

Grandparents for Gun Safety Meeting Minutes  
January 24, 2022

*Vision: All members of our community have the right to feel safe from gun violence.*

**Mission:** We focus on working for solutions, educating the community and seeking common ground reform that respects the rights of gun owners and non-owners alike.

President Judy Sherry convened the meeting at 4:00 pm on Zoom. Judy gave updates on two GGS goals: 1) Hiring an Executive Assistant (in the interview process), and 2) Expanding the Board from both inside the organization and in the community with people who share our passion for mitigating gun violence.

Say Their Names: As is our practice, Carol Gee read the names of the seven people killed by gun violence in the Kansas City Metropolitan Area since January 1. According to Gun Violence Archives, nationally there have been 2,744 homicides and 184 suicides during that time.

Membership Chair Joan Jacobson thanked all for their membership as the annual dues help pay for the advocacy and education we do in the community and the distribution of free gun locks. You may join or renew your membership at our website: [www.grandparentsforgunsafety.org](http://www.grandparentsforgunsafety.org)

Lock It For Love: In spite of Covid, Barb McNeile reported there were 28 community LIFL events in 2021, mainly drive-by or outdoor; 703 gun locks distributed; and 26 volunteers involved. 4,567 locks have been distributed since this program began in 2017. Please sign up to volunteer for 2022 LIFL opportunities on the website.

Advocacy: Carla Oppenheimer reported that several gun bills were filed in Kansas last year, and she will keep us updated. No bills were filed in Missouri. Post card campaigns will resume to reintroduce ourselves to Democratic lawmakers in Missouri, Kansas and nationally. Carla will also keep us updated on the status of a Kansas City, MO City Council resolution to place warning signs in places that sell firearms.

Program: Building on our efforts to address risk factors that contribute to gun violence, today's program focused on food and housing insecurity. Julie Young introduced GGS member Maribeth Brenneman who is active in a local, volunteer-driven program called Free Hot Soup, and its founder, Nellie McCool. Every week volunteers go to three downtown parks in Kansas City and four parks in the metro with home-cooked meals for people experiencing home and food insecurity and the systemic violence that can result. They call it a picnic with friends and serve 50-150 people a week. Nellie describes FHS as peace and fellowship at the park, no guns allowed, trauma informed, solution oriented. "You can de-escalate anything with a cup of soup." The picnics provide networking opportunities and build trust and relationships. FHS is not a 501(c)3 and

relies “on the kindness of people”; it is a community event totally reliant on volunteers providing what is needed.

Needs include nonperishable food donations, home cooked food, water, socks, gloves, boots, blankets, and camping gear. Monetary donations are accepted. For donation information, contact Maribeth Brennaman at [maribethogg@yahoo.com](mailto:maribethogg@yahoo.com). Additional information about donations will be available in the Feb. newsletter.

The next GGS meeting will be Monday, February 28 at 4 p.m.

Julie adjourned the meeting at 5:16 pm.