

Hello,

I am writing you today as a concerned parent of four school aged children. I have been a resident of the great state of Connecticut for the majority of my life and I currently reside in Cheshire. Sandy Hook was a horrible tragedy done by a mentally compromised individual for reasons unknown. As a parent I have many questions as to how this could happen. I do not blame guns as a gun is an object that can be used for good or can be used to commit atrocities' against our fellow travelers in this journey called life. What is in the heart of the individual inevitable defines our actions. I would like to voice my opinions and concerns on a couple of items that I feel are important.

Firstly, I do not know what the response time of our police officers were and I am not pointing blame in that direction however this is a concern. I have had to call 911 numerous times to request ambulatory services for a sick mother and the time it took from phone call to arrival I have always felt was a little long. This is just not long because of town response time but also from my own panic at having a sick mother and keeping my self collected and calm to make the necessary call. I could not imagine what it would have been like in the situation at Sandy Hook to keep panic down and act appropriately to the situation. I would like to see panic buttons, much like the ones at banks, installed in schools. This button could have been pressed immediately when they saw they were under siege and would have cut minutes off of the time it took to notify police. This may have saved numerous young lives.

Secondly, gun free zones. Not working and should have never been put in place at all. If you are criminal or someone wishing to do harm the logical place to go is a gun free zone. You can do massive carnage with no resistance. Basically our children are being put in the position of being sitting ducks. This needs to be removed.

Thirdly, protection for our children. There are a couple of options here. Armed guards could be put in place as protection with no other interaction with the children. The sole purpose would be to protect the children. Another option would be to allow select staff to carry or have a firearm available to them if the situation arose. In the late 90's a Texas principal stopped a school shooting by retrieving his own firearm from his vehicle. This would have be someone who would take the responsibility of continued training and not just someone who gets a license to carry. I do think there should be more than one person for replacement if the other one is not there. If costs are a problem towns can activate a volunteer program and elect people with the right criteria to protect our children.

In closing, I would like to reiterate that this was a horrible event that was committed by a man that appears to have been battling severe mental health issues. As a society

we need to look forward and put school safety strategies in place to insure that this never happens again.

Thank you.

Lisa Hawkins

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