

**From:** [Rosen, Lee](#)  
**Subject:** a message in response to recent events  
**Date:** Saturday, May 28, 2022 7:02:04 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Dear Students:

We recognize that this has been a difficult week, as we have seen yet another senseless, avoidable, and tragic shooting unfold in front of us. We join with the health care community (see the AAMC statement [here](#)) in suggesting that this week's events are part of an unacceptable public health crisis that impacts all our patients and every one of us. Please note at the bottom of this message our mental health resources. Note also that [SAFE](#) is a national organization of health care providers committed to addressing and preventing gun violence, and LCOM has a [SAFE SIG](#).

In addition, our Psychiatry Clerkship Director, Dr. Jeremiah Dickerson, sent an important message to the current students rotating in Psychiatry that we wish to share more broadly. Dr. Dickerson has generously agreed to let us share this with all our students, which provides some important context to this ongoing discussion.

*Good morning,*

*Reflecting on recent events in Texas and Buffalo and again encountering a false narrative that links gun violence/mass shootings with mental illness, I wanted to pass along a few resources.*

*Questions pertaining to such events may come up in your clinical encounters and it's important to inform yourself with evidence-based data. The bottom line is that gun violence is not caused by mental illness and 'although many Americans believe that people with mental disorders pose a danger to themselves or others, the science reveals a more nuanced picture'. Importantly, individuals with mental health issues are more likely to be the victims of violence. Remember, statements to the contrary only serve to perpetuate stigma and distract from the real issues ([NAMI.org](#)).*

*Please take care of yourselves and don't hesitate to reach out to others if you need support. If you're able, reach out to your colleagues and peers and try to find space for collective reflection. Certainly for me, I've experienced a range of strong emotions in the past few days. As I attend to such emotions (which is often not easy), I try to consider how to translate them into action, activism, and bringing kindness into the world. As you know, LCOM offers a range of resources for mental health support (see **Dr. Rosen's attached email you received earlier last month**).*

Resources:

- This article was written a few years ago (by my colleague [Dr. Jessi Gold](#)), and nicely reviews the gun violence - mental illness relationship (or lack thereof). <https://time.com/5645747/gun-violence-mental-illness/>
- Additionally, the attached *American Journal of Public Health* article is an excellent review of the topic.
- This [Rand Report](#) also thoroughly analyses the topic.
- Also, this NYT article provides an outline of how to talk to children about school shootings. <https://www.nytimes.com/article/talk-about-school-shootings-kids.html>.

Be well,

## Jeremiah

Jeremiah Dickerson, MD (he/him/his)  
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Our counseling and psychiatric care resources:

- UVM's Counseling and Psychiatric Services ([CAPS](#)). Available to all UVM students, for free, regardless of which insurance you have.
- Referrals to local mental health providers in CT (reach out to [Dr. Kulaga](#)) or community providers in VT (reach out to [Dr. Rosen](#) or your Wellness Committee reps).
- **WellConnect**. *Wherever* you are (i.e., VT, CT, on vacation or an away rotation), as an LCOM student, you have access to free online, phone, and in-person counselling sessions with a licensed mental health professional. The easiest way to access services is to call WellConnect at 866-640-4777 (code: UVMCOM).
- Referrals for psychiatric care (reach out to [CAPS](#), [Dr. Rosen](#), [Dr. Kulaga](#), or the [Wellness Committee](#)).

Please take care of yourselves as best you can, and we are glad to continue this discussion going forward.

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