

DENVER YOUTH DISCUSS POSITIVE RESPONSE TO COLUMBINE SHOOTINGS

A recent discussion sponsored by the Denver youth division attracted members who shared their emotions, insights, perspectives and experiences in response to the Columbine High School shootings that occurred on April 20 in Littleton, Colo. The participants were in agreement that the shootings drove home an urgent need for powerful prayers and compassionate action for their community.

Most focused on the positive recourses they could take, as the discussion was based on an article on Mahatma Gandhi featured in the April *SGI Quarterly*. The article revealed that Gandhi even defined violence as a hurtful word said to another person. Cindy Huggett, a middle school student, described her own painful situation when a best friend had chided her for her faith in Buddhism. Although the incident occurred years ago, the memory still brought tears to her eyes, as she shared the brunt of unleashed cruelty.

To help create a more considerate, sensitive society, the participants said that they wanted to apply the spirit of SGI President Ikeda's poem "Youth! Scale the Mountain of the 21st Century!" Plans to home visit all the youth division members throughout the region were set, and a violence prevention committee was proposed. Emulating Gandhi, the youth division members encouraged one another to better society through their own behavior.

— *NICI FAWCETT*