

Ethan's Law - Firearm Child Access Prevention

What is being proposed?

To amend CT State Statute [Sec.29-37i](#) "Responsibilities re storage of loaded firearms" to expand the conditions under which firearms must be securely stored to include unloaded firearms and to define "minors" as any person age 18 years or younger.

What are current CT regulations for secure storage of firearms?

Under Sec 29-37i only loaded firearms must be securely stored (or kept under the immediate control of the gun owner), and only when the gun owner knows or should know that 1) a minor under the age of 16 is likely to gain access without permission, 2) a resident in the home is ineligible to possess firearms under state or federal law or 3) a resident poses a risk of imminent personal injury to himself or to other individuals.

Why is Ethan's Law being proposed?

Ethan Song, a 15-year old from Guilford, was killed in January 2018 when he got access to an unsecured handgun and ammunition at a friend's house. Ethan's death was not an accident; it was the result of gross negligence on the part of the friend's father who stored his guns in a bedroom closet, in the same location as the ammunition and key to the gun's trigger lock. However, per the CT State's Attorney [report](#), the father cannot be held accountable because it cannot be proved that the handgun was loaded when Ethan and his friends started playing with it.

Ethan's Law will help prevent unintentional shootings, suicide and even crime-related gun violence. It will send a clear message to irresponsible gun owners: lock up your firearms or be held accountable. Ethan's death is not an isolated case:

- Every day, eight children are unintentionally shot or killed by a gun.¹
- Over 80% of child firearm suicides used a gun belonging to a family member.²
- 75% of guns used in school shootings come from the shooter's home or that of a relative.³
- It's estimated that more than 2,600 firearms were stolen in Connecticut in 2015.⁴ Gun thefts are a key source of illegal guns to the illegal market that are later used in the commission of crimes. Studies show that a majority of guns recovered from crime scenes were stolen.^{5,6}

How do we know a stronger child access prevention/safe storage law will make a difference?

Studies show that child access prevention laws, and safe storage in general, reduce the risk of adolescent suicide. One found that keeping a gun locked lowers the risk of both unintentional injury and suicide for children and teenagers by 73%.⁷ Circumstantial evidence suggests that most gun thefts are from owners who leave them unsecured in unlocked homes or cars⁸. More stringent safe storage requirements will lead to fewer gun thefts and a diminished supply of crime guns.

¹ [Key Gun Violence Statistics](#), Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence

² [Study](#): Who are the owners of firearms used in adolescent suicides? Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior. 2010

³ Most Guns Used in School Shootings Come From Home, Wall Street Journal, Apr 5, 2018

⁴ [Stolen Guns in America](#), Center for American Progress, Jul 25, 2017

⁵ [Study confirms what gun rights advocates have said for a long time about crime](#), Miami Herald, Jul 27, 2016

⁶ [Missing Pieces](#), The Trace, Nov 20, 2017

⁷ Policy [Statement](#): Firearm-Related Injuries Affecting the Pediatric Population, American Academy of Pediatrics, 2012

⁸ [Stolen Guns in America](#), Center for American Progress, Jul 25, 2017