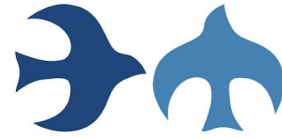


Denver Accord

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO
REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE

Presented by GVPedia



The Denver Accord is a comprehensive gun violence prevention platform, led by GVPedia and supported by more than 40 organizations nationally, designed to guide policymakers' efforts to reduce gun violence in the United States. It combines best practices from across the country with evidence-based research to create a comprehensive and effective set of policies and programs intended to stop the scourge of gun violence.

The Denver Accord includes four guiding principles and nine policy positions that, working in conjunction with each other, will stem the epidemic. This is part four in a series of fact sheets outlining those nine policy positions.

There is no single solution to gun violence in America but it is clear that more guns do not make people safer. It is a multifaceted problem that requires a comprehensive solution.

The Denver Accord Part 4: Safe Storage of Firearms

Safe gun storage reduces access to guns by unauthorized users, including children and thieves. Secured guns reduces suicide and unintentional shootings. Safe storage includes locking guns in a secure place such as a gun safe or using safety devices such as trigger or cable locks. The most secure way to store firearms, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics,¹ is to store them unloaded, locked, and separate from ammunition. ([Giffords Law Center](#))

Children and Safe Gun Storage: Unsafely stored firearms are a significant source of the guns used by children and teenagers to kill themselves or do harm to others, including school shootings.

Child Access Prevention Laws: Enacting a Federal Child Access Prevention (CAP) law with a felony penalty that holds gun owners accountable for safely storing firearms will help keep guns out of children's hands and prevent suicides and unintentional shootings.

Suicide Prevention: Secured firearms reduces access to firearms which are the most lethal means of suicide.

Storage Practices: Storing a gun locked and unloaded while keeping ammunition in a separate locked location is associated with reduction in firearm injuries in homes with children.

Gun Theft and Trafficking: Safe storage laws and mandated reporting requirements for lost and stolen firearms will reduce gun trafficking and make it more difficult for criminals to illegally obtain guns.

Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers: Requiring gun dealers to keep a digitized inventory record and increasing ATF's capacity to conduct regular audits will ensure law enforcement are promptly notified of missing guns.

Led by GVPedia, the Denver Accord is supported by more than 40 gun violence prevention organizations nationwide.
Learn more about the Denver Accord at www.GVPedia.org.

Children and Safe Gun Storage:

Children in the United States are more likely to die from gun suicides and unintentional shootings than children in other high-income countries. A [2011 study](#)² found that US children between five and fourteen years of age were eight times more likely to die from firearm suicide and ten times more likely to die from unintentional firearm injuries than children in other high-income countries. Reducing child access to firearms with safe storage policies such as a Federal Child Access Prevention (CAP) law with a felony penalty could prevent many of these tragedies.

Approximately 4.6 million US children live in homes where at least one firearm is stored loaded and unlocked. A [survey conducted in 2015](#)³ and published in 2018 found that three in ten gun owners in households with children store all guns unloaded and locked, while two in ten store at least one gun loaded and unlocked.

A [2018 study](#)⁴ of parents who own guns found that only one in three households safely store all firearms, regardless of whether a child in the home has a history of depression, ADHD, or other mental health conditions.

Four-fifths of [adolescent gun suicides](#)⁵ take place in the young person's home.

In a study of suicides among youth (under 21 years of age) in California, authors found that 65% happened in the decedent's home, and about 57% of the firearms used were owned by a family member. In 17% of the cases, the firearm used to belonged to the victim.⁶

A [2019 study](#)⁷ found that 30% of children in Washington State lived in firearm-owning households, an estimated 55% of whom lived with an unsafely stored firearm. Firearms were 20% more likely to be stored unsafely in homes with an adult who misuses alcohol.

School Shooters:

According to a [2004 study](#)⁸ by the US Secret Service and Department of Education, 68% of school shooters acquire the gun used in their attacks from their own home or the home of a relative.

A [Washington Post](#)⁹ investigation found that 80% of school shooting perpetrators between 1999 and 2018 obtained the gun from their own home or the home of a friend or relative. In the time period, there were 145 school shootings. Four adults have been convicted of failing to safely secure the guns used in a school shooting attack.

Child Access Prevention Laws:

Strong CAP laws are associated with a significant reduction in [pediatric firearm injuries](#)¹⁰, including self-inflicted and unintentional shootings. Weak CAP laws that only impose liability for reckless endangerment when a child uses an unsecured firearm are associated with an increase in risk of hospitalization for pediatric firearm injuries⁹.

Suicide Prevention:

Safe storage of firearms prevents firearm suicides in men and women, especially among young people. A [2010 study](#)¹¹ of the effects of the 1992 Canadian Firearms Act, which required safe storage of firearms, found decreases in firearm suicide rates among men and women, with the greatest reductions for the under-25 age group.

A [2004 study](#)¹² found that firearm owners who kept their firearms locked or unloaded were at least 60% less likely to die from gun suicide than those who store their firearms unlocked and/or loaded.

A [2015 study](#)¹³ found that laws requiring handguns to be locked when not in use are associated with a lower suicide rate.

Storage Practices:

According to a [2005 study](#)¹⁴ of homes with children and teenagers, keeping a gun locked and unloaded while storing ammunition in a separate locked location is associated with reduction in firearm injuries.

According to a [2018 survey](#)¹⁵, 46% of gun owners safely store all of their guns. Households with a child and handguns but not long guns were more likely to report safely storing firearms. Gun owners said the most effective messengers for promoting safe storage were law enforcement, sportsmen groups, active-duty military, and the NRA.

A [2018 evaluation](#)¹⁶ of an intervention that included a free trigger lock or firearm lock box locking device improved safe firearm storage practices among participants.

A [2019 study](#)¹⁷ found that a hypothetical safe storage intervention with a straightforward message telling parents to lock all guns in their home could prevent between 6% and 32% of youth firearm deaths, depending on the intervention's success in changing parental behavior. It is worth noting that safe storage initiatives and CAP laws must be properly implemented and evenly enforced to achieve maximum violence reduction benefits.

Gun owners are less likely to store firearms unsafely (loaded and unlocked) when they own more than one firearm, have a handgun, keep them primarily for protection, or carry a loaded gun. A [2019 survey](#)¹⁸ of gun owners in *Injury Prevention* found that firearms training did not impact safe storage practices.

Access to firearms by older adults with cognitive impairment such as dementia poses additional dangers. A [2019 survey](#)¹⁹ of adults aged 65 and older found that 32.5% of firearm-owning households stored all firearms locked and unloaded while 23.5% stored at least one firearm unlocked and loaded. Respondents who did not store firearms safely were more likely to be a veteran, male, and live in a rural area. Households with an older person exhibiting risk factors for suicide and memory loss were just as likely to own firearms or safely store firearms.

Thirty-one percent of unintentional gun deaths in 1988 and 1989 could have been prevented with a safety lock or loading indicator device according to a 1991 study by the [U.S. General Accounting Office](#)²⁰.

Gun Theft and Trafficking:

An estimated 250,000 [gun theft](#)²¹ incidents occur every year, with approximately 380,000 guns stolen annually. Two-thirds of gun thefts occur in the South, which is the U.S. region with the highest percentage of households with firearms and the least safe storage practices.

In addition to safe storage laws that prevent gun thefts, laws mandating the prompt reporting of lost and stolen firearms may help law enforcement investigate and stop gun traffickers before the stolen firearms are used in a violent crime.²¹

Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers (FFLs):

Safe storage practices are important not only for individual gun owners but also for commercial firearm sellers, all of whom are federally licensed firearms dealers (FFLs).

According to [the ATF](#)²², the number of firearms stolen from gun stores each year is on the rise. Between 2012 and 2016, burglaries of Federal Firearm Licenses (FFLs) rose by 48% and FFL robberies have increased by 175%.

Inspections of licensed gun dealers and inventory audits are an important way the ATF ensures compliance with federal laws. However, the ATF is only able to inspect FFLs about once [every five years](#)²³.

The gun lobby successfully lobbied for a provision in the 2004 Tiahrt Amendment to prohibit the ATF from requiring FFLs to conduct annual inventory audits. A requirement to keep a digitized inventory record and increase ATF's capacity to conduct regular audits of FFLs will ensure law enforcement is promptly notified of missing guns.

The [International Association of Chiefs of Police](#)²⁴ supports repealing the Tiahrt Amendment, prosecuting those who fail to safely store firearms, and mandating reporting of lost and stolen guns.

Both [ATF](#)²⁵ and the [National Shooting Sports Foundation](#)²⁶ recommend FFLs reduce the risk of stolen guns by [storing guns securely](#)²⁷, installing security cameras and alarms, and conducting regular inventory auditing. Under current federal law, ATF does not have the authority to require FFLs to upgrade security measures.

[Federal Laws Regarding Safe Storage of Firearms \(Giffords Law Center\)](#)²⁸:

In October 2005, as part of the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, Congress passed and the President signed into law legislation making it unlawful for any licensed importer, manufacturer or dealer to sell or transfer any handgun unless the transferee is provided with a secure gun storage or safety device. The law includes various exceptions, including transfers to other federal firearms licensees, law enforcement officers, and federal, state or local agencies. The legislation does not apply to transfers by private sellers, and does not require that transferees use the device.

Conclusions:

- Unsafely stored firearms are a major source of weapons used by children and teenagers to commit violence against themselves and others.
 - Storing a gun locked and unloaded while keeping ammunition in a separate locked location is associated with reduction in firearm injuries in homes with children.
 - Enacting a Federal Child Access Prevention (CAP) law with a felony penalty that holds gun owners accountable for safely storing firearms will help keep guns out of children's hands and prevent suicides and unintentional shootings.
 - Safe storage laws and mandated reporting requirements for lost and stolen firearms will reduce gun trafficking and make it more difficult for criminals to illegally obtain guns.
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Recommended Reading

[Asking Saves Kids \(ASK\)](#)

[The Risk of Unsecured Guns in Oregon](#)

[Missing Pieces: Gun theft from legal owners is on the rise, quietly fueling violent crime across America](#)



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