

# New Yorkers Against Gun Violence

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Working to Reduce Gun Violence Since 1993

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
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### **On Eve of Mother's Day Advocates Walk with Mothers of Children Killed by Stray Bullets**

#### **Call on Congress to Protect Families not Criminals and Call on State Senate to Pass the Gun Dealer Bill**

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**(Bronx, NY)** This morning, families of loved ones slain by illegal guns joined advocates at the playground in the Bronx where ten year old Naiesha Pearson was killed by a stray bullet while at a family picnic on Labor Day 2005. They marched to a local church, then gathered on 141<sup>st</sup> Street where they called for an end to the flood of illegal guns that arrive daily on the streets of New York. The recent shootings of children highlight the tragedy.

Jackie Kuhls, Executive Director of New York Against Gun Violence (NYAGV), one of the event's co-sponsors said, "Gun violence is one of the leading causes of death for young people in the United States, yet Congress and our President have done worse than turn their backs on the problem. They have contributed to the flood of illegal guns on our streets by denying law enforcement access to crime gun trace data that would help solve gun trafficking cases. They have protected rogue gun dealers by giving unprecedented legal immunity to the gun industry. Our elected officials in Washington must stop acting as special counsel to the gun industry and start taking action to protect our nation's children".

Gloria Cruz of St. Ann's Church, Aunt of Naiesha Pearson and co-sponsor of the event noted, "I conceived of this rally last year after grieving for my niece. Sadly, 8 children die from gun violence every day in our country. Many of us gathered here today have experienced this painful loss including the family of David Pacheco Jr. who was two years old when he was shot and killed while riding in his family's van. And one year ago, on Mother's Day, Samantha Guzman was shot and killed, just weeks before she was to graduate from High School. We must do all we can to prevent these tragedies."

Anne Durston of the American Friends Service Committee and co-sponsor of the event added, "Guns turn day to day altercations into deadly tragedy. Too many guns are available on the illegal market. We must work to bring peace to our communities by supporting neighborhood programs and leaders like those we have here today and by calling on our elected officials to take action and close off the supply of illegal guns."

Kuhls closed, "Mayor Bloomberg has led the way for local government action by initiating a Coalition of over 200 Mayors to address illegal guns and the public health crisis they cause. The New York State Assembly has also acted by passing a bill that will keep illegal guns off of our streets by requiring responsible business practices from gun dealers. We call on the State Senate to act on this measure as well. And finally, we demand that Congress and President Bush stop serving the gun lobby and start saving lives. The grieving families gathered here today have great courage and compassion, something our elected officials in Washington lack when it comes to gun violence prevention."

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