



Children's Defense Fund Protect Children Not Guns Interfaith Toolkit Outreach Templates

February 2018

Sample Letter to the Editor

Look for articles, editorials, or opinion pieces in your local paper about children killed or injured by guns—then reference that article at the top of your letter to the Editor.

Dear Editor:

In response to the recent article, insert title of article and date, about the tragic death of insert child's name by gun violence, we mourn with the family for their terrible loss and we mourn that we as a community have not stood up to stop the epidemic of gun violence that kills a child or teen every 2 hours and 48 minutes. It is up to us to stop these preventable tragedies that rip families apart, like the tragedy in Parkland, Florida. School shootings frighten our children and make them afraid to walk the street or go to class. We need to make our homes, streets and schools safe for our children. It's long past time to pass common sense gun safety laws and protect children, not guns.

Sample Op-Ed

The recent massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shocked the nation, tragically killing 14 students and 3 teachers. We mourn with the mothers and fathers and sisters and brothers who will never see their loved one again. And we mourn with the families of the eight children a day who die from guns. Where is the safe harbor for our children? How young do the victims have to be and how many children and teens need to die before we stop the proliferation of guns in this country and the killing of our young?

This gun violence epidemic must be stopped. People of faith and good conscience must not stand by and let our political leaders protect gun makers and gun owners instead of vulnerable children and teens who rely on us to protect them. It is up to us to stop these preventable tragedies that tear families apart and fuel recurring nightmares in our children making them afraid to leave the house to go to school.

By any standards of human and moral decency, our young in America are under assault. Since 1963, a shocking 181,578 children and teens have been killed by gun violence. That is more child and teen gun deaths than all the Americans killed in action in every war since World War II combined. Where is the anti-war movement to stop the killing fields here at home?

It is way past time for all of us to stand up and demand common sense gun safety laws so we protect children, not guns. Reasonable people should agree we have no need for

weapons of mass destruction on our streets like the AR-15 assault rifle used to kill students and teachers in Parkland, Florida. Do gun owners really need high-volume ammunition magazines for sport or self-protection? When toy guns and teddy bears are regulated by consumer safety standards, why in the world aren't real guns that relentlessly kill our children week in and week out? Isn't it time we close the gun show loophole so 100 percent of gun buyers have to pass a background check before buying a gun?

More than 30 years ago, a mother lost her 13-year-old daughter at the hands of a repeat offender drunk driver and she started MADD, Mothers Against Drunk Drivers. As a result, laws and our culture of drinking and driving in America have changed. Now it's time to join members of your communities and states, the Children's Defense Fund, and other gun violence prevention groups to protect children, not guns. Arm yourself with the facts and stand up and speak up. Demand the President, members of Congress, and elected officials in your own states pass common sense gun safety measures to protect children, not guns.