

SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS

A TOOLKIT FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Keeping Students Safe

Firearms are the leading cause of death for children in the United States. Millions of children live in homes where firearms are loaded and unlocked. Accidental shootings, suicide, and school shootings can occur when firearms are not securely stored.

This toolkit provides school districts with information about their legal obligation to notify parents about child access prevention and safe storage laws, as well as additional steps schools can take to promote safe storage of firearms.



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- * Doing More to Keep Students Safe
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ONLINE VERSION

THE BASIC RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Cal. Ed. Code section 48980 requires that, at the beginning of the first semester or quarter of the regular school term, the governing board of each school district must notify parents/guardians of a minor of their rights or responsibilities under certain provisions of the Education Code.

In 2022, California **passed legislation** requiring local education agencies to provide annual notice to parents and guardians regarding California's **child access prevention and safe storage** laws for firearms. Part of the law requires the CA Department of Education to develop model content for this notice.

In July 2023, the Department of Education released the **model content** that can be used by school districts in the annual notice to parents. Links to the model content are included in the **Resources and Tools** section of this toolkit.

School districts are not required to use the model content; however, Cal. Ed. Code § 48986(d) provides that: “A local educational agency, a private school, and the department are **immune from civil liability** for any damages allegedly caused by, arising out of, or relating to the notice if the entity provided the notice using the model language provided to it by the department.”

Many areas of San Diego County also have **local laws** that govern the safe storage of firearms and expand the obligations of gun owners. The model content notes that your city or county may have **additional requirements**. Because we believe it is important for families to understand ALL of their safe storage obligations, we provide sample language options for those districts with additional restrictions to consider.

Use of the model content is recommended for school districts, AND there is much more that school districts can do to keep their students safe!



Note that school districts have other legal obligations regarding school safety that are not covered in this toolkit. These include new obligations beginning Fall 2023 to address homicidal threats in middle and high schools, as detailed in Superintendent Thurmond's letter.



DOING MORE TO KEEP STUDENTS SAFE

THERE ARE IMPORTANT AND EASY THINGS A SCHOOL DISTRICT CAN DO TO HELP PROMOTE SAFE STORAGE!

Enhance the Information Provided to Parents **(see Resources and Tools section)**

Include additional information in the annual notice. There are several resources included in this toolkit that school districts can share with parents, including an information sheet with helpful links, and an infographic that illustrates the prevalence of gun violence impacting children.

Communicate with parents about safe storage beyond the annual notice. Email or social media are great ways to remind parents to securely store their firearms. This toolkit includes sample email language and downloadable images for easy use on social media sites.

Add information on safe storage to Parent Handbooks. A brief reference to a school or district webpage with information on safe storage is an easy way to make parents aware of the issue and the resources available to them.

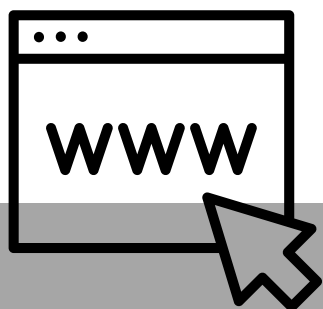
Pass a Resolution

This can enhance your district's commitment to preventing gun violence and promoting safety while building awareness among parents and staff.

Several districts in San Diego County have passed resolutions recently, including San Diego Unified School District. View the resolution in the online version of this toolkit.



DOING MORE TO KEEP STUDENTS SAFE



Create Content on the District Website

The district website is a great place to provide resources to parents and students about safe storage.

This can include tips for keeping kids safe, an explanation of local regulations, and links to resources to assist families in crisis and needing support.

Host an Event or Training

Train Parents to Be SMART: Be SMART for Kids has worked with schools from all across the country, helping to raise awareness around secure gun storage. A Be SMART training can ensure that parents, caregivers, and all adults in your school community receive important and potentially life-saving information.

Contact sd4gvp@gmail.com to learn more about scheduling a free Be SMART Training (provided in English or Spanish) for schools in your district.

Plan Awareness-Raising Events: There are several days, weeks, and months each year dedicated to raising awareness about keeping kids safe from firearm injuries and death. Consider hosting awareness-raising events during these designated times:

National Suicide Prevention Week:
September 10- September 16, 2023
(September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month)

National Injury Prevention Day
November 18, 2023

National Gun Violence Awareness Day
June 2, 2024

RESOURCES AND TOOLS TO PROMOTE SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS

SD4GVP is pleased to provide the following materials that can be downloaded and included in school district communications.

Visit www.sd4gvp.org/toolkit or scan the QR code on the cover for downloadable versions.

The following pages provide materials for reference or replication, including:

1. Resources Provided by The White House
2. Links to the CA Department of Education Model Content
3. Local Ordinance Information
4. "Learn More" Info Sheet for Parents
5. Social Media Messaging Templates
6. Infographic on Children and Guns

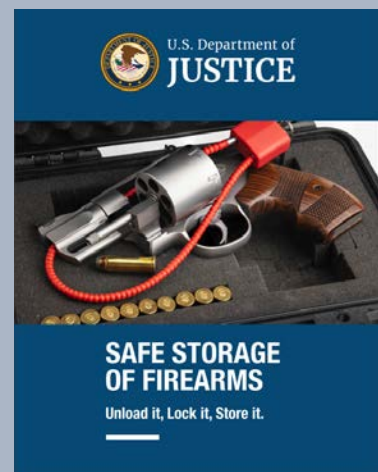


RESOURCES PROVIDED BY THE WHITE HOUSE



On January 25, 2024, the White House announced new executive actions to help promote safe storage of firearms, including provision of the following resources:

- A **customizable template** that principals and school leaders can use to communicate with parents and families about the importance of firearm storage and encourage safe storage practices. Access the template by clicking on the image to the right or by visiting <https://rems.ed.gov/docs/Safe-Firearm-Storage>
- A **Guide to Safe Storage of Firearms** developed by the U.S. Department of Justice. This is the most comprehensive guide on safe storage ever released by the federal government. Access the Guide by clicking on the image to the right or by visiting <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/DOJ-Safe-Firearm-Storage-Guide.pdf>



In addition, Miguel Cardona, Secretary of Education, sent a letter to School Principals and District Administrators suggesting steps to build awareness in their school communities about safe firearm storage. The letter can be accessed at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/secletter/012524.html>

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MODEL CONTENT

On July 29, 2023, the California Department of Education issued a letter to School Superintendents and Principals directing them to the Template Memoranda for Parent/guardian annual notification that satisfies the model content requirement of Assembly Bill 452 and Senate Bill 906.

The templates are available in English and Spanish.

Sample templates for memoranda to parents and guardians informing them of the laws in California regarding safe storage of firearms are available here:

[Template Memorandum for Safe Firearms Storage in English\(DOCX\)](#)

[Template Memorandum for Safe Firearms Storage in Spanish\(DOCX\)](#)



LOCAL SAFE STORAGE ORDINANCES

In addition to state laws regarding access prevention and safe storage of firearms, several local communities have passed ordinances to help reduce gun-related deaths and injuries. Families who live in unincorporated areas of San Diego County, or in the cities of San Diego, Encinitas, Del Mar, or Solana Beach, have obligations under these additional local ordinances.

Each ordinance has identical key language about a gun owner's obligations. Specifically, the ordinances require that a person who keeps any type of firearm in their residence or its accessory structures must keep it secured so that unauthorized users cannot access the weapon. The law requires that loaded and unloaded firearms be stored in a locked container or disabled with a trigger lock. There is an exception if the firearm is carried on the body of an authorized user, or is in the user's immediate control so that they can readily retrieve and use the firearm.

We suggest that information provided to parents from school districts with families covered by these laws reference these local regulations as well as state laws in their communications. Sample language ideas and further details about each of the ordinances are provided below.

Sample Language That Can Be Added to the Template Memoranda

(add before the first bullet point of the model letter, and remove the "NOTE" from page 2)

There are safe firearms storage laws at both the local and state levels for families that live in unincorporated areas of San Diego County, or in the cities of San Diego, Encinitas, Del Mar, or Solana Beach.

These local ordinances are broader than state law, and apply to all gun owners. They state that it is unlawful for any person to keep a firearm within any residence, including its accessory structures, unless the firearm is stored in a locked container or disabled with a trigger lock.

There is an exception if the firearm is carried on the body of, or is in the immediate control of, an authorized user so that the person can readily retrieve and use the firearm. "Locked container" means a secure container that is fully enclosed and locked by a padlock, keylock, combination lock, or similar locking device. "Trigger lock" means a firearm safety device approved by the California Department of Justice Bureau of Firearms.

LOCAL SAFE STORAGE ORDINANCES

Sample Language for a Separate Communication in Addition to the Required Annual Notice

Dear Parents,

As you were made aware in the annual notice, California state law makes it a crime for a person to negligently store or leave any firearm on their premises in a location where they know or reasonably should know that a child is likely to gain access to it, unless reasonable action is taken to secure the firearm to prevent the child from accessing it.

You should also be aware that some local communities have enacted additional laws, or ordinances, that also require safe storage of firearms. Families that live in unincorporated areas of San Diego County, or in the cities of San Diego, Encinitas, Del Mar, or Solana Beach, are covered by local ordinances that are broader than state law, and apply to all gun owners. They state that it is unlawful for any person to keep a firearm within any residence, including its accessory structures, unless the firearm is stored in a locked container or disabled with a trigger lock.

There is an exception if the firearm is carried on the body of, or is in the immediate control of, an authorized user so that the person can readily retrieve and use the firearm. “Locked container” means a secure container that is fully enclosed and locked by a padlock, keylock, combination lock, or similar locking device. “Trigger lock” means a firearm safety device approved by the California Department of Justice Bureau of Firearms.



LOCAL SAFE STORAGE ORDINANCES

Links to Local Ordinances

School Districts Serving Families in the City of San Diego

Families residing in the City of San Diego should be aware of San Diego Municipal Code Section 53.17, Residential Safe Storage of Firearms. This ordinance applies to everyone living in the City of San Diego.

Full Text [available here](#).

School Districts Serving Families in Unincorporated Areas of San Diego County

Families residing in the unincorporated areas of San Diego County should be aware of San Diego County Ordinance 10765, Section 33.302, Safe Storage of Firearms.

Full Text [available here](#).

School Districts Serving Families in Solana Beach

Families residing in Solana Beach should be aware of Solana Beach Municipal Code 7.20.030 Residential Safe Storage of Firearms. The ordinance applies to everyone living in the City of Solana Beach.

Full Text [available here](#).

School Districts Serving Families in Encinitas

Families residing in the following school districts should be aware of Encinitas Municipal Code 9.31.030-9.31.040, Residential Safe Storage of Firearms. This ordinance applies to everyone living in the City of Encinitas.

Full Text [available here](#).

School Districts Serving Families in Del Mar

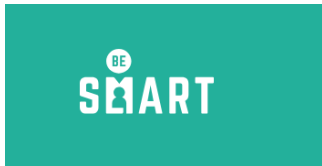
Families residing in Del Mar should be aware of Del Mar Municipal Code 9.12.050, Residential Safe Storage of Firearms. This ordinance applies to everyone living in the City of Del Mar.

Full Text [available here](#).

LEARN MORE ABOUT KEEPING KIDS SAFE

WWW.SD4GVP.ORG

Be SMART



Be SMART is a framework designed to help parents, caretakers and communities play a role in keeping kids from accessing guns. To learn more, visit <https://besmartforkids.org/>

END FAMILY FIRE



The End Family Fire Campaign provides simple steps to prevent children from gaining access to a gun from the home when they shouldn't have it. To learn more, visit <https://www.endfamilyfire.org/>

SAFETY DEVICES



There are a variety of options for securing firearms in your home, including gun safes, locked boxes, trigger locks, or cable locks. To find which safety devices are compatible with your firearm, visit <https://oag.ca.gov/firearms/certified-firearms-fsd/search>.

You can also contact your local San Diego Police station about receiving a free gun lock.

ASKING SAVES LIVES

Inquiring about firearm storage when your child is visiting another home is a simple way to keep your child safe.

The Brady Campaign encourages parents to ask one straightforward question: **"Is there an unlocked gun where my child plays?"**



GUN VIOLENCE RESTRAINING ORDERS (GVRO)

A GVRO is a court order requested by law enforcement that allows firearms to be removed from individuals who pose a threat to themselves or others. If you are concerned that someone who poses a risk of violence may have access to a firearm, contact your local police to obtain GVRO.

For more information on GVROs or Domestic Violence Restraining Orders (DVROs), visit: www.caloes.ca.gov/gunsafety/_OR <https://endinggv.org/>



KNOW WHERE TO GET HELP

If you or your child are in a dangerous situation, there are people who can help:

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)

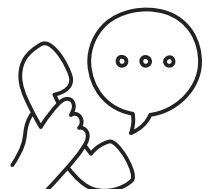
Text START to 88788

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Dial 988

Your Safe Place at

<https://www.sandiego.gov/yoursafeplace/help>



SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATES RAISING AWARENESS AMONG PARENTS

Text: Parents have the opportunity - and the obligation - to keep firearms safely stored and out of the hands of children



Text: Before you drop off your child at someone's house, ask if they have firearms, and if they do, whether they are locked and unloaded. Your child is counting on you.



Text: "In as many as 75% of youth firearm suicides for which the gun storage method could be identified, the gun was stored loaded and unlocked." (www.teamenough.org/ending-family-fire)



Download these and other templates here

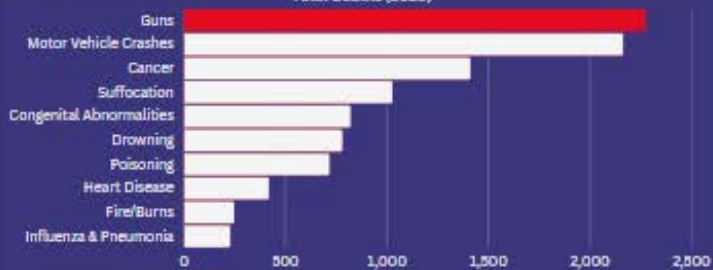
The Impact of Gun Violence on Children

Each year, thousands of children are wounded or killed by gunfire, and millions are exposed to gun violence

(<https://everytownresearch.org/issue/child-teen-safety/>)

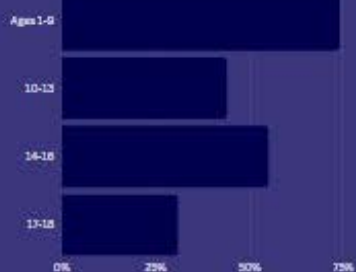
GUNS ARE THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18

Total Deaths (2020)



THE PROBLEM IS GETTING WORSE

Increase in gun deaths by age group, 2019-21



Among similarly large and wealthy nations, the United States accounted for 46% of the child population, but 97% of all child gun deaths.

Among children who die by gunfire, Black and Hispanic children are more likely to be killed by others, and white children are more likely to kill themselves.

CHILD AND TEEN GUN DEATHS PER YEAR

62% of child and teen gun deaths are homicides



DAILY IMPACTS

Everyday 8 children and teens are killed or injured by guns found in the home



CALIFORNIA

On average, someone is killed with a gun every 3 hours in California

Gun Deaths by intent for CA Children under 18



CHILD AND TEEN GUN SAFETY BY THE NUMBERS

More than 80 percent of child suicides involve a gun that belong to a family member.



4.6M

4.6 million American children live in homes with at least one gun that is loaded and unlocked.

66%

Over the past decade, the firearm suicide rate among children and teens has increased by 66 percent.

17x

Black children and teens are 17 times more likely than white children and teens of the same age to die by gun homicide.

3M

Approximately three million American children witness gun violence every year.

Download and print the full-sized version of this infographic here



SD4GVP SAN DIEGANS FOR GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

WWW.SD4GVP.ORG