Child Access to Guns

- **Gun violence is the second leading cause of death in American youth.**
  - **Child Gun-Related Deaths:**
      - 1,773 homicide gun deaths among children and teens
      - 749 suicide gun deaths
      - 134 accidental gun deaths
      - 38 deaths of undetermined intent.
    - 15,576 children and teens were injured by guns in 2010.
    - In 2010, gun-related injuries caused 6570 deaths among youth 1 to 24 years old: 18 deaths a day.
    - In a 2009 study of injury deaths of kids ages 15 to 19—from homicide, suicide, and unintentional injury—more than 1 in 4 were gun related;
      - For children younger than 20, nearly 1 in 5 deaths were gun related.
  - **Children, Guns, and Suicide:**
    - Suicide is a leading cause of death for kids ages 15-19; guns are the most common method used.
      - Firearm availability plays a large role in increasing risk. The odds are particularly high if the gun stored at home is kept loaded and/or unlocked.
      - More than half of youth who commit suicide with a gun obtained the gun from their home, usually a parent’s gun.
      - Of all methods used for attempting suicide, firearms are the most lethal, with an approximate 90% mortality rate.

- **How do children gain access to firearms?**
  - **Guns in the Home:** Children obtain guns most often from within their own homes.
    - In fact, of 37 school shootings in 26 states, the attacker got the gun from his or her own home or that of a relative more than 65% of the time.
  - **Presence of Firearms in Homes with Children:**
    - **Homes with Loaded and Unlocked Guns:** One third of US households with children under the age of 18 contain firearms.
      - Nearly 2 million of these children live in homes where guns are kept loaded and/or unlocked.
      - One fifth of gun owners with children under 18 store a gun loaded; more than one third store one unlocked; nearly 1 in 10 store a gun loaded and unlocked.
      - In homes with adolescents ages 13-17, firearms were left unlocked 41% of the time.
Research cited in a 2013 Children's Defense Fund report found:

- Over 40% of gun-owning households with children store their guns unlocked.
- 22% of children with gun-owning parents handled guns in their homes without their parents’ knowledge.
- A study by the Harvard Injury Control Research Center found that 39% of children interviewed knew the location of their parents’ guns and 22% said they had handled the guns despite their parents reporting otherwise.

- **Guns in the home increase risk of homicide:** A gun in the home makes the likelihood of homicide 3 times higher and suicide 3-5 times higher.

- **Keeping unlocked weapons at home increases the risk of accidental gun injuries:** A gun in the home makes the likelihood of accidental death 4 times higher.
  - In one study, more than half of unintentional firearm deaths occurred while children played with a loaded gun.
  - In nearly half of cases, the shootings occurred in the home of the victim.
  - More than 90% of the time, there was no adult present.

- **Safe Storage of Firearms in the Home:**
  - **Keep guns locked and unloaded:** Keeping guns locked and unloaded, and storing guns separate from ammunition has protective effects of better than 70%.
  - The American Pediatric Society recommends the use of trigger locks, lock boxes, personalized safety mechanisms, and trigger pressures that are too high for young children.

- **Marketing of Firearms to Children:**
  - **Guns Designed for Children:** The gun industry promotes the sale of child sized guns for kids.
    - Examples of such practices include:
      - Giving firearms, ammunition and cash to youth groups, such as Boy Scouts and 4-H clubs;
      - Marketing an affordable military-style rifle for “junior shooters” and sponsoring semiautomatic-handgun youth competitions.
      - The NRA 2013 Annual Meeting included a “Youth Day,” on-premises sale of weapons marketed for kids, and an official NRA youth magazine.

  - **Marketing guns to children has deadly consequences:**
    - Among recent examples is the heart-breaking accidental shooting of a 2 year old girl by her 5 year old brother as he played with his child-sized rifle, a gun marketed with the slogan “My First Rifle,” and sold by major retailers.

- **Legislation to Prevent Child Gun Deaths in the Home:**
  - **Lack of Child Access Prevention Laws:** There are currently no child access prevention laws at the federal level or in New York State.
    - **Child access prevention (CAP) laws** impose criminal liability on adults who negligently leave firearms accessible to children or otherwise allow children access to firearms.
    - **CAP laws save lives:** Research shows that CAP laws reduce accidental shootings of children by as much as 23 percent and they reduce suicides of adolescents by 8 percent.
- New York State needs a CAP law:
  - **New York Children Killed with Guns:** 1,192 children and teens in New York were killed with guns from 2000-2010.
    - In 2010 alone, 116 New York children and teens were killed with guns.
  - **Proposed Child Access Prevention Legislation:** NYAGV is working to enact new gun safety laws in New York State that require child access prevention (CAP) and safe storage of firearms.
  - **NYAGV supports A8293, or Nicholas’s Bill, the Child Access Prevention or Safe Weapon Storage Act.** A8293 requires the safe storage of all guns not in the immediate possession or control of the gun owner, either in a safe storage depository or with a locking device, to prevent access by children and others who should not have access to them. The bill was named for 12-year-old Nicholas Naumkin, who died after being unintentionally shot by a friend playing with his father’s unlocked gun.

7. WISQARS (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System). Atlanta, see above
8. Ibid


