

Guns in our community

Storing guns locked and unloaded, with ammunition locked separately, can reduce the risk of injuries and deaths involving children and teens.

Did you know...?

- In the United States, **33,636 people died in 2013** as a result of guns. 63% of these deaths were suicides and 35% were homicides.
- In Washington State, **108 children (age 17 or younger) died as a result of guns between 2010 and 2014**. During this period, 158 children were hospitalized. In King County, **23 children died as a result of guns between 2010 and 2014**. 42 children were hospitalized in King County during this period.
- In 2013, an estimated **64,000 adults in King County reported keeping a gun loaded and unlocked**.
[CDC WISQARS \(Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System\)](#), Accessed Oct. 2015

Children, youth and guns

Guns and our schools:

- During the 2013-2014 school year, the WA State Superintendent of Public Instruction reported 91 incidents involving a gun on school premises, transportation systems, or school facilities.
[WA Superintendent of Public Instruction, Weapons in Schools Ten Year Trend Report](#)
- In 2014, over 10% of 8th grade students, almost 20% of 10th grade students and over 25% of 12th grade students in King County reported that they would not be caught if they carried a handgun without parental permission.
[WA State Healthy Youth Survey, 2014](#)
- In 2013, 6% of Seattle youth in grades 9-12 reported having carried a gun on at least 1 day during the last 30 days.
[CDC Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System \(YRBS\), Youth Online: High School YRBS](#)

Guns in our homes:

- In 2013, approximately 24% of King County adults (371,000 people) reported firearms present in or around their homes. Among these adults, an estimated 33% (123,000 people) stored firearms loaded. Of those who kept their guns loaded, 52% (64,000 people) stored them loaded and unlocked.
[WA State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2013](#)
- Parent perceptions of children's behavior with firearms do not predict actual behavior. One study revealed that boys estimated to have "low interest" in playing with a real handgun were as likely to play with or pull the trigger as children perceived to have "moderate to high interest."¹ Another study revealed that parents living in homes with guns who reported their children had never handled a gun in their homes were contradicted by their child's self-report.²
[American Academy of Pediatrics 2001; Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2006](#)

Gun suicides

- Firearms are the primary method of suicide in Washington State.
[WA State Department of Health, Fatal Injury Data Tables, November 2014](#)
- From 2009 to 2013, 139 youth (age 17 or younger) died by suicide in Washington; 49 of these youth (35%) died from firearms. During this same period, 37 youth died by suicide in King County; 9 youth (24%) used firearms.
[WA State Department of Health, Fatal Injury Data Tables, October 2015](#)
- A study of adolescent suicides found that over half were carried out with guns from the adolescent's home. More than 75% of the firearms used in suicide attempts and unintentional injuries were stored in the residence of the victim, a relative, or friend.³
[Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 1999](#)

Gun violence, homicides and crime

- In Washington State, a child or teen is killed by gunfire every 8 days.
Children's Defense Fund, Children in Washington Factsheet, March 2013
- In 2014, 56% of homicides in Washington State were committed with guns.
Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs, Crime in WA, 2014 Annual Report
- From 2009 to 2013, 62 homicides occurred among youth (ages 5-17) in Washington; 38 (61%) of these youth died as a result of guns.
WA State Department of Health, Fatal Injury Data Tables, October 2015
- During the same period, 93 youth (ages 5-17) were hospitalized for gun assault injuries in Washington; King County youth accounted for 32% of these nonfatal injury hospitalizations (30 youth).
WA State Department of Health, Nonfatal Injury Data Tables, November 2014
- According to the WA Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, the total value of guns reported stolen in Washington State in 2013 was \$3,990,218.

Guns in Washington State and King County

- An estimated 36% of Washington adults (1,889,000 people) 18 years and older reported having a gun in or around their home in 2013. More than half of these adults (51% or 971,000 people) reported having an unlocked firearm.
WA State Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance, System, 2013
- 1,472 Washington State residents were hospitalized for nonfatal gun injuries (294/year), including 277 children ages 19 and younger (55/year).
WA State Department of Health, Nonfatal Injury Data Tables, 2009-2013, October 2015
- 3,038 Washington State residents died from a gun injury (607/year), including 191 children ages 19 and younger (38/year).
WA State Department of Health, Fatal Injury Data Tables, 2009-2013, October 2015
- 436 King County residents were hospitalized for nonfatal gun injuries (87/year), including 82 children ages 19 and younger (16/year).
WA State Department of Health, Nonfatal Injury Data Tables, 2009-2013, October 2015
- 642 King County residents died from a gun injury (128/year), including 35 children ages 19 and younger (7/year).
WA State Department of Health, Fatal Injury Data Tables, 2009-2013, October 2015

Data Methods

National firearm nonfatal injury data were obtained from CDC WISQARS™ (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System). Washington State data on firearms comes from the Washington State Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Data on high school student access to guns comes from the Washington State Healthy Youth Survey for 2014.

For more information, please contact: Whitney Taylor at 206-263-8730. For electronic fact sheet, please visit:
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/injury/lokutup/FirearmFacts.aspx>.

References

¹ Jackman GA, Farah MM, Kellermann AL, Simon HK. Seeing is Believing: What do Boys Do When They Find a Real Gun? *Pediatrics*. 2001; 107(6): 1247-1250; DOI: 10.1542/peds.107.6.1247. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/107/6/1247>

² Baxley F, Miller M. Parental Misperceptions About Children and Firearms. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*. 2006;160(5):542-547. doi:10.1001/archpedi.160.5.542. <http://archpedi.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=204929>

³ Grossman DC, Reay DT, Baker SA. Self-inflicted and Unintentional Firearm Injuries Among Children and Adolescents: The Source of the Firearm. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*. 1999;153(8):875-878. doi:10.1001/archpedi.153.8.875. <http://archpedi.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=347593>