

Program Rules

These rules apply to every Palm Beach County Middle School participating in the Challenge:

1. Student entries, at minimum, should address three questions:

How has violence affected my life?
What are the causes of youth violence?
What can I do about youth violence?

All writings should address these questions in order to advance in the selection process. This is NOT a creative writing project. Students should address the questions honestly and should not invent situations.

2. Students may use any form of written expression (e.g. essays, poems, plays or songs) as long as the language is positive and not derogatory. Students may submit only one entry per year. Each entry must be the exclusive work product of only one student. Entries should be approximately 500 to 1000 words in length. Written forms of expression such as poetry that are shorter by their nature may contain fewer than 500 words.
3. Entries must either be typed (preferred) or they may be written legibly in black ink on 8 1/2" x 11" paper. Only one side of the paper may be used and ***all*** pages should provide the name of the student as well as page numbers.
4. Entries must be in English.
5. If the student participant uses a quotation or another person's material in his or her entry, the entry must identify whose work is being used by citing the person's name or citing the source of the material. Writings based upon plagiarism will NOT be advanced in the judging process.
6. Each entry must be firmly stapled to a "Cover Sheet" with the **consent statement signed** by the participating student *and* a parent or guardian. Entries without a signed Cover Sheet can NOT advance in the judging process. Just as importantly, entries without a cover sheet do not count for purposes of determining full participation by the school will not be accepted. The Cover Sheet should be photocopied and distributed by the teachers with the program rules.
7. Entries must be submitted in the form that they are received from the student writer. Everybody who makes a good-faith effort to participate is eligible for recognition as a Top 10 student. However, this rule does not preclude teachers from using the submission as a graded project or school assignment. School credit, if any, is given at the discretion of the teacher.¹

¹ Teachers, please send us the writings and the Cover Sheets of all of the students who submit an entry. In this program, everybody who makes a good-faith effort to participate deserves to be recognized and have his or her work considered in the selection process.