

President – Jaime Stelzer, MD, FAAP
Vice President/Treasurer – Cynthia Robbins, MD, MS, FAAP
Secretary – Pat Clements, MD, FAAP
Past President – Emily Scott, MD, FAAP
Executive Director – Christopher Weintraut, JD
INAAP is Incorporated in Indiana



May 26, 2022

Dear Members of the Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics:

On May 15th I assumed the role as President of the Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. I never imagined that one of my first duties would be responding to the horrifying tragedy that took place in Texas this past Tuesday. As doctors and advance practice nurses who have pledged our lives to the care and well-being of children, I know that the vast majority of us are still reeling from this week's events. I know too that many are looking for ways to make a difference so that a tragedy like the one that took place in Uvalde becomes unfathomable.

I wish I had an easy answer – a pill we could prescribe or a form we could submit that would instigate rapid and meaningful change. I do not. Change will come incredibly hard, and it will take the collective efforts of thousands of individuals. We must say, through our words and actions, that enough is enough. Something has to change. The time for change is now. Contrary to what some may think, there can be no denying that gun violence is a pediatric health issue and that we as pediatric clinicians have a critical role to play in making sure our lawmakers understand why. I assure you that INAAP will also continue to help amplify your voice to our elected officials and that we will do everything we can to help protect the children and families we serve.

Though change will not come overnight, the work must start now. There are a few things we can all do today to get started:

First, you can call Senator Mike Braun and Senator Todd Young and urge them to support [H.R.8](#), also known as the Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2021. Though just a small step, this bill has already been passed by the House of Representatives and would close background check loopholes for unlicensed sellers. The bill alone is not enough, but would move our country in the right direction.

- You can reach Senator Braun's office at (202) 224-4814, or you can email him [here](#).
- You can Reach Senator Young's office at (202) 224-5623, or you can email him [here](#).

Another thing you can do today is contact your state senator and state representative and let them know you want meaningful change to help keep kids safe and healthy. You can find your state lawmakers using this easy [tool](#). The tool will provide you with a phone number and email address, and your message can be as simple as "My name is Dr. Jaime Stelzer, and I am a pediatrician that lives in your district. I'm reaching out to you today to urge you to enact legislation that helps keep kids safe from gun violence."

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Finally, talking to families about safe gun storage in our practices is a critical way we can all make a difference. INAAP has previously promoted the [Be SMART](#) program, and it continues to be a great framework for talking to families about this topic. If you are unsure how to incorporate this into your own practice, please reach out to me and I can connect you with a member who has implemented the program already.

Though it may not always feel like it, every action you take to advocate on this issue will help move the ball forward. None of us can do it alone, but together we can help make a difference for the children in Indiana. I look forward to working with all of you over the next two years as INAAP President, and I thank you in advance for your efforts.

Sincerely,

Jaime Stelzer, MD, FAAP
President, Indiana Chapter of the
American Academy of Pediatrics