

# American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



## AAP Headquarters

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## Reply to

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December 19, 2012

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a non-profit professional organization of 62,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical sub-specialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, I write to urge your immediate leadership to protect the health and safety of the nation's children in response to the tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut.

The AAP stands with all Americans in grieving the loss of the lives of the children and school professionals at Sandy Hook Elementary School. During this difficult period pediatricians across the country have counseled frightened children and supported families. In the coming days, the AAP is fully prepared to work with the administration, Congress and state governments to protect children and place their health, safety and long term well-being as *the* primary national focus necessary to prevent gun violence and recover from this tragedy.

New federal firearms legislation that bans assault weapon sales and the sales of high capacity magazines, strengthens mandatory waiting periods and background checks for all gun purchases and promotes strict gun safety policies is a necessary first step. Next, the federal government must take action to improve access to services that meet the mental health and developmental needs of infants, children and adolescents, and ensures that children and families exposed to violence have access to a medical home and other community supports. There must be strengthened health systems in every community to help build childhood resilience and strong families. Finally, we must engage in a national dialogue designed to reduce children's detrimental exposure to violence in their communities, environments and entertainment.

During your December 16 statement, you said, "[N]o matter how much you love these kids, you can't do it by yourself, the job of keeping our children safe and teaching them well is something we can only do together." The American Academy of Pediatrics wholeheartedly agrees with this sentiment. We are ready to work with you, Vice President Biden and Congressional leaders to honor the memory of the children and families in Connecticut and those exposed to gun violence every day through swift, bold action that keeps our children healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas K. McInerney MD".

Thomas K. McInerney, MD, FAAP  
President

cc: U.S. Senate Leader Harry Reid, U.S. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, U.S. House Speaker John Boehner, U.S. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi