

## Firearm-related Injury

In Washington State from 2008 to 2012, unintentional firearm incidents killed 39 people, firearms used in suicides killed 2,387 people; and homicide by firearm killed 584 people. Those hospitalized for firearm injuries included 489 people from unintentional incidents, 142 from suicide attempts, and 878 from assault with a firearm. Using a firearm is the most common and lethal means of suicide and homicide. Research shows firearms bought for self-protection are most often used by family members to unintentionally shoot another family member or friend, or for suicide. This information is about firearm safety, not firearm or gun control.

### Key Messages to Help Reduce Risks

- ◆ Firearms include handguns, rifles, and shotguns.
- ◆ In 2010, firearm injuries cost \$174 billion in the U.S., and the taxpayer firearm injury bill alone exceeded \$12 billion. Pacific Institute Research and Evaluation (PIRE) research estimates annual firearm injury costs at an average of \$645 per gun in America.
- ◆ These injuries are preventable, and families can reduce their risk:
  - Take a firearm handling and safety class by a certified firearm instructor.
  - About 90 percent of fatal firearm injuries among children happen in the home.
  - Store firearms safely in the home; this means, when not in use, secure firearms with trigger locks or in a gun safe.
  - Store bullets in a separate, locked place different from the firearms.
  - Remove firearms from the home of a depressed or suicidal person.
  - Teach children to find a responsible adult if they find a firearm.
  - Parents need to ask other parents if they have firearms in their home and how they are stored before their child goes to play in that home. If there is doubt about the safety of someone's home, the first parents should invite the children to play at their home instead.
- ◆ Remember - this is about improving firearm safety to reduce gun-related deaths and injuries, especially among children. This is not about firearm or gun control.

### Information and Resources

- ASK (Asking Saves Kids) Campaign at The Center to Prevent Youth Violence: [www.cpyv.org/programs](http://www.cpyv.org/programs)
- Lok-It-Up campaign for safe storage of firearms: [www.lokitup.org](http://www.lokitup.org)
- Safe Kids Worldwide: [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)
- Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife - Hunter Education Programs [www.wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/huntered/](http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/huntered/)
- WA State Injury & Violence Prevention Guide, January 2013: [Firearms \(PDF\)](#)
- WA State Injury and Violence Prevention Guide: [Suicide \(PDF\)](#)
- WA State Youth Suicide Prevention Program (YSPP): [www.yspp.org](http://www.yspp.org)

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