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INTRODUCTION

Deaths due to firearms account for almost one-quarter of all injury-related deaths among U.S. children ages 0 – 19. On average, annually over 3,300 U.S. children die and 13,000 suffer non-fatal wounds from firearms.¹ Firearm injuries are classified as intentionally self-inflicted (suicide), interpersonal (homicide or assault), unintentional (accidental firing without intention), legal intervention (injuries inflicted by the police or other law enforcement agents acting in the line of duty), and undetermined intent.² A firearm injury is a gunshot wound or penetrating injury from a weapon that uses a powder charge to fire a projectile; these include handguns, rifles, and shotguns. Injuries from air- and gas-powered guns, BB, and pellet guns are not considered firearm injuries as they do not use a powder charge to fire a projectile. See the sidebar for more information on each type of firearm injury.

Among U.S. children ages 0 – 19 years, firearm injury rates increased from 3.3 per 100,000 in 2010 to 4.2 in 2019. In the four-year period of 2016 – 2019, among children 0– 19 years, there were 7,630 firearm homicides, 4,862 firearm suicides and 475 deaths due to unintentional shootings, accounting for almost 97% of firearm-related deaths in this population. Firearm-related deaths are more common among 10 – 19 year olds (7.7 per 100,000 in 2019) than among 0 – 9 year olds (0.4 per 100,000 in 2019).


Gun violence overall carries an annual cost to the U.S. health care system of $170 billion, with $16 billion for surgical operations alone.\(^3\) In addition, there is a high psychological and emotional cost to firearm injuries. Children and youth who are exposed to gun violence experience lasting emotional scars, some developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) while others experience anger, withdrawal and desensitization to violence.\(^4\) The psychological effects can also contribute to a continued cycle of violence, also facilitated by access to guns.\(^5\)

There are many types of firearm injuries, which can be fatal or nonfatal:

- **Intentionally Self-Inflicted** includes firearm suicide or nonfatal self-harm.
- **Unintentional** includes fatal or nonfatal firearm injuries that happen while cleaning or playing with a firearm or other incidents of an accidental firing without evidence of intentional harm.
- **Interpersonal Violence** includes firearm homicide or nonfatal assault injury from a firearm.
- **Legal Intervention** includes firearm injuries inflicted by the police or other law enforcement agents acting in the line of duty. For example, firearm injuries that occur while arresting or attempting to arrest someone, maintaining order, or ensuring safety. The term legal intervention is a commonly used external cause of injury classification and does not indicate the legality of the circumstances surrounding the death.
- **Undetermined Intent** includes firearm injuries where there is not enough information to determine whether the injury was intentionally self-inflicted, unintentional, a legal intervention firearm death, or from an act of interpersonal violence.

### Firearm Injury Deaths by Intent, Ages 0–19 2016–2019

- **Homicide**: 57.2%
- **Suicide**: 36.5%
- **Legal Intervention**: 0.8%
- **Unintentional**: 3.6%
- **Undetermined**: 1.9%

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Approximately 7% of U.S. children (4.6 million) live in homes in which at least one firearm is stored loaded and unlocked.6

There are many proven strategies to prevent firearm-related injuries to children and youth, including the safe storage of firearms, focusing prevention efforts on the people and places most likely to be affected, and removing firearms from the home if your child is experiencing a mental health problem or life crisis.

This guide provides links to firearm safety resources available to you. It is divided into six sections: (1) Introduction; (2) Organizations; (3) Data; (4) Legislation and Policies; (5) Prevention Resources; and (6) Publications. The resources included in this guide are not meant to be comprehensive, nor are the listings intended as endorsements.

ORGANIZATIONS

American Academy of Pediatrics
www.aap.org

American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma
https://www.facs.org/Quality-Programs/Trauma/Advocacy/IPC/firearm-injury

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/firearms/fastfact.html

Cure Violence
https://cvg.org/

Harvard Injury Control Research Center | Harvard School of Public Health
https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/hicrc/

Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research | Bloomberg School of Public Health
https://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-gun-policy-and-research/

National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention
https://theactionalliance.org/

National Center for the Prevention of Youth Suicides | American Association of Suicidology (AAS)
https://www.preventyouthsuicide.org/mission-index-impact

Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)  
https://www.sprc.org/

### DATA SOURCES

#### CDC Data Sources

- National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NHAMCS) | CDC  
  https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/ahcd/index.htm
- National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) | CDC  
  https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/datasources/nvdrs/index.html
- National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) | CDC  
  https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/index.htm
- School Associated Violent Death Study (SAVS) | CDC  
  https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/schoolviolence/savd.html
- Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) | CDC  
- Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research (WONDER) | CDC  
  https://wonder.cdc.gov/
- Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) | CDC  
  https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/index.htm

#### Other Federal Data Sources

- Health Care Utilization Project (HCUP) | Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)  
  https://www.ahrq.gov/data/hcup/index.html
Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) | Office of Justice Programs
https://www.bjs.gov/

National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) | U.S. Census Bureau
https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/ncvs.html

National Electronic Injury Surveillance System – All Injury Program (NEISS-AIP) | Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)
https://www.cpsc.gov/Research--Statistics/NEISS-Injury-Data

National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) | Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ucr/nibr

Non-Federal Data Sources

Gun Violence Archive (GVA)
https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/

National Fatality Review Case Reporting System | National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention
https://www.ncfrp.org/data/nfr-crs/

LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

National Firearms Act | Bureau Alcohol, Firearms, Tobacco of and Explosives (ATF)

State Firearms Laws Database | State Firearms Law
https://www.statefirearmlaws.org/

State Firearm Law Navigator | RAND Corporation
https://www.rand.org/research/gun-policy/law-navigator.html#self-defense

State Gun Control Laws | FindLaw
https://statelaws.findlaw.com/criminal-laws/gun-control.html

PREVENTION RESOURCES

General Prevention

Firearm Injury Prevention | Injury Free Coalition for Kids
https://www.injuryfree.org/safetytpc_display.cfm?PermanentId=ADC74F45-E6D2-4BCA-8D270EDDD0370F76
Gun Safety and Your Health | American College of Surgeons
https://www.facs.org/-/media/files/quality-programs/trauma/ipc/gunsafety_brochure.ashx

Personal Firearms: Programs that Promote Safe Storage and Research on Their Effectiveness | US Government Accountability Office (GAO)

Homicide/Violence Prevention

A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors | CDC

Violence Impacts Teens’ Lives | Vital Signs CDC

Violence Intervention Programs: A Primer for Developing a Comprehensive Program within Trauma Centers | American College of Surgeons
https://www.facs.org/quality-programs/trauma/advocacy/ipc/firearm-injury/hvip-primer

Suicide Prevention

CALM: Counseling on Access to Lethal Means | Zero Suicide
https://zerosuicide.edc.org/resources/key-resources/CALM

https://theactionalliance.org/sites/default/files/lethal_means_and Suicide_prevention-a_guide_for_community_and_industry_leaders_final_0.pdf

Means Matter | Harvard School of Public Health
https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/

Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policy, Programs, and Practices | CDC

Suicide Prevention | SAMHSA
https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/suicide-prevention

Suicide Prevention Lifeline | SAMHSA
https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/
PUBLICATIONS

Association of Changes in Missouri Firearm Laws with Adolescent and Young Adult Suicides by Firearms | JAMA Network (2020)

Association of Minimum Age Laws for Handgun Purchase and Possession with Homicides Perpetrated by Young Adults Aged 18 to 20 Years | JAMA Pediatrics (2020)
Moe CA, Haviland MH, Bowen AG
https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/article-abstract/2770131

Beyond Gun Laws—Innovative Interventions to Reduce Gun Violence in the United States | JAMA Psychiatry (2020)
Branas CC, Reeping PM, Rudolph KE
https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/fullarticle/2769625

https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/article-abstract/2761305

Azrael D, Cohen J, Salhi C, Miller M
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5993703/

Selected State and Local Prevention Resources

Many state health departments and local organizations have produced their own prevention materials. To learn more about what may be available in your area, please contact your state or health department.

PSA Relevant to Teens in Utah | Utah Suicide Prevention Coalition
https://vimeo.com/232528101

Reopening RI: Is Your Home Suicide Proof? | Rhode Island Department of Health

Safe-Guard Your Home: A Guide to Suicide Prevention at Home | Colorado School of Public Health
https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/PW_ISVP_Suicide_Safe-guard-Home_Youth.pdf

Safe Streets Baltimore
https://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/center-for-prevention-of-youth-violence/field_reports/Safe_ Streets.html
Knopov A, Sherman J, Raifman JR, Larson E, Siegel MB
https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(18)32383-3/fulltext

Bleyer A, Siegel SE, Thomas CR,
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S002796842030451X#bib40

Initiation Age, Cumulative Prevalence, and Longitudinal Patterns of Handgun Carrying Among Rural Adolescents: A Multistate Study | Journal of Adolescent Health (2020)
Rowhani-Rahbar A, Oesterle S, Skinner M.L.,
https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X(19)30921-8/fulltext