



SIMPLE ROADMAP CAN VASTLY REDUCE SCHOOL SHOOTINGS — BEFORE THEY START

Everytown for Gun Safety Action Fund; December 9, 2021

In the wake of yet another horrific school shooting and amidst a historic surge in [gun violence on school grounds](#), Everytown and its grassroots arms, Moms Demand Action and Students Demand Action, are today releasing a list of concrete steps that can drastically reduce the frequency of this uniquely American phenomenon by addressing the source of guns in [3 out of 4 school shootings](#). We don't have to live like this, and we don't need to wait until another life is lost to act.

The comprehensive roadmap demands and facilitates action at all levels of government and engages critical stakeholders to encourage best practices and ensure clear standards and accountability for secure gun storage. The overwhelming evidence shows access to guns in the home is a critical intervention point in preventing school shootings. Only bold action across the board will break the radical gun extremist culture that has gagged conversations about responsible gun storage and access to guns.

The measures being proposed today are non-controversial, backed by data and, most importantly, most could be taken tomorrow — and, in fact, some are already underway. The proposed interventions will prevent school shootings, youth suicide and unintentional shootings. There is no reason to wait and Everytown and our millions of grassroots volunteers will engage the broad range of stakeholders mentioned below.

An effective approach must focus on and emphasize the secure storage responsibilities of adult gun owners — not children — and on the devices and storage methods most likely to stop a young person from accessing an unsecured gun. The Everytown and Moms Demand Action-developed Be SMART program — endorsed by the National PTA — is an educational program that clearly communicates about the importance of secure storage, the efficacy of different methods of secure storage, and how to have effective communication with gun owners and non-gun owners alike.



Starting immediately, here is what Everytown, Moms Demand Action and our millions of grassroots volunteers will do:

- Work with the Biden-Harris Administration to activate the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and other key agencies to collaborate and create secure storage programs and advisories as part of the Administration's school safety and gun violence prevention agenda. This action will inform and turbocharge efforts at the local level and clearly insert disrupting access to guns as part of the essential actions needed to prevent school shootings.
- Demand Governors order state education departments to publish advisories and secure storage guidance and work with local schools to send home secure storage notifications, to invest in public awareness campaigns, and to create and [disseminate materials on secure storage and gun violence prevention](#). The materials should provide clear, unambiguous guidance to parents about secure storage, such as is done in the Be SMART program. Statewide leadership can establish best practices, make secure storage devices available, and set the tone for action at the local level.
- Develop and aggressively advocate for bipartisan legislative solutions at the federal, state and local levels to create clear standards and accountability for effective parental secure storage (e.g., secure storage laws), educate gun owners on making informed choices about storage devices, incentivize gun owners on acquiring effective secure storage devices (including through tax credits), and dedicate funding for public awareness campaigns on secure storage. These legislative actions will create the environment to widely distribute effective devices, inform gun owners of their responsibility, and create appropriate accountability measures.
- Work with the education associations to promote secure storage notifications in every school district in the country, and to publish best practices for asking about access to guns, especially in the home, whenever working with a student who may pose a risk to harming themselves or the school community. Schools must be made aware of relevant extreme risk laws and how they should be used to prevent access to guns. Everytown's volunteers will continue working on the



school board campaigns that have led to more than 1.5 million students across the country now living in a school district that requires schools to educate parents about the critical importance of secure firearm storage.

- Build on the gun violence prevention leadership of medical associations and support the existing work of medical professionals, especially pediatricians, asking families about access to firearms and counseling parents on how best to securely store firearms in the home. We will fight back against any effort to silence medical voices in this conversation.
- Continue to work with partner organizations like the National PTA to ensure parents have access to Be SMART materials and are able to communicate to their communities and school boards how essential secure gun storage is to protecting children.
- Because parents must be held responsible if they do not secure their firearms, we will launch a national call to encourage prosecutors to bring applicable charges against gun owners who fail to secure the firearms that contribute to acts of gun violence. In addition to activating our millions of supporters, we will work with prosecutors associations to make recommendations that prosecutors can act on.