



## **Testimony of the Injury Prevention Center at Connecticut Children's Medical Center to the Gun Violence Prevention Working Group**

**January 28, 2013**

Senator Looney, Representative Miner, members of the Gun Violence Prevention Working Group, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you today. My name is Garry Lapidus, and I am the Director of the Injury Prevention Center at the Connecticut Children's Medical Center and an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Public Health at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. I am here today representing Connecticut Children's Medical Staff to share with you a position statement approved by the Medical Staff Executive Committee. The statement was developed by Dr. Brendan Campbell, Director of Pediatric Trauma, Dr. Steve Rogers, Emergency Department Coordinator for Behavioral Health and Psychiatric Services, and researchers at the Injury Prevention Center.

The tragic and preventable deaths at Sandy Hook Elementary school demand action on the part of all those who care for children. This is a public health emergency. Constructive action can and must be taken to prevent future deaths of children due to firearms.

Thirty-eight percent of American households own guns, and many of these households have children under 18 years of age and accessible firearms and ammunition. Children in the United States are 10 times more likely to be killed by firearms than in other developed countries. In Connecticut, from 2006-2010 there were 894 deaths, 1,261 hospital admissions and 1,645 emergency department resulting from firearm injuries. The following recommendations are opportunities for common sense gun policy reforms in Connecticut and the United States.

1. Federal regulation of gun purchases that would include mandatory waiting periods, closure of the gun show and internet sales loopholes, mental health restrictions for gun purchases, and more comprehensive background checks.
2. Renew the federal assault weapons ban that expired a decade ago and close the loopholes in Connecticut's assault weapons ban.
3. Ban high-capacity magazines.
4. Allow federal public health agencies to study firearm violence and make recommendations on evidence-based ways to prevent firearm violence.

The Medical Staff Executive Committee at Connecticut Children's considered and approved this statement. Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.