

Letters: Editorial: Dump the toxic brew creating gun violence

May 31, 2023

RE: [Editorial: Dump the toxic brew creating gun violence](#)

Thank you so much for taking on the difficult task of addressing gun violence. To add specifics to the “toxic brew,” law enforcement has a specific list of ingredients:

Poverty; moving around a lot (no time to make friends); no parent or guardian at home; no significant adult mentor in their lives; presence of alcohol or drugs in the home (though they may or may not use them); encounters with law enforcement (though not necessarily jailed); being (cyber)bullied, and more.

Basically, no one cared about them. The church really can step in here and make a huge difference in these broken lives.

Other information:

- 80 percent of those who struggle with mental illness are the victims of bullying. We are not the source of gun violence.
- Texas ranks dead last in funding to address mental health of children, adolescents and their families. Gov. Abbot is basically lying about what he and the state of Texas are doing to address the social sources of gun violence.

- Fighting over Second Amendment gun rights versus gun restrictions is not the problem. Our communities and relationships to each other are. But addressing the social aspects of mass shooters—such as poverty and social isolation—do not enhance politicians’ careers nearly as much as endless public fights over guns.

So why wait on government to do something? We are to minister to “the least of these,” and this is exactly the situation where our faith and love can be the hands and feet of Jesus. *That’s* how you change the world.

Lynette Bowen
Plainview, Texas

You found one solution to the problem of gun violence in your column: harden up schools just like it’s done in the Capitol—armed guards.

We have many trained veterans who happily would work to protect our children. It is a deterrent for the Capitol and places of business, and even churches with armed security. Why not schools?

There are not enough mental health providers to start with. Maybe funding and educating more people in this field—paying for their education—to serve in our schools and to have at least one in every school would help. It is a start.

But we have allowed ourselves, as a society, to be sloppy in our expectations of our children and our own responsibilities as parents. America has gone “woke,” to the detriment of our children and our country.

Target—the store we all love to shop—revealed it gave more than \$2 million over 11 years to an organization who puts books in K-12 grades about explaining gay and/or transgenderism. These things cause confusion in our

children, who grow up to fight back against those who didn't stand up for them. We have to do better.

Pat Bowlin

San Antonio, Texas

Thank you for your provocative piece on the toxic brew of inane conversations about gun violence.

We are retired public school teachers. Both of us are graduates of Texas Baptist universities, and both of our daughters have earned degrees at Texas Baptist universities. We have been active in First Baptist Church of San Angelo for many years and have served on the board of trustees of our universities.

We support strong gun safety measures and have shared our views in person and in writing with our congressmen and legislators. We gladly would support Baptist initiatives to stop gun violence.

As I recently told our congressman, clearly what our country is doing is not working. It is past time to enact measures to save innocent lives. We feel if we as individuals fail to make our views known, we appear to be permissive and therefore complicit. We do not want that same criticism leveled at churches. But sadly, too many churches have been silent too long.

If you create a database of volunteers or develop a plan of action, we would appreciate being included in such an initiative.

Again, thank you for expressing your views. Hopefully, your essay will inspire many to join forces and save lives.

Jim and Louise Jones

San Angelo, Texas