

# Poem: New Bedford Strong by Heather Trombly

I've been writing poetry since I was 9 years old. It has been my best friend and my mortal enemy at times. Through my writing I have written about many controversial topics, homosexuality and Christianity, child abuse, sexual abuse, you know all the stuff that no one wants to talk about and everyone wants to pretend doesn't happen.

Never have I written something so important to me as the poem I am about to share with you. My hope is that it will inspire a change in the city that has held my heart for 35 years, but I also pray that it inspires you and challenges you, the person reading it, to get off your behind and be the change you want to see in this city because this starts with us. Please read this and take the second to share it, but then also take the next step and that is to reach out to our youth.

New Bedford Strong  
Heather Trombly 6/7/17

Where do I start, where do I begin  
Am I the only one who sees the chaos we're in?  
We got babies getting shot, stabbed, or jumped  
And NO ONE does anything, but get all pumped  
Who's stepping in, helping these kids, teaching them to change  
It starts with us, don't look at me strange.

Accountability starts with us, have we reached out our hand  
Have you sat and spoke to these kids who think no one understands  
Have you shared your story about what you've overcome  
So these kids know someone gets it, or do we continue to look dumb.

As a society we need to change

People are more worried about panhandlers, and that to me is deranged.

We are losing our young men, to the gun, or the knife  
And yet we continue to sit back and leave them alone in their strife.

It is time we step up, parents we need to take back these streets

Rather then watch these kids killing each other, I know its a huge feat

But we need to come together we need to do what's right  
Because its breaking my heart watching these mothers losing babies night after night

We've taught our youth that they don't matter, they are left on their own

Babies toting guns, selling drugs, thinking they are grown.

We whine and complain, and then as adults move away

Don't you think change would happen if half of you loved your city enough to stay?

You have so many ideas, but how many of those ideas do you actually share

How much of your own time have you given up, to show our youth you care?

This is a call to arms of sorts, a call to love those who seem unlovable

To make the sacrifice, to touch the untouchables.

I know the streets I've been on my own since I was Fourteen

So I know what's its like out there, I've seen the blood at the crime scenes.

They say it takes a village to raise a child, and our village is falling apart

Everyone has the mouth to complain, but who really has the heart?

Our youth is screaming for a leader, someone to come in, take

charge, that they can admire

Someone who is willing to go through the tough times, and  
carry our babies out of the fire?

But who will stand up, who of you is willing today

To stop thinking about yourself, and show a different way.

Everyone wants to cast blame, but who is giving these kids a  
chance

Our system is failing them, when its suppose to enhance.

Police cant be everywhere all of the time

But maybe had you stepped in instead, these kids wouldn't be  
committing crimes.

They are not your responsibility, you worry about you and  
yours alone

But how hard is it to reach out, to check in, to pick up a  
phone?

This is our community, if we wont stand up for it, then who  
will?

We have done nothing but watch more and more blood spill.

I know this problem with the south and west has been  
longstanding

But when do we stop facilitating violence and promote  
understanding?

These are our babies we are losing on the street, not grown  
men, making bad decisions

These are babies born with hope and dreams, New Bedford, come  
together what is our vision?

We have lost focus on what counts the most, and that's seeing  
our youth excel, propel and grow

For children tend to live what they've grown to know.

Enough talk its time to stop focusing on the problem and start  
creating a solution

What we need as a community is a love revolution

Where we act as one and reach out to those that have lost

And give them the love and understanding they need, so no one else pays the cost.

We all want to protect our friends and family, but we are doing it all wrong

Its time to come together, it's time that we become New Bedford strong.

How many children have we lost to this fight

How many more will we lose before we do what's right?

– Heather Trombly