



## CHILDREN AND GUNS IN NEW YORK

**Gun violence is the second leading cause of death among American children and teens aged 0-19.** A child is killed or injured every 30 minutes.<sup>1</sup>

**Gun deaths.** In 2010, 2,694 kids (aged 0-19) were killed by guns in the US. 116 children died from gun violence in New York State.<sup>2</sup>

**Unintentional shootings.** Each year in New York State an average of 210 children aged 19 and under are treated in a hospital because of an unintentional firearm injury. Two children die each year because of an unintentional firearm incident.<sup>3</sup> A *New York Times* report found that accidental gun deaths of children are seriously under-reported.<sup>4</sup>

**Suicides.** About 85% of attempted suicides with a firearm are fatal whereas many of the other most widely used suicide attempt methods have fatality rates below 5%.<sup>5</sup> Firearms that are stored loaded or unlocked are more likely to be used than those that are unloaded or locked and adolescent suicide victims often use an unlocked firearm in the home.<sup>6</sup>

**Nonfatal gun injuries.** In 2011 in New York State there were 389 nonfatal firearm injuries among children and youth aged 0-18.<sup>7</sup>

Nearly 2 million American children live in homes where they have easy access to loaded or unlocked guns – in rural, suburban and urban neighborhoods. In New York, 38% of gun owners reported some form of unsafe storage.<sup>8</sup>

### HOW CAN WE PROTECT OUR CHILDREN?

**A New York State CAP Law:** New York has some of the strongest gun laws in the nation. But it has no **Child Access Prevention (CAP)**, also called **Safe Storage**, law. New York requires locks with all gun sales, but only requires their use in households where individuals live who have been convicted of a crime, involuntarily committed, or subject to an order of protection.

We advocate a New York State law requiring that all guns be locked or stored safely unless they are under the **immediate possession or control** of their owner, i.e., on the person or within easy reach. A strong CAP law would impose criminal liability upon gun owners who leave guns accessible to children or other unauthorized persons.

**Ask:** Meanwhile, when your child visits his or her friends, ask: “Are there any guns in the home?” and, if so, “Are they locked?”

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.childrendefense.org/child-research-data-publications/data/protect-children-not-guns-2013.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal\\_injury\\_reports.html](http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal_injury_reports.html)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury\\_prevention/children/fact\\_sheets/birth-19\\_years/firearm\\_injuries\\_birth-19\\_years.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/children/fact_sheets/birth-19_years/firearm_injuries_birth-19_years.htm)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/29/us/children-and-guns-the-hidden-toll.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/means-matter/risk/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://annals.org/article.aspx?articleid=1814426>

<sup>7</sup> National Inpatient Sample 2011

<sup>8</sup> Firearm Ownership and Safe Storage in New York State, NY State Department of Health, 1996