



INDEPENDENT  
LENS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONTACT**

Lisa Tawil, ITVS 415-356-8383 lisa\_tawil@itvs.org  
Mary Lugo 770-623-8190 lugo@negia.net  
Cara White 843-881-1480 cara.white@mac.com

For downloadable images, visit [pbs.org/pressroom/](http://pbs.org/pressroom/)

**Newtown Premieres on *Independent Lens*  
Monday, April 3, 2017 on PBS**

**Online Streaming Begins April 4**

**Powerful Documentary Explores Aftermath and Resilience in Community Devastated by Trauma**



Credit: Derek Weisehahn

(San Francisco, CA) — On December 14, 2012, a disturbed young man committed a horrific mass shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, that took the lives of 20 elementary school children and six educators. Kim A. Snyder's searing new documentary *Newtown*, filmed over the course of nearly three years, uses deeply personal, never-before-heard testimonies to relate the aftermath of the deadliest mass shooting of schoolchildren in American history. Through raw and heartbreakingly intimate interviews with parents, siblings, teachers, doctors and first responders, *Newtown* documents a traumatized community still reeling

from the senseless tragedy, fractured by grief but driven toward a sense of purpose. *Newtown* premieres on *Independent Lens* Monday, April 3, 2017, 9:00-11:00PM ET (check local listings) on PBS.

There are no words of compassion or reassurance that can bring back those who lost their lives during the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Instead, Snyder delves into the lives and homes of those who remain, all of whom have been indelibly changed by the events. They speak candidly about their grief, anger and disbelief over what occurred and their disappointment that nothing has truly changed with regard to the country's legal response to gun violence. *Newtown* bears witness to their profound grief and allows it to reverberate within our collective conscience, exploring what happens to a community after it becomes the epicenter of a national discussion and what it must cope with after the cameras leave.

"Working with Kim on this film has been a deeply rewarding experience," said Lois Vossen, *Independent Lens* executive producer. "The team was committed to making a film that was

**ITVS**

1435 Folsom Street  
San Francisco CA 94103  
T. 415 356 8383  
F. 415 356 8391  
[pbs.org/independentlens](http://pbs.org/independentlens)

incisive without being exploitative. *Newtown* shows the impact of trauma on a community, the grief gun violence causes and how we begin to heal and move forward.”

Visit the *Newtown* page on [Independent Lens](#), which features more information about the film. *Newtown* will be available for online viewing on the site beginning April 4, 2017.

#### **About the Participants, in Alphabetical Order:**

**Mark Barden**, the father of Daniel, who at age seven was killed at Sandy Hook. Mark’s journey from isolation to reconnection with family, community and ultimately with his murdered son is intimate, raw and informed by strength.

**Dr. William Begg**, ER doctor, Danbury Hospital.

**Sgt. Bill Cario**, Connecticut State Trooper.

**Abbey Clements**, Sandy Hook Elementary School teacher.

**Sarah Clements**, daughter of surviving Sandy Hook Elementary School teacher.

**Nicole Hockley**, mother of Dylan, one of the children murdered at Sandy Hook. Her son, Jake, a third grade survivor, is manifesting symptoms of PTSD. In the midst of all this, her unrelenting conviction to effect change connects her with fellow bereaved parent Mark Barden.

**Mary Ann Jacob**, Sandy Hook Elementary School library clerk.

**Melissa Malin**, Newtown resident and neighbor of the Barden family.

**Gene Rosen**, Sandy Hook Elementary School neighbor.

**Rick Thorne**, Sandy Hook Elementary School custodian.

**Laurie Veillette**, volunteer EMT.

**David Wheeler**, whose youngest son Ben was killed at Sandy Hook. Active in the Newtown community, he shares his story out of the desire to protect the rest of the world from going through what his family endured.

#### **About the Filmmakers**

**Kim A. Snyder (Director/Producer)**



*Newtown*, Kim Snyder's most recent film, premiered in competition at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival and was hailed in *Entertainment Weekly* as among the "Best of Sundance." The film will continue to screen at premiere festivals worldwide and is poised to have a theatrical release in September 2016, followed by a national broadcast on PBS's *Independent Lens*. Snyder's last feature documentary, *Welcome to Shelbyville*, was also nationally broadcast on *Independent Lens*. In 2007, Snyder co-founded the BeCause Foundation to direct and produce a series of socially conscious documentaries, which have won numerous awards with campaigns furthering the work of the social innovators they highlight. Her award-winning directorial debut feature documentary, *I Remember Me*, was theatrically distributed by Zeitgeist Films. In 1994, she associate produced the Academy Award-winning short film *Trevor*, directed by Peggy Rajski. Snyder graduated with a Masters in international affairs from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and resides in New York City.

#### **Maria Cuomo Cole (Producer)**

Maria Cuomo Cole is the award-winning producer of *Newtown*, which premiered at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival. In her career, she has tackled such subjects as gun violence, homelessness, veterans' PTSD, domestic violence and sexual assault. Most recently, she executive produced *The Hunting Ground*, directed by Kirby Dick. This Emmy and Peabody Award-winning film has been lauded as a powerful investigation into the epidemic of sexual assaults on college campuses. In 2012, Cuomo Cole worked with the same film team, executive producing the 2014 Oscar®-nominated documentary *The Invisible War*. This groundbreaking documentary about the epidemic of rape and sexual violence in the U.S. military served as a catalyst for federal legislation and influenced federal policy reforms. Cuomo Cole's 2011 documentary *Living for 32*, about gun laws in America, was short-listed for an Academy Award® and premiered at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival. In collaboration with national communities of gun violence survivors, faith leaders, political leaders and nonprofits, the film has served as a catalyst for awareness and advocacy on the subject of federal and state legislative reform across the country. Since 1992, she has led HELP USA, the national nonprofit leader in both homeless and permanent supportive service housing and employment programs for veterans, families and survivors of domestic violence.

#### **CREDITS**

Directed and Produced by

Kim A. Snyder

Produced by

Maria Cuomo Cole

Edited by

Gabriel Rhodes

Director of Photography

Derek Wiesehahn

Cinematography

Jake Clennell and Naiti Gámez

Supervising Composer and Main Theme by

Fil Eisler

Executive Producers

Nick Stuart

CarolAnne Dolan

Regina K. Scully



1435 Folsom Street  
San Francisco CA 94103  
[T. 415 356 8383](tel:4153568383)  
[F. 415 356 8391](tel:4153568391)  
[pbs.org/independentlens](http://pbs.org/independentlens)



Executive Producers for ITVS

Geralyn White Dreyfous  
Mara Sandler  
Jamie Wolf  
Sally Jo Fifer  
Lois Vossen  
Kim Brizzolara  
Joan Platt  
Liz and Eric Lefkofsky

Co-Executive Producers

**Newtown** is a co-production of Mile 22 LLC, and Independent Television Service (ITVS), with funding provided by Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)

In association with K A Snyder Productions and Cuomo Cole Productions and Transform Films

#### **About *Independent Lens***

*Independent Lens* is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS Monday nights at 10:00 PM. The acclaimed series, with Lois Vossen as executive producer, features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by ITVS, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more, visit [pbs.org/independentlens](http://pbs.org/independentlens). Join the conversation: [facebook.com/independentlens](http://facebook.com/independentlens) and on Twitter [@IndependentLens](http://@IndependentLens).

###



1435 Folsom Street  
San Francisco CA 94103  
**T.** 415 356 8383  
**F.** 415 356 8391  
[pbs.org/independentlens](http://pbs.org/independentlens)