

EFFECTIVE, LIFESAVING LAWS PREVENT TRAGEDY

In 2015 alone, America lost nearly 3,000 children and teenagers to gun violence. More than 1,000 of these deaths were either suicides or accidental shootings.

Child access prevention (CAP) laws are a proven tool for reducing the accidental shootings and suicides that claim far too many young lives.

THE IMPACT OF CAP LAWS

CAP laws have been shown to be effective at reducing youth suicides and unintentional shootings:

- One study of twelve states where CAP laws had been in effect for at least one year found that **unintentional firearm deaths fell by 23%** among children under 15 years of age.
- Researchers recently found that CAP laws were associated with an **8.3% decrease in suicides** among children ages 14 to 17.
- A 2005 study concluded that safe storage practices serve as a protective measure to **reduce youth suicide and unintentional injury** in homes with children and teenagers.

NO FEDERAL CAP LAWS

There are no CAP laws at the federal level, and federal law does not generally require gun owners to safely store their guns. Federal law does, however, make 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." Federal law also immunizes the lawful owner of a handgun who uses a secure gun storage or safety device from certain civil actions based on the criminal or unlawful misuse of the handgun by a third party.

State CAP laws take a variety of forms:

- **The strongest CAP laws impose criminal liability when a minor gains access to a negligently stored firearm.**
- **The weakest CAP laws merely prohibit certain persons, such as parents or guardians, from directly providing a firearm to a minor.**
- There is a wide range of laws that fall somewhere between these extremes, including laws that impose criminal liability for negligently stored firearms, but only where the child uses the firearm and causes death or serious injury.
- Despite the strong evidence of the protective effect of CAP laws, **there are still 23 states that do not have any such laws on the books.**

For more details and underlying research, visit smartgunlaws.org/child-access

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160+

new smart gun laws have been enacted in 43 states and DC since the tragedy at Sandy Hook.

114,000

Americans are shot each year—over one million in the past decade.

ABOUT US

Led by former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and Navy combat veteran and retired NASA astronaut Captain Mark Kelly, Americans for Responsible Solutions and the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence are committed to advancing commonsense change that makes communities safer from gun violence. Operating out of offices in Washington DC, San Francisco, and New York, our staff partners with lawmakers and advocates to craft and enact the smart gun laws that save lives. We provide expertise in firearms litigation, lead grassroots coalitions, and educate the public on the proven solutions to America's gun violence epidemic.

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