

**TITLE:** Safe Gun Storage: A Survey of Preferences among Parents and Caregivers of Children

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**STUDENT SUBMISSION:** Yes

**TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE:** We believe this abstract will be relevant to many public health professionals but especially policy makers, program managers/developers, clinical staff, and researchers.

**ABSTRACT:** Guns are a leading mechanism of death among children. The American Academy of Pediatrics advises that the safest home is one without a gun; however, surveys suggest that approximately half of homes with children contain guns. This study examines preferences for gun safety devices (GSDs) among pediatric caregivers with guns in their homes. Parents and caregivers are recruited at community events and children's hospitals in Portland, Oregon. Participants (n=89 to date) complete an anonymous, in-person survey assessing preferences for five GSDs (cable lock, life jacket locking device, lockbox with keyed access, quick access electronic lockbox, biometric lockbox). We examined frequencies of participant characteristics and preferences. Participants were primarily women (65%), ages 25-34 years (46%). To date, 63% endorsed currently owning a GSD. Of the options available, 56% preferred the biometric lockbox to other GSDs, yet only 18% reported currently owning one. Many respondents reported that affordability (58%) or having the ability to lock, and quickly unlock, the gun while loaded (66%) was "very important" or "absolutely essential" to their GSD preference. Results suggest majority preference for biometric lockboxes despite few owning them. The provision of preferred GSDs to caregivers may help reduce children's access to guns in the home.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** 1. Describe frequencies and differences in gun safety device preferences among parents/caregivers.

2. Discuss potential public health implications for safely storing guns in homes with children.

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