



May 25, 2022

We are sad, angry, and frustrated, that we all have to live through another massacre of our innocent children. At the same time, we are reminded of the words of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who, paraphrasing the Buddha, reminded us that “Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” If we are to stop the consequences of hate in our communities, we must not let our anger and frustration drive us to respond in kind. It is important to remember that throughout human history, war and armed conflict of any kind has had a single consistent consequence—more death and destruction.

From our American history we can be certain that we will be here again. It is said that the definition of insanity is “doing the same things over and over again expecting a different result.” We will not participate in that insanity. While we understand there are those who are dealing with this as a political issue, we are a nonpartisan organization, and we view this as a public health issue.

This is a systemic issue within the American Culture and will not be solved by the simple solution of any kind. Putting guns in the hands of teachers; turning our schools into armed fortresses; making mental health services more widely available; or increasing background checks will not solve what is endemic to American Culture.

A systemic issue requires a systemic solution. American ingenuity invented ways to send astronauts to the moon and bring them home safely. NASA scientists and engineers even figured out how to deal with a catastrophic failure in the Apollo 13 mission and bring that crew home safely. If America can do all that; certainly, we can solve the catastrophic system failure that allows our children to be killed over and over again.

While this is a public health issue; it is also true that America lacks the political will to address this issue in a systemic way. The fact that what we experience occurs nowhere else in the world clearly demonstrates that this is an issue that is uniquely American. It also underscores the point that our elected officials lack either the skills or the will to address this issue. If the rest of the world has dealt with the safety of their children without the need for arming their teachers and turning their schools into fortresses, are we not at least as capable as they are!?!

If our politicians won't act, it is up to the rest of us—private citizens; nonprofits; and private corporations—to become partners in bringing about the necessary changes so that like the rest of the world, parents can send their children to school and know they're safe; and teachers can teach without fear of being killed. We welcome the opportunity to be a part of the solution

going forward and are actively seeking partners to resolve this. We believe it is totally possible to deal with this issue safely and in a way that does not assure a reoccurrence. What has been done is so obviously totally insufficient. It is time to do what works.

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