

John: We're actually going to start with our main story tonight, which concerns what happened in Uvalde, Texas, 12 days ago, when an 18-year-old armed with two ar-15s killed 19 children and two teachers at an elementary school. And look, we all know what the key problem is here. It's guns. It's because we let basically whoever wants to buy a gun in this country have one, which has led to tragic consequences. The vast majority of mass shooters, including the shooters at Uvalde and parkland, obtained the weapons they used through legal purchases. So we know what the answer to this problem is, too. It's gun control. It's meaningful, effective gun laws. But that hasn't stopped some from desperately pitching absolutely anything other than that as a solution :

"The only solution is Christ Jesus and being able to get some type of spirituality and prayer back into our schools."

"Man traps. A series of interlocking doors at the school entrance that are triggered by a tripwire."

"I would like to see this, a national push towards, instead of parents buyin' their kids all these tools and toys and games, invest in the classroom to make it safer. I mean, they have blankets that you can put up on the wall that are colorful and beautiful, but they're ballistic blankets."

John: What are you talking about? "Use a blanket" is not a strategy for stopping deaths during a school shooting. It's barely a strategy for "a bird got in the house." And while those ideas are clearly ridiculous, "hardening our schools" so often comes up as an alternative to gun control. And at the NRA convention that inexplicably still took place in Texas just three days after the shooting there, Wayne Lapierre pitched the exact same solution he did after Sandy Hook and after Parkland :

"We also need to fully fund our nation's police departments and school security resource officer programs."

John: Exactly. Put police or school resource officers or SROS, as they're sometimes called, into schools. And I guess it's not that surprising that the solution from the CEO of the NRA is "more people with guns." It'd be like hearing "the garbage dump is overflowing, so we need more piles of garbage" from the head of the national raccoon association. What else do you really expect him to say? But the idea of adding police to schools does seem to come up in the wake of every big school shooting. And crucially, it's then the thing that we always do. In fact, in the six years after the columbine massacre in 1999, the federal government awarded over \$750 million, resulting in the hiring of over 6,500 SROS. And since then, it's exploded to the point that the most recent data available shows 58% of American schools report having a sworn law enforcement officer on campus at least once a week. And this has happened, even as vital resources for students have been starved. A recent report found 14 million students go to a school with police but without a counselor, nurse, psychologist, or social worker. That is 14 million kids who are in closer proximity to a pair of handcuffs than they are to a medical or mental health professional.

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