

Dear Friends:

Yesterday I shared with you my thoughts concerning the school shooting in Gardenia, CA. Today I know more about the circumstances that led to this tragic incident. A gun in a backpack of a 10th grade student accidentally discharged when he dropped the bag. This wounded a 15 year-old girl in the head, and a 15 year-old boy in the neck. They were hit with the same bullet. The girl has been in critical condition since the incident happened on Tuesday. My thoughts and prayers go out to the victim's and their families.

It is worthy of mentioning that the boy who brought the gun to school did apologize; however, it is a crime to bring a gun to school and he was rightly arrested.

The crime he committed was a preventable crime. It was and is a crime of ignorance, a crime of fear. The Gardenia tragedy is just one in a string of accidental shootings that occur daily in America. Fear is one of the biggest contributors to incidents of this nature. For instance: Seeing other students could cause a student that is indirectly affected by the bullying to arm himself. He may be afraid of the gang intimidation that many students encounter.

It's difficult to explain when we don't know about the circumstances that led to this young man bringing a gun to school. But as teens get older they have more and more issues to deal with. Some get more and more frustrated and simply don't know how to go about dealing with their issues in a positive way so they turn to carrying guns.

There are warning signs that I would like to share with you. Ordinarily, a misguided teen who is having difficulty dealing with him or her issues will not function normally. They like to isolate themselves to the computer or their rooms in general. They will say things that are illogical and abnormal. Many have a false sense of belief that someone is out to get them. Other signs are associated with eating and sleeping disorders.

In order to help the misguided, you must ask yourself, "Am I passionately giving them my undivided attention?" Children can become fixate on a person or problem to the point that they become delusional. I strongly encourage you to read my books: How To Save Our Children From Crime, Drugs and Violence and How To Stop Your Children From Going To Prison. I know how these children think because I was once like them. At age 15, I was expelled for carrying a gun onto a school bus. I did it for the reasons aforementioned.

We can make a difference and we will if we work together.

Yours for the cause of Love and Peace,

Cedric Dean