

The Youth Violence Project
CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

-----MAIN CHARACTERS -----

JAMES - age 10 and 17 -- Black male, refuses to become violent. Stands his ground through difficult situations. Raised by a single mom. Becomes a great basketball player. Goes to college.

KISHA - age 14 - Black female, James' sister. Is embarrassed by their poverty, Wants more, is into status. Thinks she is "mature" for her age and that hanging out with older boys makes her cool. Has an older boyfriend, Akeivo. Runs away with him and has his baby.

SEAN - age 10 and 17 - Black male, best friend of James. Is sensitive and quiet. Has very rough home life -- pent up anger. Learns to fight at an early age. Becomes a great basketball player. Joins a gang and gets killed in a gang shootout.

MICHAEL - ages 10 and 17 -- White male. Middle-income family. New kid in town. Is bullied at his new school. Parents don't have time to talk -- too busy with their careers. The pressure at school finally gets to him. He explodes in rage.

ANNE -- ages 12 and 19 -- White female. Was a sweet child, but after parents get divorced, mom becomes depressed and does not relate to her children. Anne becomes angry and unmanageable as she tries to get attention. Her temper indirectly causes her death when she becomes angry while being mugged.

BRAD -- ages 17 and 24 -- White male. Spoiled rich kid. . He does drugs and robs people for kicks. Has no fear. Is capable of killing someone. No conscience. Is a leader.

MARK - ages 17 and 24 -- White male. Middle-income family. Idolizes Brad. More shy and less angry than Brad. He is insecure. His parents give him everything he wants, but they can't communicate with him. Eventually Brad insults him, and Mark does a very violent thing in order to prove he is a tough guy.

-----SECONDARY CHARACTERS -----

AKEIVO -- age 22 -- Black male. Strong leader of a gang. Brought into the gang by his uncle, J. D. who is a drug dealer. Boyfriend of Kisha and father of her child. Gets killed in a gang shoot out.

JERMAINE - age 18 -- Black male. Follower-type. Follows Akeivo, his idol. Insecure, needs to belong. Has a thin veil of bravado.

J. D. -- ages 45 and 52 -- Black male. Older gang member, drug dealer. Drives the car for gang activities. Quietly does his business. Brought his nephew, Akeivo, into the gang. Later goes into neighborhoods looking for kids who might want to join a gang.

-----MINOR CHARACTERS -----

LATOYA - age 12 -- black female. Kisha's best friend.

DENISE - 30's -- Black female. Kisha and James' mom. Good woman, works hard, loves her kids. Gets mixed up with the wrong kind of men, but generally runs a tight ship. James appreciates her for her efforts to support the family since his father died.

MARIE - age 30's -- White female. Anne's mom. Is clinically depressed. She has simply stopped mothering since her divorce from Anne's father.

JAMAL - age 30's -- Black male. Denise's drunken boyfriend.

GAIL - age 30's. White female. Michael's mom. Hard working, middle income woman. Tries to be a good mom, but is preoccupied with work. Thinks Michael is just going through a phase with social problems and doesn't really listen.

PETER -- age late 30's. White male. Michael's dad. Middle-income. Busy developing his own career and has trouble relating to his pre-teen son.

JANET -- age late 40's. White female. Brad's mom. Wealthy socialite, out of touch with her son. Obsessed with appearances.

RICK -- age 50's. White male. Brad's dad. Older and out of touch with the world of a teenager. Quick tempered. Military in approach.

WEARY GARRETT -- age 40's. Black male. Sean's dad. Can't find steady work, is depressed and abusive to his family.

LAURA -- age 40. Black female. Sean's mom. Is abused by her unhappy husband.

LOGAN - age 16. White male. Rich kid. Allows Brad and Mark to break into his house and steal from his parents. Gives them the okay to do this if they will stay out of his room and give him a cut of what they steal from his parents. They don't keep their word.

HARLEY - age 10. White male. Best friends with Jeremy. Troublemaker. Bullies Michael.

JEREMY - age 10. White male. Best friends with Harley. Would follow Harley anywhere.

BIG ANT - age 11. White male. Bully. Tries to pick a fight with James after school one day. Sean tries to get James to fight him. James walks away.

MR. COVINGTON - age 48. Black male. High School principal.

SUE - age 11 and 18. White female. Anne's best friend. Is with Anne when she is mugged and shot.

CLERK - age 30. Runs the pawn shop where Brad and Mark hock the jewelry they stole from Logan's house.

POLICEMEN 1 and 2 - Drive up at the convenience store when the gang is trying to do a drug deal. Sean delivers the package to avoid attention by the policemen.