

# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

The logo for Safer Teens, featuring the word "SAFER" in white and "TEENS" in orange, both in a bold, sans-serif font, set against a black background with a white border.

**AN INTERVIEW WITH**

**DR. BRIAN STORK**

**Co-Investigator**

**Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Center**

**HOW ARE YOU CONNECTED TO THE ISSUE OF YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION?**

I'm a physician in Muskegon, MI. Over the years, I've seen a lot of patients come into the emergency room with gun injuries. I felt like I had a responsibility to do something to prevent youth from ending up in the emergency room in the first place.

**WHAT IS THE MISSION OR PURPOSE OF SAFERTEENS?**

SafERteens is an evidence-based program developed by the Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Center (MI-YVPC) at the University of Michigan. Through the program, healthcare providers offer brief motivational interviewing sessions to youth who have risk factors for violence. Providers ask youth about their life goals and how substance use and violence could affect those goals. Youth are guided to explore their values and learn healthy conflict-resolution skills. Providers also refer youth to needed social services.

**WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN SAFERTEENS?**

As a community-based physician, I serve as an intermediary between the MI-YVPC, hospitals, and communities to help implement SafERteens into clinical practice in the most efficient, effective, and culturally-sensitive way possible.

**WHY IS PRIMARY PREVENTION FOR YOUTH VIOLENCE NEEDED?**

Gun violence is the number one cause of death among children and adolescents in the United States, and violent behavior is a precursor to gun violence. So the sooner we reach youth who are vulnerable to violence with the skills and support to stay healthy and safe, the better off we'll be.

**HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE SAFERTEENS GROW?**

SafERteens generates conversations about youth violence. I want those conversations not only to happen in the ER but also with parents and people in the community. I would like to see SafERteens implemented at hospitals and clinics around Michigan and ultimately across the Midwest and United States.

**IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE IN HONOR OF NATIONAL YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION WEEK?**

I'd like to share my empathy with what our youth are going through now. I want our youth to know that we care, and we're doing something positive to try to change this for them.

**WHERE CAN WE FIND YOU ONLINE?** <https://www.saferteens.org/home/>

To Learn More, Visit  
<https://yvpc.sph.umich.edu/>

**M** | YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION CENTER