

To: All ADAPT Community Network Staff
From: Ed Matthews
Re: Uvalde Texas

Like all of you, my family and I were horrified and shocked again as young innocent lives were taken by a madman with a gun. We grieve for the families who lost their child and the kids who are scarred forever by something they cannot even comprehend. And we wonder if it could happen in our own city, in our own schools. We think probably not. People in NY do not and probably can't walk around with assault rifles without attracting attention. Yet, many of us have seen and experienced up close and personal the devastation and horror by one handgun in a subway, in a playground, in a store or just walking on the street.

I know that some reading this come to work here at ADAPT praying that their children are safe going to and coming home from school, playing in the park or just walking around. The killing of an 11 year old girl by a stray bullet does not get the national attention that the murder of 20 of them do, but it should.

It's not usually racism here since much of the violence is committed by people from the same neighborhood. Some for personal grievances, some for a perceived slight, some because they could. One common theme does bind them together though. Complete indifference to human life, theirs or anyone else's. Fortunately, the opposite of that is the one thing that binds us together here at ADAPT. We respect the dignity of every life. We practice it here and at home. We instill it in our children. At home, we can continue to advocate for and participate in programs that give kids a sense of belonging and a safe place to be. We can vote for politicians who are serious about gun laws. We can speak out against the senseless violence. We can hold law enforcement accountable to pursue these investigations as vigorously as they do others. But, mostly, we can all help build a sense of community and family so that fewer young people will feel alone and uncared about.

But right now, we can pray for the victims of these tragedies and their families and that this country wakes up. No other country on the world has the constant and relentless murder rate among its citizens. Freedom is a right and a privilege that demands great responsibility to ourselves and our neighbors. The folks we support are blessed that you are who you are.

Thanks. Stay safe. Godspeed.

Edward Matthews
Chief Executive Officer