

Child Access to Guns

- **Gun violence is one of the top three causes of death in American youth.**¹
 - **Child Gun-Related Deaths:** 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.²
 - In 2010, gun-related injuries caused 6570 deaths among youth 1 to 24 years old: **18 deaths a day.**³
 - **Children, Guns, and Suicide:** Suicide is a leading cause of death for kids ages 15-19; guns are the most common method used.⁴
 - Firearm availability plays a large role in increasing risk.⁵ The odds are particularly high if the gun stored at home is kept loaded and/or unlocked.⁶
 - Of all methods used for attempting suicide, firearms are the most lethal, with an approximate 90% mortality rate.⁷
- **How do children gain access to firearms?**
 - **Guns in the Home:** Children obtain guns most often from within their own homes.⁸
 - 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.⁹
- **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.¹⁰
 - Nearly 2 million of these children live in homes where guns are kept loaded and/or unlocked.¹¹

¹ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-Based Injury Statistics Query & Reporting System (WISQARS) Injury Mortality Reports, 1999–2009, for national, regional, and states (May, 2012). Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal_injury_reports.html.

² Ibid

³ WISQARS (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System). Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars), *NEJM*, 12/2012 *Preventing Gun Deaths in Children*, Judith S. Palfrey, M.D. and Sean Palfrey, M.D.

⁴ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. See above.

⁵ Wiebe DJ. Homicide and suicide risks associated with firearms in the home: a national case-control study. *Ann Emerg Med*. 2003;41(6):771–782; . Miller M, et al, The association between changes in household firearm ownership and rates of suicide in the United States, 1981-2002. *Inj Prev*. 2006;12(3):178–182

⁶ Brent DA, et al, Firearms and adolescent suicide. A community case-control study. *Am J Dis Child*. 1993;147(10):1066–1071; Brent DA, et al, Suicide in adolescents with no apparent psychopathology. *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry*. 1993;32(3):494–500

⁷ Elnour AA, Harrison J. Lethality of suicide methods. *Inj Prev*. 2008;14(1):39–45

⁸ Johnson RM, et al, Are household firearms stored less safely in homes with adolescents? Analysis of a national random sample of parents, *Arc Pediatr Adolesc Med*. 2006;160(8):788-792. doi:10.1001/archpedi.160.8.788

⁹ US Secret Service, U.S. Department of the Treasury, An Interim Report on the Prevention of Targeted Violence in Schools 6 Oct. 2000.

¹⁰ Johnson RM et al, Firearm ownership and storage practices, U.S. households, 1992-2002. A systematic review. *Am J Prev Med*. 2004 Aug; 27(2):173-82.

¹¹ Okoro, CA et al, Prevalence of household firearms and firearm storage practice in the 50 states and the District of Columbia: findings from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2002 *Pediatrics* 2005;116e370-e376

- 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.¹²
 - In homes with adolescents ages 13-17, firearms were left unlocked 41% of the time.¹³
 - **Keeping unlocked weapons at home increases the risk of accidental gun injuries:** In one study, more than half of unintentional firearm deaths occurred while children played with a loaded gun.¹⁴
 - In nearly half of cases, the shootings occurred in the home of the victim.¹⁵
 - More than 90% of the time, there was no adult present.¹⁶
- **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%.¹⁷
 - 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.¹⁸
- **Marketing of Firearms to Children:**
 - **Guns Designed for Children:** The gun industry promotes the sale of child sized guns for kids.¹⁹ 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.²⁰
 - 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.

¹² WISQARS (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System). Atlanta, see above

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Grossman DC, Reay DT, Baker SA. Self-inflicted and unintentional firearm injuries among children and adolescents. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 1999; 153(8): 875-878.

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Grossman DC, Mueller BA, Riedy C, et al. Gun storage practices and risk of youth suicide and unintentional firearm injuries. *JAMA.* 2005;293(6):707–714

¹⁸ American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement: *Firearm-Related Injuries affecting the Pediatric Population.* AAP website <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2012/10/15/peds.2012-2481.full.pdf+html>

¹⁹ http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/27/us/selling-a-new-generation-on-guns.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

²⁰ Ibid

- **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.
 - **New State Laws Needed:** 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 New York Assembly bill A-03941, the Children’s Weapon Accident Prevention Act, which “creates crimes of failure to store a weapon safely in the first and second degrees, aggravated failure to store a weapon, and criminally negligent storage of a weapon in the first and second degrees and directs the commissioner of education to develop a weapons safety program.”