



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on November 9, 2022

Texas Families Being Asked to Collect Children's DNA

"The state of Texas is sending public school students home with DNA kits designed to help their parents identify their children 'in case of an emergency.'"

That was the opening sentence of a [story published recently](#) about the push by schools to compel parents to collect their children's DNA so that their bodies would be easily identified in case they were the victim of an armed attack at the school.

Is the situation as dire as all that?

Here's the back story, as published by [Reason](#):



Tony Webster/Wikimedia Commons

In 2021, Texas lawmakers passed a bill, [S.B. 2158](#), mandating that all schools (including open-enrollment charter schools) send home fingerprint or DNA kits "on request" to ... parents or legal guardians of children up through middle school. Parents may then use the kits and submit the identifying information to law enforcement officials if their child is kidnapped or trafficked. Participation is completely voluntary, and parents are supposed to keep the DNA samples at home in case something happens to their children.

In the online article published by *Today*, the emphasis was on the shooters' weapons and how those "weapons of war" shouldn't be in the hands of civilians. The article even contained an ever-so-emotional quotation from "a former CIA and FBI agent and current college professor" — Tracy Walder — who claimed that she was enraged that her child was being left at the mercy of madmen with weapons of war. Walder is quoted saying:

I worry every single day when I send my kid to school. Now we're giving parents DNA kits so that when their child is killed with the same weapon of war I had when I was in Afghanistan, parents can use them to identify them?

The first thing I notice about that sentence is that Walder admits that she drops her child off "every single day" at a place where she believes that child could possibly be "killed with the same weapon of war" she used in Afghanistan.

What does that behavior say about Walden?

Of course, in today's society in which even the raising of one's own children is outsourced, that's a question that dare not be asked.

Everyone knows about the horrific massacres committed at Santa Fe High School in Santa Fe, Texas, and Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas.

Perhaps what everyone doesn't know, however, is that the murder of the children at Robb Elementary



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had nothing at all to do with the weapon used. It was well reported at the time that the horrific situation of the the children at Robb Elementary was made worse by the ineptitude and inaction of law enforcement on the scene.

Again, that's not something that we should talk about, right?

As for the collection and storage of the DNA samples of children, if it is true, as the *Today* story claims, that "many of the children gunned down inside Robb Elementary were not easily identifiable as a result of their catastrophic injuries," why couldn't DNA samples be taken from the unidentifiable children and compared to the DNA provided at the time by parents whose children remained unidentified?

Short answer: They could. There is no scientific reason for the collection and storage of DNA for the reasons reported by *Today*. The entire article is devoted to nothing more than fomenting fear and pressuring otherwise well-intentioned parents to collect their children's DNA and to hand it over to law enforcement.

Which brings us to another uneasy question: What does the Texas statute mandate be done with the DNA?

The law is silent as to the restrictions on the use of the DNA to be collected by parents and surrendered to law enforcement in the context set forth in the *Today* piece.

Mind you, it's not like we have to wonder what sort of problems could arise from law enforcement's mishandling of DNA.

As *Reason* reminds readers:

California officials are calling for an end to rape kit testing outside of rape investigations. San Francisco's district attorney said Monday that DNA collected from alleged rape victims—evidence known as a rape kit—has been used to check if they are also criminals. District Attorney Chesa Boudin accused the city's police crime lab of searching a database that includes DNA from sexual assault investigations in "attempts to identify crime suspects."

The collection of DNA and its surrender to law enforcement is unnecessary at best and dangerous at worst. The likelihood that such data could be used by law enforcement for nefarious or unrelated purposes is too high to justify taking the risk.

Of course, outlets like the *Today* show thrive on fearmongering and making it sound as if the nearly impossible happens every day.

For example, the story quotes one parent saying that the DNA kits are welcome because they are an "in-your-face reminder that our kids are at risk of being obliterated by automatic weapons to the point they won't be recognizable."

Well, unless there's something strange happening in Texas, I don't think armed agents are showing up at the doors of Texas parents every morning forcing them to hand over their beloved children to be escorted to places where the parents believe their children are "at risk of being obliterated by automatic weapons to the point they won't be recognizable."

I'm pretty sure those parents *voluntarily* put their children on a bus headed toward those "war zones," or alternatively, personally drop their children off there. So...



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Again, collecting DNA and fearmongering are simply another example of legislative misdirection, distracting parents and others from the real issue: Why are parents voluntarily placing their children in such dangerous and deadly places for nine hours a day, 5 days a week, 36 weeks a year, for 13 years?





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