

Connecticut Shooting Tragedy Sparks Debate on Guns, Mental Health

The Newtown, Conn., **shooting tragedy** is reviving a national debate on **gun control**.

Lawmakers in favor of stricter gun legislation say that the Connecticut elementary school shooting could be the tipping point.

"We can put aside the R's and D's and realize that there is a reasonable approach to restrict access to some of the most violent of these weapons," Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., said.

Democrats are renewing their cry for tougher gun laws, calling for outright bans on assault rifles.

"I don't know anyone that needs 30 rounds in a clip to go hunting," Sen. Joe Manchin, ., said.

President Obama agreed.

"Are we prepared to say that such violence visited on our children year after year after year is somehow the price of our freedom?" he challenged.

Some Republican lawmakers say arming teachers will make schools safer.

"She takes him out, takes his head off before he can kill those precious kids," Rep Louie Gohmert, R-Texas, said.

"In the state of Texas with our concealed handgun license, if you go through the process and you have been duly backgrounded and trained, and you are a concealed handgun license individual, you should be able to carry your handgun anywhere

in this state,” Texas Gov. Rick Perry said.

The Sandy Hook Elementary tragedy is also sparking a conversation about mental health.

Friends and family of the shooter, **Adam Lanza**, said he suffered from a personality or mental disorder.

More than 15 million children in the United States have similar disorders. But experts say there aren’t many resources available to help them.

“There’s a lot of different parameters that come into play, certainly mental health issues,” Psychiatrist Karl Benzio, executive director and founder of Lighthouse Network, said. “Our society 34 percent this year will have a mental health issue – 61 percent in their lifetime it’s a prevalent situation.”

“But there’s not that many services or people have problems getting access to these services, so that’s always part of the problem in these kind of situations,” he explained.

The gun control issue is expected to be addressed on the first day Congress is back in session.

Lawmakers calling for gun control will face off against gun rights advocates – one of the strongest lobbying teams in Washington.