

HILL DAY EXPERIENCE

at the 125th Anniversary Convention

2022 PTA CAPITOL HILL DAY ASK: COMMUNITY SAFETY AND YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Because all children should feel safe and welcome at school and in their community!

Congress must pass legislation that:

- Invests in evidence-based community violence intervention strategies
- Requires a waiting period and a comprehensive background check for all individuals prior to purchasing a firearm
- Funds research on gun violence prevention and encourages reporting on school crime and safety
- Prevents discrimination and harmful disciplinary practices in schools
- Encourages gun safety education and the safe storage of firearms

Issue Overview

A person's exposure to gun violence and other traumatic events in childhood significantly impacts their mental and physical health through adulthood, including being at increased likelihood of abusing drugs and alcohol, suffering from depression, anxiety and posttraumatic stress disorder, failing or having difficulties in school, and becoming involved in the justice system.

Violence, especially by firearm, not only directly impacts individual children, but whole families and whole school communities.

- An estimated 46 million American children will be affected by violence, crime, abuse, or psychological trauma in a given year.
- Firearms in particular are now the leading cause of death for American children and teens, and youth suicide by firearm has increased 59% over the last decade.
- Approximately 3 million American children witness gun violence every year, including the students and families affected by the 875 incidents of gunfire on school grounds that have been recorded in America since 2013.

PTA's Recommendations

The time is long overdue for Congress to adopt measures that ensure our children are protected from harm and support schools in their efforts to create safe and welcoming spaces for every child to enhance development, growth and safety for all of our nation's students.

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PTA urges members of Congress to co-sponsor the following bills:

- Break the Cycle of Violence Act (S. 2275, H.R. 4118)
- Bipartisan Background Checks Act (S. 529, H.R. 8)
- Gun Violence Prevention Research Act (S. 281, H.R. 825)
- School Shooting Safety and Preparedness Act (H.R. 5428)
- Protecting Our Students in Schools Act (S. 2029, H.R. 3836)
- Keeping All Students Safe Act (S. 1858, H.R. 3474)
- Safe Gun Storage Act of 2021 (S.1825, H.R. 3509)

Break the Cycle of Violence Act (S. 2275, H.R. 4118) would direct the Department of Health and Human Services to award grants for coordinated community violence intervention initiatives in communities disproportionately impacted by homicides and community violence, including job training and workforce programs for youth ages 16 to 24 in communities disproportionately affected by gun violence.

Bipartisan Background Checks Act (S. 529, H.R. 8) would expand background checks to be required on all firearm sales, closing the gun show and online sales loopholes and has already passed the U.S. House of Representatives.

Gun Violence Prevention Research Act (S.281, H.R.825) would authorize the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to conduct or support research on firearms safety or gun violence prevention.

School Shooting Safety and Preparedness Act (H.R. 5428) would be the first federal legislation to provide parents and families with an annual, comprehensive understanding of indicators of school crime and safety, including data on school shootings, across the nation.

Protecting Our Students in Schools Act (S. 2029, H.R. 3836) would ban the use of corporal punishment.

Keeping All Students Safe Act (S. 1858, H.R. 3474) would ban the use of seclusion in schools, ban dangerous restraint practices and prohibit schools from physically restraining children, except when necessary to protect students and staff.

Safe Gun Storage Act of 2021 (S.1825, H.R. 3509) would direct the Consumer Product Safety Commission to establish safety standards for firearm locks and safes to prevent unintentional discharge of firearms and unauthorized access.

Questions? Email National PTA Director of Government Affairs Kate Clabaugh (kclabaugh@PTA.org).