



A New Year's message of hope and thanks from Christopher 2X

As we start the New Year, let's take a moment to salute the kids, parents and caregivers focused on positive experiences and building a bright future even as they struggle with grief and trauma because of gun violence.

I see hope, resilience, and happiness in the faces of the kids who participate in the Future Healers program, kids from age 4-13 who have been hit by stray bullets, lost a sibling, a parent, a friend to gun violence, or simply can't escape the sound of gunfire in their neighborhoods.

I've seen their wonder and excitement when they visit the Louisville Zoo for the first time, feed the giraffes, prepare food for the polar bears, and learn about the importance of animals for our environment. At UofL Hospital, I've seen our Future Healers delighted to put on a stethoscope and amazed when they hear the sounds of their own hearts beating.

These kids are healing, learning, and having fun with role models including UofL Medical School students and physicians and Zoo staff. They're becoming empathetic and realizing the importance of community and giving back. Helping them reach their potential also means we are building a stronger, better community for everyone.

I've seen in this past year much to celebrate in these kids and their families, despite what they've been through and despite a persistent pandemic and record-breaking gun violence. I am optimistic we will see more positive progress in 2022.

I am especially grateful for our partners and supporters whose help is vital in giving so many kids opportunities they deserve to find a path to a happy, safe, and fulfilling future. Helping these kids is my life's mission, and you can learn more by watching this video: [Christopher 2X Game Changers Mission](#)

Thank you for your support and may you have a healthy, safe, and happy New Year!

Christopher 2X
Executive Director
Christopher 2X Game Changers



Outfront Media has donated billboard space to display the above image recognizing Future Healers Got Zoo Buddies

FUTURE HEALERS GOT ZOO BUDDIES PROGRAM LAUNCHES TO HELP KIDS IN NEED

Future Healers and the Louisville Zoo are teaming up so kids who have suffered because of exposure to gun violence can experience the healing and therapeutic power of nature and animals.

All 50 Future Healers kids will continue visiting the Zoo, and 17 will participate in the new Future Healers Got Zoo Buddies program for exclusive educational programs, camps and behind-the-scenes experiences with Zoo staff and the animals.

Here's a brief video about Future Healers and the Zoo Got Buddies program: [Future Healers Got Zoo Buddies](#)

The Future Healers Got Zoo Buddies include "Little Healer Buddies," ages 4 to 8 who will engage in activities focused on learning about empathy for each other and for animals. "Big Healer Buddies," ages 9-13, will work on conservation projects that reinforce the concept of one mind, one body, one life and one plant.

In a news release about the program, Mayor Greg Fischer commended Christopher 2X and said the Zoo program "is building upon the great beginnings of the Future Healers program."

Louisville Zoo Executive Director Dan Maloney said the program is believed to be the first of its kind and can connect the kids with nature and animals in meaningful ways. "We hope these kids grow up with us, become part of our Zoo family and create a lifetime of memories while learning more about the planet we call home," he said.

Our partners in the Future Healers program at the UofL Hospital Trauma Center and the UofL School of Medicine, who provide programming focused on health, safety and well-being are excited about the new experiences for the kids.

"Adding this supplemental curriculum to Future Healers is a perfect complement to the existing healers medical component," said Dr. Christopher Jones, transplant surgeon at UofL Health, who noted the unified goal is "helping the kids heal."

We are thankful for the Zoo's commitment to help Future Healers kids, and excited for the opportunity for them to learn and grow through exposure to all that the Zoo has to offer.

THERE'S NO STOPPING FUTURE HEALER MALAKAI ROBERTS

Malakai Roberts, 6, is an enthusiastic Future Healer, joining the program in November after being left permanently blinded by stray bullets fired through his Lexington home as he slept on Dec. 21, 2021.

Since that tragic night, Malakai has demonstrated what his mother, Cacy Roberts, who suffered a hand injury in the shooting, said: "There's no stopping him."

A smart first-grader, he splits time between the Kentucky School for the Blind in Louisville, which shares a partnership with Christopher 2X Game Changers, and Breckinridge Elementary near his home in Lexington.

His inspiring story led Vrbo, sponsor of the Vrbo Citrus Bowl, to honor him and his family with a trip to Orlando, Fla., for the Jan. 1 game between the University of Kentucky and the University of Iowa.



Malakai, center, with a Future Healer friend and UofL Medical School student

According to police, two teens arrested in the shooting were targeting a home next to Malakai's.

VICTORIA GWYNN, HER FAMILY, AND CHRISTOPHER 2X TAKE ANTI-GUN VIOLENCE MESSAGE TO US SUPREME COURT



Victoria Gwynn, 19, was hit by gunfire and her friend, DeJuan Coward, 17, was killed last July during a drive by shooting at Ballard Park. In December 2019, she lost her 19-year-old brother, Christian Gwynn, in West Louisville in another drive-by shooting.

Her story was one of eight testimonials relating to gun violence told in an amicus brief filed in November with the US Supreme Court by the advocacy group March for Our Lives. At the time of the filing, she, her family, and Christopher 2X traveled to Washington DC for an anti-gun violence rally.

Victoria, whose leg was shattered in the shooting, requiring multiple surgeries, told media she hoped that sharing her story will put a spotlight on the damage being done to kids and families because of gun violence. "I'm a voice for my brother and friend who can't speak for themselves," she said.

GRAMMY WINNER MASTER P DONATES GIFTS TO FUTURE HEALERS

Thanks to five-time Grammy winner Percy “Master P” Miller, a longtime partner with Chris in efforts to help kids, for donating gifts during the holiday season to Future Healers participants. In a video produced by our partners at UofL Hospital, Master P explained why he was supporting Future Healers.

“I LOVE WHAT CHRISTOPHER 2X IS DOING WITH THESE KIDS & I LOVE THE SPIRIT OF THESE KIDS SAYING I WANT TO DO BETTER. I WANT TO EDUCATE MYSELF. I WANTED TO BLESS THEM & LET THEM KNOW WE APPRECIATE THEM.” - MASTER P

You can watch the video here: [Master P donates Christmas gifts to show appreciation for Future Healers](#)

Earlier in the year, Master P hosted members of Future Healers and their families at his Sports and Education Camp at Tennessee State University where they participated in an “Operating Healing Class.”

WE HONOR KIDS WOUNDED AND REMEMBER THOSE WE LOST IN 2021

Future Healers kids and partners came together in December to honor children wounded by gunfire and to remember those who we lost to senseless gun violence in 2021.

More children – 123 – were hit by gunfire in Louisville in 2021 than in any previous year, and 24 of them were killed.



They were all under age 17.

Future Healers placed stuffed animals and Future Healers figurines on a table displaying roses that commemorated children who were victims of gun violence during the ceremony at UofL Hospital.

At the ceremony, Candy Linear, who lost her 16-year-old daughter Nylah Linear last July in a drive-by shooting in the Shawnee neighborhood, spoke of her loss and enduring grief. She started the Nylah Linear Foundation to help support grieving families and works with Game Changers and Future Healers. “Gun violence has literally destroyed my family,” she said.

Jessica Goins’ 11-year-old daughter, Alexis Lewis, was hit in the hand last summer by stray bullets that came through her Valley Station apartment as she was lying in bed. She’s had four hand surgeries, and remains in physical therapy “every week, every night,” her mother said. “It’s something we struggle with every day. The Kids are the ones being hit now and it needs to quit.”

Louisville’s record-breaking violence in 2021 included a total of 188 homicides compared to 173 homicides in 2020. In addition to the 188 homicides, 583 people were wounded by gunfire in 2021.