



FIREARMS: CHILDREN AND TEENS

Children and teens in the U.S. are impacted by gun violence in all its forms. Exposure to gun violence has an impact on the psychological and mental well-being of children and teens and affects their school performance, among other factors.

Children and teens in the U.S. experience staggeringly high rates of gun deaths and injuries.

59%

Over the past decade, the firearm suicide rate among children and teens has increased by 59 percent

15,000

children and teens are shot and killed or wounded every year

3 million

children and teens witness gun violence every year in The United States

4.6 million

children live in a home with at least one unlocked and loaded firearm

Respect Their Decisions

Inform a parent of the increased risk of harm when a firearm is in a home with children. Importantly, do not shame or judge a survivor for owning a gun instead offer information on how to own and use one as safely as possible.



DISCUSSING GUN SAFETY WITH CHILDREN IN THE HOME

For families who decide to keep guns in the home, many studies show that teaching kids about gun safety, or to not touch a firearm if they find one, is not enough. However, parents can reduce the chances of children being injured by following important safety rules.

To learn about how to obtain a free Safety kit visit
Project ChildSafe
projectchildsafe.org

Tips When Storing a Gun

- Keep firearms unloaded when not in use.
- Guns and ammunition should be secured in a locked safe that is hard to reach with ammo and firearms separate from each other
- Make sure keys or combinations are kept in a place where children can't access them.
- Use a gun-locking device (like a cable lock) as an extra safety precaution when firearms are stored.

Respect Their Decisions

Do not shame or judge parents for wanting to own a gun. Share knowledge on how to have one as safely as possible with kids in the home.

Tips When Discussing Guns with Children

- Talk to children about guns. Remind your kid(s) that if they ever come across a gun, they must stay away from it and tell you immediately.
- Children will watch and learn. Always follow gun safety guidelines and teach them in importance of being safe when owning, operating or being near a gun.
- Make sure your children understand that gun violence they may see on TV, in movies and in video games they play at home or friends' homes is not real.
- They need to be told—and reminded—that in real life, people are killed and hurt badly by guns.
- Ask about guns in other homes where your child plays. Ask: "Is there an unlocked gun in your house?" If there is, reconsider allowing your child to play there or talk to them about keeping the guns unloaded and locked.
- Before setting the gun down, always unload it. As much as a child may want to take a turn shooting, this is not a good idea. No matter how much instruction you may give about how to safely shoot a gun, children are not capable or responsible enough to handle a potentially lethal weapon.

[Adapted from: healthychildren.org](http://healthychildren.org) - Guns in the Home