

Gun Safety for Children

1 in 3

homes with children have guns,
many unlocked or loaded



WHY IS GUN SAFETY IMPORTANT?

- Suicide risk is five times more likely if there is a gun in the home.
- A gun kept in the home triples the risk of homicide.
- Firearm related deaths are the third leading cause of death for children aged 1-17.
- Firearm injuries cause more deaths in people ages 1-24 than any other type of injury – including car accidents.
- More than 44 million Americans own firearms.
- Children have the ability to fire guns.

WHAT ARE THE GUN-RELATED INJURIES SEEN AT ST. LOUIS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL?

- 150 children were treated for gunshot wounds in 2020, compared to 92 in 2019 – more than a 60% increase.
- An increasing number of children, 0-10 years old, are being treated for severe injuries related to firearms.
- Most of the unintentional firearm injuries occur in the child's home or a friend's home.



For a free gun lock, use the QR code by using your camera on your smartphone.

For more information, visit [StLouisChildrens.org/safetystop](https://www.stlouischildrens.org/safetystop) or call 314.565.0369.



HOW ARE GUNS AND TEEN SUICIDE RELATED?

- Suicide attempts involving a gun often are fatal.
- Teens in homes with guns are at a much higher risk for suicide.
- Most guns involved in a suicide come from the victim's home or a relative or friend's home.

HOW CAN I KEEP MY CHILD SAFE FROM GUN INJURY?

- According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, the best way to keep your child or teen safe from gun injury or death is to never have a gun in your home, especially not a handgun.
- Find out if there are guns present and how they are stored at homes where your children play.
- If your friends or family keep a firearm, urge them to keep it locked and unloaded.

IF I CHOOSE TO HAVE A GUN IN THE HOME, HOW CAN I STORE IT SAFELY?

- **Always** keep the gun unloaded and locked up.
- Lock and store the bullets in a **separate place**.
- Make sure to **hide the keys** to the locked boxes.
- Keep both the locked gun and ammunition boxes out of the reach of children.
- Do not keep a loaded gun next to your bed.

WHAT SHOULD I TELL MY CHILD TO DO IF HE OR SHE SEES A GUN?

- Do not touch the gun and walk away from it.
- Tell an adult as soon as possible.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov

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