

Safe Streets and Homes

Greg D. liked to hang out with Willie because Willie was tough. He made Greg feel safe in the streets. One day, Willie said to Greg and his friends, "Let's go bother some people in the subway." Greg was too afraid to say no. "We're not going to hurt anybody, are we?" Greg asked. "No, we'll just harass them," said Willie. They went into the subway.

Willie approached some people on the platform to rob them while the others waited. Suddenly, he turned around, a knife in his hand and blood all over him. One of the victims had fought back and been stabbed to death. "Run!" Willie shouted. They ran, but the police caught them.



Greg was frightened even though he knew that he had done nothing wrong. The police told him his *Miranda* rights — that he had the right to remain silent. Greg thought he would just tell them what happened and not be in trouble. The police videotaped everyone as evidence. Today, they are all in prison, serving a twenty-five-years-to-life sentence for a murder they had never even planned to commit.

In this chapter, you will learn about saving your life by staying far away from trouble. You will learn how young people all over the country are stopping violence and crime in ways that can really work.

Say No to Crime

Can you say no to crime? Small crimes have a way of turning into big crimes. Willie probably did not plan to kill anyone. He knew he only wanted to rob some people. But he had a knife, and he picked a woman who looked as if she would not struggle. He was wrong. As a result, a knife plus a plan had equaled murder.

What could Greg have done to stop this crime? Could Greg have said no to tagging along? Could he have said he wanted to do something else? Should Greg have been a better boss of himself? You alone are the boss of your own behavior—nobody else!

Friends

It is easier to say no to a small crime before it turns into something big than to stop a big crime. Sometimes, you might need help saying no. You may be afraid that your friends will hurt you or think you are not

CHECK vocabulary words in bold.
LOOK UP word meanings in the glossary beginning on page 92.



CRITICAL THINKING

Can you think of people you admire who are nonviolent? How do they deal with anger and conflict?



Street kid Gino says: "I used to belong to a gang. I thought they were my best friends. All I got for my loyalty was trouble. Friends like that plus alcohol, drugs, or weapons equals murder. Think about it."



CRITICAL THINKING

People who feel good about themselves do not have to use violence to solve problems or differences. Can you explain this?

“cool” if you do not go along with them. They may even call you names and try to make you angry.

When this happens, is there one adult you trust who can help you say no? Are you strong enough, smart enough, and cool enough to stand up to your friends? You can say that you have things to do at home. You can have another idea of a fun thing to do that does not hurt anybody. You have a right to say no.

Sometimes, people—especially young people—get into trouble just by being with people who are doing criminal things. Sometimes, they do not even agree to commit a crime before it happens. Sometimes, they are bystanders who are taken by surprise. Look at the case of Dina G.

Tricked into Crime

Dina G. liked going out with Reggie. He always had lots of money and bought her nice clothes and jewelry. But she did not know that he was a drug dealer.

One weekend, he invited her to go on a trip to Washington. He had secretly planned to pick up some drugs from a drug seller. Dina and Reggie drove in his car to the pickup place. Dina still had no idea what was happening. What Reggie did not know was that the police were watching him.

After Reggie picked up the drugs, he told Dina he had decided to stay in Washington alone for a couple of days. He gave Inez the car and asked her to drive it back to New York. The police waited until she had crossed the state line from Delaware into New Jersey. Reggie’s illegal act had just now become a federal offense because something illegal had been transported from one state into another.

Dina was arrested. There was a kilogram, or about a pound, of an illegal drug in the trunk of the car. Although shocked and an innocent victim, Dina was charged with possession and with crossing a state line with drugs. The judge set bail at \$1.5 million.

Could what happened to Dina ever happen to you? If you made a list of your friends, which ones would you most likely hangout with? Why? What things do you like to do together? Could any of these activities turn into trouble? What can you do to so that this never happens to you?

You Have the Power to Stop Violence: Do you know someone who has been killed? Was that person killed by someone he knew? Half of the homicides in the United States happen between people who know each other. Often, the people are even in the same family!

People do not start out planning to murder their brother, cousin, sister, or friend. They argue. The fight gets out of control. Sometimes, there are weapons around. Someone grabs a gun or a knife. Sometimes, one person may go away and then return with friends or come back with a gun or a knife. Half of the time, at least one person in the fight has been drinking or taking drugs. A person under the influence of a substance that causes them to lose control of their behavior is dangerous.

DID YOU KNOW? Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith is an African American doctor and teacher who helps juveniles learn to stop their violent behavior. Schools that have used her method have less violence and crime and more learning.

EYE OPENER A Massachusetts study showed that 7 percent of twelve-to-fifteen-year-olds were assaulted in one year; 16 percent of sixteen-and seventeen-year-olds; and 18 percent of eighteen-and nineteen-year olds were assaulted in that same year.

Chapter 18. pages: 87 &88

1. Why did Greg follow along with Willie?

2. What happened to Greg? _____

3. What should have Greg waited to do? _____

4. What will you learn in this chapter?

5. Small planned crimes often turn into what?

6. You alone are the boss of what? _____

7. How do friends get others to go along with crime?

8. If you are strong enough, smart and cool enough to stand up to your friends, what can you do? _____

9. Sometimes people get into trouble just by _____

10. Sometimes people do not even agree to _____

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11. Why did Dina G. like Reggie? _____
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12. What did Dina not know about Reggie? _____
13. What was Reggie going to do in Washington? _____
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14. What caused Reggie's act to become a federal offense?
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15. What happened to Dina? _____
16. How much was her bail? _____
17. Half of the homicides in the US happen between _____
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18. Often people that are murdered are in the same _____
19. People don't start out planning to _____
-
20. A person under the influence of a substance that loses control is _____

Critical Thinking

(pages: 87 & 88)

1. Is there someone you admire that is nonviolent?
2. Why do you admire them or nonviolent people?
3. How do you think nonviolent people deal with anger and conflict?
4. How do you deal with anger and conflict?
5. Why do people who feel good about themselves not have to

use violence to solve problems?

6. What does Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith do?

7. Basically, what is her method? Look it up on google.