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By JAMES W. WADE III

Staff Reporter

Violence among our youth is out of control, each week more teens are dying at hands of another teen. Two shootings in 24 hours last week in Cleveland's Ward 2 have lead to a call for help and pleas for peace.

Ward 2 City Councilman Zack Reed was joined by fellow Cleveland Councilman Jeff Johnson, Marcus Saffold, president of the Black Shield Police Association and various community and neighborhood activists at the corner of East 144th Street and Glendale Avenue to ask for a halt to the violence that has resulted in eight deaths during the month of September.

The meeting was held just down the block from where a shooting caused the death of 27-year-old Duane C. Parker around 6 p.m. last Tuesday. Overnight, gunfire near East 135th Street and Miles Avenue sent another victim to the hospital with a bullet to the head. Cleveland police continue to investigate both incidents.

Reed said more needs to be done in combating violence, calling for a cease fire. “We as a city must find a way to raise revenue to bring back police officers and provide our city's police department with the resources they need,” Reed said.

City leaders are also planning a summit on violence. While no date has been announced, they want to include everyone from federal law enforcement to local institutions, including area hospitals.

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The solution to violence and weapon control in schools apparently has yet to be found and acting as individual entities is not working. Until parents, children, teens, schools and law enforcement become a cohesive unit and formulate a feasible chain, there will always be a weak link to exploit. Three components for developing a school shooter, the starting point initially should perhaps incorporate a mandate on tackling and resolving the issue of bullying .

A regional gun buyback in the Cleveland area has collected a record 706 weapons surpassing buybacks in 2007, 2008 and 2010. A total of over 700 firearms are now off the streets, thanks to the 2011 Multi-Community Greater Cleveland Gun Buy-Back event this past weekend.

The buyback program collected so many guns in the morning that they ran out of gift cards to pay for guns at all five locations before noon. Because of increased violence in recent weeks, Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson announced the gun buyback program. With all the violence going on recently, a buy back program can be held each weekend. Cleveland Police had their hands full unraveling events that led to a shooting death of a 17-year-old boy, then the shooting of an 11-year-old girl a few blocks away on the city's West Side.

"If people really knew the number of guns that are out here, it would scare the hell out of us," said Mike Walker, executive director of Partnership for a Safer Cleveland . Walker has worked for years with local and federal law enforcement officials to reach kids through a number of violence prevention efforts.

The sad part is that our youth are the victims in most of these crimes. Recently, police got a call for a Black male 18 years of age who was located lying in the street at E. 169 and Grovewood with gunshot wounds to the upper torso.

After a series of fatal shootings in involving Black youths, what measures could be taken to prevent more senseless killing of young boys? Even if you are sitting in your house minding your business it is a chance you can still be shot.