



Washington State Psychological Association
Your Voice. Our Community.

WSPA's Statement on Mass Shootings

We come together, impassioned and ready, to support the victims of the recent Buffalo and Uvalde shootings and countless other acts of violence involving firearms. We stand in solidarity with the American Psychological Association in its [reiterated call for gun reform](#). Death from firearm injuries is the [leading cause of death of children and young adults](#) ages 1 to 24 years of age in the United States, surpassing death due to vehicle crashes. Gun violence [disproportionately affects our BIPOC communities](#). Access to guns and the resulting acts of violence is an urgent public health crisis and [data has shown](#) that means restriction is an effective method to reduce violence.

For too long, responsibility for mass shootings and gun violence has been shirked and placed on the individual who pulled the trigger. As psychologists, we staunchly reject the falsehood that the epidemic of gun violence in this country is primarily due to individual mental illness. Policy change to restrict access to guns and require strict gun storage and safety laws is desperately needed.

In times of tragedy, the importance of using our voice to make a difference cannot be forgotten. Change is attainable if we are willing to take action. We propose multiple avenues as a call to action, with options for a variety of personal and political beliefs:

- We encourage the following strategies to assist in reforming gun laws:
 - Download the [Everytown/Moms Demand Action App](#) to keep holding policy makers accountable.
 - Learn about advocacy priorities from [Sandy Hook Promise](#).
 - Identify ways to take action from [Giffords Courage to Fight Gun Violence](#).
- Participate in [WSPA's Disaster Resource Network](#) (DRN), a community of psychologists committed to humanitarian and clinical involvement during times of human-created disasters.
- Advocate for police reform in de-escalation strategies, particularly as they relate to guns.

- Advocate for abolition and an end to state-sanctioned violence.
- Research the roles of [white supremacy](#) and toxic masculinity in violence and [gun ownership](#), and appropriate antiracist individual and [anti-gun violence](#) community interventions with which you can educate yourself, colleagues, coworkers, and clients.
- [Join WSPA](#) to influence healthcare policy.

For support in the aftermath of this tragedy, please visit the following resources:

- Visit the National Center for PTSD's guidance on [Resources in the Wake of Mass Violence](#).
- [Incidents of Mass Violence](#) resources from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- [Helping Children with Tragic Events in the News](#).
- The National Association of School Psychologist Tips for Parents and Teachers on [Talking to Children About Violence](#).
- [American Psychological Association's Mass Shooting Resources](#).