



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on January 20, 2013

Pa. Kindergartner Suspended for “Terroristic Threat” With Bubble Gun

“Can’t kids be kids anymore?” asked Maryland attorney Robin Ficker.

In today’s hysterical anti-gun atmosphere, the answer, at least for public-school students, is apparently *no*. The day after a first-grade boy in Ficker’s state was suspended from school for [using his fingers as a gun](#) during recess, a kindergarten girl in Pennsylvania was sent home for 10 days merely for telling her friends that she would shoot them with a Hello Kitty soap-bubble gun — a toy that was not even in her possession at the time.



Ficker, who is being retained by the unnamed girl’s family, told the Sunbury, Pennsylvania, [Daily Item](#) that it all began on January 10, while the girl was waiting for her school bus.

According to the paper, “Ficker said the girl mentioned that she was going to shoot one of her friends and then herself with the bubble gun, so that they could all be together. Then, she was going to shoot herself again when she got home.” These remarks, he stated, were “not said in malice.”

“The girl did not have the bubble gun with her and has never shot a real gun in her life,” Ficker told [PennLive](#).

Officials at Mount Carmel Area Elementary School, which the girl attends, found out about the conversation, and the next day they questioned her about it for three hours, Ficker said. Ultimately, they decided she was guilty of making a “terroristic threat” and suspended her for 10 days, he added. Her parents say they were not contacted by the school about the incident or the questioning until the decision to suspend had already been made.

“You’re telling me that this child was questioned by adults, in a situation where there was no parent or parental guardian, and then she was, initially, given an incident category of ‘making terrorist threats?’” Ficker told the *Item*. “And this from a 5-year-old? What’s going on here? Can’t kids be kids anymore?”

“This little girl is the least terroristic person in Pennsylvania,” Ficker declared in his interview with PennLive.

Officials required the girl to undergo a psychological evaluation before she could return to school, according to Ficker. “The psychologist said that she posed no danger to others,” he told the *Item*.

As a result, the suspension was reduced to two days and the reason downgraded from “terroristic threat” to “threat to harm others” — never mind that she was “threatening” them with a toy that fires soap bubbles.

Not surprisingly, being interrogated and kicked out of school for talking about shooting a bubble gun has confused and frightened the poor girl. Writes the *Item*:



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The girl's mother said her daughter has been very upset since the incident.

"All I know," said the mother, "is what my daughter has told me and she said she was told she could go to jail, which is a very traumatic thing for a 5-year-old to live with."

Notwithstanding the clearly ridiculous nature of the charges and the psychologist's assessment of the girl, the incident will remain on her permanent record. The *Item* reports that Ficker is trying to arrange a meeting with the superintendent of schools to get the incident expunged from the record so that the girl is not, in his words, "branded a troubled person." Should that approach fail, the family may sue the school district.

The superintendent declined to comment on the incident, citing student confidentiality issues. Embarrassment, one hopes, is also a factor.



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