May 24, 2024

RE:  Parent/Caregiver Communication on Safe Gun Storage

Dear [INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT] Families, Guardians, and Caregivers,

All students and members of our school communities deserve to feel safe, welcomed, and included. It is on all of us to work together to prevent firearm violence and to avoid the harm and tragedy that shootings of any kind can cause in the spaces in which we live, learn, work, and play.

Safe firearm storage is one of many preventative actions that can keep our school community safe. Safe firearm storage can help prevent firearms from getting into the hands of children and teens, who may use them to, intentionally or unintentionally, harm themselves or others. If you have firearms in your home or if your child spends time in a space where firearms are present, there are important steps that can be taken to keep firearms safe and secure.

Safe Firearm Storage: Actions to Take to Keep Our Communities Safe

Everyone, both firearm owners and non-owners, has a role to play in building awareness of safe, responsible firearm storage. Below are simple, highly effective practices that can help to reduce firearm-related incidents in our community and help protect our kids.

* Safely Store Firearms: Store firearms—always unloaded—in a tamper proof locked cabinet, box, safe, firearm vault, or storage case that children or other unauthorized adults cannot access.
* Safely Store Ammunition: Store ammunition in a separate, tamper-proof locked cabinet, safe, firearm vault, or storage case that children or other unauthorized adults cannot access.
* Secure Firearms: Use trigger locks or cable locks to prevent a firearm from firing. (More information can be found on the [Safe Firearm Storage Fact Sheet](https://www.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh241/files/media/document/safe_storage_fact_sheet.pdf), developed by the U.S. Department of Justice.)
  + Trigger locks use a mechanism that clamps down around the trigger or trigger housing to prevent it from being pressed (Note: trigger locks should not be installed on loaded firearms).
  + In a cable lock, a cable is threaded through the barrel or action of a firearm to prevent it from firing.

Safe Firearm Storage: Resources in Vermont

In Vermont, we have resources available to support safe storage of firearms and to assist when firearms need to be removed from a home.

The [www.gunsafevt.org](http://www.gunsafevt.org) website[[1]](#footnote-2) provides:

1. a link to the Vermont State Police’s web-based map of federal firearm licensees (FFLs) who offer safe, out-of-home, temporary storage for firearms;
2. a list of locations around the state where free gun cable locks are available; and
3. resources on state laws around safe gun storage and methods for safe gun storage.

Vermont law requires gun owners to safely store their firearms if a child or unauthorized adult is likely to gain access to them. For information about Vermont laws that provide options to restrict firearms access for individuals who pose a risk to themselves or others, please visit: [www.gunsafevt.org](http://www.gunsafevt.org)

Additionally, Vermont law provides options to restrict firearms access for individuals who pose a risk to themselves or others. Relief From Abuse orders (RFAs) offer firearms removal and other protection where a household or family member has caused harm. Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs) allow state authorities or family/household members to obtain an order preventing an individual in crisis from buying, having or receiving firearms. More information about safe storage, RFAs and ERPOs is available at [www.gunsafevt.org](http://www.gunsafevt.org).

[INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT OR SCHOOL] remains committed to the safety of our students and school community. Thank you for being a partner in these efforts.

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR]

1. This website is a joint project of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Vermont, the UVM Medical Center, ATF, the Vermont State Police, the Vermont Attorney General’s Office, the Vermont Sheriffs’ Association, the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Vermont’s Office of the Director of Violence Prevention. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)