



National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Reacts to the Santa Fe High School Shooting

Organization Represents Nation's Nearly 3,000 Local Governmental Health Departments -- Texas Public Health Official Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH Quoted

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, May 22, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a scene all-too-frequent in our schools, ten people were killed last Friday in a mass shooting at Santa Fe High School in southeastern Texas. From a young man who had just turned 17 and was preparing to celebrate with friends to a Pakistani exchange student working to build bridges between her host and native countries, we are reminded of the vast promise that is lost when children become victims of a shooter's outrage.

"This incident hits close to home, since this occurred in our neighboring community. Our hearts go out to all those affected," said Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH, executive director of [Harris County Public Health](#) and NACCHO board president. "As a country we have not done enough to invest in research and response efforts in behavioral health and violence prevention. We can and must do more to emphasize and fund prevention efforts so we can protect our nation's children. As a physician, public health practitioner, and a father, I know that we can and should be doing more."

A recent article in Politico Pulse pointed out that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) ban to study gun violence has been quietly lifted, but in the ensuing two months, funding for firearms research at CDC is still nonexistent. "We shouldn't have to wait for yet another shooting until funding for gun violence research becomes available to the CDC," said NACCHO CEO, Lori Tremmel Freeman, MBA. "What is urgently needed is dedicated funding for data collection on a broad variety of issues aside from gun violence, including assault weapons, gun theft, suicide by gun, accidents, straw purchasers, background checks, guns on college campuses, and a host of other factors. Public health departments need to focus on prevention efforts in their communities, but the gaps in data make it difficult on where to focus those efforts."

NACCHO wants to remind and urge its partners of the absolute importance of building resilient communities that strongly support each other, especially in times of crisis. As always, NACCHO remains committed to providing resources, training, and guidance to their local health department members to help in their response to this ongoing public health crisis. These include enhancing awareness through trainings for Suspicious Activity, Active Shooter and Explosive Device, and Risk Communications. You will find resources on [NACCHO's Preparedness blog](#) here, and updated resources from the [U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#) can be found here.

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About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their

communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit www.naccho.org.

Theresa Spinner
National Association of County and City Health Officials
202-783-5551
[email us here](#)

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