

Resolution 11.14.02

Resolution on Gun Safety

Whereas, in 1999, 88 children age 14 and younger died from unintentional firearm injuries, and in 2000, 1,800 children 14 and younger made emergency room visits for firearm injuries.¹

Whereas, 40 percent of American households with children have guns² and in 30 percent of gun-owning households, the gun was stored unlocked and loaded.³

Whereas, firearms in the home, regardless of how they are stored, are associated with a higher risk for adolescent suicide, and more than 90% of suicide attempts involving a firearm are fatal.⁴

Whereas, many parents are unaware of the risks to children and adolescents when a gun is kept in their home, or may not be accustomed to inquiring about the presence of firearms in the homes where their children visit.

Therefore, be it resolved, that PCA America supports:

Educating parents and children about the risks of having guns in the home as well as gun safety measures, including the separate and locked storage of guns and ammunition, the need for vigilant supervision when guns are present, and the risk of children handling guns.

Encouraging parents to inquire about the presence of firearms in homes their children visit (including those of home-based child care providers).

Using safety devices on guns, which can prevent 30 percent of unintentional firearm deaths⁵ - although these devices are not fail-safe and the ultimate responsibility lies with parents.

Mandating that older children may only handle firearms after completion of an approved firearms safety course and in the presence of a supervising adult.

¹ "Injury Facts: Firearm Injuries (Unintentional)" (2001). Washington, D.C. National SAFE Kids Campaign.

² Peter Hart Research Associates, July 1999.

³ National Institute of Justice: "Guns in America: National Survey on Private Ownership and Use of Firearms." 1997.

⁴ American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Adolescence. "Suicide and Suicide Attempts in Adolescents." *Pediatrics*. 2000; 105:871-874; Brent, DA, Perper, JA, Allman, CJ, et al. "The Presence and Accessibility of Firearms in the Home of Adolescent Suicides: A Case-Control Study." *JAMA*. 1991;266:2989-2995; American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Injury and Poison Prevention. "Firearm Injuries Affecting the Pediatric Population." *Pediatrics*. 1992;89:788-790.

⁵ "Injury Facts: Firearm Injuries (Unintentional)" (2001). Washington, D.C. National SAFE Kids Campaign.