

Psychiatric Drugs and Violence — School Shooters and Other Murders

At least fourteen recent school shootings were committed by those taking or withdrawing from psychiatric drugs. There have been 109 wounded and 58 killed.

Of these 14, seven were seeing either a psychiatrist (5 of them) or psychologist (2 of them). It is not known whether or not the other half were seeing a psychiatrist, as it has not been published.

1. Huntsville, Alabama – February 5, 2010: 15-year-old Hammad Memon shot and killed another Discover Middle School student Todd Brown. Memon had a history for being treated for ADHD and depression. He was taking the antidepressant Zoloft and other drugs for the conditions. He had been seeing a psychiatrist and psychologist.

2. Kauhajoki, Finland – September 23, 2008: 22-year-old culinary student Matti Saari shot and killed 9 students and a teacher, and wounded another student, before killing himself. Saari was taking an SSRI and a benzodiazapine. He was also seeing a psychologist.

3. Dekalb, Illinois – February 14, 2008: 27-year-old Steven Kazmierczak shot and killed five people and wounded 21 others before killing himself in a Northern Illinois University auditorium. According to his girlfriend, he had recently been taking Prozac, Xanax and Ambien. Toxicology results showed that he still had trace amount of Xanax in his system. He had been seeing a psychiatrist.

4. Jokela, Finland – November 7, 2007: 18-year-old Finnish gunman Pekka-Eric Auvinen had been taking antidepressants before he killed eight people and wounded a dozen more at Jokela High School in southern Finland, then committed suicide.

5. Cleveland, Ohio – October 10, 2007: 14-year-old Asa Coon stormed through his school with a gun in each hand, shooting and wounding four before taking his own life. Court records show Coon had been placed on the antidepressant Trazodone.

6. Red Lake, Minnesota – March 2005: 16-year-old Jeff Weise, on Prozac, shot and killed his grandparents, then went to his school on the Red Lake Indian

Reservation where he shot dead 7 students and a teacher, and wounded 7 before killing himself.

7. Greenbush, New York – February 2004: 16-year-old Jon Romano strolled into his high school in east Greenbush and opened fire with a shotgun. Special education teacher Michael Bennett was hit in the leg. Romano had been taking medication for depression. He had previously seen a psychiatrist.

8. Wahluke, Washington – April 10, 2001: Sixteen-year-old Cory Baadsgaard took a rifle to his high school and held 23 classmates and a teacher hostage. He had been taking the antidepressant Effexor.

9. El Cajon, California – March 22, 2001: 18-year-old Jason Hoffman, on the antidepressants Celexa and Effexor, opened fire on his classmates, wounding three students and two teachers at Granite Hills High School. He had been seeing a psychiatrist before the shooting.

10. Williamsport, Pennsylvania – March 7, 2001: 14-year-old Elizabeth Bush was taking the antidepressant Prozac when she shot at fellow students, wounding one.

11. Conyers, Georgia – May 20, 1999: 15-year-old T.J. Solomon was being treated with the stimulant Ritalin when he opened fire on and wounded six of his classmates.

12. Columbine, Colorado – April 20, 1999: 18-year-old Eric Harris and his accomplice, Dylan Klebold, killed 12 students and a teacher and wounded 26 others before killing themselves. Harris was on the antidepressant Luvox. Klebold's medical records remain sealed. Both shooters had been in anger-management classes and had undergone counseling. Harris had been seeing a psychiatrist before the shooting.

13. Notus, Idaho – April 16, 1999: 15-year-old Shawn Cooper fired two shotgun rounds in his school, narrowly missing students. He was taking a prescribed SSRI antidepressant and Ritalin.

14. Springfield, Oregon – May 21, 1998: 15-year-old Kip Kinkel murdered his parents and then proceeded to school where he opened fire on students in the cafeteria, killing two and wounding 25. Kinkel had been taking the antidepressant Prozac. Kinkel had been attending anger control classes and was under the care of a psychologist.