

# Violence In America: March For Our Lives In Washington DC

When you hear about the massacre of students at a high school in America, you gulp your pain. The savagery of the act slides into your mind like an unwanted nightmare. No, not again! Those young people didn't deserve that kind of ending to their lives.

The next question: why do these events occur in the richest nation on Earth? How can these deadly events occur in a free country where anyone may choose to learn, grow, work and thrive with unlimited possibilities?

As a former teacher, I shake my head. I don't understand what's happening to America.

Will my wife, my two boys or I become the next statistic at a mall, train station or movie theater? It plays on my mind when we attend a movie or walk down a mall. What nut-case might shoot us like ducks at a carnival?



On Friday at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, Parkland, Florida, a young man, Nikolas Cruz, 19 and former student at the school, walked into the building with an AR15 assault rifle. He slaughtered 14 students and three teachers.

By Sunday, students organized “March for Our Lives” in Washington, DC. Facebook and other social media screamed all over the Internet with anger, frustration, exasperation and rage. Many demanded gun control to stop the carnage of our citizens.

At the same time, let’s examine decades-long perpetuation of violence in America that occurs every day of the year. How about examining these multiple systems that promote violence? Anyone question corporations that kill with immunity?

How about inspecting your local movie theater’s array of brutal films? Notice that most of the movies portray more violence in 90 minutes than World War II. Blood spurts and people die in horrendously violent ways. Next, notice video games kids play. Gratuitous violence dominates to an uncivilized level. In a word: sickening! Young minds cannot understand the difference between fantasy and reality. They may express such violence by committing mayhem on their own.

Anyone watch the TV program, “Criminal Minds”? It’s so grisly and beyond sickening! It gives challenged minds more ideas for gruesome outcomes. Yet, it’s watched by millions of adults and children every week.

Please contemplate these violent statistics on our nation’s highways annually.

- In 2015, 10,265 people died in alcohol-impaired driving crashes, accounting for nearly one-third (29%) of all traffic-related deaths in the United States.
- Of the 1,132 traffic deaths among children ages 1 to 14 years in 2015, 209 (16%) involved an alcohol-impaired driver.
- In 2015, nearly 1.1 million drivers were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. That’s one percent of the 111 million reported episodes of alcohol-impaired driving among U.S.

adults each year. (Source: [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov))

- Mothers Against Drunk Drivers conducted a study that revealed 14,000,000 (million) people drive drunk 24/7 on America's highways.

With that many deaths of children, do you hear about any aggressive lawmakers making consequential laws against drunk driving? How about impounding their vehicles, taking their driver's licenses away for five years, enormous fines or imprisoning them? Nope! They keep driving and killing kids, and adults year after year.

The National Safety Council reports that cell phone use while driving leads to **1.6 million** crashes annually.

Nearly **330,000** injuries occur each year from accidents caused by texting while driving. Each day, nine people suffer death and 1,000 face injuries from texting while driving. Any state or federal lawmakers passing harsher laws to stop that practice? How about your lawmakers?

Domestic violence cases show that one woman suffers a beating by her husband or significant other every 15 seconds in America. Their kids watch that violence. On a daily basis, three women die 24/7 across America. Anybody marching to stop that kind of violence? (Source: NBC News "Domestic Violence: Nearly Three U.S. Women Killed Every Day by Intimate Partners" April 11, 2017)

The number of American troops **killed** in Afghanistan and Iraq between 2001 and 2012: 6,488. The number of American **women** murdered by current or ex male partners during that time: 11,766. That's nearly double the **number of** casualties lost during war.

On the pharmaceutical front: U.S. medical doctors prescribe drugs that kill 100,000 Americans annually. (Source: [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov)) Yet, these killings continue 24/7, year after year with no consequences to drug companies or doctors.

Illegal drug overdoses kill 13 teenagers every hour, 24/7 in the United States, yet no one in our U.S. Congress moves to seal the Mexican-US border from the \$50 billion in drugs arriving in the USA annually. A whopping 64,000 Americans died from illegal drugs in 2016. (Source: [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov))

Why should we pay Congress to sidestep what both sides should have solved decades ago?

How about knife killings? The FBI statistics show that knives have been used as murder weapons more often than rifles – even “assault weapons” – for quite a while. In 2013, knives or other cutting instruments killed 1,490 victims. In contrast, rifles caused 285 deaths. Shotguns killed 308 people. The 2009 ratio: knives killed three times as many people as rifles.

Ironically, in Chicago, Illinois and California, both ‘gun free zones’ with extremely strict gun control laws—firearm murders make Chicago the murder capital of America.

How do you chew on all these startling facts on violence in America? What causes us to be so incredibly vicious and/or careless across the entire spectrum of our society.

As a teacher, writer and observer of the American scene for the past 50 years, I’ve watched parents change from watching their kids playing sports to watching TV an average of 4.1 hours daily, seven days a week. I’ve watched marriages fracture 50 to 60 percent of the time—leaving their kids without structure, security or balance. Seven out of ten African-American children face life born out of wedlock and grow up with a single mother on welfare. I’ve learned that teenagers average 3,300 texts monthly or more than 100 times a day. (Source: [www.textrequest.com](http://www.textrequest.com)) If you look at the college scene or the local high school arena, alcohol remains the drug of choice for fights, mayhem and emotional insanity.

Any solutions? Please realize that hoping the “other guy”

will push for changes in Washington DC flat-out isn't working. We must be the change makers. Remember: government of the people, by the people, and for the people—remains one of our greatest Constitutional gifts. We better start holding our kids closer, love them more and make them feel wanted. We must give them our time. We must make them feel whole, secure and cherished.

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