

Creating A Gun Safety Team



IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE



Table of Contents

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE	1
Model	1
Mission statement	1
Vision	1
FIREARM DEATHS	2
North Carolina	2
County Specific Data	2
NATIONAL KEY FACTS	3
MEETING LOGISTICS	4
Stakeholders	4
Community Outreach Opportunities	5
Sample Invitation to Join the Team	6
Sample 1st Meeting Agenda	6
CHECKLIST	7
NEW MEMBER SURVEY	8
RESOURCES	9
NC Safe Storage Law	9
Sample Proclamation	10
Asking Saves Lives Campaign	11
Messaging and Sample Conversation	12
Common Questions or Comments	13
Additional Organizational Links	14

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Statement of Purpose

Gun violence is a leading cause of injury and death in the United States. In 2017, nearly 40,000 people died from gun violence in this country.



The root causes of gun violence are complex and multifactorial. A comprehensive approach with public health being at the forefront is essential to reduce this preventable cause of mortality and morbidity. Public health is defined as the science of protecting the safety and improving the health of communities through education, policy making, and research for disease and injury prevention. By applying this strategy to gun violence, public health is in a position to have a profound impact on violence in our community.

Model

In 1999, the Durham County Board of Health set forth a resolution to address gun violence within their community. Understanding that gun violence is a public health issue, the Durham County Gun Safety Team (DCGST) was established. Over the past 20 years this nonpartisan, apolitical committee has functioned as a multidisciplinary team housed within the Durham County Department of Public Health.

This implementation guideline is based on the experience of the DCGST. By providing an easy to use model, each county can use this guide as a springboard to create their own gun safety team and adapt it to their unique setting.

Mission Statement



Working together to provide a community free of gun violence

Vision



A community where every citizen feels safe from gun violence

NORTH CAROLINA DATA

In 2016, there were 1,378 firearm-related deaths among North Carolina (N.C.) residents, accounting for nearly two-thirds of all violent deaths that year. Specific causes of firearm-related deaths included suicide (57.3%), homicide (39.2%), legal intervention involving discharge of firearm (2.2%), unintentional discharge of firearm (0.8%), and undetermined intent (0.5%).

The most common locations of firearm-related deaths were apartment or home (70.7%)

FIREARMS IN THE HOME

According to the 2011 North Carolina Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 41.6% of North Carolina residents own firearms (2011 was the last year this data was collected). Approximately half of North Carolina residents with a firearm reported that the firearm is unsecured (secured = gun safe, trigger or cable lock), and 62.5% of residents who are parents left their firearms unsecured.

Nationally, approximately one in three handguns is kept loaded and unlocked and most children know where guns are kept by their parents; more than 75 percent of guns used by youth in suicide attempts were kept in the home of the victim, a relative, or a friend.

Nationally and in North Carolina, suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10 and 17. There were over 300 suicide deaths in North Carolina, ages 17 and younger during the ten-year time-period between 2006 and 2015.

ADD YOUR COUNTY SPECIFIC DATA

Some county specific data can be found at the NC Violent Death Reporting System <https://bit.ly/2SVQWzz>. Local coroner office, trauma centers can provide additional statistics. Having county specific data can help direct your team to focus the common causes of gun violence in your community.

Sources: North Carolina Injury and Violence Prevention Branch: <https://bit.ly/2DLn8MA>

North Carolina Behavioral Risk Surveillance

Gun Violence: Facts and Statistics, from the Center for Injury Research and Prevention, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute.

NC data - NC DHHS State Center for Health Statistics, based on 2015 NC Death Certificate data. US data - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, based on 2015 Underlying Cause of Death from CDC WONDER Online Database.

State Center for Health Statistics, NC Department of Health and Human Services 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, North Carolina High School Survey:

<http://www.nchealthyschools.org/docs/data/yrbs/2015/statewide/highschool/trend.pdf>.

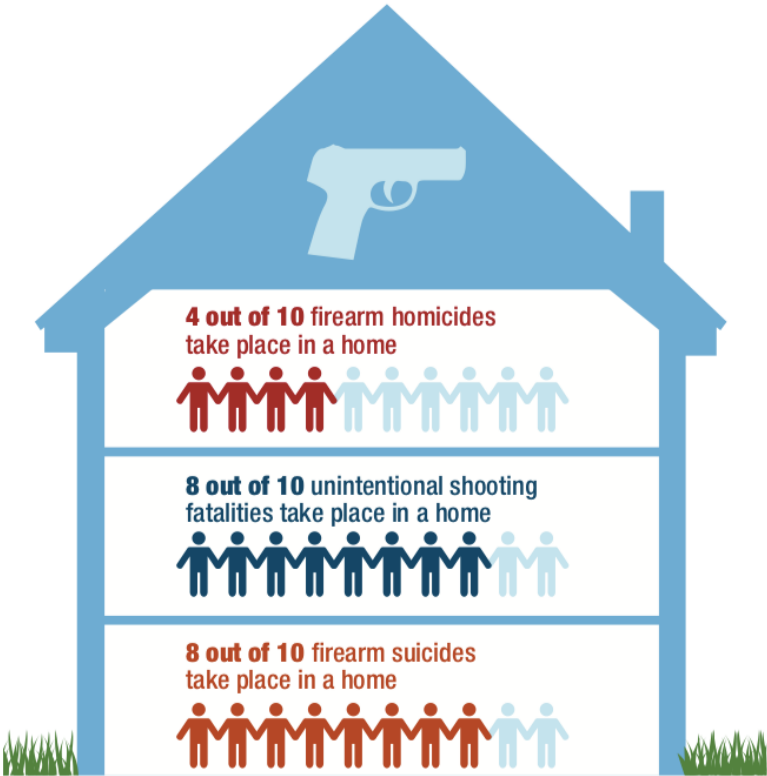
4.6

million children live in a home where a gun is unlocked and loaded

78%

of children (ages 5-14) know where the gun is kept in the home

Firearms are the **2nd** leading cause of death in children 0-19 years of age



82% of firearm suicides among children under 18, used a gun belonging to a family member, usually a parent



Step By Step Planning Guide



Logistics

Meeting Logistics

Below is a list of some things to consider when organizing your gun safety team meetings.

How often will you meet? *Monthly meetings allow for absent members not to fall too far behind*

What is the best time to meet? *Consider key individual work schedules*

Where will you meet? *Consider travel time and functionality of the meeting space*

Who will chair the meeting and create the agenda? *Consider a flow and a format that will allow all participants to be heard*

Who will be responsible for the taking and disseminating the minutes? *Ensure all members are on a list serve*

What are the action items?

Individual reporting and sharing of information? *Ensure all members have a voice and time on the agenda to share*

Stakeholders

A robust and diverse group of stakeholders is essential to create buy in and ensure that various sectors are represented. As members of the team, individuals will not only contribute to the overall goals of the county, but will be responsible for the dissemination of information within their networks.

Below is a list of members to consider. **There may be unique individuals or organizations that reside within your community that are not listed below, but would be important to include.**

- Community Outreach Groups
- Concerned Citizens
- Local Health Department
- Department of Social Services (CPS)
- Law Enforcement
- Domestic Violence Advocate

Stakeholders Cont.

- Faith Based Groups/Leaders
- Healthcare Providers
- Youth Groups
- Justice System (ADA, DA)
- Injury Prevention Advocates
- Mental Health Providers and Advocacy Groups
- Suicide Prevention
- Veterans
- Wildlife/Hunting Organizations
- Neighborhood Community Watch Associations
& other Neighborhood and Housing
Associations

An initial group of 10-15 members is a good size to set the foundation for the team. Many of the above organizations can participate through partnerships in which members of the GST provide activities in these settings. Forging relationship within the community is essential to reach more sectors of the community.

Community Outreach Opportunities

here are many community partners that can provide venues for the GST to share information. Below are some suggested groups to consider reaching out to Introducing the services that the GST can provide to organization will increase the likelihood of inclusion in these events.

- Street fairs
- Health fairs
- Back to school events
- National Night Out
- PTA meetings
- Community and Recreational Centers
- Senior Centers
- Health Departments events
- Faith-Based events
- Fire Department events
- Law Enforcement events
- Wildlife activities



Step By Step Planning Guide



Stakeholders

Sample Invitation to Join the Team

Orange County Safe Kids in collaboration with the Orange County Board of Health and the Injury Prevention Division of the University of North Carolina Trauma Center has established an Orange County Gun Safety Team (OCGST). The team was formed following the ...proclamation, recognizing gun safety as a public health issue affecting the health and wellbeing of the county.

The gun safety team is a nonpartisan, apolitical group aimed at the reduction of injury and death from gun violence using public health strategies. The OCGST is in the process of selecting team members to represent various sectors in the community. Stakeholders will work together to identify solutions and impactful interventions. The team is based on the model of the Durham County Gun Safety Team, which has actively resided in the DC Department of Public Health since 1999.

Orange County will serve as the first expansion of this model. As a vital part of our community we would like to invite... to join us as a member of the OCGST on...date, time location.

We look forward to your participation on the team.

Sincerely,
Name

Sample 1st Meeting Agenda

- Introduction of Members
- Overview of:
 - Mission
 - Vision
 - History and Model
 - General Facts (national, state and local)
 - NC Safe Storage Law
 - Just Ask Campaign
- Roundtable Discussion
- Next Steps



Step By Step Planning Guide



Sample Invitation



Checklist



Draft Formal Proclamation



Identify and Approach Key Stakeholders



Determine Meeting Logistics



Invite Members



Establish a mission/vision for your Gun Safety Team



Finalize Written Materials and PP Presentation



Secure Gun Locks



Identify Community Venues for Activities



Establish a Reporting System for Tracking Activities (Include a description of the event, number of attendees, number of gun locks distributed, etc)



NC Safe Storage Law

14-315.1. Storage of Firearms to Protect Minors

(a) Any person who resides in the same premises as a minor, owns or possesses a firearm, and stores or leaves the firearm (i) in a condition that the firearm can be discharged and (ii) in a manner that the person knew or should have known that an unsupervised minor would be able to gain access to the firearm, is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor if a minor gains access to the firearm without the lawful permission of the minor's parents or a person having charge of the minor and the minor:

- (1) Possesses it in violation of G.S. 14-269.2(b);
- (2) Exhibits it in a public place in a careless, angry, or threatening manner
- (3) Causes personal injury or death with it not in self defense; or
- (4) Uses it in the commission of a crime.

(b) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a person from carrying a firearm on his or her body, or placed in such close proximity that it can be used as easily and quickly as if carried on the body.

(c) This section shall not apply if the minor obtained the firearm as a result of an unlawful entry by any person.

(d) "Minor" as used in this section means a person under 18 years of age who is not emancipated. (1993, c. 558, s. 2; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 14, s. 11.)



Sample Proclamation

The sample proclamation below can be adapted to any entity. Most often the proclamation comes for a Board of Health, state or county legislative body, or major medical center.

_____ County Board of Health Resolution
Regarding Gun Safety

WHEREAS, the _____ County Board of Health upholds the mission to preserve, protect, and enhance the general health and environment of the community; and

WHEREAS, the _____ County Health Department’s general goals include goals to promote healthy lifestyles” and “identify and reduce health risks in the community”; and

WHEREAS, injury prevention is an area of study within the discipline of public health, and many groups of physicians and public health professionals nation wide publically recognize that accidently death and injuries attributed to guns in the home are a serious, but preventable public health problem; and NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED That

- The _____ County Board of Health concludes that the _____ County Health Department must promote citizen education toward firearm safety; and
- The _____ County Board of Health recommends that the _____ County Health Department public health education programs promote the responsibility of families to create a gun-safe environment
- The _____ County Board of Health recommends that age-appropriate literature emphasizing gun safety for youth be distributed to parent by _____ County Health Department health educators that are present in the public health setting; and
- The _____ County Health Department will educate _____ County citizens through Health Department programs about the importance of taking measures to ensure that you with never be able to gain unauthorized or unsupervised access to firearms from their homes.

_____ Signature of the
_____ Date

Chairperson Adopted by the _____ Board of Health Date:
Document to be on department letter health head.

Sample
Proclamation



Asking Saves Kids Campaign

In America, one out of three homes with children has a gun, and more than 4.6 million children live in a home with a loaded, unlocked gun. Every year, thousands of kids are killed and injured as a result.

The ASK (Asking Saves Kids, formerly Just Ask Campaign) Campaign promotes a simple idea with the potential to help keep kids safe. It encourages parents to ASK if there is an unlocked gun in the homes where their children play.

Parents ask all sorts of questions before their children visit other homes. They ask about pets in the house, discuss allergies and Internet access, and ask questions about supervision. ASK encourages parents to add one more question to this conversation: "Is there an unlocked gun in your house?" It's a simple question, but it has the power to save a child's life.

Every parent cares about the safety of their children. ASK allows parents to play an active role in keeping kids safe. Any parent can make a difference by asking, and encouraging others to do the same.

For more than a decade, the ASK Campaign and its supporters have partnered with over 400 grassroots organizations to spread its message in neighborhoods nationwide. The ASK Campaign has successfully inspired 19 million households to ask if there are guns where their children play.

The ASK Campaign is a collaboration between the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence and the American Academy of Pediatrics who has promoted the ASK message to its 62,000 members across the country.

Downloadable materials to share with the community can be found at <http://www.askingsaveskids.org>

Ask Campaign



Messaging

Sample Conversation (1)

GST Member:

Hi, we are with the _____ County Gun Safety Team and we are giving away free gunlocks to people who have a firearm in the home that needs to be properly secured. Do you have a firearm in the home that is unlocked?

Public:

No I don't (Often these people mistakenly assume that because they don't have a firearm this issue does not pertain to them.)

GST Member: (Just Ask) We are also encouraging parents to ask if there is a gun in the home of where your child plays or visits. Many people don't realize that one in three homes in NC has a firearm, so the chance that your child may be visiting a home with a firearm is fairly high. It is important to ask so that no one is unintentionally hurt.

This brochure (Just Ask) is designed to help start that conversation. The idea is for this to be one of the routine questions that parents ask when their child is visiting. It can be a relative, neighbor or friend. You might just say, I attended this health fair and now I am asking everyone.

Sample Conversation (2)

GST Member

Same intro as (1)

Public:

Yes I do. I could actually use two of them.

GST Member:

Great! Here are two locks. The instructions are inside the packet (specific for each type of firearm). *Segue into the Just Ask conversation, stating "your home may be safe, but someone else may not be as diligent and so it is important to ask to make sure that is a safe place to play."*

Resources



Messaging (1)



Common Questions or Comments

Public:

I'm concerned that I won't be able to unlock and load it in time should I need to.

GST Member:

Law enforcement recommends that you practice, so that you become comfortable in an urgent situation.

Public:

My kids don't know we have a gun or where it is hidden.

GST Member:

Kids are pretty smart and resourceful. In fact, there was a study that showed that 78% of second graders actually knew where the gun was when parents thought they didn't.

Public:

My kids know not to go near our guns. We taught them that from a young age.

GST Member:

That's great that you talk with your kids about the seriousness of handling a firearm. I worry though that one of their friends who is playing at your house might not be as well educated and not understand the consequences like your kids do.

Resources



Messaging (2)



Organizational Links

The **ASK (Asking Saves Kids) Campaign** promotes a simple idea with the potential to help keep kids safe. It encourages parents to ASK if there is an unlocked gun in the homes where their children play. <http://www.askingsaveskids.org>

The **North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (N.C. VDRS)** is a public health, population-based surveillance system that contains detailed information on deaths that result from violence. It is operated by the North Carolina Division of Public Health's Injury and Violence Prevention Branch to provide injury and violence prevention specialists and policy-makers with timely information on the victims, suspects, relationships, circumstances, and weapons that are associated with every incident of violence that results in a fatality in North Carolina. <https://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov>

For 25 years **North Carolinians Against Gun Violence (NCGV)** has worked as the only statewide non-profit organization dedicated to reducing gun death and injury. <http://www.ncgv.org>

Project ChildSafe is a program of the National Shooting Sports Foundation to promote firearms safety and education. We are committed to promoting genuine firearms safety through the distribution of safety education messages and free firearm safety kits to communities across the United States. <https://www.projectchildsafesafe.org>

Means Matters is a program created by the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health to introduce a non-controversial, "lethal means counseling" approach to reducing a suicidal person's access to firearms and other lethal means. How a person attempts—the means they use—plays a key role in whether they live or die.

"Means reduction" (reducing a suicidal person's access to highly lethal means) is an important part of a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter>