

Ending school shootings

[Education](#), [School](#)



Every single day, millions of kids across the country wake up, get ready for the day, and head to school. The parents of these children trust the school with many things; a safe bus ride, a productive environment, and most importantly, keeping their kids safe throughout the day. School districts take pride in this, and on a normal basis, things will go smoothly. Despite all of their efforts, though, one of the most serious and saddening problems that affects schools today is the occurrence of school shootings.

Since 1980, there have been over 50 deadly shootings in the United States that occurred on school campuses. There have been many actions taken to prevent these terrible acts, but because they are so unpredictable, shootings still occur. There are many more things we can do to prevent school shootings, horrible events that do not need to occur, and to help those who suffer from thoughts of violence. Shootings have been a problem for hundreds of years. Beginning in 1927, individuals have been driven to intense measures and have taken it out on classmates, teachers, or even random victims.

Unfortunately, almost every single incident involving school shootings could have been avoided if people would have taken precautions and said something. Dr. Fred Bemak, a professor at George Mason University, feels that situations can be dodged if we just talk to one another. " This is a very individualistic society, and we need to work more toward becoming a collective one. We need to work in groups to help foster tolerance and acceptance for others" (Orr 92). One of the most saddening things is the fact that often times, the attacker is a victim driven to these extremes.

There are many things that can be pointed to as the cause of school shootings, including mental disorders and family trouble, but perhaps the largest contributor is bullying. "One-third of U. S. students have experienced bullying, either as a target or the perpetrator, and 8 percent of those reported bullying or being bullied at least once a week" (Orr 25). We constantly hear the media telling us about how serious of a problem bullying in schools is, but even the news underestimates how bad it is.

According to a study produced by Secret Service after the Columbine shooting, one of the most famous deadly school shootings ever, bullying is a leading cause in driving someone to a breaking point. "Many attackers felt bullied, persecuted, or injured by others prior to the attack" (Threat Assessment). Bullying is something that will never entirely go away, but there is not nearly enough being done to put an end to it. If this problem were taken out of the equation, hundreds of lives could have been saved.

More programs need to be put into place that make people aware of this impending problem, and schools need to be more firm about putting their foot down against bullying when it occurs. In turn, the chances of a victim lashing out will be hugely diminished. In this day and age, firearms are much too easy to acquire. There are laws that say you must be a certain age to purchase a gun, and laws that make the punishments clear for supplying a minor with a weapon, but kids across the country find ways to get them illegally with ease. In the eyes of gun-control advocates, the correlation between violence and a growing supply of guns is clear: the greater availability of guns leads to more gun-related deaths" (Gun Control). Guns are a great thing for many reasons, and in the 2nd Amendment of the

Constitution, every American has the right to possess a gun, but in the wrong hands they can have deadly consequences. They also become all the more dangerous when someone driven to the breaking point owns one, and lashes out. Shootings can be entirely spontaneous and throwing a deadly weapon into the picture makes them all the scarier. Gun-control advocates add that the mere existence of a gun in a home raises a family's risk of harm significantly. A 1993 study by criminologist Arthur Kellerman, for example, concluded that the presence of a gun in the home actually triples the risk that someone in the home will be killed" (Gun Control). By reducing the access to firearms, the school shootings will be directly effected positively. Students aren't the only people who start school shootings. There are countless stories of former students and adults coming onto school campuses and shooting them up.

One of the leading questions is how did they get on to the campuses so easily? " Backersstressthat the chief reason for imposing mandatory-ID policies is to improve the safety of students in school buildings and around campus. By requiring students to carry IDs, trespassers can be detected more easily, they say" (Student ID Cards). Generally, when someone wants to enter a school campus during the school day, they have a specific purpose for going there. Assuming someone wanting to access a school is up to no good would be wrong, but it goes back to the old saying, " better safe than sorry".

ID'ing people coming and going from schools would definitely not be a hindrance to anyone, and if it could prevent deadly attacks from happening, what would the harm be? " More than three-quarters of school shooters had

a history of suicidal thoughts, threats, gestures, or attempts. Most of these students were known to have been severely depressed or desperate at some point before their attacks” (Threat Assessment). Approximately 1 in 4 people in the United States suffer or have suffered from depression at some point in their lives. To really comprehend this, an understanding of the meaning of depression is crucial.

Dictionary. com defines depression as “ a mental disorder characterized by extreme gloom, feelings of inadequacy, and inability to concentrate”. Depression is a serious mental-health issue, and it takes a strong toll on its victims. Thankfully, modern medicine is advanced enough that we can now treat people with this truly awful condition, helping their personal lives along with preventing possible dangerous situations stemming from this disorder. By beginning to identify these individuals, we can help them by getting them medical attention and counseling to assist them in their troubles.

Many victims think that there is no hope for them, or anyone else they know, so they take drastic measures. No situation needs to ever be escalated to the point of violence, and if these victims can be helped soon enough, we could prevent shootings everywhere. After a school shooting occurs, there is often a common feeling of sorrow, a tense atmosphere, and a sense of confusion, and rightfully so, considering that people have been hurt or killed. The way that the school and teachers cope with the aftermath is a crucial step in healing. Beyond just dealing with the physical injuries and/or deaths, there will be students who are emotionally or mentally traumatized by the entire incident” (Orr 150). These students have just seen things that no one should ever have see, and people that they knew on a daily basis were either

involved or affected. At this stage, teachers have a right to take action, and there is more that can be done. Counseling is a very good solution for these students. Talking about how they are feeling is proven to help the healing process, and it can help spot students who may be having the same thoughts as the shooter, but have hidden them. Schools may decide to have prepared crisis teams on hand to help students with their various reactions, which may include anything from suicide to paralyzing grief to insomnia to paranoia" (Orr 150). This is just another way that future violent events can be prevented, and a difference can be made in schools across America. School shootings have been a problem in our country for too long. As we continue to grow as a nation, we must remember all of those victims of shootings- not just those people who have passed away, but the families of those people as well.

The easy thing to do is to condescendingly look at all the hurt and pain, destruction and havoc caused by school shootings, but instead of turning into pessimists. We should be optimistic about the good things going on to defend against these attacks. A wise man once pointed out, "Rome wasn't built in a day". While we learn in our knowledge of techniques for ending this problem, we need to be patient and realize that when tragedies do occur, we can turn them into valuable learning experiences.

By putting a stop to bullying, being more careful with gun laws, and helping those who suffer from depression, we can prevent school shootings. Let's band together, take a stand, and act to save lives across the country.

Works Cited

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