



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on October 2, 2013

Schools Suspend Boys for Keychain and Finger Guns

The anti-gun hysteria in U.S. public schools continues apace. In the past week at least two boys have been suspended for bringing something resembling a firearm onto school grounds, notwithstanding the fact that neither of them posed any threat to other students and one boy's "gun" consisted solely of his thumb and index finger.



On September 26, 12-year-old Joseph Lyssikatos got the heave-ho from administrators at Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School in Coventry, Rhode Island, for the crime of showing up at school with a pistol-shaped keychain that he won at an arcade.

Joseph told Providence TV station [WJAR](#) that the keychain, which "is slightly larger than a quarter," fell out of his backpack at school, whereupon "a classmate picked it up and started showing it to other students."

"This boy was the one waving it or showing it to other kids. Not Joseph. Joseph wasn't doing that so why weren't both of them reprimanded?" Joseph's mother, Bonnie Bonanno, told the station.

An eagle-eyed teacher "confiscated" the keychain, reported WJAR, "and before Joseph knew it, he was suspended" for three days for violating the school's zero-tolerance policy regarding firearms. On top of that, he was also barred from attending a class field trip.

"That's disgraceful," Bonanno said, "because, OK, being suspended for three days, and this big punishment is enough for him mentally."

"I'm missing the NECAP [New England Common Assessment Program] testing and I'm in advanced math so I'm going to have to re-do all the homework I'm going to miss for advanced math," Joseph told WJAR. And as everyone knows, any kid who worries about missing out on tests and homework is undoubtedly a huge threat to his classmates.

In a statement, the school said: "Because this is a student discipline issue, we cannot comment on any specifics." All they would say is that the principal determines suspensions.

"However," wrote WJAR, "Joseph and his parents said he was told of the suspension by the school's behavioral specialist, and the principal and superintendent won't return their calls."

As much of an overreaction as Joseph's suspension was, at least he had an actual, albeit tiny, gun replica in his possession. Eight-year-old Jordan Bennett, meanwhile, was suspended for bringing his hand to school — and pretending it was a gun.

On September 27, Jordan, a student at Harmony Community School in Harmony, Florida, was playing the time-tested game of cops-and-robbers and made the mistake of doing what boys have done ever since pistols were invented: simulating a gun with his thumb and forefinger.



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“He had nothing in his hand. It was a finger gun, a pretend gun,” Jordan’s mother, Bonnie Bennett, told Orlando’s [WFTV](#). “He didn’t threaten violence. He didn’t utter words that were inappropriate. He made a sound and used his fingers and that was it.”

That was all it took for him to run afoul of his school’s gun-averse administrators. Jordan and the other boy involved in the game were suspended from school for the remainder of the day.

Bennett told WFTV that “her son has never been in detention or suspended before.”

“They took a child that has never been in trouble before and went to the extreme,” she [said](#). “A child that has no history of violence is now classified as a violent offender.”

Bennett said she’s trying to get the principal to remove the suspension from Jordan’s record — even if she has to go to court to make that happen. She also hopes to convince school administrators to “start distinguishing between an actual threat and a pretend game,” according to WFTV.

Good luck with that. As in Joseph’s case, school administrators are refusing comment on Jordan’s incident. However, noted an obviously skeptical WFTV, “They did say their code of conduct prohibits students from playing with invisible guns.”



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