

# How To Talk About Safe Firearm Storage

As a school resource officer, you can play a key role in spreading the word to parents and others in your community on the importance of properly securing their firearms.



Help us spread the word about the urgent need to secure all firearms effectively.

Here are a few ways you can help:

- **Learn the Facts.** The talking points on the back of this flyer can help direct your conversations about safe firearm storage.
- **Distribute Information.** Distribute our parent flyer at sporting events and other public activities.
- **Host a Presentation.** We offer everything you need to host a presentation on safe firearm storage. Visit [ncsafe.org/resources](https://ncsafe.org/resources) to view and download our presentation materials.
- **Engage Your Administration.** Talk with school leadership about how they can spread the word – whether it’s through school newsletters, mailings, or social media.

Nearly 30% of North Carolina high school students reported it would take them less than an hour to get, and be ready to fire, a loaded gun without a parent or other adult’s permission; for white males, it was 40%.<sup>1</sup>

1. [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CAHoekiVazRqCL6UC-uofT8uPW\\_afKan/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CAHoekiVazRqCL6UC-uofT8uPW_afKan/view) (pages 220–221)



To access all NC S.A.F.E. resources, scan the QR code or visit

[ncsafe.org/resources](https://ncsafe.org/resources)

# Talking Points About Safe Firearm Storage

Use the talking points below to inform your conversations about safe firearm storage.

## There is an urgent need for gun owners in North Carolina to secure their firearms effectively.

- Too many guns are falling into the wrong hands. Children are gaining access to firearms in their homes, and gun theft – especially from cars – is on the rise throughout North Carolina.
- Firearms are now the leading cause of injury-related death for children and youth in North Carolina.<sup>2</sup>

## There are many ways to effectively secure your firearms.

- Options to secure your firearm include gun safes, lockboxes, gun cases, cable locks, and trigger locks. Visit [ncsafe.org](https://ncsafe.org) to download a flyer that describes the various firearm storage options.
- After finding the best lock option for your firearm, review the following tips:
  - If your lock uses a combination or code, choose one that can't be easily guessed by children or unauthorized users.
  - If your lock requires a key, make sure you hide the key someplace it can't easily be found.
  - Lock your firearm regardless of whether it's in your home or in your vehicle.
  - Consider storing ammunition separately.

## Safe firearm storage practices can help prevent unauthorized access to firearms.

- Unsafe storage is very common among gun owners in North Carolina. 42% of North Carolina adults keep a firearm in or around the home. Of those, 45% keep a firearm loaded, and over half of those keeping a firearm loaded also keep it unlocked.<sup>3</sup>
- Safe storage can prevent suicide and school shootings.
  - A 2019 study in JAMA Pediatrics estimated that up to 32% of youth firearm deaths by suicide and unintentional firearm injury could be prevented through safe storage of firearms in homes with youths.<sup>4</sup>
  - An estimated 82% of adolescent firearm suicides involve a gun belonging to a family member.<sup>5</sup>
  - 80% of school shooters under 18 access a firearm from their own home or that of a relative or friend.<sup>5</sup>
- Safe firearm storage is especially important in vehicles, which are hot spots for gun theft.
  - An estimated 250,000 gun theft incidents occur each year, resulting in about 380,000 guns stolen annually.<sup>5</sup>
  - If you keep a firearm in your car, it is important to secure it properly **and** lock your car.

2. <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/public-health-approaches-reduce-violence-and-firearm-misuse-leading-injury-and-death/open>

3. <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/brfss/2021/nc/nccr/topics.htm#fr>

4. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2733158>

5. <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/departments/health-policy-and-management/research-and-practice/center-for-gun-violence-solutions/solutions/safe-and-secure-gun-storage>



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