

Start the conversation.



Talking with other parents about how they store their firearms could be the difference between a fun afternoon and a tragic accident.

Here are some tips for ensuring safe gatherings with kids at your home and elsewhere:

At Home

- ✓ **Educate your children.** Make sure your child knows what to do if they find a gun.
1. Don't touch. 2. Exit the room. 3. Tell an adult.
- ✓ **If you're a gun owner, make sure your firearms are properly locked up** to keep your kids and others safe while they're in your home. Don't forget to check your car, too.

With Others

- ✓ **Start the conversation with other parents.** Make asking about gun storage a priority. Never assume you know someone's stance on safe firearm storage. Instead, ask the question.
- ✓ **Extend the first invitation.** When you invite someone's child to your home, describe the safety measures you use – including safe firearm storage if you own a gun. This will reassure other parents and make it easier for you to ask safety questions in the future.
- ✓ **Listen for red flags.** Consider whether the other parent's home sounds like a safe environment for your child. One red flag is when a parent says that their guns are "hidden" or "out of reach." Kids can find anything adults try to hide.

Spread the word.

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

Conversation Starters

Ready to have the conversation but don't know where to begin? The following tips and prompts can help you start a conversation with other parents about safe firearm storage.

Refer to a current event or past experience.

"Hey! So excited for our kids to finally get together this weekend. But ... did you see what happened a couple of weeks ago in [XX]? Really sad, so I have to ask before the kids get together: Do you all have any guns in your house or cars? If so, are they locked? I thought it was worth checking before our kids get together to be sure everyone is safe. I appreciate it!"

Include safe firearm storage among other safety questions.

"Hi! Looking forward to tomorrow. I wanted to let you know that Emmy has a peanut allergy, so I'll send a snack for her. Also, I wanted to check in on two other things – internet safety and gun storage. We don't allow Emmy unsupervised access to the internet. Also, we want to make sure any guns in the home are securely locked so the kids can't get to them. Just want to make sure we are on the same page on those things before she comes over. Thanks!"

Share resources and discuss safe firearm storage in relevant parent and community groups.

"Hey! I know at last week's PTA meeting we discussed safe firearm storage. It made me think about asking the parents of our kids' friends ... Do you have any guns in your house, and are they all locked up to make sure the kids can't get at them? I'm thinking, as the kids get older, this is just an important thing to check before kids get together, especially as they play more independently. Thanks!"

Make clear that the priority is child safety and leave out any personal opinions on gun ownership.

"Hi! I know we all want our kids to stay safe. So now that the kids are playing more on their own, I'm starting to ask the families of kids that our kids play with: Do you have any guns in your house, and if so, are they locked so the kids can't get to them? This has been on my mind recently. We're asking everyone the same thing just to make sure we're on the same page. Thanks!"



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