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HEALTH CENTER PARTNERS
of Southern California

Gun Violence and Community Health

June 21, 2022

Gun violence is a community health epidemic. It is past time to contain it.

Gun violence has long been a community safety issue, particularly among black and brown communities. By not acting, we are complicit in the violence that is impacting our children, our community spaces, and our communities of color.

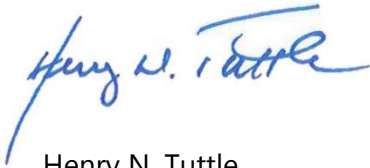
Elizabeth Williamson, New York Times feature writer, has published recently: *Sandy Hook – An American Tragedy and the Battle for Truth*. She used the term "[stray voltage](#)" in describing the impact of mass shootings on our communities and acceleration of gun violence. Uvalde's Robb Elementary School shooting is the 27th school shooting in the U.S. this year. Expanding beyond schools, we've had more than 198 mass shootings in 2022. Each day more than 200 Americans are [injured with guns](#). Since 1999, 187,000 students have been exposed to gun violence at school. **Over the last two decades, more school-age children have [died from guns](#) than on-duty police officers and active-duty military combined.** Bet you didn't know that...

Sometimes it is hard to understand how we got here. What have we done to create this environment in this Country where this level of violence and loss is acceptable? As citizens we are angered that those in power have become paralyzed to act. Anyone with empathy knows that this is obviously wrong. Good citizens can no longer stand by in silence.

We can no longer wait for our leaders to do something, or for "stray voltage" to take aim at our hometown elementary school. It is time for us to take responsibility, refocus our outrage and become engaged, make a difference, and make these precious lives that were lost mean something more. Defenseless children are depending upon it. Stop thinking, and talking, and posting – we must all commit to taking some action if we are to make any change. It is time for us to march and demonstrate. To [make demands](#) of our leaders in positions of power. To [donate](#). To [write](#) Op Eds that share the facts about gun violence. TO VOTE!

Gun violence is a [preventable](#) public health epidemic.

It is time to get honest and meet the moment. How will you take action?

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Henry N. Tuttle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Henry N. Tuttle
President and Chief Executive Officer

[Health Center Partners of Southern California](#), a family of companies, includes a 17-membership organization of federally qualified health centers, Indian Health Services Organizations, both urban and sovereign, and Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest, collectively serving 917,000 patients each year, for 3.9 million patient visits each year, at 170 practice sites across San Diego, Riverside and Imperial counties, and is the seventh largest provider group in the region. [Read our latest Impact Report.](#)