

Virginia Chapter

American Academy of Pediatrics
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Virginia Pediatricians Mourn Death of Children and Teachers in Texas and Call for Change

RICHMOND, VA (5/31/22) – Members of the Virginia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (VA-AAP) are devastated by the recent murder of the children and their teachers at Robb Elementary School. As members and community members, we are heartbroken for their families, the survivors of the shooting and the entire community who will never be the same after enduring this trauma.

“The science is clear, legislation like a background check for every gun sale and extreme risk protection orders save lives,” stated Dr. Lauren Morea, the VA-AAP’s Champion on Gun Safety. She added, “The devastation of these families and this community is unimaginable. Our children are precious, and we must make them a priority by taking action to make it harder for criminals and at-risk people to access guns.”

Unfortunately, this is not the first time something this horrific has happened and there are many children and families affected by daily gun violence which disproportionately affects communities of color. We are hopeful our nation can come together to make changes so no community has to endure the senseless loss of lives, especially those of children.

The most recent data from the CDC (2020) shows that firearm injury is now the leading cause of death for American children. This is a national crisis that we need to solve. The research is clear that legislation that keeps firearms out of the hands of dangerous people reduces firearm injury and death.

VA-AAP president, Dr. Michael Martin, stated that “The Virginia Chapter stands with the National AAP in urging the federal government to increase funding for gun violence prevention and for common sense gun laws to protect our communities.” Turning his focus to his own state, he further stated, “We also urge Virginia lawmakers to make this a priority. We hope these horrible events can open a door to dialogue with Virginia legislators that has been closed in the past.”

The VA-AAP continues to speak up for the children who have been affected by gun violence and pursue meaningful policy change to prevent the needless and preventable death of our children. On June 3-5, pediatricians across Virginia will join communities across the US in

participating in Wear Orange Weekend to raise awareness and honor victims. To learn more or increase action and awareness, please visit <http://www.wearorange.org> and use the hashtags #WearOrange and #EndGunViolence.

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About the Virginia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (VA-AAP)

The Virginia Chapter consists of over 1300 pediatricians in the Commonwealth. The mission of the VA-AAP is the attainment of optimal health, safety and well-being of Virginia's children and promotion of pediatricians as the best qualified of all health professionals to provide child health care. The Chapter strives to be the leading authority, advocate, and voice for the health of Virginia's children and for the profession of pediatrics.