

Expert view: A Tulane trauma surgeon on gun violence

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My career has been filled with delivering bad news. I trained at Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia, and I'm [now a trauma surgeon at Tulane University School of Medicine](#). Dealing with gun violence is part of my job. While I've seen the carnage of gun violence throughout the entirety of my training and career, when I became a father, the issue began to hit closer to home. I've delivered the news that no parent should have to hear too many times, that their child is gone at the hands of the gun violence. Delivering the news never becomes easier, it breaks my heart every time.

Gun violence is a worsening epidemic in the United States. We have numerous studies showing that. [A 2020 analysis from the Centers for Disease Control](#) showed that firearm-related injuries are the leading killer in the pediatric population, surpassing motor vehicle crashes. Gun violence is a public health issue and a disease, and it should be approached like one.

The time to act is now. Before another life is lost, before another mass shooting. We need a multidisciplinary approach to preventing gun violence. We must fund more research to understand the drivers of this issue. From our research at the [Violence Prevention Institute](#), we know factors such as structural racism and food insecurity can all play a role. Something we see a lot of at University Medical Center is injuries caused by firearms that weren't adequately and safely stored. One of the things we're doing at the [Center for Youth Equity](#) is giving out biometric gun locks.

Many people have asked me how we can help protect our children. [The American Medical Association has developed numerous policy recommendations to reduce firearm trauma, injury and death over the past two decades.](#)

It's easy to say it will never happen to me. But we can see that it happens everywhere, and it keeps happening. It's only a matter of time before our community is affected.

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