



Philadelphia Collaborative
Violence Prevention Center

www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

Safe Neighborhoods, Safe Lives: Things that Prevent or Reduce the Impact of Violence in the Community

Expert's Tips for Preventing Violence from
the Philadelphia Collaborative Violence Prevention Center
For more information, please visit www.phillyviolenceprevention.org

Promoting Community Safety (Tips 6-10)

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6. Keep guns out of the hands of youth.

It is safer for them and for the community. Most youth in trouble got their first guns from family or friends. Talk to other adults and agree that guns should never be given to youth.

Importance: Adolescents living in urban areas, males in particular, are most at risk of gun possession. Many youths say that they carry guns for self-protection, but this means that conflicts that could be settled by more peaceful means often escalate to shooting incidents. Other frequently cited reasons for carrying guns include involvement in delinquent activities, such as drug dealing, and aggressive behavior. The bottom line is that having a gun may actually make a person less safe.



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How it helps: Getting guns out of the hands of youth will help to curb firearm access for youth and decrease the youth and community's exposure to fear and intimidation from guns. Gun carrying can lead to a false sense of security and it can lead to serious consequences other than physical injury.

References:

- Ash, P., Kellerman, A.L., Fuqua-Whitley, D., & Johnson, A. (1996). Gun acquisition and use by juvenile offenders. Journal of the American Medical Association, 275(22), 1754-1758.
- Fullilove, M., Arias, G., Nunez, M., Phillips, E., McFarlane, P., Wallace, R., and Fullilove, R. (2003). 'What did Ian tell God?: School Violence in East New York.' In M.H. Moore, C.V. Petrie, A.A. Braga, & B.L. McLaughlin (Eds) Deadly Lessons: Understanding Lethal School Violence, (pp. 198-246). Washington, D.C.: National Research Council.
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For more info:

Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE)
<http://www.safeyouth.gov/Resources/Impact/Pages/ExtentProblem.aspx>

Promising Strategies to Reduce Gun Violence (OJJDP)
http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/gun_violence/contents.html

7. Talk to your kids about guns. Don't let them carry a gun.

Appearing more dangerous to others actually increases a child's chance of being severely hurt or killed. Work together to make plans to be safer, to not get caught up in trouble, and how to get out of risky situations.



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Importance: Firearm-related injuries and deaths have become an increasing problem among young adults. While many say that they carry a gun for safety purposes, some research suggests that possession of a gun may increase, rather than decrease, the risk of becoming a victim of violence.

How it helps: Fostering public awareness about the risks of carrying guns, gives community leaders an opportunity to create safer alternatives and solutions. When parents talk to youth about staying away from guns, it can have an impact on decreasing accidental deaths by handguns.

References:

- Kellerman, A. (1998). Injuries and Death Due to Firearms in the Home. Journal of Trauma-Injury Infection & Critical Care. 45:263-267,
Marsh, N. (2007). Taming the Tools of Violence. Journal of Public Health Policy. 28: 401-409.
Powell, E., et al. (1996). Firearm Violence Among Youth: Public Health Strategies for Prevention. Ann Emerg Med. 28: 204-12.

For more info:

KidsHealth
<http://kidshealth.org/>

Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE)
<http://www.safeyouth.gov/Resources/Impact/Pages/ExtentProblem.aspx>

8. Don't buy, hold, or carry guns for friends.

Not only does this help violent criminals, it's also dangerous and a crime with hard time.

Importance: Guns are dangerous tools that can pose considerable risk to community safety, especially in the hands of youth. However, according to one study, the majority of youth acquire their first gun from family or friends.

How it helps: A large majority of guns used in criminal activities have been bought or given to dangerous and irresponsible individuals by friends. By not buying, holding, or carrying guns for friends, you can help reduce the potential for guns to end up in the hands of criminals.



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- Kellerman, A. (1998). Injuries and Death Due to Firearms in the Home. Journal of Trauma-Injury Infection & Critical Care. 45:263-267,
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- Webster, D. (2002). How Delinquent Youth Acquire Guns: Initial Versus Most Recent Gun Acquisitions. Journal of Urban Health. 79(1): 60-69.

For more info:

KidsHealth

<http://kidshealth.org/>

Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE)

<http://www.safeyouth.gov/Resources/Impact/Pages/ExtentProblem.aspx>

9. Take guns out of your house, and if you feel you must keep a gun, keep it locked and unloaded.

Guns are magnets for children, so hiding or forbidding them from touching them doesn't work. Guns are also magnets for thieves. Work with neighbors to ask everyone to store them safely.

Importance: Some guns look identical to toys. Because children are inquisitive, they could discover a gun in the home that was thought to be properly hidden. Guns are also a target for theft by criminals. One study acknowledges that gun theft is common, with many criminals admitting that they had stolen the gun that they later used in committing a crime.

How it helps: Taking the time to safely store your firearms in your house can prevent accidental loss of life. Many of the accidents caused by guns in the home could easily have been prevented by separating the guns from the ammunition as well as locking up the unloaded weapon in a lock box. Using full explanations to



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educate children on the dangers of guns tends to prove more fruitful than simply forbidding them to touch guns.

References:

Beasley, T., et al. (2001). Love Our Kids, Lock Your Guns: A Community-Based Firearm Safety Counseling and Gun Lock Distribution Program. Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine. 155(6): 659-664.

Powell, E., et al. (1996). Firearm Violence Among Youth: Public Health Strategies for Prevention. Ann Emerg Med. 28: 204-12.

For more info:

Coalition to Stop Gun Violence
<http://www.csgv.org/index.php>

KidsHealth
<http://kidshealth.org/>

Striving To Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE)
<http://www.safeyouth.gov/Resources/Impact/Pages/ExtentProblem.aspx>

10. Speak up.

Let police, prosecutors, clerks, and judges know that you are concerned about guns. Show up at sentencing. Let them know that even "small" gun crimes affect your daily life and that you expect them to focus on gun violence and other violent crimes.

Importance: The impact of gun violence reaches far beyond the individuals injured. Not only does gun violence raise healthcare costs to taxpayers, the fear associated with it can empty neighborhoods by causing residents and businesses to flee.

How it helps: Speaking up and letting law enforcement know that stopping gun violence is not someone else's problem can make an impact in pushing intervention and prevention programs to the forefront. The community recognizing the severity of the problem can help aid the proper agencies develop comprehensive strategic plans to reduce gun violence.



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- Sherman, L. (2001). Reducing Gun Violence: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising. Criminology and Criminal Justice. 1(1): 11-25.
- Wray, R., et al. (2004). Preventing Domestic Violence in the African American Community: Assessing the Impact the Impact of a Dramatic Radio Serial. Journal of Health Communication. 9(1): 31-52.
- Wilkinson, D.L. & Fagan, J (2001). What We Know About Gun Use Among Adolescents. Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review. 4(2):109-132.

For more info:

Moms Against Guns

<http://momsagainstguns.org/>

Step Up, Speak Out

<http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/step-up-speak-up-resource-guide-2006-pdf/view>