started."
Resolving Conflicts	Conciliating differences, cooperative problem solving
	"Even though you feel that way, Jason, can you understand what Tina is saying?"
Seeking	Asking for clarification, suggestions, more information "What has your experience been?"
Summarizing	Pulling it all together, restating points "What I think I hear you saying is" "Let's review what we just discussed"

SOCIAL WORKER / COUNSELOR

Because we are working with youth who have often lost loved ones to gun violence or have been victims themselves, they can become triggered when talking about the issue. During the discussion days, it may be necessary to have a counselor or therapist present. It can be the school counselor or someone who is trained to help facilitate difficult conversations.

FINDING A WALL / ORGANIZATION

As mentioned at the beginning of this pillar, we have facilitated murals in schools and at other youth organizations. If their wall space is not available, you can create murals on 4x6 pieces of plywood that can lean against a wall. Wooden easels can be crafted to secure the portable panels.

LENGTH OF PROJECT

These projects vary in length. Usually with schools, it is only possible to work on the weekends. In those situations, the mural can take several months to complete. If it is a summer program at a youth center, it may be possible to work four or five days a week. Those projects are often completed in approximately 6 weeks.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

Before the mural project begins, meet with school administration to discuss expectations and any issues that may arise.

ITEMS TO DISCUSS:

- · Location of mural.
- Whether or not the mural will be portable or on a wall.
- · Size of mural.
- Weekdays that it is possible to work with youth on the mural.
- School availability to work on weekends.
- Number of students that will be able to participate in the mural program.
 (7 is a good number).
- Place to store art supplies.
- Insurance coverage.
- Safety protocols.
- Availability of a counselor.
- Permission to photograph students for press and social media.
- Any questions the school or organization may have about the project.

MEET WITH POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN THE PROJECT

- Explain project (why it is important to create murals of nonviolence).
- Group discussion about gun violence and how it can be prevented. (This conversation will continue throughout the mural process).
- Group discussion about murals/art being a vehicle of change. (This conversation will continue throughout the mural process).
- Show images of murals that reflect social action, community empowerment, and gun violence prevention. Feel
 free to take images from the NMPGV website at www.newmexicanstopreventgunviolence.org.
- Discuss the importance of commitment, stipends, food, dates, etc.
- Questions.
- Hand out applications for mural project. (Appendix) Set a completion date that works with the students'
 schedules. Applications are only for commitment purposes and to give youth participants an opportunity to begin
 formulating thoughts about the issue. All students who are willing to commit are welcome.

FIRST MEETING

- Circle gathering with introductions and team-building activities. (There are many team-building activities that can be found online.)
- 2. Establish Expectations. This is an important step. It allows space to discuss the environment this group wants to create as a collective for the project. Discussion items can include individual expectations and needs, safe collaboration, respect for other ideas and work, honoring commitment to project, food allergies, etc. This should be a group discussion and not simply a list that the facilitator communicates. We use a large sheet of paper (giant 3M Post-it) which will be posted at every meeting. There may be issues that arise during the mural process that need to be added or times when it is necessary to refer back to the list of expectations.
- 3. Scheduling and transportation discussion. Many of our youth participants have jobs, so we try to find a way to work around their schedules. Check and see if there are transportation issues and if rides need to be organized, etc. If they are under 18, you will need a written permission slip from a parent.
- 4. Signed media releases for photos and social media. If students are under 18, parents need to sign the release. Most schools already have releases signed by their students. If participants do not want their photos taken, it is important to respect those wishes.

5. Hand out journals: These journals are for youth use during writing and drawing exercises. Journals will be the participants to take home after the mural is completed. Participants often use the journals to draw and design or write down mural ideas between sessions. We encourage participants to bring in any previous drawings, doodles or sketches that they would like to have considered for the mural.

SECOND MEETING: EFFECTS OF GUN VIOLENCE ON OUR COMMUNITIES AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC ART AND MURALS AS VEHICLES OF CHANGE.

- Check in and do a team-building activity and a fun art activity.
- 2. PowerPoint presentation on the issue of gun violence in both the United States and the state/city in which the mural is being done. This is important to establish context and as an educational tool for youth participants.
- 3. Discussion about the issue of gun violence. This will be a discussion that continues during the creation process.
 A social worker or counselor may be useful to help youth process their emotions.
- 4. Discussion about murals and how they function as a means to communicate messages of non-violence, promote peace, offer solutions, and build awareness.
- 5. The Wind is Blowing exercise. This is a helpful way to begin conversation.

THE WIND IS BLOWING EXERCISE

The Facilitator will read statements beginning with "the wind is blowing for anyone who believes ..." if you agree with the statement, you must get up and move to another part of the room. Following each statement will be a discussion about why students did or did not move. The most important part of this activity is getting youth to explain WHY they agree with a particular statement. The goal is to have participants listen to one another and delve deeper into the issue.

Note to facilitator: If you are constrained by space or other issues, every person who agrees with the statement can stand up, raise their hand, move to another seat, or move to one side of the room.

THE WIND IS BLOWING EXERCISE (CON'T)

STATEMENT EXAMPLES:

- The wind is blowing for anyone who believes there is too much violence in our society.
- The wind is blowing for anyone who believes that schools have a problem with violence.
 - The wind is blowing for anyone who believes the media influences or contributes to violence in our society.
 - · The wind is blowing for anyone who believes gun violence is a problem in our city.
- · The wind is blowing for anyone who believes gun violence is hurting our communities.
 - The wind is blowing for anyone who believes gun violence is hurting our families.
- The wind is blowing for anyone who believes youth have too easy access to firearms
 - · The wind is blowing for anyone who knows a victim of gun violence.
 - The wind is blowing for anyone who has lost a loved one to gun violence.
- The wind is blowing for anyone who believes communities can work together to end gun violence.

Facilitate a group discussion about "The wind is blowing" exercise and gun violence.

6. Circle gathering and group discussion, questions, etc.

THIRD MEETING: EXPLORATION OF THE ROOT CAUSES OF GUN VIOLENCE IN COMMUNITIES AND ITS IMPACT ON YOUTH.

- Check in and team building activity and an art activity.
- 2. Group discussion about the causes of gun violence. Ask participants what they think are the root causes of gun violence in their community. Write these down on a large piece of paper for future use when creating the mural.
- "Something is Wrong" Exercise. It may be good to have a counselor help facilitate this exercise.

SOMETHING IS WRONG EXERCISE

Explain that David Banner was moved after the video of Derrion Albert's beating on the internet. He sent out his original song to artists around the country and four Chicago artists responded, which led to this remix. Pass out the lyrics to the song and play the song. Ask participants to share their thoughts on the song by going around the room and sharing one phrase in the poem that they enjoyed. This fosters and deepens the trust and strength in the group. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tandbtQb27s

In their journals, have participants reflect on the causes of violence mentioned in the song. You can ask them to identify the causes that they believe are the most important, which causes they disagree with or have questions about and if there are any causes of violence that were not mentioned in the song. Have participants share what they wrote.



SOMETHING IS WRONG [REMIX]

David Banner featuring Twista, Naledge, Rhymefest, Skooda Chose & Lisa Ivey

[Rick Sanchez - taken from a CNN interview regarding Derrion Albert:]

But, but I just gotta ask you though
Because at that moment where you have that brick
Or where you have that that two by four
And you're bust about to bust the skull
Of a fellow human being open with it

And you're about to crush him
Or kill him or stomp him or kick him
When he's on the ground bleeding already
Something's gotta be real wrong

[Chorus: Lisa Ivey]

If you look at all the hurt, look at all the pain People are dying and it's such a shame

They know something's wrong (But won't nobody say it)
They know something's wrong (But won't nobody say it)
They know something's wrong (But won't nobody say it)
(I'll put it in a record, but will anybody play it?)

[David Banner]

In Chi-Town, D. Albert's laying on the ground
His life bleeds away while other folks stand around
We gangstas but we can't stop the pain in our town
I watched it on the net and that moment was profound

The OG'z gotta put the BG'z in check
I'm tryna do sum'hin but I need y'all help
We started gang bangin' to protect ourself
Now it's power and respect to kill everything for wealth

And it's the same thing in rap
You tell the kids to stay hood and you ain't even in the trap
He ain't never sell dope, he ain't never did time
And if you did, why would you want them to walk the same lines?

It's like we travel back in time

Took the whip with the crack, now it's black-on-black crime

Yeah, we put our cities on the map

But they call it the trap because most hoods are just that, a trap

[Repeat Chorus]

[Rhymefest]

Everybody wanna talk about these problem kids But that ain't what the problem is and it's obvious

Imagine if the Cosby kids had to rob to live
While Rudy HIV positive ...it's different now
Oh they wanna serve and protect the gifted child
While shorties out here duckin' shots, yeah these ___ are wild
They raised a hundred million dollars for an Olympics that we ain't even get
But you starving on the street and you can even get a hundred thou

Stop the police
They not babysitting but they guard Barack Obama's house that he don't even live in
I gotta lisp but my tongue ain't bit
You got a clip but your ___ don't spit

They got cameras on the poles

But it ain't catch what sun guy hid

But you can see it on a YouTube clip

Blair Holt was an honor student

Derrion Albert was an honor student

We kill each other but it just ain't got no honor to it

And we can't expect for Kanye or Com to do it

It's up to us, it's real talk

This is honest music

[Skooda Chose]
Work to go, been a battleground
You say something going's on
I say something's been wrong
Same old song

Reminiscin' Shock G
On 87th St. they be killin' dudes over G-shocks
In Englewood the phone poles hang Reeboks
Like Nas said, this ain't rappin', this is street hop

Cause see when Mayor Daley worry about the games in '16
I was reading in the paper that they tore down Ida B
When Oprah Winfrey and Bono was shutting down the Mag Mile
I was reading about the death of a black child
But what you expect when leaders ain't leadin'
Teachers ain't teachin' Politicians still thievin'

[Repeat Chorus]

[Twista]

Just look at the murderers, look at the killers, li'l shorty whatever you shootin'
I know that you hurtin' and you gotta get it li'l homey but see what you doing
Fightin' and shootin' each other now take a look at where it put y'all
When y'all fin to settle it over a rugged game of football
But they wouldn'ta did it if we could take some of the money the city be spending and put it
back in the community and in the schools and we could just get down to business

If you ain't believin' that something is wrong just take a look at the percentage of people that sufferin' where I'm from so I'ma stand up and get with it And rest in peace to Derrion and Im'a pray for them who gotta bury him And shorties use the experience as an example, you ain't a barbarian You are a divine creation of God think your body is a temple And that's why I'm taking my time to tell it to you on this instrumental

- 5. Group Pictionary game on large white sheets of paper.
- 6. Circle gathering. Discussion of day, questions, issues etc.

FOURTH MEETING: IMPACTS OF GUN VIOLENCE ON YOUTH

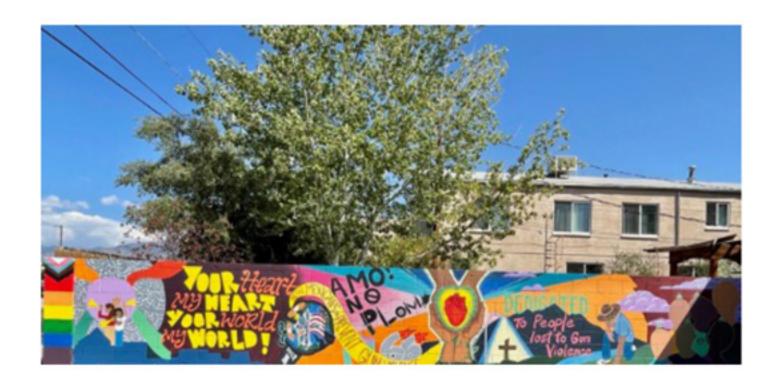
- Check in, fun art activity, and ask if anyone wants to share a drawing or journal entry about something that
 they think would fit in the mural.
- 2. Activity: Impact of Gun Violence on Youth (If needed or preferred, have a counselor for this exercise.)
 - a) Divide participants into groups of three to five people.
 - b) Give each group a piece of butcher paper.
- c) Ask the groups to list the several ways that young people are impacted by gun violence and have them write their ideas on piece large butcher paper. (15 min)
- d) Next ask them to consider the several ways that communities are impacted by gun violence and write on a large piece butcher paper. (15 min)
- e) Once everyone has had 30 minutes to work with their group, ask for a spokesperson to summarize their discussion for the larger group of participants.
- f) Facilitator concludes this part of the activity by asking participants why they believe that it is important to understand the impact(s) of gun violence.
- g) Put a large white sheet of paper next to each paper from the impact exercise. Have participants do timed a ten-minute drawing at each paper that reflect the ideas written on the paper about the impact of gun violence on our youth. Challenge participants not to use guns or bloody and violence imagery in the drawings. Participants can use their phones for imagery ideas as well as find an image that they want to trace. This helps some of the participants who have not had much experience in drawing. (This can be done in all of the drawing exercises.)
- h) Group discussion of images and how they might fit in the mural. This is the beginning of the cooperative design of the mural.
- 3. YouTube videos of murals being made. There are a lot of these on YouTube and you can choose ones that best fit your particular group.
- 4. Closure Circle. This is an opportunity for participants to bring up any thoughts or emotions that came up, ideas for mural issues, etc.

FIFTH MEETING: HOW CAN GUN VIOLENCE BE PREVENTED

Check in, team building activity or an art activity. Ask if anyone wants to share a drawing or journal
entry about something that they think would fit in the mural.

VISUAL STORY WRITING AND DRAWING EXERCISE FOR MURAL

- In journals, write words that convey the causes of gun violence (15 minutes)
 - In journals write words that convey gun violence prevention (15 minutes)
- Discussion of words and facilitator will write them on two large white sheets of paper. One titled cause and one titled prevention.
- Drawing exercise. Put large sheets of paper on different tables around the room.
 Write one of the words on the top of each piece of paper. Have participants do a timed drawing on each piece of paper. Again, challenge participants to not use guns or bloody imagery in the drawings.
- Discussion of drawings and words and how they may fit into the mural sketch.
- 2. Closure Circle: This is an opportunity for youth to bring up any thoughts or emotions that came up.



SIXTH MEETING: CELEBRATING COMMUNITY

In this session we will focus on participants' particular community: What they love about their community, what is unique in their community, what makes them proud about their community, what is their favorite place to go in their community, and what changes they would like to see in their community.

- Check in and do team-building activity or art activity. Ask if anyone wants to share a drawing or journal entry about something that they think would fit in the mural.
- 2. Writing and art activity about community resilience. Celebrating Community Writing and Drawing Exercise.
- 3. Have students spend five minutes on each journal topic:
 - a) What do they love about their community.
 - b) What makes them proud about their community.
 - c) What is unique about their community.
 - d) What changes would they like to see in their community.
- 4. Group discussion to share their ideas about their community.
- 5. Write their ideas on large pieces of paper at the top. Do timed ten-minute drawings so that each student can draw images of the ideas that came out of the writing exercise. Again, they can use their phones and/or trace images.
- 6. Discussion of how these images and ideas could fit in the mural.
- 7. Watch Film "Unidos: Against Gun Violence" and discuss.
- 8. Closing circle

SEVENTH MEETING: SUMMARIZING IDEAS AND IMAGES

(If there are not enough ideas and images, take more days to create them.)

- Check in and ask to see if anyone wants to share a drawing or journal entry about something that they think
 would fit in the mural.
- 2. Tape all the papers to the wall and discuss which images and messaging could potentially be a part of the mural and if a design is starting to take shape.

- 3. Put large pieces of butcher paper on a table (or tables) and have youth cut out words and images that they agree would communicate a gun violence prevention message, as well as images that are a celebration of their community and demonstrate its resilience. Working together, have them decide potential places that the images can go, how big they want them to be, words, persons, etc.
- 4. Discussion of large image. What works, what images could enhance the messaging, what words? Create a list of words and images to add in the next coming sessions.

Ex. of drawing:



EIGHTH MEETING: WORKING WITH COLOR AND PAINT

- Check in and explain that this session will be more like an art class in order to help prepare them for painting of the mural.
- 2. Art Class: How to use paint brushes and blending exercise(s).

3. Art activity:

Why is it important to know how to mix colors?
What are the psychological effects of colors?
How do you create colors for a desired effect?
How does color affect and express emotions?

4. How to make a color wheel

NINTH MEETINGS: CREATING FINAL DESIGN

(This may take several sessions.)

- 1. Check in and ask if anyone wants to share a drawing or journal entry about something that they think would fit in the mural.
- Have students work on and add to the list of images created the week before. Again, students can use their phones and facilitators can print images if the participants want to trace them onto the mural draft.
- 3. At the end of each day, have youth cut images and continue to work together to decide where they want the images and written messages to be placed.

Once the design is finalized, it is time to begin painting the mural. Before beginning, get school (or other) approval for the design!

TENTH MEETING: MURAL PAINTING

- 1. Check in.
- 2. Facilitator will teach participants different painting techniques, i.e. spray paint, brushwork, line work for words, etc.
- Project image on wall. (This may have to be done at night.)

Part G

UNVEILING: HONORING THE ARTISTS

The unveiling of the mural is an important moment for participants. Any event should be focused on their wishes. In the past, we have had unveilings that were a luncheon to which participants invited family and friends. Other times, we have had public events with mayors, city leaders, and the press in attendance. At the unveiling, we hand out participant stipends, certificates of completion, and a framed picture of the mural for them to take home.

APPENDIX

- Mural Application for Students
- · Project Scope and Service Quote for Gun Violence Prevention Mural
- Student Art Project Survey