



Grandparents Against Gun Violence Meeting Minutes July 23, 2019

Our Mission:

We work to reduce gun violence to keep all children safe at home, at school and in our community.

President Judy Sherry convened the meeting at Colonial Church in Prairie Village at 4:05 pm.

Barb McNeile asked all who had volunteered at Lock It For Love events to come forward to be recognized. Fifty-seven volunteers have staffed one or more events since July 29, 2017 working 645 hours. 1,929 free gun locks have been given out at 86 events throughout the metropolitan area. Seventeen events are scheduled in the next five months. LIFL volunteers were honored with roses, and we all celebrated with cupcakes.

Judy reminded attendees of the Corinth Square Panera fundraiser following the meeting where 20% of the proceeds will be donated to GAGV.

Julie Young gave her monthly report from the Gun Violence Archives website: 8,111 gun deaths (not including suicides) have occurred this year including 184 children aged 0-11.

Help wanted. GAGV has three major needs:

1. Facebook Administrator: Our long-time administrator is retiring. Do you know someone or would you be interested in a volunteer position to post news about GAGV and gun violence on the Grandparents Against Gun Violence Facebook page?
2. Administrative Assistant – Half-time, paid position.
3. Office space – for the Assistant and all of the Lock It For Love materials.

Please contact Judy at judy@sherrymo.com

Kim Shaw-Ellis, Instructor for the Kansas City, Missouri Regional Police Academy as well as the Diversity Officer for KCPD and the LGBTQ Liaison Officer, presented “Helping our LGBTQ Youth Thrive and Survive.” Officer Shaw-Ellis described her job as being a liaison between minority communities that feel under-served and to give them a voice, including the LGBTQ community. She trains officers on how to most effectively work with the diverse minority populations in Kansas City and recruits people from the LGBTQ community and other minority groups to join the police department so KCPD can look more like the city it serves.

- LGBTQ – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/Questioning
- 10-15% of kids identify as LGBTQ.
- Almost half of homeless youth are LGBTQ. The number one factor for their being homeless is parental rejection.

- LGBTQ youth suffer more violence than non-LGBTQ identified youth: sexual assault, murder, physical harm, hate violence, bullying, suicide and self-harm.
- LGBTQ youth are at more risk for homelessness, drug/alcohol abuse, survival sex work, and suicide than non-LGBTQ identified youth.
- Perpetrators may be family members, peers, teachers, coaches and employers. The victim may feel confused about who to turn to for help which leads to distrust, fear of commitment and isolation. A huge risk factor is that they don't feel "a part of" or included.
- LGBTQ youth list their three top problems: bullying, non-accepting families and fear of being outed.
- LGBTQ identified youth thrive and survive with:
 - A supportive environment
 - Support from family and peers
 - Safe and affirming school environment
 - Presence of organizations such as Gay/Straight Alliance in schools
 - Family connectedness
- What you can do:
 - Be mindful of your reaction and your own implicit bias
 - Show respect
 - Try to avoid assumptions about sexual orientation
 - Use neutral pronouns
 - Mirror language

Advocacy project of the month: CiCi Glasgow, Outreach & Education Manager of the Kansas City Anti-Violence Project/KC Passages, introduced us to Passages Youth Group, a safe, affirming place where 14- to 20-year-old LGBTQ youth can be themselves, socialize and learn. The drug-free, alcohol-free and hate-free group convenes from 5:30 to 9 p.m. each Wednesday at Trinity United Methodist Church, 620 E. Armour Blvd., Kansas City, Mo.

A needs list will be printed in the next GAGV newsletter, and donations can be brought to our August meeting. A sign-up sheet was provided to bring cookies to their Wednesday meetings, and GAGV members can write notes of care and support to their youth.

The next meeting is Monday, August 23.

Judy Sherry adjourned the meeting at 5:25 pm.

Minutes submitted by Charlotte Davison, GAGV Secretary