

# Episode 100- Finding Hope, and Helpers, in Gun Violence Prev...

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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## SPEAKERS

Fred Guttenberg, Kelly Sampson, Dana Winters, Kris Brown, Clayton Rosenberg, JJ Janflone



JJ Janflone 00:00

Hey, everybody. This is the legal disclaimer where I tell you the views, thoughts and opinions shared on this podcast belong solely to our guests and hosts and not necessarily Brady, or Brady's affiliates. Please note this podcast contains discussions of violence that some people may find disturbing. It's okay, we find it disturbing too. Hey everybody. Welcome back to a live episode of "Red, Blue and Brady." Today Kelly and I are joined by Clayton Rosenberg, the Airector of Alliance of Concerned Men, Kris Brown, the President of Brady, Fred Guttenberg of Orange Ribbons for Jaime and Dr. Dana Winters of the Fred Rogers Center, or as I like to call it, the Mr. Rogers Center. Together, we're bringing you something a little bit different for our 100th episode, a conversation not just on gun violence, but on how each of our guests have been helped in their journeys of activism, and how we all can be helpers ourselves. And of course, that's why Dr. Winters is here, because who knows more about being a good neighbor than Mr. Rogers himself. Then, in our "unbelievable but..." segment, Kelly and I discuss why you shouldn't bring a gun to Disney World. And yes, this is the second time we've had this conversation. Finally, in our news wrap up, I celebrate some gun violence prevention wins, mark the unfortunate remembrance of a mass shooting, and mourn the passing of a young gun violence prevention activist. So I want to say thank you so much to everyone who is joining us here this evening, both as viewers, as listeners, and as our amazing panelists. For this event tonight, we are talking about a lot of serious things, but hopefully things that will end up

uplifting us and making us feel closer together -- rather than farther apart. So just to give you a little bit of background on February 14 of 2018, Fred Guttenberg, one of our panelists, his daughter, Jaime, then 14, was killed in the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. At the time of her death, however, the Guttenberg family was already mourning. Just four months earlier, Fred's brother Michael had passed away of pancreatic cancer stemming back to the service during 9/11 as a Deputy Medical Director for the New York City Fire Department. The loss of Jamie and Michael, who if you read Fred's book, "Find the Helpers" were incredible people who were devoted to public service was, at the time, it seemed insurmountable, and he'll talk about that a little bit. But in the days following Jamie's death, he was struck by a quote from Mr. Rogers, a show that he and his children, Jaime and Jesse enjoyed, who said in a well known interview in 1999, that his mother used to tell him, in the light of tragedy, that he should always look to the helpers to find hope. And day after day, people, many unknown to him, work to treat his family with kindness and compassion. Today, we are here, in part to talk about his book, amazing book, "Find the Helpers: What 9/11 and Parkland Taught Me About Recovery, Purpose and Hope, where he details his ongoing fight for gun violence prevention, but also the lessons he learned about living through grief, and how to be a helper himself. And so to do that, we're joined, I think, by some amazing helpers, there is my beautiful and fantastic brilliant co-host, Kelly Sampson, who is Legal Counsel and Director of Racial Justice at Brady. We also have Clayton Rosenberg with us, who is the director for Alliance of Concerned Men, a group of violence interrupters in D.C., we have Kris Brown, the President of Brady, one of the oldest and boldest gun violence prevention nonprofits in the US. And Dr. Dana Winters of the Fred Rogers Center who -- if you don't know who Fred Rogers is, I think you might be very confused about this call -- but you'll figure it out. We're going to talk about the way gun violence impacts Americans, how helpers can, you know, lead people along their journeys, and how when things seem dark outside, we can bring a little light to the world. So I want to thank all of our panelists, so much for being here. And I want to give each one of you an opportunity to, sort of, talk about the groups you're associated with. So Kris, I'd love to start with you and can you tell our audience a little bit about Brady?

K

**Kris Brown 04:18**

Happy to JJ. I'm thrilled to be part of this podcast with Fred and Dana and Clayton. And I mean, at this moment in time in our nation's history, I can't imagine really, at the end, a more important topic. I'm the President of Brady, obviously, one of the nation's oldest and boldest gun violence prevention organizations, we'd like to say. And at the end, really what we're all about is ending the epidemic of gun violence. And we do have an epidemic, an epidemic of gun violence, even in the backdrop of this pandemic of COVID, what we've seen is an unprecedented spike in gun sales -- 2 million more guns sold this year than last

-- mainly due to what the press calls "panic purchases." And I think that's the right way to call it. Individuals who honestly never thought about buying a gun before ever, who are thinking about that, because they're afraid. They're afraid that the police won't be there for them, or that if the police are, that's the wrong arm of government to potentially support them. And a big part of what we do, as a gun violence prevention movement, very much related to Jim and Sarah Brady, is focusing on what we can do, the art of the reality of the situation that we're in. How can we pass laws? How can we make a difference? How can we enforce? And then when we can't do that, as a Virginian I say this, then, if you can't change the laws, then you change the lawmakers. We're at a moment in time where we have a huge potential for change, for real change around our issue. And I think people like Fred Guttenberg, who were not called to this, per se, and never thought of themselves as activists. But unfortunately, the United States of America conscripts, and I say that purposefully, far too many people, people like Fred and his wife, Jennifer, to be part of this cause. Because we lose people, and we lose people every day. And in far too many communities that are underrepresented across this country, in a horrible way, I hope that will change and that we can make real difference. So ultimately, we're here because I think that the uplifting and ultimate goal here, is to make sure all of us are connected by what we can do together, regardless of party, regardless of circumstance. It's about empathy, and understanding how other people live in this country and lifting each other up. And so I'm really excited to be part of this conversation.

K

Kelly Sampson 07:16

I'm going to turn to Dr. Winters and ask if you could tell us a little bit about the Fred Rogers Center, and Fred Rogers or Mr. Rogers, as most of us know him, himself.

D

Dana Winters 07:25

Yes. Thank you so much, I'm really excited to be with you tonight. And yes, the Fred Rogers Center is that Mr. Rogers, it took me about a year-and-a-half of working at the center to start to feel comfortable to referring to Mr. Rogers as "Fred." The Fred Rogers center was envisioned by Fred, when he was ending his time in television, as early as the 1980s, he was beginning to think about what was going to come next for him. And he wanted to continue to write, he wanted to continue to serve children and their families, and their helpers, and he decided to do that on a college campus. So he started the Fred Rogers Center. He didn't get to see us open, he passed away in 2003. We formally opened in 2006. But it was very much envisioned by him, as a way to continue to extend his philosophy and his legacy, well past his time in television. So Mr. Rogers Neighborhood was on public television for over 30 years, nearly 900 episodes. But at the Fred Rogers Center, while we do work around Mr. Rogers Neighborhood, we're far more interested in

who Fred Rogers was outside of the sweater, who he was as a humanitarian, as someone who was so very much interested in the public good, and advancing notions of empathy, and compassion, and kindness through all of his work. And that's the legacy that we've taken on now, is that the work that we do is in service of Fred's idea that we learn best and grow best through relationships. And what can we do to support and empower the adults around the lives of children, to be able to continue to serve children and continue to help them to become caring, competent and confident human beings?



JJ Janflone 09:16

Well, and I think, we can't really talk about what it is to be 'neighborly,' or what it is to kind of go beyond ourselves without talking about Mr. Clayton Rosenberg and the phenomenal people that he works with at Alliance of Concerned Men. And so I'm wondering, Clayton, if you can tell our listeners a little bit about your organization and what all of you do in DC?



Clayton Rosenberg 09:36

Yes, indeed. I want to thank you all for having me. My name is Clayton Rosenberg. I'm the Chief of Staff and Director of Operation at The Alliance of Concerned Men. We have been doing youth gang intervention for the past three decades, really going into the communities, creating relationships, brokering truce, just being on the ground in the community and someone that the community can depend on, that have hope. And we've been transforming lives. As we like to say, we go into communities and we do surgery, we always say that the violence is a public health, it's a public health, basically, matter, of when it comes to dealing with this stuff on forefront. But all we like to do is really build these relationships, broker truce and make our community safe for everybody. And now that's what we've been doing, just been on the ground.



JJ Janflone 10:25

And I want to thank you so much. And so now maybe if we want to pivot to, maybe the man of the hour, our other beloved Fred, if I can call Mr. Rogers, Fred, because you're right, Dr. Winters, it does seem strange. The, you know, Mr. Guttenberg, Fred, can you tell our viewers a little bit about you, and about Jamie and Michael, in particular, and sort of, why we're here for a Mr. Rogers-related event, why you named the book, find the helpers.



Fred Guttenberg 10:55

But before I do, because my book is about the helpers. And, and I try to deliver the message that helpers are everywhere, you only have to open yourself up to them. Clayton, thank you for what you do. Because you are proof of this book. We all have our helpers. They are everywhere, as long as we are willing to be open to that idea. And so thank you for doing what you do. Listen. My story was really horrific already, before February 14, 2018. My brother Michael, was only a year younger than me. And growing up, we had all the same friends and we were very close. He was a hero. You know, he did things I could never do. I was the guy who would be running away from tragedy. My brother was the one running into it, which was the case on 9/11 at the World Trade Center. My brother ran in when others were running out. He was an emergency room physician, and he was there to set up a triage. He was a group of, part of the group of the original 10 doctors that were there. Nobody ever expected the buildings to fall. And he was inside when they did, and amazingly, where he hid out didn't collapse. He survived that. But he breathed everything in. And then he spent 16 days at Ground Zero, continuing to breathe everything in. And in 2013, he got the cancer that came from that. And in October of 2017, he passed from the cancer. The thing about my family, I'm one of five kids, my parents are still alive. We never suffered loss. My brother was our first experience with it. So it was big. It was tragic. It was a very slow loss. And my family had never gone through anything like this. It felt like the worst thing in the world -- until four months later. I sent my two children to school. That's my daughter, Jamie behind me. And we send our children to school to learn with the expectation that they're going to be safe. I rushed my kids out the door that day because they were running late, never knowing it would be the last time. The last words I would say to my daughter would be "You gotta go, you gotta go. You gotta get to school," because you never expect it's going to happen to you. But it did. My daughter Jamie was killed February 14 2018 in Parkland, Florida. I, that day, is a day that in weird ways, I remember some of the details so distinctly, it's like they're still happening. And so many of the details of that day are a blur. But as that day became February 15, and then February 16. And the days started to go forward, I had to go forward, my family had to go forward. And while the world was spinning, we needed to get through the seconds, the minutes and the days. And over the course of that early period, and then moving forward, I don't get through it without the amazing help of others who carried me. They lifted me up, they did things I couldn't do. And that has continued. You know, listen, for anyone who has followed me, I have made it my life's mission to do something about gun violence. And Kris, like you said, if those we put in place won't do something about it, then we change those who are in place, who will do something about it, because our lives are worth it. Your life is worth it. Everyone on this podcast, your life is worth this fight. My daughter had a favorite saying that she lived her life by and it was "dreams and dedication are a powerful combination. And with my helpers, I have a dream that we are going to do something about gun violence, and I've dedicated myself to doing something about it. And part of my dream is getting more Americans to just simply vote, I won't tell you who to vote for just vote,

because the more of you who vote, the better chance we have of getting legislators who will do what we expect them to do. And so I really do, thank you for having me on, for giving me a chance to tell the story, over the course of the next hour about some of the amazing helpers in my life. You know, some of you on this podcast with me, I would call some of my amazing helpers, and I really appreciate you. But together, we're going to solve this problem.

K

Kelly Sampson 15:44

So thank you just want to thank you. I mean, I've heard you tell your story. And every time, I can't imagine that it's easy to do. So I just want to thank you for once again, sharing your family with us sharing Jamie and Michael with us, and helping all of us with your story, truly. And I know we talked earlier that the title of your book, "Finding the Helpers" came from a Mr. Rogers quote. And so I wanted to turn to Dr. Winters, because that quote of Mr. Rogers is pretty well known. But I was wondering if you could tell our listeners a little bit more about how that sentiment of finding helpers aligns with Mr. Rogers, or Fred's, philosophy on things and life.

D

Dana Winters 16:24

Sure. So the the finding the helpers, looking for helpers is probably one of the more well known quotes that we hear attributed to Fred Rogers, the quote actually goes back to Fred Rogers's mom. So it was when Fred was a young boy, he asked his mother when he was afraid when he was scared, what he should do. And his mom told him to look for the helpers, you'll always find people helping. And I was incredibly impressed when I read "Find the Helpers, that Fred, you found the complete quote, which is not often seen. So as an aside, I teach a course called "What wWould Fred Rogers do?" at the college and one of my assignments to my students is to find Fred Rogers quotes and dig deeper and find the whole thing. So you would have gotten an A on this Fred. Because the reason is, it goes on. And he Fred goes on to explain why his mom told him to look for the helpers. And the reason is, because when you find people helping, you'll know there is hope. And that is so important, when we think of helpers, is it's not just the act of helping, but it's the hope that we get from seeing the helping, but also from them becoming helpers ourselves.

F

Fred Guttenberg 17:41

You know, and it is the second part of that quote, that drives me. What so, what I, so the story of how I actually came up with the name, and the quote, is actually more interesting than what you had told, JJ. Because it wasn't the initial intention of the book. Initially, I really wrote a straight up manuscript, I was telling my story. And someone who I really

trust, implicitly, I shared with them what I had done. And this person said, "keep writing," you know, keep going. We want to know more about like, every thing you wrote, involves another person. Like we want to know more about those other people. And in the conversation, you know, this person said, you know, that Mr. Rogers quote about how, and I was like, "Yeah," it was like an 'aha' moment that went off. And that's when the search started for the complete quote. And candidly, after that, I went back and rewrote the whole book, to really tell more of these stories about all of these amazing other peoples. Because I didn't want my book to be about what happened to my family, it's part of my story. But I really wanted people to understand that in this process of going forward, there is hope, how I found hope, and how no matter what we go through in life, we can always have hope, as long as we stay connected to our helpers. And so I really, it is that second part of the full quote, that really drove so much of what I was trying to do with this book and the story that I continue to tell when I talk about the book, because, listen, think about this pandemic right now, what people are going through. It is, this quote, is one that this country should put up on a, on billboards all around the country, so we all know, as long as we stay in touch with who our helpers are, you're gonna be okay. But there's another side to that, which is, if we're in a position where we can be a helper, we need to do so.



JJ Janflone 20:08

I think that that's brilliant. And I think someone should go and buy a billboard right now, and place it somewhere. One of the things, I think, when we're talking about hope that I would really like to ask both to you, Kris, and to you, Clayton, because you both work in the fields of gun violence prevention. And you've been working in these fields for quite a while, if you have any stories about finding your own helpers in the face of gun violence. And one of the reasons why I think this is so interesting is Kris, you're a lifelong Virginian, and you fought for gun violence prevention in Virginia. Clayton, you're a lifelong DC resident, you fought for gun violence prevention in DC. And I think it's so interesting that both of you have sort of remained close-to-home fighting for this. And so I'm wondering if you have any sort of tales, tales of helpers or hope, from you know, your hometown?



Kris Brown 20:58

I think Clayton will be more particular on these things. But so, what I would say is, it's a combination of things for me. First of all, I think that, you know, we had a conversation yesterday, JJ, you were a part of that, Kelly was too, with Gretchen Whitmer, focused on all that's going on at this moment and how we deal with this. And I think a big part of 'finding the helpers' is finding people who understand where you are at this moment in time. And that's a big part of moving forward. For our movement, that's people who are committed to the cause, people who are impacts, and I think all of this, all of us in this

movement are and then also understanding we have a common purpose. We may have different organizations, we may have different ends, but ultimately, we're all seeking to achieve the same, exact end. And that's why having Clayton on and certainly Fred, for me, is so important, because we are stronger together. And for many issues in life, right, I was like Fred in the private sector for a long time. We all know how we're governed in the private sector. How are we performing? What's happening? and that didn't really help me that much as a person. And there's a reason that I'm back, now leading Brady ultimately, for me, it's about how can I make the world a better place? That matters a lot. But what matters more are the other people who are part of this. To me in America today, it is just terrible that Fred is one of those people, I wish he wasn't Jamie should be with him. And so should so many others, and Clayton can talk about this. But ultimately, it doesn't have to be this way. All that we can do as a movement is lift people like them up, and ensure that their voices are heard. Because it's not, for anyone who's a thinking or feeling person, something that we can't commit to change together. And so for me, ultimately, that's what this is all about, is coming together, as Fred said, "finding the helpers," and there are so many all over in your communities, and making a difference.

C

Clayton Rosenberg 23:41

Yes, indeed. And I just want to just add to that, I mean, from our standpoint, every person that's willing to commit to change and help us in the community, we consider as a helper, as a good neighbor. It's plenty of times when we go in this community. And when we first started this work, DC was considered the murder capital of the USA. So we went inside DC and in the worst community, we picked the worst community. At what was, at that time, DC had a murder rate around 484. With the intervention, with constantly being involved in these individual lives, we were able to bring that down to 88. And that's because when we go in there, we look for individuals that's ready for change. But individuals that understand that, we have to do this based upon in relationships. If we don't have a relationship in these communities, we cannot begin to talk to these individuals, we cannot begin to mediate certain conflicts that's occurring. We won't be able to get in front of certain things to prevent it from even occurring. So for us, it's always about building those relationships, and having those neighbors who's going to, you know, let you be aware of what's happening, whether it's the moms that always looking outside, the grandmothers that sit on the porch. Whether it's the church, the congregation at the church, everyone that's considered, you know, trying to make a change them, I consider the good neighbors and the neighbors that really help us do our job, that in order for us, as violence interrupters, as credible messengers, to get on the frontline and begin to, again, do surgery. We have to have that already established in order to begin to communicate with these individuals. So you know, having a good neighbor and being, you know, someone that these people can have hope and believe in, that's how you begin to transform them.

And we noticed, when they research and they asked the individuals in the neighborhood we went in, "Why did you listen to them, and nobody else?" they answer was, "because nobody else came." Things like that, when you actually, you know, give yourself and give yourself unconditionally to make change in these communities and create that better relationship, you begin to see that, you know, they all, we all like each other. It's just, they don't know how to transform, they just need the right resources, they need the right individuals to help them build that neighborly love and you know, their own community. When we went in there, they end up cleaning the community up, the same ones that was once terrorizing the community. So you go to show, that's how neighborly love, that's how that neighbor could be like, you know. We should be helping one another, building a better community for everyone. And that's pretty much how we identify our neighbors in the community and the people that's helping us on the ground.



Fred Guttenberg 26:21

Clayton in a post COVID world, I want to come spend time with you. And I, and I'm serious. Because you know, everything you just described, is going into a community and helping everyone in the community to understand: life has value, you have value, you're important. And when you think of Mr. Rogers, I'm not going to call him Fred Rogers, Mr. Rogers, and the show, every person, every character, everything on that show had value. Nobody was risen, you know, put above one another. Everybody was treated with value. And that's what you're describing. And I just, I got to come spend time with you, when COVID allows me to do so



Kris Brown 27:07

Fred, we're happy to make sure that happens and I want to be a part of that too, 100 percent -- and that's why we love you so much. Because that's ultimately what this is about -- it is about community, it's about connecting with each other, and it's about finding a way to make a difference -- one neighborhood at a time.



JJ Janflone 27:28

Sounds like there's gonna be a post-COVID party at Clayton's. So I'm sorry, Mr. Rosenberg, you got assigned that.



Kris Brown 27:35

With masks, with masks.



JJ Janflone 27:36

Well, post-COVID. Post- COVID. We gotta be careful. And yeah, no, I think, you know, what it makes me think of, Fred, when you when you mentioned that the the sort of worth that everyone had in Mr. Rogers Neighborhood, I think to Doctor, you know, for Dr. Winters, I think of even things like Daniel Tiger, who like very famously, sang a song that he was not a mistake, that no one is a mistake, that everyone has value and has purpose, and how just, important that is. So and I believe, though in, terms of valuing people, I just was super rude and cut off Kelly. So Kelly...



Kelly Sampson 28:06

Oh, no, you're totally fine. I was just gonna say number one, I'm inviting myself to the postcode COVID party. And two, I was struck, Clayton, when you were talking about like, purposefully going into the worst, hardest hit neighborhood, how much that has in common with what Fred shared about his brother, purposefully running towards danger. And so it's just really striking to hear that kind of commonality around people who go towards need. So Fred, I would love to hear from you, if you could share some of your own experiences with helpers, that I mean, you put a lot into the book, but if you could just share some of your experiences will helpers too.



Fred Guttenberg 28:42

You know, the first helper that I really focus on in my book was actually from the day of 9/11. A lady who, to this day, I wish I actually knew and met, but one of the great helpers and heroes of that day. So my brother is someone who, as I said, we know when there's something like that going on, he is the one running in. And we also knew his office was right near the World Trade Center. So we knew he was going to be in there soon. In fact, he got in there before the second building even got hit. When the morning hours rolled on, and we hadn't heard from him, we all started to panic. As the morning hours rolled into the afternoon, we started to all settle into this notion of the worst case scenario, and my family was getting very emotional. We all believed we had lost my brother, until late that afternoon, when this lady called my parents and said, "I've spoken to your loved one. He is alive. He will call you when he can." And what's amazing is remember what 9/11 was like, remember the debris? Remember the only people walking the streets that day, were first responders. Yet this lady went out into all of that, went by where the first responders were, to every first responder that she could go up to and said, "You just give me a name and a phone number, I will call someone for you." And she did. That was the sign of life that we had for my brother that day. And I think about this lady every day, because she wouldn't leave her name, she wouldn't leave her phone number. But yet she did what she did. You

know, following the murder of my daughter, I talk a lot about dear friends of mine who I already had. From one who's a law enforcement officer, and when we couldn't find Jamie, went back to the school, and with the rest of the police that were there, walked the campus and found my daughter, he identified her. Or from another lifelong friend of mine, who was out my house the next day, and didn't leave my side, for I think was probably about a week. Everywhere I went, he was there, drove me everywhere. When we were planning Jamie's funeral, he sat outside the room, so we had our privacy, but close enough so that he can listen to everything that was going on, so I wouldn't forget to detail. You know, in ways big and small. But then listen, I'm so fortunate to have you, my friends at Brady, as just examples of people that I've become connected with because of what happened, I can honestly tell you, I wish I never knew any of you. But I'm so thankful every day that I do. And there's so many others like that. And then if you look at in the political arena, you know. One of my, one of the people who I love more than anyone these days is my congressman, Ted Deutsch, a guy who came to my house, the day I bury Jamie. I didn't want any political people in my house, my sister sort of pushed it. So I met Ted Deutsch in our driveway, abruptly and aggressively, and I was literally putting my finger in his face telling him, "You have 10 minutes," I said, "and I can just promise you, when this is all over, I am going to do something about gun violence and you're either with me or you're against me." And he said "Oh I'm with you." And from that day, and by the way, he didn't leave in 10 minutes. He and his wife, Jill, spent the rest of the night at my house. My family fell in love with them. They fell in love with my family and we've been friends ever since. But I've had this amazing good fortune of becoming close to people in the world of politics, media, new friends, from my community, people I never knew, but did such amazing things, not just for my family, but the other 16 families as well. Organizing meal trains, because obviously, you're not thinking about food when this is going on. But they made sure people were eating, I didn't know who these people were at the time. You know so there's, these helpers come from so many different directions. And every single day, every day, I meet new helpers, but I have all my other helpers who I know, are with me every minute of every day. It's what helps me to go forward with hope. It's what inspires me to know that what happened to my daughter, we're gonna start doing something about it, so it doesn't keep happening to our kids and to those we love.



JJ Janflone 33:28

Well, even that, Fred it makes me think of I, and Clayton knows this, I stalk the Alliance of Concerned Men's Instagram. I think I like everything in a way that is perhaps a little creepy. But, you know, one of the things I've that I see that they're consistently doing and other, you know, GVP, you know, like local groups are doing consistently is you know, bringing food to the community, especially during during COVID, bringing backpacks and school supplies for kids who are now at home. And I think sometimes we don't realize

maybe -- or people who aren't working in maybe gun violence prevention, who aren't working in maybe, say, child intervention don't realize, that -- these are things that saves lives too. You know, food trains, just letting someone know that, you know, they deserve a hot meal. That's a big thing, actually.

F

Fred Guttenberg 34:15

Food, you think about what this country is going through right now of this pandemic. Because it's it's not just the sickness, think about how many people are going hungry right now. All the economic insecurity. They rely on helpers like that, you know, and whether it's it's the work you're doing in the community, or people like chef, Jose Andres, who sets up these mobile kitchens around the country, you know, helpers helping every day, where they are needed.



JJ Janflone 34:48

And on that note of, sort of, helpers and everything that's been going on this year, I think we can all agree but you know, 2020 might have been better if we had Mr. Rogers in it, to help us see, see it through. I know that I've found myself turning to old YouTube videos in times of trouble. And so for you, Dr. Winters, I'm wondering if you could share with our audience, you know, some of his messages or some of his trainings on on how to maintain calm to spread kindness to be the best neighbors that we possibly can be in these times.

D

Dana Winters 35:17

Sure. No pressure there, in 18 minutes or so.



JJ Janflone 35:23

Small questions here really: How can we be the best humans we possibly can be? Easy.

D

Dana Winters 35:28

I mean, yes, easy. I think it really does, very much, play into what Clayton was saying about building relationships with people, the neighborly love. And I think oftentimes we confuse the kindness of helpers with just people being nice, and I want to push us beyond that. Because that wasn't what Fred had in mind, I don't think when he was talking about kindness, because the type of radical kindness that I've come to know from Fred Rogers

and studying his work is it moves far beyond just sheer niceties. I think it goes to the root of what it means to be kind. The root of the word kind is "-kin." It means rather, family neighbor, it means approaching the other by, to use one of Fred Rogers lines, seeing everyone as more than just one thing. So seeing beyond and being able to reach inside, and want to show compassion, and empathy, and kindness to another person, is not just being nice. Fred, the woman that you talked about, she saw beyond more than just one thing, in every face that she saw on on September 11. Clayton, in the work that you're doing, you're seeing beyond more than just one thing to truly come into contact with true kindness and compassion. And I think that in 2020, that's something that we need to think about even more, especially when, we almost have to have a greater intention with the way that we interact with others. We're not seeing full faces all the time with our masks, we're not coming into just, you know, serendipitous contact with people, as much as we were. But it takes that true intention and the core of what Fred Rogers advocated for in radical kindness, to approach every single person from a place of helping means to see what those inner needs are. And to be able to serve the inner needs, which remain.

K

Kelly Sampson 37:36

Dr. Winters, thank you so much for, sort of, distinguishing niceness with real kindness. So I want to bring in Kris and Clayton, and see, you know, what is something that you wish people knew about resiliency and kindness in the face of gun violence or gun violence prevention work?

K

Kris Brown 37:53

Well, I'll start with this. But I'm really want to hear from Clayton. The idea that Dr. Winters talked about about "radical kindness." I mean, it's interesting, right? Because people who think about those words together might say, "well, that's an oxymoron," to the extent that they would like "jumbo shrimp," radical kindness. And I love the way she put it. I wish we could clip her talking about this, and it's just a suggestion, but perhaps we can because she's the perfect person to put this forward? But that's the notion, right, this is radical kindness. I think, in a weird way, in today's world, "radical kindness" is not an oxymoron, these two things go together. I love this concept. And Fred is laughing along with me, because that's what makes the world change, and honestly, to me, that is America. I know a lot of different people across this country have a notion of America, what they think America is. To me, America is uniting many different people together, of all stripes, of all denominations, of all different life histories. We will come together, and we will lift everyone up, and we will have a better society for it. That's my notion of America. And I think that's not just this, oh, "I have a dream." I actually think that's a reality. We have a lot of work to do. There's no question about it. But I can't believe that for my kids, you know,

for all of our kids, that can't be the reality. That's what they want. We're all united, I'm sorry, but there's no way around it. Our environments, all of these things we experience together. We're connected. I'm losing the thread of your question, JJ. So I'm so sorry, but

**F** Fred Guttenberg 40:05  
We love what you said.

**K** Kris Brown 40:08  
Thank you, Fred, perhaps you can bring me home because I've lost..

**F** Fred Guttenberg 40:12  
You know, listen, and then I'm gonna throw it to Clayton, but I'm gonna keep this real simple. When February 15, 2018, the day after happened, I went to a vigil, and I spoke there that night. And I remember describing this feeling of being broken and saying, "I don't know what I do next." And I'll just say this, and it is why I have hope for this country, tune out all this negative rhetoric and noise. The reality is all across this country, in every community, in every way, I was touched by radical kindness, not just people being nice, but intentional, you know, and I think that maybe is that word is maybe the difference in being nice and radical kindness, it's intentional. And I was touched by it every day. And honestly, it helped me to eventually not feel broken, and it helped me to figure out what I continue to do next. So, you know, when we think about gun violence, you know, just think about all the families that are fighting to do something about this, because they're so radically decent, they don't want it to happen to somebody else. Clayton?

**C** Clayton Rosenberg 41:30  
I think, you know, really, uh, you know, just speaking on gun violence, we have noticed, you know, just in our communities, we all have experienced a loss of someone in gun violence. And it's sad, because, you know, these are the people that's working in these communities, for on the ground, and all of them had an experience of a loss of someone being shot, right? And for us to even say that's normal, for us, is a bad thing. You know, that's something that we're experiencing on the everyday in these certain communities. And these are the individuals now, been on the front line to help prevent that. So when we talk about, you know, having a real robust plan, and been able to pivot, because I think that's the the best way I can say it. We have to be able to adjust to what's going on, and meet them where they at, they're individuals. Because gun violence now, as we see with the pandemic, there's so many different variables, and so many different things that's causing

gun violence now. And even for us, when we go in the communities, we had a first responder program, and I arrived on scene before the police. So I get to see certain things that I don't want to witness, but I'm the first one there. So as a, as a community member calling me, "Hey, someone just been shot." Then I go to the scene, and I see a body on the ground, I see things that, you know, I'm not supposed to really be comfortable with. But because now it's ingrained that I have to help these people out, because I know if it was another version of me, they'd help me out. If they was in my position, this is what they would do. So I always put myself in that position to try to, now it's unconditionally, whatever they need, however I can help, I'm there and the staff is there. Like people understand that we're doing this because, not that we have to, but because we want to, you know. Like we want to do because it, this is not normal, there's a lot of trauma in our communities, and gun violence is at the at the top, you know, where I feel like if these individuals had a second chance, to not be experiencing certain things they experienced in their community, we'd see something totally different. And when we go into the worst communities, we had a, we got an initiative now. We in like, this was considered the sixth, well the 23rd most dangerous place in the United States, but the most dangerous place in DC. We were able to, with gun violence prevention, have that place now over 130/140 days without a shooting. And now in that place is considered a place where individuals want to go now. Individuals, they come outside, you see people riding bikes now. But just fast forward six months ago, you know, pre COVID, you won't see a soul outside, because they knew that's how dangerous it was, where it was two to three shootings every other week. But it's these are the type of things that we have to, you know, reinforce. We got to let the community know that it's going to start with them, and it will end with them. Because the community, they are the ones that's living it every single day. They, and some of them already have the answers you just have to go there and get them to provide, you know, what they already know, back it with the resources. And you'll see the significant changes. But you know, I think, like me personally, I experienced you know, my family members, you know, being shot, kids. Like, I don't think that's supposed to be normal. I don't think that that should be going on every single day like. It's not nothing "Oh, this person got shot" and you just like "Oh, okay." No, this stuff is real is serious. I think it needs to be more real, robust solutions behind it, because our people are hurt. And when hurt people, hurt people. So they're dealing with that. If somebody is already hurt, somebody's always experiencing trauma, they're going to hurt other individuals, because they think 'why should I care about someone knows when nobody cares for me?' So we have to, you know, show that love, show that hope and reinforce that, that love and neighborly love in our communities in order to get them to take their own community back. Because we're going to build from within, and they're going to be the ones to be the real change agents, when it's all said and done.



JJ Janflone 45:31

Well, and and Clayton, I want to thank you for all of that. Because I think also, you set us up for a really great listener question that we've received, that I actually want to open up to everybody on the panel. And this is from Roger, and I'm going to read it directly, because I think this is actually really powerful. So Roger says, "My son was also killed by gun violence in 2018, in Washington DC, just driving home from work. And my experience with helpers also saved my life. But unlike me, most families whose loved ones have been killed by gun violence in DC, and are not well connected to civic leaders and politicians, have been disenfranchised and overlooked by city agencies and council members and even our mayor for years, even when their family members have been killed." So when people are traumatized and in grief, how do we get the helpers to find them, particularly when funding is way too low in every city and state? And I in particular, you know, Dr. Winters, I would love to hear sort of, to go beyond the sort of radical kindness idea, you know, maybe what Mr. Rogers would even say? Or about how do we go and seek out opportunities to better serve those that, you know, we should be loving?



Dana Winters 46:36

Well, I can't necessarily speak to the the funding part, although I have thoughts that transcend this, this one talk here. But I think that we constantly come back, when we think of difficult emotions and emotions that are very real for so many people, to the line that Fred used, that was actually from his mentor, Dr. Margaret McFarland, that empowered Fred to seek out ways to help others through emotions that were very real. And that line is "Whatever is human is mentionable, and whatever is mentionable is manageable." Which means that we, as helpers, cannot be afraid, of real emotion, of real feelings, that we have to be able to talk about these things. And not just as grownups, we have to be able to engage every level of people in this conversation, in ways that are appropriate for them, but we can't ignore it. There will be no perfect way of handling this, but the only imperfect way is to not try. So we have to be attempting these conversations, we have to be reaching out, in any way that we can, to make all of those feelings, that are very real, to be mentionable and manageable.



Fred Guttenberg 47:27

And if I could, because I think it's an amazing question. And first, I'm truly sorry, for what happened to your son. You know, I didn't have any connections when my daughter was killed. And what I did do is I immediately went out, and I just, I wouldn't stop talking, and I wouldn't shut up. And I reached out to organizations, you know, like Brady and others, who helped me to get connected, and set up on appointments with those who make

decisions that lead to what happened to our children. And it really again, it gets back to this quote that you just said, you know, whatever is human is mentionable and manageable. I, I started going to these offices of these legislators, and I refused to sit down, I made them stand up and look me in the eye when I spoke to them about what happened to my daughter. You know, so, I tell you this, because what I would encourage you to do, is because of what happened to your son, if you want to do something about it, don't ever stop using your voice. Don't ever stop reaching out. Don't ever stop making people talk to you about what happened, and the importance of doing something about it. Because my friend, we are in this together, and together, you know, we don't bring our children back, but we're going to do something to start saving lives across this country.

C

Clayton Rosenberg 48:48

I know Mr. Rogers, a moment, that's, that's good, good brother, that... I want to say, you know, this is, it's so tough because we're still dealing with it as being in the community right now. You know, we know that you know, some of the politicians that you know, are supposed to you would think, you know, common sense, they understand that more work needs to be done, and the results don't lie. And there's individuals that always are forgotten in our communities, that need it. And if you don't bring those resources to them, they will never go grab it, they'll never go reach for it. Because it's too much trauma, it's so much trauma to where if an individual do not, or you're not bringing it to them, they won't get it, and it's going to end up affecting an entire community. I know that just me personally, when I was, you know, just responding to certain scenes. And if I did not say, "Hey, we have these resources that we can give you," or "We have these wraparound services that might be," you know, "the best for you and your family in order to take you out of this situation and get you in a safer, better situation," they will still be in that same predicament, where they just lost someone, and now they got to worry about if something else is going to happen to the other child. Or if something else is now going to happen to someone else in the community by being an innocent bystander. It's like and I guess I will concur with Fred, I think you have to really push forward and never let individuals forget. You have to, you know, push it down they throat, as they say. You have to really be on the forefront, and let them know that this stuff, this isn't normal, we're not going to allow it to be normal, we're not going to allow it to just go away, because there's individuals that's hurt, and voices I've never heard. So we have to change the topic, we have to change the focus, and we have to reinforce that everybody that's experiencing things like this matters. Everybody, we all matter, and we have to make sure we reinforce that and push up these individuals. Because if they were able to speak and get in that platform, they'll tell you things that these, you know, some of our politicians won't even believe. But these are their everyday lives, and they still got to go to work, they still got to go to school, they still got to make sure they provide for their children. They still got to make sure they look,

you know, just being being safe outside, just in their own community. So I think we really have to reinforce it and push that, and never let them forget, and never let them, you know, hold them accountable. Everybody got to be held accountable. And even them they understand that accountability got to going on all forefronts. So that's what I think, you know, we should definitely, you know, continue, continue to spread your word, and, you know, I'll be right there with you, you know, on the front line, pushing and making sure we hold these politicians accountable.

D

Dana Winters 52:27

JJ, I think you, you started a bit of that question also by talking about what would Fred Rogers say, what Rogers do? And what Clayton is saying, what Fred is saying, that the question isn't, "What would Fred do? What would Fred Rogers do?" anymore. It's how can we continue, how can we do our little parts and make our ripples to do that? And Clayton by saying you don't stop, you keep going, you keep standing up for what you believe in. To get the resources that we need we all have to do our part, that it's not enough to say, "Well, what what is this next person going to do?" What are you going to do? And that's something that, when we talk about empowering each and every one of us to find our voice, that that's what, you know, those little sea changes become the big sea changes. And that's the work that Clayton you're doing every single day, I didn't get invited to your party I'd like to come too.



JJ Janflone 53:29

I thought it was implicitly, that you were, implied that you.

D

Dana Winters 53:31

I just wanted, I just wanted, I didn't want to surprise anyone when when I showed up.

K

Kris Brown 53:37

Let's make it happen.

D

Dana Winters 53:39

But it's organizations and talks like this, that keep that moving in every part of the conversation as possible.



JJ Janflone 53:51

Well, and I think that sets again, all of you're setting me up so well, for these questions, you're making my job incredibly easy. And as we're, you know, coming close to an end on, on our time together -- which is why of course we need to have continuous parties afterwards -- that maybe people can or cannot, you know, our audience can, can may or may not attend. I want to pivot to one of our listener questions here, which really, I think gets to the heart of some of the things and the anxieties that are going on right now. Which is what, what would you maybe say, all of you individually, to those who are fighting for change, maybe those who are fighting for, maybe, gun violence prevention legislation, but are discouraged by what they see in the world. And maybe another example of this is, you know, we're only a few days from an election. More and more people are trying to get out and vote. But a lot of people are worried about violence at the polls, and about fighting at the polls, particularly people come with, with guns. And so do you have any advice for our listeners on how to deal with that anxiety? And then, how to keep fighting and how to keep being radically kind, in the face of a world that can sometimes seem very, very cruel?



Fred Guttenberg 55:01

Listen, I would say first, so much of the fear is manufactured, to keep you from going to the polls. And so don't fear your obligation in your right to vote. But get out and vote as soon as possible. There's no need to wait. Vote. The earlier you vote, the earlier you get your voice counted, the better for democracy. Americans, I think, are showing up in record numbers for this election because they do believe in this country, because they do believe in radical kindness, because it's what we want. We're not going to give in to the fear that was designed to keep people from voting. People are showing up, and so for anyone who still has a concern about what could potentially happen on Election Day, my advice to that person is don't wait till Election Day. Go out and vote tomorrow.



Kris Brown 56:01

I just have to say, for our cause, and for this election, so many people who, we sit on the shoulders of incredible leaders in this movement who've done incredible things. But what they would say about this moment in time, if John Lewis could somehow morph into the reality of today and talk to us, he would say, I'm sure, there is no more important election. And look back on his history, just look it up, understand what he did, what he stood for, what he spent his life doing. And at the end, despite, you know, incredible accomplishments, I was so thrilled to stand with him on so many, you know, podiums, but ultimately what he stood for is the right to vote. It's just that simple. It's so basic. And he

spent a career in public service, a career before that, as someone who was pivotal in our civil rights movements, being beaten down at clubs, being put behind bars. And he stood for that, for a basic premise, the right to vote. Let's not let all of that history, and all of that activism for people who are undoubtedly heroes to you, me, all of us on this podcast, but also, everyone listening, these are heroes. Don't let it go to waste, just vote. I mean, it really is that simple. And if you have a voice, and you do, don't discount it, encourage everyone else, you know, to vote. Just make it happen. Tell them to vote, make it happen, because you will be living their legacy. That's what they did be like them. And I think that this podcast, and all that we're saying, really show it takes all of us. It's the simple acts, don't discount your own power. You have power, you have influence, make it happen. And we can make a change all of us want to see. It's not a minority, it's all of us want to make it happen. But it does take all of us.

D

Dana Winters 58:37

So I think that, you know, I referenced the ripples that we can all make earlier, I think to be an agent for change, there are times to be loud about it. And there are times to do it softly. And voting is one of the ways that you can just do it softly. And that you can use your power in ways that, that is hopefully, an easy way to have your voice heard. And when I look at when everybody is doing their part in those, in those ripples, we have a chance to flood the entire system. And you know, that's, that's the goal, is that we all have play a role in that. We all do have a voice -- and anything we can do to make sure that it's heard in big and small ways -- is worth the effort.

C

Clayton Rosenberg 59:22

It's, I want to say that really dealing with it on the ground level, it shows you things that you can't even imagine. Just, just go in on, just going in certain communities where you know, that this community can instantly go from zero to 100 in a split second, based upon things that sometimes are out of your control. So you have to go in there unconditionally. You have to understand that the individuals that, that you're dealing with, sometimes they are hurt, and they're not going to want to, you know, just communicate with you right off the bat. They're not going to want to, you know, hear what you got to say. And you're going to think that's your time to just say, "You know what, I'm not gonna help them no more" but you can't. Because they just look for somebody to trust first, because they're so used to inconstant people coming into their lives for a quick second, and then next thing, you know, they're out of their lives, and then more things are escalating, and more things are happening. So, you really have to, to be willing to sacrifice and be selfless in these cases, like in this work, in this work you have to be selfless. Um, there was plenty of times and it, just going back to the beginning, where I was mentored in the organization. So for

me, they had a program where they went inside the prisons and mentored, some of the inmates in the prison, and told them just because they are incarcerated, their duties as a father doesn't relinquish. So because of that them individuals, from the prison that they mentor, end up coming out of jail, and begin to be mentors themselves, to try to help shape your path to not go where they were, just that. And from that standpoint, one of the individuals mentored me. So I was involved in the organization when I was like 10 years old, and having that ability to now say, you know, what, I know these individuals helping me right my path the right way, but what can I do more to give back when when it's all said and done? When I was able to, they helped put me through my grad school, helped me get my masters because of just the donation from them. So I say, you know, I have to give back. So I came back in you know, 2017, where we didn't have no funding. And I said, you know what, I'm gonna still sacrifice because you sacrificed for me. And there was no funding for like two years, and we were just dependent on donations, and I said, "I'm still going to make it my job to make sure that I'm able to give back to the community." So I'm in the community, a lot of times, and you know, they think everything good, because we still going in there with a smile. We still go in there, like we're not experiencing our own hardships in our household. But we have to understand that the people that are dealing with the stuff on the forefront, them people, like in the community, they're experiencing so much more. So I put whatever issues that I was having, whatever issues organization was having, I put it in the back, because these people needed us more. They needed hope, they needed people to really help them navigate through life, or they was going to resort to making a community unsafe for everybody. So we had that unconditional love, we had that that ability to recognize that building these relationships in these communities will help us be better violence interrupters, will help us be better individuals, will help us be now a part of that community. So each community that we in now, we all a part of it. So when they hurt, we hurt. When there's a shooting, that affects us, so we have to make sure that we're able to give them more and provide that love. And that's what we do, now more than ever. We give them things that no one, that they're not used to, so when you give them that real love, it's almost a surprise to them. Because they never felt loved before. They never felt that type of hope before. They never saw someone consistently care for them, calling them making sure they are making sure we can give them the basic needs, like an ID, making sure that we provide them with information and resources on jobs, making sure that "do you need help with family care?" Things like that, where they never had that hands-on experience from somebody that they trust, that they know, we're a part of your community. So we're gonna be there, regardless if the funding stop tomorrow, we still going to be there. And that's what they understand, and that's why they trust us more to really begin that transformation.



Kelly Sampson 1:03:49

And I mean, I think, it's interesting, because I know you don't do this for accolades, Clayton or Fred, but hearing you talk -- I mean, I think I can speak for everyone on the call that -- you're heroes. I mean, these are, the things that you're talking about are heroic. To share your family story in the way that you do Fred and push forward, and to go into communities Clayton, I mean that I hear you all talking and I just, I just have to say it out loud, because it's true, I think, truly, truly heroic. And that's why we have to have parties, as JJ said, and I wish we had more time, but to kind of round it out, you know, I would love if each of you everyone on the panel could talk about where people can find more information about your organization? Also any actions that people can take to be helpers in their own neighborhood.

F

**Fred Guttenberg** 1:04:32

Yeah, I'll start, and there's a variety of ways. We're on all the different platforms whether it be Twitter personally, as Fred\_Guttenberg, but Orange Ribbons for Jaime also has a Twitter page. On Facebook, I have a public page Fred Guttenberg, Author. But Orange Ribbons for Jaime also has a page. Same thing on Instagram. And then we also have a website OrangeRibbonsforJaime.org. And, by the way, Jamie spelled J-A-I-M-E, we did it a little different. So there's a variety of ways to find us. You know, I have a personal webpage, also, just Fredguttenberg.com. And we're going to keep working, keep working, keep at this. Keep working to do something about gun violence, but also keep working to spread this whole concept of radical kindness, and helpers, and taking whatever, doing whatever I can with my book, and sharing my story, to hopefully give people hope.

D

**Dana Winters** 1:05:36

Sure, so our website is FredRogersCenter.org, you'll be directed to some of the initiatives that we have in serving children's helpers, educators and beyond. And I think if I were to give one piece of advice on how to be a helper: be there, be there for another person, in a real way, see their humanity, see who they are, learn one. You know, Fred Rogers always talked about, if you have anything ever to do in the life of a child, you do it, you learn, you listen, you hear from them. And at the Center, we want to extend that, beyond children to all human beings. That if you will have any opportunity to be a helper for another person, that you do that, you learn that person, you listen to that person, you hear that person, you're there for that person, and you see the humanity deep within them.

K

**Kris Brown** 1:06:25

And I'll just add to that, JJ, for me, just listening to the amazing contributors to tonight's podcast, we are all together united for, I think, a common purpose, which is advancing

humanity. At the end, I think, you know, for our cause, like so many others, we're united trying to make the world a better place. So the only thing that I would say, to kind of end with this, that I think is really important, and it's from Fred's book, so I'll just say, please note this and think about. It's, he starts this off this way, and I think it's important to think about because it's something not all of us do, but we all will at some point, which is "Grief is love, with no place to go." And if you haven't suffered a loss, well, that may be a strange idea. But if you have, you know what it means. And for too many people in America today, gun violence is that kind of loss, and it doesn't need to happen, and it doesn't need to be political, right? You don't need to send your kids to school, and then have to deal with the consequences of that. So I just would close with that thought of, can we find a way to come together in more united sense of what we will do, together, to make sure that fewer of us have to think about grief, and what we do as next steps to resolve the idea of a loss of someone who was our child, or our brother, or sister, or friend. That's a uniquely American problem. And we can solve it.



JJ Janflone 1:08:25

And Clayton? Where can we find the Alliance of Concerned Men, so people can join me in my stalking, so I'm not so alone?



Clayton Rosenberg 1:08:31

Our website, [AllianceofConcernedMen.org](http://AllianceofConcernedMen.org). Instagram, we have two: it's @ACM\_curethestreets, or @TheAllianceofConcernedMen on Instagram. And on Twitter, @ACM\_DC. And I guess, just to answer that question, I say, we gonna have a call-of-action, call-to-action, basically. You know, just telling each person in your community different ways and how to get involved. Everybody, as I say, is not built for the same thing. Everybody can't be a violence interruptor, and that's fine. But there's always a way that each individual can, can assist each individual have they own skill set, they own talents, in which they can help provide and, gather resources or, or help just be, as you say, a good helper, we all have them ways. So I think if we focus on 'what's our own talents?' and then we you know, reinforce that in trying to do something. Just do something, that's it, we just have to do something sometimes.



JJ Janflone 1:09:32

Well, and on I mean, that's actually a really good place, so, I on that note, I will tell everyone, you know, as always, if you go to [BradyUnited.org](http://BradyUnited.org), or [BradyUnited.org/Podcast](http://BradyUnited.org/Podcast), you'll see a link to this. And I'll have links to then all of our amazing panelists, where you

can find their organizations, where you can find resources related to all the stuff we talked about today. So I want to just thank you all, from the bottom of my heart, so much for coming on. And in the spirit of Mr. Rogers himself who's from Latrobe, home of the banana split, where it was created, let's all go out, have some ice cream, and then let's go vote. Alright, so yet again, Kelly, we return to Disney World for this story, and children, right? It's, this is, this is like, so a Georgia woman is accused of attempting to hide a loaded firearm in some plants outside of Disney World theme park. And she then told police that it was her six-year-old that was actually the culprit.

 Kelly Sampson 1:10:32  
Why?

 JJ Janflone 1:10:33  
Would you like me to unpack this a little bit for you?

 Kelly Sampson 1:10:35  
Yeah, please, if that's even possible. It seems like it might not be.

 JJ Janflone 1:10:39  
It's a tangled web. So the woman took her kid to Disney World, where you have to get, like most places, your temperature taken, before you can enter the park. While they're in line, one of the temperature checkers saw a woman take something out of a stroller and put it behind some plants near the tents before the security checkpoint. The woman then went through the metal detector, because you also have to go through metal detectors and things at places like that, but security was suspicious. So they went and they looked in the plant. And in the plant, they found a gun.

 Kelly Sampson 1:11:11  
Mm hmm.

 JJ Janflone 1:11:12  
So while they're looking at the gun, the woman comes back to them and goes like, hey,

"that's my weapon," which is good, like she's being honest. And said, and I'm quoting here, quote, "I had told my son to hold it for me and stand right here while I go get my brother. He put it down and messed with the plants. And I put them back. But I didn't know he put it down. And I didn't know he left it over here." Yet video and eyewitness account show that that is not what happened, and that she put it in the plant and not the six-year-old.



Kelly Sampson 1:11:37

And even if that is what happened that's, that's like, that doesn't really make it any better. Like "Yeah, I just gave the gun into a six-year-old child, told him to watch it."



JJ Janflone 1:11:48

Well, it gets better because, when asked why she would give a gun to a six-year-old, woman said she asked him to hold it so she could go get her brother who is inside the park, so he could then come out and take it back to the car. And then this is why I say that this, when I, when we were talking before we recorded that this might be one of the worst ones we've had, police found that the firearm was a loaded nine millimeter. It had 10 bullets, including one in the chamber. And the woman does not have a concealed weapons permit for Florida or Georgia. So as a result, she was arrested.



Kelly Sampson 1:12:18

I know so much of what we talked about, at Brady and across gun violence prevention work in general, is just how so many things that we're advocating for are common sense. And if people were to take off like an extremist hat, then you would just be able to take a common sense approach, taking your political positions out of it, just like should a six-year-old child be left alone with a loaded nine millimeter? And I think the answer clearly is no.



JJ Janflone 1:12:47

So in news that I think is on the top of everyone's mind. Brady is eager for the opportunity to work with President-Elect Joe Biden, Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris, legislators and executives across the country to meaningfully address gun violence. This year, Brady worked to expand access to our democracy so that every voice could be heard, you hear us talk about in this very episode. In light of these new events, we're hoping to immediately begin to enact a gun violence prevention agenda across the Congress, courts and communities that we work in, to stop the violence that claims 100 American

lives every day. Brady is so ready and eager to do this with all of our partners, and with all of you, and let's hope that this is a new chapter in the fight to end gun violence in America. On a sadder note, we have to remember the history of gun violence in the US, with the November 13, 2017 series of shootings that occurred at Rancho Tehama Reserve in California, resulting in five deaths and 18 people being injured. The shooting spree involved multiple firearms and stretched over eight locations including an elementary school. Just nine months before the shooting, a judge that issued the shooter a restraining order at a neighbor's request, and ordered him to surrender his guns. He shouldn't have had access to firearms, but instead, manufactured a rifle and violated the restraining order in order to get two handguns. At least one semi-automatic ghost gun and two borrowed semi-automatic pistols were also used. Moreover and really, I think of note today, a 21-year-old woman is dead, and another woman is recovering after a shooting in DC that 21-year-old Lorraine Marie Thomas, called by friends Chyna, was a southeast DC native and a community ambassador for The Alliance of Concerned Men. She was working on becoming a violence interrupter, and doing all the right things to get there. Alliance of Concerned feature Thomas in a YouTube video about their efforts to bring peace and resources to the community. We dedicate this episode to her. Hey, want to share with the podcast? Listeners can now get in touch with us here at Red, Blue and Brady via phone or text message. Simply call or text us at 480- 744-3452 with your thoughts, questions, concerns, ideas, whatever! And you know what else is fun chocolate? Come join me and eating your 2020 feelings by shopping HU's Kitchen. It's chocolate free of dairy, gluten, refined sugar, palm oil and cane sugar. My personal favorites are the dark gems -- it's a bag bursting with 70% dark chocolate -- paleo friendly snacks. You can just click on the link in the description of our episode to help support the show and to buy yourself or your loved ones some tasty treats. Thanks for listening. As always, Brady's life saving work from Congress, the courts and communities across the country is made possible thanks to you. For more information on Brady, or how to get involved in the fight against gun violence. Please like and subscribe to the podcast. Get in touch with us at BradyUnited.org or on social @Bradybuzz. Be brave, and remember, take action, not sides.