

Firearms in our Community

Storing firearms locked and unloaded, with ammunition locked separately, can reduce the risk of injury and death (including suicide) and prevent firearm theft. Firearm injuries and deaths are preventable.

Did you know...

- In 2020, there were 45,222 firearm-related deaths in the United States? That's about 124 people dying from a firearm-related injury each day. More than half of firearm-related deaths were suicides and more than 4 out of every 10 were firearm homicides.¹
- In Washington, 896 individuals died due to firearm injury in 2021.²
- As of 2020, nearly 30% of Snohomish County adults reported having a firearm in their home. Of those, 38% indicated they store them loaded and unlocked.³

Children, youth and firearms

- In Washington, an average of 59 children and teens die by firearm every year, and more than half of these (55%) are suicides.⁴
- Although 70% of parents reported that adolescents could not independently access firearms in their household, over one-third of children belonging to those households reported being able to access the firearm in less than five minutes.⁵
- Studies show that between 70 and 90% of guns used in youth suicides, unintentional shootings among children, and school shootings perpetrated by shooters under the age of 18 are acquired from the home or the homes of relatives or friends.⁶
- In 2020, firearms were the leading cause of death for children and teens in Washington. While school shootings dominate the narrative around children and gun violence, young people are more likely to be victims of unintentional shootings, domestic violence, or suicide. Black children and teens in Washington are twice as likely to be killed by a gun as their white peers.⁷
- During the 2017-2018 school year, the Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction reported 58 incidents involving a firearm on school premises, transportation systems, or school facilities. These incidents resulted in 18 suspensions and 30 expulsions.⁸
- In 2020, 10% of 8th grade students, 14% of 10th grade students, and 19% of 12th grade students in Snohomish County reported that they would not be caught if they carried a handgun without parental permission.⁹
- In 2020, 4% of Snohomish County 10th and 12th grade students reported having carried a gun on at least one day during the last 30 days.⁹
- In 2020, nearly 15% of 12th graders said it would be sort of easy, or very easy, to get a handgun if they wanted one.⁹

Firearm suicides

- In Washington, more than 75% of all gun deaths are suicides. From 2010 to 2019, 7,152 Washington citizens ended their lives with a firearm.⁴
- Suicide accounts for 55% of all youth firearm deaths in Washington.⁷
- Adolescents with access to firearms are 2.6 times as likely to die by suicide as adolescents without access to firearms.¹⁰
- A study of adolescent suicides by firearm found that more than half were carried out with guns from the adolescent's home. More than 75% of firearms used in suicide attempts and unintentional injuries were stored in the residence of the victim, a relative, or friend.^{10,11}
- In Snohomish County, inappropriate access to firearms in the home, or an acquaintance's home, accounted for 100% of youth firearm suicides.¹²

Firearm violence, homicides and crime

- In 2021, 70% of homicides in Washington State were committed with firearms.¹³
- In 2021, 69% of weapons identified in weapon law violations in Washington were firearms (N=4,012).¹³
- In 2021, of the total 125,383 arrests made in Washington, 36% of those were in possession of a firearm.¹³
- Gun violence in Washington is expensive. The expenses can be measured, including healthcare costs (\$56 million per year), law enforcement and criminal justice expenses (\$64 million per year), costs to employers (\$8 million per year), and lost income (\$1.2 billion per year), the initial price tag of gun violence in Washington is over \$1.3 billion per year. Much of this tab is picked up by the public. Up to 85% of gunshot victims, for example, are either uninsured or on some form of publicly funded insurance. Additionally, law enforcement efforts are funded entirely by taxpayer dollars. As a result, the direct annual cost of gun violence to Washington taxpayers is over \$219 million.¹⁴
- In 2020, more than 10,000 guns were stolen or lost in the United States. These figures, which came from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, exclude the estimated 380,000 firearms that were stolen from private citizens.¹⁵

References

- 1) [Fast Facts: Firearm Violence Prevention |Violence Prevention|Injury Center|CDC](#) .
- 2) [Stats of the States - Firearm Mortality \(cdc.gov\)](#)
- 3) Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, supported in part by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (2021).
- 4) CDC, Fatal Injury Reports, five-year average: 2010-2019. Leading cause of death: CDC, Fatal Injury Report, 2020. (cdc.gov)
- 5) Baxley F, Miller M. Parental Misperceptions About Children and Firearms. Arch Pediatric Adolescent Med. 2006; 160(5):542-547.doi:10.1001/archpedi.160.5.542. <http://archpedi.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=204929>
- 6) Anglemeyer A, Horvath T, Rutherford G. The Accessibility of Firearms and Risk for Suicide and Homicide Victimization Among Household Members. Annals of Internal Medicine. 160(2):101-110
- 7) [Every-State-Fact-Sheet-2.0-042720-Washington.pdf \(everytownresearch.org\)](#) in partnership with CDC WONDER (Wide-Ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research), Underlying Cause of Death, cdc.gov
- 8) WA Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2019 Weapons in Schools Report
- 9) Washington State Healthy Youth Survey, 2020
- 10) Brent DA, Perper JA, Allman CJ, et al. The presence and accessibility of firearms in the homes of adolescent suicides: a case-control study. JAMA. 1991; 266:2989-2995.
- 11) Grossman DC, Mueller BA, Riedy C, et al. Gun Storage Practices and Risk of Youth Suicide and Unintentional Firearm Injuries. JAMA. 2005. 23(6):707-714
- 12) National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention Case Reporting System, Snohomish County cases reviewed 2011-2021.
- 13) WA Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs, Crime in WA, 2021 Annual Report
- 14) Estimates of the cost of gun violence were created using a model published in 2012 by economists at the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE). [www.pire.org/ documents/gswcost2010.pdf](http://www.pire.org/documents/gswcost2010.pdf). All cost estimates were adjusted to 2016 dollars.
- 15) [Federal Firearms Licensee \(FFL\) Theft/Loss Report - Calendar Year 2020 \(atf.gov\)](#)