

# A GUN in the HOME is a RISK to your FAMILY!

–The best way to reduce gun risks is to remove the gun from your home!

## ☑ If you keep a gun, unload it and lock it up!

- Always keep your gun unloaded, locked up and out of the sight and reach of children.
- Lock and put away bullets in a separate location.
- Make sure children cannot get the keys or combination of the locked storage area where your gun is kept.
- Learn about your state laws for safe storage of guns.
- Ask police for help on safe storage procedures and gun locks.
- All gun owners should take gun safety classes on a regular basis.

## ☑ Educate family and neighbors

- Talk to your children and family members about the dangers of guns outside of the home in places where they may visit and play.
- Tell your children to stay away from guns at their friends' homes.
- **ASK** if there is a gun in the home where your children play and visit. If there is a gun, **ASK** how it is stored. Urge anyone who keeps a gun at home to unload it and lock it up.
- Pass along this brochure to anyone who keeps a gun in the home.

## ☑ Protect toddlers and children

- Even well-behaved children are curious by nature and will search within their environments. For all children, *the safest thing is NOT to keep a gun in the home.*
- Let your children know that if they see a gun, they should not touch it and should *immediately* get help from a trusted adult.
- Tell your children that gun violence on TV and in the movies is not real. Warn your children that in real life, people are hurt and killed with guns. It is your responsibility as a parent to monitor and reduce the violence content in TV programming for your children.
- Remember that children learn gradually and often forget and test the rules. It is a good idea to repeat the message to stay away from guns to your children whenever you can.



## ☑ Protect preteens and teenagers

- You can't count on preteens or teens to stay away from guns, so you have to keep guns away from them. Children this age may find and load guns found in the home, and may take them from the house. *Make sure they can't get to any guns in the home.*
- Depressed preteens and teens commit suicide with guns more often than by any other method. Teens may consider suicide if they feel very sad, angry, not taken seriously, ignored, bullied, or unloved. You may not be able to tell if someone is depressed. *Make sure they can't get to any guns in the home.*
  - Talk to your children about resolving conflict without guns or violence.
  - *Think twice before you allow a handgun in your home with children and teens!*

## ☑ Protect veterans/elderly

- Suicide can happen in any family. Coping with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), physical or mental illness, divorce, social isolation and/or loneliness can lead to suicidal thoughts.
- In 2012, the Dept. of Veterans Affairs reported that 18 military veterans die by suicide every day. More veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars have died by their own hand than died from enemy fire. If a gun is not available, suicide attempts are less likely to be fatal and the person can often receive help.
- If there is someone in your home that is suicidal, immediately remove any guns in your home and contact a health professional!
- If there is someone who is violent or uses alcohol or other drugs, remove guns from your home. *A gun in the home increases the risk of suicide and homicide.*

## ☑ Getting rid of a gun in the home

- Contact your local police department and ask how to properly get rid of a gun in the home. They can provide you with information about the laws regarding the transporting and disposing of a gun specific to your state, county and city.