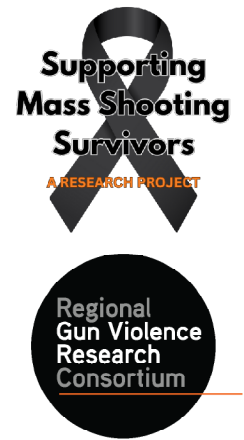


Recommended Practices for Media Outlets Working with Mass Shooting Survivors



Mass shootings generate widespread interest among the public, and the media have an important job in telling the stories not only about the event but also about those it impacts. Findings from a survey of mass shooting survivors found that nearly half (47%) of respondents who said that they had engaged with the media found the experience to be exploitative. The following are recommended practices, drawn from the unique experiences of survivors, for engaging with impacted individuals after a mass shooting.

Create spaces for survivors to tell their stories without an agenda or pressure.

Value the stories of all survivors, including those who were present but not physically injured. Journalists can put out a call or create a portal for survivors to share their stories, or they can connect with an official, nonprofit or other credible messenger at the affected location who then can share the call with survivors.

Obtain consent before filming or taking photos so that survivors understand how their statements or images will be used.

Journalists should approach survivors without a camera or audio device and request permission before recording; they also should share the angle of the story and why they want to talk to the survivor up front. Special care should be used with juveniles, and parent or guardian consent should be obtained before interviewing.

Avoid featuring the perpetrator alongside survivors.

Unless the survivor brings up the perpetrator, exercise caution when discussing. Consider adopting a No Notoriety approach and not using the perpetrator's name and image in stories about survivors.

Consider the media footprint and its impact on an affected community.

Use pool reporting, rely on local affiliates, and send minimal staff to reduce the media footprint in impacted communities. Be cautious about inundating spaces, such as memorials or vigils, where survivors have gathered to grieve and pay their respects.

Follow the guidance for trauma-informed reporting.

This includes taking care to minimize harm to subjects, employing a culturally sensitive lens, and avoiding drawing any comparisons between survivors' traumas. Additionally, use language that reflects the survivor experience (e.g., saying "year mark" rather than "anniversary").



supportingmassshootingsurvivors.com



[@RockGunResearch](https://twitter.com/RockGunResearch)

This research was supported with funding provided by the New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center at Rutgers University. The Center works in collaboration with and is supported by New Jersey's Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE).