

## The Freedom from Fear Medal

### On this, the fifth day of October 2019, the Franklin D. Roosevelt Freedom from Fear Medal is awarded to: Sandy Hook Promise

Every year, three million American children witness gun violence<sup>i</sup>, and nearly 1700 American children and teens die by gun homicide.<sup>ii</sup> In 2019, there have been 22 school shootings across the country—from elementary schools to college campuses.

As this national epidemic rages on without congressional intervention, and as parents fear for the lives of their children every single day, Sandy Hook Promise has led a national movement centered around an urgent question: How do we keep each other safe?

Mark Barden's answer: What would Daniel do?<sup>iii</sup>

After the senseless murder of your son Daniel, 19 schoolmates, and six adult educators, you and the family members of other victims co-founded Sandy Hook Promise with the mission of preventing gun-related deaths due to crime, suicide, and accidental discharge.

Daniel's life has been a guiding light in that work. Thoughtful, kind, and compassionate, Daniel noticed everything: someone sitting alone, someone in need of comfort. His teachers praised him for taking care of his classmates—for offering his ear and his heart to anyone who was struggling.<sup>iv</sup>

That kind of thoughtfulness is what Sandy Hook Promise centers in its gun violence prevention efforts. As you've written, "asking who is fundamentally bad doesn't do much good. It's much more important to focus on what you can see, what you can prevent, and those things that empower students—the eyes and ears of their schools—to look for warning signs."<sup>v</sup>

In the six years since its founding, Sandy Hook Promise has trained over 5.5 million children, teens, and adults to know the signs, to intervene, and to start with hello.<sup>vi</sup> You have shaped the policy conversation and achieved major legislative victories, including the landmark STOP School Violence Act—which provided schools with over \$100 million in funding for safety programs—and over a dozen bipartisan laws at the state level.<sup>vii</sup>

**But beyond changing our laws, you have also changed the way we see each other, hear each other, and help each other.**

Every day, you are creating a culture of awareness and engagement, building a safer world one training—one hello—at a time. You have honored all victims of gun violence in this transformative work, and we are proud to honor you with the 2019 Freedom from Fear Medal.

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<sup>i</sup> Everytown research - <https://everytownresearch.org/gun-violence-america/>

<sup>ii</sup> Everytown research - <https://everytownresearch.org/gun-violence-america/>

<sup>iii</sup> Facebook page - What Would Daniel Do? <https://www.facebook.com/WhatWouldDanielDo>

<sup>iv</sup> PBS interview with Mark and Jackie - February 2013 <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/jackie-and-mark-barden-parents-of-newtown-victim-daniel-was-a-kind-little-soul/>

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<sup>v</sup> *Fatherly* piece by Mark Barden - December 2018 - <https://www.fatherly.com/love-money/sandy-hook-promise-stopping-school-shooters/>

<sup>vi</sup> Sandy Hook Promise press releases - <https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/pressreleases?page=6>

<sup>vii</sup> *Mother Jones* article - December 2018 - <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2018/12/what-one-sandy-hook-parent-wants-congress-to-do-next-year/>