

Gun violence is a public health threat to children. Although mass shootings command our attention, children remain at risk of suicide, homicide, and unintentional injury from guns every day. The American Academy of Pediatrics calls on Congress to enact comprehensive gun violence prevention policies to keep children safe where they live, learn and play.

Gun violence injures and kills children at alarming rates.

- **Every day, 74 children** are injured or killed by guns in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- In 2015, suicide was the second leading cause of death for children aged 10 to 17. For children in this age group, firearms accounted for over 40% of all suicides. Firearms are a highly lethal method of suicide, with a mortality rate around 90 percent.
- Firearm-related deaths are the third leading cause of death overall among US children aged 1 to 17 years, surpassing the number of deaths from pediatric congenital anomalies, heart disease, influenza and/or pneumonia, chronic lower respiratory disease, and cerebrovascular causes.

A public health approach will help save children's lives.

- Federally funded public health research has a proven track record of reducing deaths from child health threats, whether from car accidents, smoking or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. This same approach should be applied to reducing gun violence in our communities.
- Since 1996, the Dickey Amendment has had a chilling effect on public health research on gun violence. The AAP strongly supports bipartisan efforts to reinstate research to keep children safe.
- **We urge Congress to provide CDC with \$50 million for gun violence prevention research.** Such research can help us understand the best ways to protect toddlers from accidentally firing a gun, the long-term health effects of exposure to community violence, and the measures that can best prevent the next school shooting.

Protect Children from Gun Violence:

- Provide \$50 million to the CDC for public health research into firearm safety and injury prevention;
- Support a minimum purchase age of 21 for semiautomatic assault weapons and high-capacity magazines; and
- Support a ban on semiautomatic assault weapons.

Congress can keep children safe from the deadliest weapons.

- Semiautomatic assault weapons are dangerous, military-style guns that are built to kill or maim the maximum number of people in the shortest amount of time. They have been involved in many of the highest-profile mass shootings, including the shootings in Parkland, Las Vegas, Orlando, and Sandy Hook, and do not belong on our streets.
- **AAP supports the bipartisan Age 21 Act (S. 2470)**, sponsored by Senators Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.) and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.). At minimum, we urge Congress to enact this bipartisan bill, which would harmonize the federal minimum purchase age for semiautomatic assault weapons and high-capacity magazines with the current requirement for handguns.
- **Ultimately, the AAP supports the Assault Weapons Ban of 2017 (S. 2095)**, which would restore the assault weapons ban.

For more information, please contact Ami Gadhia at 202.347.8600 or AGadhia@aap.org



AAP Washington Office
601 13th Street NW
Suite 400 North
Washington, DC 20005
202/347-8600