

**\*14,605 Americans have died in gun-related incidents in 2017 alone, according to Gun Violence Archive.**

## Generation Z's guide to talking about gun control

by Rebecca Lee

Gun control is one of the most, if not the most, dividing issue in the contemporary United States.

There are those who believe that the ownership and use of all guns is a constitutional right, while there are others who believe that the federal government should ban access to all guns by everyone everywhere, and there are a whole lot of people in between.

All of us, however, have in common the belief that we are right.

I've found that it's especially difficult to engage in calm and reasonable discourse about gun control.

For many of us, this matter goes

far beyond policy. For many of us, our stances on gun control are rooted in our upbringing, our core values, and what we believe to be our rights as United States citizens.

So, how does one go about having an unemotional and thoughtful conversation about gun control, when the issue feels like anything but?

*It feels as though the destruction and death caused by gun violence have become one big political debate*

Tip one to engage in productive civil discourse about gun violence in

the United States: do your research. Too many of us rely on the claims that our parents spout and the random articles that our Facebook feeds generate. Despite what our president says, news sources are crucial to our awareness and activism as Americans.

Let me revise that—credible news sources are crucial to our awareness and activism as Americans. Although you are absolutely entitled to subscribe to Breitbart, recognize that most people will neither take you nor your argument seriously if that is the only source you can cite.

Tip two: ad hominem attacks are fallacious and ineffective. When you assume that all members of the NRA are white, racist, and uneducated, you

demonstrate a complete disrespect for others' views. When you accuse a gun-rights supporter of not caring about the children killed by mass shooters, you suggest that he or she is an evil person simply because he or she disagrees with you.

When you make ad hominem attacks against a person with whom you disagree, you ruin the possibility of ever convincing that person of your position.

Tip three: don't use poverty, racial tensions, and violence to conveniently shut down opposing arguments. Too many Americans seem to only care about gang violence in Chicago when it serves as a political talking point. Politicians of all parties grossly exploit public grief

after mass shootings to push agendas.

It feels as though many Americans have become desensitized to the destruction and death caused by gun violence. In fact, it feels as though the destruction and death caused by gun violence have become one big political debate.

Gun control is literally a matter of life or death. As of Dec. 11, 14,605 Americans have died gun-related deaths in 2017. There have been more than 1,500 mass shootings in the United States since Sandy Hook.

I think all of us, no matter where we stand on gun control, can agree that this current state of affairs is unacceptable. We can all agree that we need to do better. I think this is where it starts.

## Inconsistencies in Trump's responses to tragedies shed light on double standard

Some view Trump's responses to recent acts of violence as contradictory

by Katie Kim

The recent stream of mass shootings and terrorist attacks, and the ways that President Donald Trump has responded to them, have created controversy.

One of the duties of the President of the United States is to comfort the American public in times of crisis and despair.

As the most powerful figure in the United States, President Trump has had to comfort the Americans who have lost loved ones in mass shootings and terrorist attacks.

While some believe that he has continually arisen to this challenge, others have been disappointed by his responses.

"I've been disappointed with our President's response in that it seems rather binary and simplistic. He believes the crisis stemming from mass shootings is an issue solely related to mental health concerns and tethered to the nature of evil," said English teacher and Young Democrats sponsor Brett Rubin.

On Oct. 1, at least 59 people died and more than 500 people were injured in a mass shooting in Las Vegas. The shooter, Stephan Paddock, ultimately commit suicide.

In response, Trump said, "what happened is, in many ways, a miracle."

On Nov. 5, 26 people were killed and 20 people were injured in the mass shooting that occurred in a church in Sutherland Springs, Texas.

Trump again responded to the incident by calling it a mental health issue, not a gun control issue.

"Mental health is your problem here. This isn't a gun's situation. This is a mental health problem at the highest level. It's a very, very sad event but that's the way I view it," said Trump.

This response in particular caused an uproar due to what some perceived to be contradictory points. President Trump signed a bill that revoked a regulation created by former president Barack Obama, which required people to undergo national background checks before purchasing a firearm.

"It is a kind of madness to continue without considering common sense gun reform policies. The vast majority of Americans are in favor of common sense gun reform. The rate at which these shootings occur speaks to a national sickness at the level of a collective national consciousness. Something is very wrong with our culture and our values that is manifesting itself in these horrific and tragic acts," argued Rubin.

Trump's response to the radical Islamic terrorist attack in lower Manhattan provoked anger among some Americans, who accused him of holding Muslims and white Americans to a double standard.

On Oct. 31, a 29 year-old immigrant from Uzbekistan, Sayfullo Saipov, ran a rental truck into the Hudson River Park bike path. Saipov killed eight people. Witnesses say that Saipov yelled "Allahu Akbar" multiple times.

Trump responded by tweeting that he wanted Saipov to be given the death sentence.

"It's foolish of him to make such statements before any trial or proceeding because politicians usually don't express their opinions on the outcomes of criminal cases," said sophomore debater Roland Kim.

Others argue that Trump has responded appropriately to all the events, while being poorly represented by the media.

"I think that Trump's responses to the recent shootings have been good even though they have been portrayed in the media as being very bad. All he ever tries to do is whatever is best for Americans, no matter their color of skin," said senior Emily Curylo.

**@realDonaldTrump**

**Donald J. Trump** @realDonaldTrump  
Appreciate the congrats for being right on radical Islamic terrorism, I don't want congrats, I want toughness & vigilance. We must be smart!  
6/12/16, 12:43 PM

**Donald J. Trump** @realDonaldTrump  
What has happened in Orlando is just the beginning. Our leadership is weak and ineffective. I called it and asked for the ban. Must be tough  
3:47 PM · Jun 12, 2016  
26,441 Retweets 69,032 Likes

**Donald J. Trump** @realDonaldTrump  
NYC terrorist was happy as he asked to hang ISIS flag in his hospital room. He killed 8 people, badly injured 12. SHOULD GET DEATH PENALTY!  
9:43 PM - Nov 1, 2017  
34,279 43,286 172,953

**Donald J. Trump** @realDonaldTrump  
...There is also something appropriate about keeping him in the home of the horrible crime he committed. Should move fast. DEATH PENALTY!  
5:54 AM - Nov 2, 2017  
24,514 17,411 85,121