

# Russian Special Forces Show Fifth-Graders How to Beat Crowds

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A special forces unit demonstrated its melee combat skills to elementary school students in central Russia last week, sparking outrage among parents, a local television station has reported.

Prison service guards wearing helmets and bearing shields showed fifth-graders how to club an imaginary enemy at a school auditorium in the Chelyabinsk region town of Zlatoust, as seen in a news segment by the local Zlat-TV channel. Most of the children's parents had reportedly not been [informed](#) of the demonstration in advance and flooded the school with calls after seeing the news report.

**Embed:**

During the display, the unit's leader is seen ordering his subordinates to show the assembled schoolchildren how to strike from different positions, while a banner reading "life for the

motherland, honor to no one!” is seen on the wall.

Critics have called similar displays of military might to young Russians a misguided attempt by authorities to [breed a loyal base](#) of future voters.

“I believe demonstrations of physical force against citizens can in no way ingrain patriotism and love for the motherland,” local assemblywoman Olga Mukhometyarova [wrote](#) in a social media post Monday.

The Zlatoust mayor’s office called in the school’s director to find out the circumstances of the demonstration, Russia’s Podyom news website [reported](#), after national outlets ran segments about the video.

Earlier this month, schoolchildren in the town were [shown](#) rifle handling and wrestling displays by young men and women in t-shirts bearing the logo of the Emergency Situations Ministry.

Most recently, police units in the republic of Tatarstan recruited ninth-graders to pose as protesters in a display of crowd-dispersal tactics. Police there [said](#) they were looking into the incident, which was filmed last Friday.

“The entire country is discussing how police in Tatarstan practiced dispersing rallies on schoolchildren,” Mukhometyarova wrote.

“[Now our] region has also distinguished itself,” she added.

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