



## Kids and Gun Violence

**FACT:** In 2006, incidents of gun murders, gun suicides, and unintentional shootings in Illinois killed 154 children and adolescents ages 19 and younger, a 1.8% increase from the 2005 total of 130 in this age group. (Numbers obtained from CDC National Center for Health Statistics mortality report online, 2009)

**FACT:** Nationwide for 2006, gun violence killed 3,218 American children and teens ages 19 and under, an increase of 6.3% from the nationwide 2005 total of 3,027. The total of children killed in 2006 included 2,225 homicides, 763 suicides, 154 unintentional, 34 legal intervention, and 42 undetermined intent. This means that an average of 9 young people are killed each day by guns in the U.S. (Numbers obtained from CDC National Center for Health Statistics mortality report online, 2009)

**FACT:** In 2006, a total of 763 young Americans ages 10-19 committed suicide with firearms, decrease of 7% from the 2005 total of 822 youth gun suicides. Unlike suicide attempts using other methods, 92% of suicide attempts with guns are fatal, meaning a temporarily depressed teenager will never get a second chance at life. (CDC National Center for Health Statistics mortality report online, 2008; Wintemute, et. al., "The Choice of Weapons in Firearm Suicides," *American Journal of Public Health*, Vol 78, No. 7, July 1988, p. 824)

**FACT:** The firearms used by American youth ages 19 and younger in 90% of firearm suicide attempts and completions, and in 72% unintentional firearm deaths and injuries, were stored in the residence of the victim, their relative, or their friend. On average, 68% of suicides for youth ages 15-24 are committed with guns. (Grossman, DC, Reay DR, Baker SA. "Self-inflicted and unintentional firearm injuries among children and adolescents: the source of the firearm." *Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine*, August 1999;153:875-8; *American Association of Suicidology, Washington, DC, 1998*)

**FACT:** In 2006, the national gun death rate for African-American males ages 15 to 19 was 36 per 100,000, a large disparity compared to white males of the same age (8 per 100,000). For black males ages 20-24, the gun death rate was even higher at 62 per 100,000, an even greater disparity compared to white males of the same age group (13 per 100,000). (Numbers obtained from CDC National Center for Health Statistics mortality report online, 2008)

**FACT:** 48% of gun-owning households with children do NOT regularly make sure that their guns are equipped with child safety locks or other trigger locks. (Peter Hart Research Associates Poll, July 1999)

**FACT:** Contrary to popular belief, young children do possess the physical strength to fire a gun: 25% of 3 to 4 year olds, 70% of 5 to 6 year olds, and 90% of 7 to 8 year olds can fire most handguns. (Naureckas, SM,

Christoffel, KK, et al. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, 1995)

**FACT:** More than 3,500 students were expelled in 1998-99 for bringing guns to school. Of these, 43% were in elementary or junior high school. This means that, in a 40-week school year, an average of 88 children per week nationwide are expelled for bringing a gun in school. These figures include only the children who get caught. (U.S. Department of Education. *Report on State Implementation of the Gun-Free Schools Act: School Year 1998-99*. October 2000, p.2)