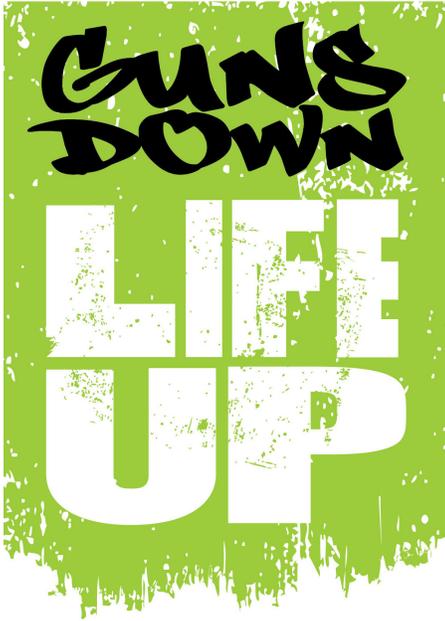


A Message from *Guns Down, Life Up*



At HHC, many of us have witnessed the tragedy and heartbreak of gun violence firsthand. Thousands of young men and women in New York City have their lives threatened and futures stolen by gun violence; many who are hospitalized and survive frequently return to our emergency departments, caught up in a violent cycle of retribution and retaliation.

Through *Guns Down, Life Up* (GDLU, philanthropic arm) has joined in the fight against gun violence. Maybe some of you have seen the GDLU T-shirts in your community, or at the recent Mayoral press conference about gun violence. Maybe some of you have met some of the inspiring people who take part in the GDLU programs. And maybe some of you are wondering: What is *Guns Down, Life Up*, exactly?

Guns Down, Life Up is a call to action to break the cycle of violence and empower youth to fulfill their potential by leading safer, healthier lives. With GDLU support, HHC public health experts at facilities and Central Office partner with youth and anti-violence organizations across New York City, using a hospital-based, community-centered approach to prevent and interrupt violence and provide youth with a better path to a safer future.

The *Guns Down, Life Up* model also provides opportunities for kids to choose healthy and engaging activities like cycling, music, and dance, and provides mentorship and life-skills development. Through an integrated approach offering continued



Mayor Bill de Blasio with City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Deputy Mayor of Health and Human Services Lilliam Barrios-Paoli

support and guidance, GDLU programs help to ensure that young people are cared for, respected, and encouraged. GDLU's youth empowerment programs complement the violence interruption and prevention work being done in the communities through the Cure Violence model, led by the work of violence interrupters and Hospital Responders – community members with personal experience with violence.

On Wednesday, June 11, 100 HHC staff members gathered at Harlem Hospital for the first GDLU Internal Planning Retreat. They were joined by leaders of other gun violence reduction movements (Harlem Mothers S.A.V.E. and I Love My Life/LifeCamp) and representatives of HHC's non-governmental partner organizations (Operation SNUG, Man Up!, and S.O.S. Crown Heights) for a dynamic day of powerful storytelling, strategic planning, and sharing of best practices and new ideas about how to reduce violence in our neighborhoods and communities.

Over the next few weeks and months, you'll be seeing and hearing a lot more about *Guns Down, Life Up*. It's our hope that you'll join us every step of the way because together, we can empower our young people to fulfill their potential.

Be sure to follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) with the hashtag [#GunsDownLifeUp](#).

Thanks – more soon,

The Guns Down, Life Up Team at The Fund for HHC
