



SAHM Statement in Support for March for Our Lives

Gun violence is a top cause of death among children and adolescents in the United States

Over 7,000 U.S. children and adolescents sustain firearm injuries each year and gun-related violence is the third leading cause of death among children and adolescents in the United States (U.S.). America is unique among wealthy nations in the frequency of deaths of children due to firearms, with 91% of all gun-related deaths among children occurring in the U.S. (1).

The Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM) is a multidisciplinary organization committed to improving the physical and psychosocial health and well-being of all adolescents and young adults. Because gun violence is a serious threat to youth in the U.S., resulting in the death of over 1,200 children and adolescents each year, SAHM is committed to research, advocacy, and health promotion efforts to end gun violence against America's children and adolescents.

SAHM supports youth advocacy efforts and the March for Our Lives movement

After the February 14, 2018 massacre of 17 children at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida, our nation's youth have elevated their voices and started a powerful movement aimed at ending firearm-related deaths among children in the U.S. As an organization dedicated to serving youth, SAHM wholeheartedly supports the efforts of this youth-led movement and encourages peaceful participation in the March for Our Lives demonstration in [Washington DC](#) or in a [local march](#) on March 24, 2018.

SAHM supports an evidence-based legislative agenda to stop gun violence

SAHM believes that the participation and leadership of youth are key to meaningful social and political change now and in the future. Therefore we second the call for evidence-based legislative measures to address gun violence, including four specific actions (3):

1. Ban the sale of assault weapons like the ones used in Las Vegas, Orlando, Sutherland Springs, Aurora, Sandy Hook and, most recently, to kill 17 innocent people and injure more than a dozen others at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.
2. Prohibit the sale of high-capacity magazines.
3. Close the loophole in our background check law that allows dangerous people who shouldn't be allowed to purchase firearms to slip through the cracks and buy guns online or at gun shows.
4. Restore federal funding for research on firearms and gun violence prevention research to improve the well being of adolescents, families, and communities in the United States (4,5)

Our work does not stop there: opportunities abound for pediatric and adolescent health professionals to conduct research, engage in public health interventions, and advocate for changes in social norms in order to show that all “teen lives matter.”(2). Gun violence is an issue that extends beyond schools and includes: [neighborhoods](#), [domestic violence](#), unintentional firearm injuries, and [injuries from stray bullets](#). It can affect citizens from every neighborhood and all walks of life. Gun violence imposes a wide array of physical, social, and financial costs on communities. Understanding these costs is the first step toward addressing them, and community members, including adolescents and young adults, who live with the daily presence of gun violence and its fallout can also serve as important voices and valuable resources for further research and strategies for protecting neighborhoods (6).

Share your message on social media using
#MarchForOurLives, #EndGunViolence and #NeverAgain.

March, speak out, and call your federal legislators to demand action!
Find your representative [here](#) - Find your congress person [here](#)

Gun violence of any kind threatens the future for our youth!

[1] Dowd MD, Sege RD, Gardner HG, Quinlan KP, Ewald MB, Ebel BE, Lichenstein R, Melzer-Lange MD, O’Neil J, Pomerantz WJ. Firearm-related injuries affecting the pediatric population. *Pediatrics*. 2012;130(5):e1416-e23.

[2] Dodson NA. Adolescent gun violence prevention: what we know, and what we can do to keep young people safe. *Current opinion in pediatrics*. 2016;28(4):441-6.

[3] Petition for An Act To Protect & Save Your Children: March for Our Lives; 2018 [Available from: <https://marchforourlivespetition.com/>.] (last accessed March 22, 2018)

[4] Behrman P, Redding CA, Raja S, Newton T, Beharie N, Printz D. Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM) position statement: restore CDC funding for firearms and gun violence prevention research. *Translational behavioral medicine*. 2018.

[5] Kaplan, S. Congress Quashed Research Into Gun Violence. Since Then, 600,000 People Have Been Shot. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/12/health/gun-violence-research-cdc.html> (Last accessed, March 20, 2018)

[6]Beiler S. “Raising the Voices of Gun Violence” [Available from: <http://datatools.urban.org/Features/raising-the-voices-of-gun-violence/>] (Last accessed March 22, 2018)