

Joining an Existing Event To Share Information About Safe Firearm Storage

NC S.A.F.E.



ncsafe.org

NC S.A.F.E.
Secure All Firearms Effectively

Toolkit Instructions:

Joining an Existing Event To Share Information About Safe Firearm Storage

Thank you for partnering with NC S.A.F.E. to spread messages about safe firearm storage with your community. By joining an event to share information on this topic, you are playing a significant role in establishing safer communities across North Carolina. We appreciate your efforts to engage the community on this important matter.

This toolkit is designed to help you spread awareness about safe firearm storage at events in your community. Reaching audiences at events they are already attending is a great way to engage them on the topic of safe firearm storage. We've included:

- Ideas on types of events to join.
- Recommendations for things to consider as you plan your participation.
- Ideas for how to engage event attendees.
- A list of handouts and resources you can distribute at the event.
- Talking points to guide conversations at the event.
- Links to PowerPoint presentations of varying lengths (useful if you have the opportunity to give a presentation at the event).

Event Preparation

What types of events should I/my organization join?

Consider promoting safe firearm storage at the following types of events:

- Local fairs and community events.
- Farmers markets.
- Sporting events.
- Gun shows or exhibitions.
- Gun-related classes or safety training sessions.
- City council or county commissioners meetings.
- PTA meetings.
- Concerts.
- Parades or festivals.
- Business meetings or conferences.
- Community meetings about violence prevention or other issues facing your community.

What are some things to consider as I plan my participation in this event?

- **Main Audience:** Gun owners are the main audience for this campaign. Think about joining events where this audience is present and may be open to conversations about safe firearm storage. Alternatively, think about events attended by other community leaders who could amplify messages about safe storage.
- **Materials Needed:** Gather any materials you need for your table or booth ahead of time. Possible materials include a foldable table, tablecloth, tent, chairs, and any flyers or giveaways you plan to distribute.
- **Preparing Volunteers:** If volunteers will be staffing a booth or table, make sure they are familiar with this toolkit and its talking points to speak about safe firearm storage and answer questions from attendees.
- **Opportunities To Share Information:** Consider the best way to share firearm storage information for the type of event and your level of involvement. Some

events involve setting up a table or booth, while others offer opportunities to give a presentation, host a breakout event, or moderate a conversation on the topic.

- **Event Format:** Consider the format of the event — including whether it's in person or virtual, indoor or outdoor, and loosely or tightly scheduled. This will help you plan how you engage your audience.

What are some ideas for engaging attendees at the event?

Here are some ways to engage attendees and draw them to your area:

- Bring items to hand out (see following section for ideas on what to hand out).
- Raffle off firearm safety equipment, gun locks, or other relevant giveaways.
- Hold games or quizzes that emphasize safe firearm storage practices.
- Play music to draw attention to your table or booth.
- If the event will draw families, offer age-appropriate activities or giveaways for children (e.g. bubbles, stickers, candy).
- Encourage your staff or volunteers to engage with attendees and start discussions about safe firearm storage.
- Set up a photo booth or social media station for taking and sharing photos with safety messages or hashtags.
- For any virtual events, use polls to engage audiences.

Supporting Materials for the Event

Depending on the format of your event, the following materials may be helpful to use during your event.

What should I hand out at the event?

The NC S.A.F.E. website has several campaign flyers that you can download, print, and hand out at your event. These flyers are a great way to share information about safe firearm storage. Visit ncsafe.org/resources to view the various flyer options, and

see our specific suggestions below. You can also download the [NC S.A.F.E. logo](#) if you would like to include it on any branded materials purchased by your organization.

Ideas for handouts include:

- [NC S.A.F.E. safe storage options flyer](#).
- [NC S.A.F.E. safe storage checklist](#).
- [NC S.A.F.E. parent flyer](#).
- Food and beverage options (cold bottled water is an inexpensive and effective way to draw attendees during the warmer months).
- Branded promotional giveaways.
- Gun locks (your local police department may offer these for free).
- Fun items for kids, such as bubbles, stickers, or candy. (While you may put the NC S.A.F.E. logo on these items, we advise against putting images of any type of firearm on materials designed for children.)

What talking points should I use when speaking about safe firearm storage?

Review the following talking points to better understand the topic and how to communicate with audiences across North Carolina. Familiarity with these talking points will help you provide accurate, helpful information and answer any questions you get.

Talking Point 1: 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.¹
- Child deaths in North Carolina due to firearm injury skyrocketed in 2020 and 2021. The 2021 rate represents an increase of 231% since 2012.²

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

2. <https://webservices.ncleg.gov/ViewDocSiteFile/74156> (Page 16)

- From 2012 to 2021, over 600 children died from firearm-related injuries.³
- In 2021, firearms were the lethal means used in most youth suicides and homicides.⁴
- In data obtained from the Durham Police Department, there were 331 gun thefts in the city from January 1 to November 26, 2022. In 56% of those cases, guns were stolen from cars. And in 62% of gun thefts from cars, the car was unlocked, meaning these are easily preventable crimes.⁵

Talking Point 2: There are many ways to effectively secure your firearms.

- Options to secure your firearm include cable locks, trigger locks, gun safes, lockboxes, and gun cases. Visit ncsafe.org to download a flyer that describes the various firearm storage options.
- Different types of locks provide different benefits. Whether you value low cost, mobility, or ease of use, there is a locking mechanism that's right for you.
- NC S.A.F.E. offers a checklist to guide you through the necessary steps so you can effectively secure your firearms.
- 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.
- Many organizations agree on what constitutes safe storage. Everytown for Gun Safety Action Fund (undated), the American Academy of Pediatrics (Schaechter, 2021), the National Shooting Sports Foundation (as part of its Project ChildSafe program) (NSSF, 2016), and the U.S. Concealed Carry Association (Alcazar, 2021) recommend that firearms be stored locked, unloaded, and separately from ammunition, which should also be stored locked.⁶
- There are other ways to safely secure unwanted firearms. To find a location near you where you can temporarily store your unwanted firearms, consult the map at ncsafe.org/safestorage.

3. <https://webservices.ncleg.gov/ViewDocSiteFile/74156> (Page 16)

4. <https://webservices.ncleg.gov/ViewDocSiteFile/75628> (Page 16)

5. <https://www.wral.com/stolen-guns-from-cars-put-further-strain-on-durham-police/20653198/>

6. <https://www.rand.org/research/gun-policy/analysis/essays/personal-firearm-storage.html>

Talking Point 3: Safe firearm storage practices can help prevent unauthorized access to firearms.

- Unsafe storage is very common among gun owners in North Carolina.
 - According to a 2021 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey, 42% of North Carolina adults have a firearm in or around the home, and over half of firearms that are stored loaded are also unlocked.⁷
 - According to a 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System survey, 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%.⁸
- 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.⁹
 - An estimated 82% of adolescent firearm suicides involve a gun belonging to a family member.¹⁰
 - Eighty percent of school shooters under 18 access a firearm from their own home or that of a relative or friend.¹¹
- In April 2021, approximately 30 million children lived in households with firearms, 7 million more than in 2015.¹²
- 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.¹³
 - If you keep a firearm in your car, it is important to secure it properly **and** lock your car.

7. <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/brfss/2021/nc/nccr/firearm5.html>

8. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CAHoekiVazRqCL6UC-uofT8uPW_afKan/view (pages 220-221)

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

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

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

12. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2789269>

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

What materials can I use if I want to host a presentation as part of my event?

The following PowerPoint files are designed for two different presentation lengths – brief (10 minutes or less) and full-length (15 minutes or more). You can download and customize these files to use during your presentation in case it needs to be slightly shorter or longer than the times provided. These can be saved as a PowerPoint file or PDF, depending on your presentation needs. If you are unsure about the technology available where you are planning to present, we recommend printing out the slides for attendees so they can follow along.

- [Brief presentation](#) (10 minutes or less)
- [Full-length presentation](#) (15 minutes or more)

The notes section in the PowerPoint files includes high-level talking points you can use to guide your presentation. Add anything else you think is relevant from the more in-depth talking points outlined in this toolkit.

For more information on how to host an in-person or virtual presentation about safe firearm storage, visit ncsafe.org/resources to download a toolkit on that topic.

Thank You!

Thank you for volunteering your time to share messages about safe firearm storage with members of your community. By spreading knowledge and advocating for responsible and effective firearm storage, you are helping us take steps toward building safer communities.