

## The Deadly Dangers of Lax Firearm Storage

1. It is well documented that the risk of teen suicide—the third leading cause of death among 15 to 19 year olds—increases when there is a gun in the home, even more so when the firearm is kept loaded.<sup>1</sup> The rate of firearm suicide among children and teens has increased 61% over the past decade.<sup>2</sup>
2. Over 80% of child firearm suicides used a gun belonging to a family member.<sup>3</sup>

*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%.<sup>4</sup>*
3. Every day, eight children are unintentionally shot or killed by a gun.

*A study found that households that locked both firearms and ammunition had an 85% lower risk of unintentional gun deaths compared to those who lock neither.<sup>5</sup>*
4. 4.6 million children live in a home with an unlocked, loaded firearm.<sup>6</sup>

*The U.S. General Accounting Office estimated that 31% of accidental deaths caused by firearms might be prevented with the addition of two devices: a child-proof safety lock and a loading indicator.<sup>7</sup>*
5. More than 75% of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders know where their parents keep their firearms and one-third admitted handling the weapons, contradicting their parents' reports.<sup>8</sup>
6. In 2015, about 4% of students ages 12-18 reported having access to a loaded gun without adult permission<sup>9</sup>.
7. On average, there are 1,550 incidents of students having firearms at public schools each school year.<sup>10</sup> 75% of guns used in school shootings come from the shooter's home or that of a relative.<sup>11</sup>
8. On average, a gun is stolen in the U.S. every two minutes<sup>12</sup>. More than 238,000 guns were reported stolen in the U.S. in 2016<sup>13</sup>, although because of underreporting, the total number of gun thefts is much higher, estimated at 380,000 each year<sup>14</sup>. It is estimated that in 2015 more than 2,600 firearms were stolen in Connecticut<sup>15</sup>.
9. Circumstantial evidence suggests that most gun thefts are from owners who leave them unsecured in unlocked homes or cars<sup>16</sup>.
10. Because all guns start as legal guns, gun thefts are a key source of 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. A study of the 893 guns recovered by Pittsburgh police from crimes in 2008 found that 80% of the suspects used guns owned by someone else<sup>17</sup>. Between 2010 and 2015 more than 4,600 guns were reported lost or stolen in Austin. During that same time period, lost and stolen firearms were recovered in some 600 crimes<sup>18</sup>.

- 1 Policy [Statement](#): Firearm-Related Injuries Affecting the Pediatric Population, American Academy of Pediatrics, 2012
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- 3 [Study](#): Who are the owners of firearms used in adolescent suicides? Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior. 2010
- 4 Policy [Statement](#): Firearm-Related Injuries Affecting the Pediatric Population, American Academy of Pediatrics, 2012
- 5 [Study](#): The impact of minimum age and child access prevention laws on firearm-related youth suicides and unintentional deaths. The Social Science Journal. 2015
- 6 Firearm storage in gun-owning households with children: Results of a 2015 national [survey](#). Journal of Urban Health. 2018
- 7 Gun Violence: [Facts and Statistics](#), Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute
- 8 Gun Violence: [Facts and Statistics](#), Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute
- 9 [Indicators](#) of School Crime and Safety, National Center for Education Statistics
- 10 [Digest](#) of Education Statistics, National Center for Education Statistics
- 11 Most Guns Used in School Shootings Come From Home, Wall Street Journal, Apr 5, 2018
- 12 [Stolen Guns in America](#), Center for American Progress, Jul 25, 2017
- 13 [Missing Pieces](#), The Trace, Nov 20, 2017
- 14 [Whose guns are stolen?](#) The epidemiology of Gun theft victims, Injury Epidemiology, Apr 10, 2017
- 15 [Stolen Guns in America](#), Center for American Progress, Jul 25, 2017
- 16 ibid
- 17 [Study confirms what gun rights advocates have said for a long time about crime](#), Miami Herald, Jul 27, 2016
- 18 [Missing Pieces](#), The Trace, Nov 20, 2017