

Ironically, I took the course for a gun permit about 6 days before the Newtown tragedy. I will be applying for my permit shortly. My father was a sheriff and had a gun as a result of having to transport prisoners from the jail to the courthouse for that job. We rarely saw it, I could have gotten my hands on it if I had wanted to. It was in a locked safe, but we all knew the combination as it held other things too. My uncles both are target shooting enthusiasts. I am positive one had a gun safe and the other probably had a locked box. The gun may even have been in pieces in the locked box. No one ever made a big deal about the guns. They had a purpose and we knew what that was. As with most things, if children are raised to respect things and rules and human life, then they generally do so. Unfortunately, not so many people are raised this way and the types of guns that are available are over the top. I really don't care how much fun having a 100 round rifle is for war games. Use paintball. There is no need to have an assault rifle either.

I would like to see as much attention paid to reducing violence on tv, in video games and in films as in restricting guns. Perhaps in some way, better exposure to guns would also be useful. Making the mentality more of understanding them, keeping them safely kept and making kids not think of them as weapons of destruction. (I know that sounds crazy, but you will never get rid of all guns, some people don't respect the government and have fear of it, they have fear of the "bad guys" on the street or someone violating the sanctity of their homes, and it is deeply rooted in our society.)

Perhaps some sort of training to understand guns may keep kids from picking one up at home and accidentally shooting themselves, their friend, or a relative. While the Newtown tragedy was profound, how many individuals die from guns one at a time, due to mental illness or hot blood or drinking?

Better mental health care access is PARAMOUNT. After someone gets a gun, or after a family member gets one, they could have mental health problems. I know from experience that it is almost impossible to get someone help until they do something "wrong." Perhaps you could mandate gun safety classes in schools or for permit renewals. You can require all kinds of things, but until you remove the "approval" of violence in our society, as seen by parents buying and playing these horrible video games, etc, you won't come close to solving the problem. Maybe classes in school where kids learn to handle bad situations without violence would be a deterrent. Making an effort to pull people who are outcasts into community activities might help. And, again, getting rid of assault rifles and large round magazines should still be done.

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