

## Loaded Guns Kept at Home are Hurting U.S. Kids

Loaded guns left where kids can reach them may be contributing to the high level of firearms injuries to children in the U.S. A study reveals the number of such injuries is 30 per cent higher than thought.

Figures gathered from emergency rooms across the US show that around **20,000 children are injured by firearms each year** - higher than earlier estimates.

**A further 900 incidents are fatal.**

- *Many teens attempt suicide on impulse, and there's no second chance with a gun.*
- **One youth completes suicide every 2 hours, which is about 12 each day.**
- **Firearms remain the most commonly utilized method of completing suicide by essentially all ages.**

**NATIONAL**  
**SUICIDE**  
**PREVENTION**  
**LIFELINE**  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
suicidepreventionlifeline.org



### What is Project ChildSafe?

Project ChildSafe is a nationwide program whose purpose is to promote safe firearms handling and storage practices among all firearms owners through the distribution of key safety education messages and free firearm safety kits that include a gun-locking device and educational brochure. The program is supported by the non-for-profit National Shooting Sports Foundation.

### What is the goal of Project ChildSafe?

Firearms accidents in the home often result from a child, finding a loaded and unsecured firearm in the home. The risk of firearms-related unintentional injuries or deaths can be reduced when owners are aware of and fully understand their responsibility to handle firearms safely and store them in a secure manner. The goal of Project ChildSafe is to inform and educate all firearms owners on key safety issues and to provide firearms safety kits that include a gun-locking device.

Gun owners who wish to receive a free Project ChildSafe safety kit should contact a participating law enforcement agency in their area.

<http://www.projectchildsafesafe.org/index.cfm>

**Experts also know that suicidal crises tend to be brief. When suicidal behaviors are detected early, lives can be saved. There are services available in our community for the assessment and treatment of suicidal behaviors and their underlying causes.**



**It could happen in a heartbeat**

**All children are at risk**

**There is no second chance**



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## Teen Suicide and Guns

### Protect Your Teenager

- ◆ Many teens attempt suicide on impulse, and there's no second chance with a gun.
- ◆ Counting on a teen's ability to resist strong emotional impulses when there is a gun is not a good idea.
- ◆ Young people need safe environments that protect them from deadly harm.

*Many teens who attempt suicide do so because of a temporary problem, like the end of a romance. When guns are involved, teens can waste their lives and destroy the happiness of their friends and families in an instant. They are thinking of a passing problem, not the outcome!*

### Teen Suicide—A Big Problem

Suicide is one of the 3 leading causes of death for 13- to 19-year-olds in the United States.

An average of 4 American teenagers commit suicide every day.

Does a gun in the home increase the chance of suicide? **YES!**

In states where there are more guns, more people commit suicide.

Studies have shown that the risk of suicide is 4 to 10 times higher in homes with guns than in those without.

If the gun is a handgun or is stored loaded or unlocked, the risk of suicide is even higher.

Does it matter how a person tries to commit suicide? **YES!**

Suicide attempts with a gun are very likely to be deadly.

Suicide attempts with drugs or methods other than guns have a greater chance of survival.

### Protect Young People From Killing Themselves

Teens often see any change as a major life event. Adults and teens need to talk about things. If there is a gun in your home:

- ◆ Keep it unloaded and locked up or with a trigger lock.
- ◆ Store the bullets in a different place that is also locked.
- ◆ Do not let teens have a key to the places where guns and bullets are stored.
- ◆ If a teen becomes depressed or has severe mood swings, store the gun outside the home for the time being.

Most young survivors of a serious suicide attempt do not commit suicide later, and most survivors of suicide attempts are glad they were saved.

1/9/2012 **Source** Connected Kids: Safe, Strong, Secure (Copyright © 2006 American Academy of Pediatrics)

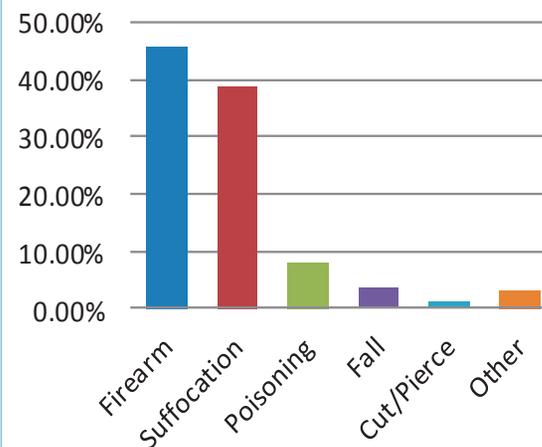
### A Message for Your Children

Young people are naturally curious about firearms and, as a result, may be tempted to "play" with a firearm they find. Make sure young people in your home are aware of and understand the safety guidelines below.

- Don't go looking for guns in your house or a friend's house. Don't let other kids look for guns in your house.
- If you find a gun in your house, or anywhere else, STOP! Leave it alone. Don't touch it. Don't let anyone else touch it. Leave the area and be sure to tell an adult at once.
- Even if a gun looks like a toy, don't touch it. Some real guns may look like toy guns, so don't take a chance. Leave the area and immediately tell an adult.

**REMEMBER: IF YOU FIND A GUN, DON'T PICK IT UP. JUST LEAVE IT ALONE, AND GO TELL AN ADULT RIGHT AWAY!**

## National Suicide Statistics at a Glance ~ age 10-24



## Suicide statistics ages 10yrs and older by sex & mechanism.

