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

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Agenda

• Review objectives of this project
• Why is this topic important?
• Review the study methodology
• Review study results
• Conclusions
• Next steps
Why this study?

• Information gap
• Inform future Safety Center purchasing practices
• Better understand Portland-metro area gun ownership
• ...what happens when approaching people in the community about this controversial topic?
Big picture –
*Gun Violence as a Public Health Problem*

• Prevalent and preventable

• **Approximately 100,000 Americans are injured or killed by firearms annually**$^{1,2}$

  – **33,636** Americans were killed by firearms (homicide, suicide, or unintentional shootings)$^1$

  – **67,197** Americans were injured$^2$

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Gun Violence & Children

• Gun-related deaths are 3rd leading cause of death overall among US children aged 1-17 years\(^3\)

• Boys, older children, and minorities are disproportionately affected\(^3\)

• Teenagers (15-19 years) have the highest gun injury rates\(^4\)
  
  – Incur gun-related injuries at almost three times the rate of the general population\(^4\)

• Suicide is fourth leading cause of death for children ages 10-14 years and second leading cause of death for youth 15-19 years old\(^4\)
  
  – Suicide attempts with a gun have a 90% case fatality rate, the highest case fatality rate compared with other mechanisms of suicide\(^4\)


Why is this topic important?

- ~1/3 of homes in the U.S. with children have a gun\(^5\)

- Presence of a gun in the home makes unintentional shootings and intentional shootings more likely\(^6\)

- ~50% of homes with children and firearms have unlocked guns\(^6\)

- Safe storage can make a difference in injury and fatality prevention\(^7\)

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Parental Preferences Regarding Safe Gun Storage

• **Study Purpose:** conduct assessment for the Portland-metro area regarding preferences for gun storage devices.
Parental Preferences Regarding Safe Gun Storage

– **Specific aims:**

Among adults who have guns and children present in their homes (or will), our aims are to:
1. Describe current safe gun storage practices.
2. Examine preferences for type of safety devices respondents would feel most comfortable using.
Study Design

- Cross-sectional

- Convenience sample of current/soon-to-be caregivers of children who report owning a firearm (or who will own a firearm in the near future)

- Anonymous 10-15 minute survey with $5 café gift card for participating

- Pilot study goal: n = 100
Recruitment locations

- Doernbecher Children’s Hospital Lobby
- OHSU Farmer’s Market
- BabyFest Northwest Expo (Portland)
- Stroller Run (Oregon Zoo)
- Family Building Blocks (Salem)
The 5 Safety Devices

- Respondents were presented with 5 devices in-person, and in the survey
- Devices selected for the following reasons:
  - Carried by the manufacturer who provides devices to the Safety Center
  - Small enough to store in bulk at the Safety Center
  - Are relatively inexpensive
Our 5 Safety Devices

• Device A: Cable Lock

• Device B: “Life Jacket” Lock

• Device C: Lock Box with Keyed Access

• Device D: Quick Access Electronic Gun Safe

• Device E: Biometric Gun Safe
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Results
Results:
Participant Demographics*

• **Respondents** (n = 147) as of 9/5/18
• **Language spoken at home**: 89% English
• **Child insurance**: 54% private, 18% Medicaid
• **Armed Forces or Law Enforcement**: 25%

*Data as of 9/5/18, survey data collection is ongoing
Results:
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Device Preferences

*"if money wasn’t an issue"

• 54% of respondents reported that the gun safe/lockbox with biometric access was their first choice
  • Of the 54% who selected biometric as their first choice, 90% reported the gun lockbox with electronic keypad access as their 2nd choice
• 20% of respondents reported that the gun lockbox with electronic keypad access was their first choice
Device Preferences
*“if money wasn’t an issue”*

- 7% of respondents reported that the cable lock was their first choice
  - Overall, the cable lock was viewed as the least favorable choice (59%)
Results: Current Gun Ownership
Existing Safety Devices in Respondents' Homes

- Biometric Gun Safe
- Electronic Lock Box with Keypad
- Lock Box Keyed Access
- Life Jacket Lock
- Cable Lock

Percentage of Respondents who Report Already Owning Device
Primary Reason for Gun Ownership

“NOT Personal Protection”
- “Recreation”
- “Target shooting”
- “Family heirloom”
- “Gift”
- “For work”
- “Hunting”

“Personal Protection”
- “Defense”
- “Personal safety”
- “Protecting my family”
- “Protection”
- “Self-defense”
18% handgun

7% Long gun

50% own both
Interest in Owning a Device

Interest in owning device
Not interested
Results: Device Features of Importance
Quick Lock/Unlock

- Not important at all
- Of average importance
- Absolutely Essential

Frequency
Affordability

- Not important at all
- Of average importance
- Absolutely Essential

Frequency

- Not important at all: 0
- Of average importance: 45
- Absolutely Essential: 30
Used for Handguns & Long Guns

- Frequency

- Not important at all
- Of average importance
- Absolutely Essential

OHSU
Conclusions

• Gun-owners receptive to safe gun storage devices
• Personal protection most common primary reason for gun ownership
• Quick access essential
• Ability to lock while loaded important
• Affordability of device important
• Biometric lock box 1st choice, electronic keypad access lockbox 2nd choice
Limitations

• Focused exclusively safety devices for handguns

• Sample may not be representative of the state

• Survey respondents may not be the decision-makers when it comes to gun storage in their homes

• Preference assessment, not an efficacy trial
Next steps

- Continue to collect data (goal n = 1,000)
- Conduct statistical analyses on group differences and economic analyses on price points
- Manuscript
- Create a manual for other pediatric hospitals – repeat this process elsewhere
Huge thanks to Doernbecher’s Tom Sargent Safety Center!

• When you’re in Portland, please visit the Safety Center! You/your child do not need to be an OHSU/Doernbecher patient.

• Services:
  – Nonprofit store with low-cost safety supplies and resources
    • Bike helmets
    • Cabinet locks
    • Window locks
    • Sleep sacks
    • Gun safety devices
    • Etc.
  – Car seat checks
  – Safety tips for parents and children

Doernbecher Children’s
Hospital Lobby
503-418-5666
safety@ohsu.edu
Questions?
Color & Appearance

- Not important at all
- Of average importance
- Absolutely Essential

Frequency
Recommended by Police or Gun Advocacy Orgs

- Not important at all
- Of average importance
- Absolutely Essential