Gun Violence and Firearm Injuries in Children and Adolescents: A Focus on the Evidence
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In 1992, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) published its first policy statement related to firearms.1 This statement, updated in 20122 and reaffirmed by the AAP in 2016, recommends steps to reduce the potentially tragic impact that guns can have on children, teens, and families. Sadly, gun violence and unintended firearm-related injuries remain an important cause of preventable morbidity and mortality. In fact, firearm-related deaths are the third leading cause of death in children between the ages of 1 and 17 years in the United States.3

The AAP policy on firearm-related injuries stresses the important role we play in educating parents to ensure firearms are properly secured in homes. It also calls upon all of us to advocate for stronger gun laws (e.g., better background checks, banning of assault weapons) in the states where we live. Despite this statement and the strong advocacy work by the AAP and pediatricians, the death toll from gun violence and unintended firearm injuries to children and adolescents continues to rise. To help develop effective evidence-based solutions to this epidemic, as the editors of Pediatrics, we have decided to open access to our Firearm-Related Injuries and Preventions digital collection located at https://www.aappublications.org/cc/firearms. We believe these compelling articles will help readers understand the urgent need to do whatever we can to protect children and their families at both the local and national level from the morbidity and mortality associated with gun violence and firearm injuries.

References:


- State Gun Laws and Pediatric Firearm-Related Mortality
- Health Systems Have a Role in Preventing Firearm Injury
- Parental Disengagement in Childhood and Adolescent Male Gun Carrying
- Facebook

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