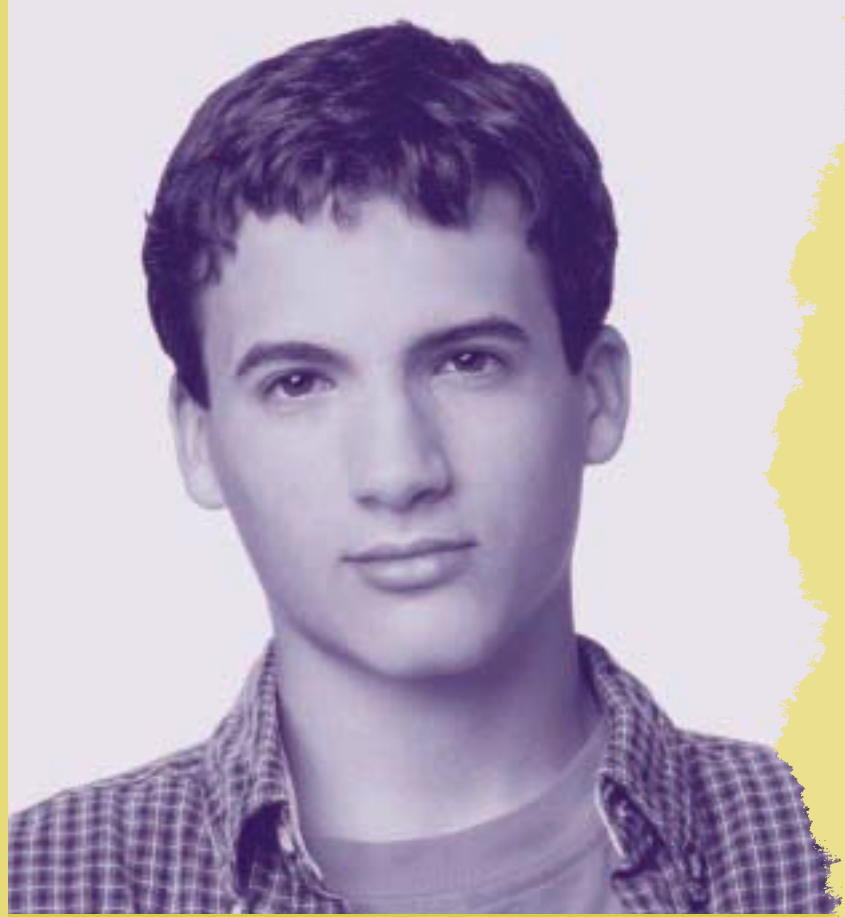


# PROTECT CHILDREN INSTEAD OF GUNS 2004



**The latest deadly numbers about children and gun violence in a single year show:**

- 2,911 children and teens were killed by gunfire
- 1,771 were murdered by gunfire
- 928 committed suicide with a firearm
- 182 died from an accidental shooting
- 1,695 were White
- 1,128 were Black
- 518 were Latino
- 414 were under age 15
- 160 were under age 10
- 81 were under age 5
- More children and teens died from gunfire than from cancer, pneumonia, and influenza *combined*.





he latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that in 2001, 2,911 children and teens were killed by gunfire in the United States—which is one child every three hours, eight children every day, more than 50 children every week. And every year, four to

five times as many children and teens suffer from non-fatal firearm injuries.

Despite these alarming numbers, child and youth gun deaths are on the decline. After peaking in 1994 at more than 5,700 young lives, child and teen firearm deaths have dropped 48 percent overall. Additionally, the number of Black children and teens killed by guns has decreased 55 percent, and the number for White children and teens has dropped 42 percent. Although it is encouraging that the number of child gun deaths per year has dropped to near record lows, we are still losing too many children. Overall, youths in the United States have a one in 1,339 chance of being killed by gunfire before the age of 20. For young Black males, however, the odds are one in 307, while for young White females, the odds are one in 6,077. The rate of firearm deaths among children under age 15 is almost 12 times higher in the United States than in 25 other industrialized countries combined. American children are 16 times more likely to be murdered with a gun, 11 times more likely to commit suicide with a gun, and nine times more likely to die in a firearm accident than children in these other countries. The needless loss of young lives to gun violence continues to be one of America's silent tragedies.

### Firearm deaths, by manner and by race, persons under age 20, 1979-2001 (excludes legal intervention)

Year	Manner					Race	
	Total	Homicide	Suicide	Accident	Undetermined	Black	White
1979	3,710	1,651	1,220	726	113	929	2,700
1980	3,749	1,743	1,214	689	103	944	2,739
1981	3,589	1,660	1,213	604	112	944	2,569
1982	3,332	1,498	1,207	550	77	811	2,450
1983	2,962	1,238	1,150	504	70	739	2,155
1984	3,030	1,289	1,114	552	75	716	2,238
1985	3,169	1,322	1,256	519	72	850	2,241
1986	3,349	1,513	1,293	472	71	938	2,337
1987	3,400	1,573	1,281	467	79	1,117	2,199
1988	3,974	1,953	1,387	543	91	1,458	2,405
1989	4,384	2,367	1,380	567	70	1,694	2,563
1990	4,935	2,852	1,476	541	66	2,047	2,753
1991	5,329	3,247	1,436	551	95	2,297	2,878
1992	5,353	3,336	1,426	501	90	2,359	2,834
1993	5,715	3,625	1,460	526	104	2,600	2,925
1994	5,793	3,579	1,565	512	137	2,559	3,024
1995	5,254	3,249	1,450	440	115	2,153	2,898
1996	4,613	2,836	1,309	376	92	1,976	2,475
1997	4,205	2,562	1,262	306	75	1,687	2,357
1998	3,761	2,184	1,241	262	74	1,416	2,197
1999	3,365	1,990	1,078	214	83	1,301	1,934
2000	3,012	1,776	1,007	193	36	1,149	1,762
2001	2,911	1,771	928	182	30	1,128	1,695
Total	92,894	50,814	29,353	10,797	1,930	33,812	56,328

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, unpublished tabulations; National Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 49, No. 8, "Deaths: Final Data for 1999" (September 21, 2001); Table 17; National Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 50, No. 15, "Deaths: Final Data for 2000" (September 16, 2002); Table 18; and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, WISQARS, at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars/>, accessed November 2003. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

## Did you know?

- Children are twice as likely as adults to be victims of violent crime and more likely to be killed by adults than by other children.
- Firearms are the second leading cause of death among young people ages 10 to 19 (second only to motor vehicle accidents).
- 61 percent of the nearly 93,000 youths killed by gunfire between 1979 and 2001 were White; 36 percent were Black.
- Black children and teens are more likely than their White counterparts to be victims of firearm homicide. White children and teens are more likely than their Black counterparts to use a firearm to take their own life.
- The firearm death rate for Black males ages 15 to 19 is four times that of White males of the same ages.
- Boys ages 15 to 19 are seven times more likely than girls to commit suicide with a firearm.

In 2001, homicides accounted for 1,771, or 61 percent, of gun deaths among children age 19 and younger. Although most child gun deaths are homicides, two out of every five young firearm deaths are the result of suicide or an accidental shooting. Thirty-two percent of young people killed by guns took their own lives. In 2001, gun suicides accounted for 928 child and teen deaths—an average of five young people every two days. Guns are used in two out of three youth suicides and, unlike other attempted methods, are the most likely to be fatal. Accidental shootings accounted for just over six percent of child firearm deaths in 2001; 182 children and teens lost their lives in accidental shootings. As with adolescent suicide, the vast majority of firearms used in unintentional shootings of children and teens come from the victim's home or the home of a relative, friend, or parent of a friend of the victim.

A study reported in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that 1.4 million homes with 2.6 million children had firearms that were stored unlocked and loaded or unlocked and unloaded but with ammunition. A separate study published in *Injury Prevention* compared firearm ownership in rural and urban areas and found that the prevalence of loaded, unlocked guns in farm households was about twice the level in town households. With guns out-numbering children and teens in America nearly three to one, our nation's youth have far too easy access to firearms. According to the 2001 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey, nearly one-fifth of children in grades nine through twelve claimed to have carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on one or more of the past 30 days.

Gun violence has already taken nearly 93,000 young lives in America since 1979. We must do more to protect children instead of guns.

**Join the Movement to  
Leave No Child Behind® TODAY!**  
**Call 1-800-CDF-1200 or log onto**  
**[www.campaign.childrensdefense.org](http://www.campaign.childrensdefense.org)**

## Firearm deaths of children and teens ages 0-19, by manner, 1999-2001

	Total*			Homicide*			Suicide			Accident			Undetermined		
	1999	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001
Alabama	83	52	64	44	31	34	26	17	20	10	3	8	3	1	2
Alaska	23	24	19	9	2	6	11	20	11	1	2	1	2	0	1
Arizona	86	81	81	55	46	49	30	29	25	0	2	6	1	4	1
Arkansas	40	43	30	15	21	13	20	14	12	3	8	5	2	0	0
California	402	402	379	320	319	316	66	66	47	8	16	15	8	1	1
Colorado	63	38	53	34	17	23	24	19	26	3	2	3	2	0	1
Connecticut	18	14	16	13	8	12	5	6	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delaware	5	2	4	1	1	3	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
District of Columbia	45	28	32	41	28	29	3	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0
Florida	137	100	111	86	58	65	43	35	38	4	7	5	4	0	3
Georgia	117	106	110	67	67	69	41	28	34	5	8	7	4	3	0
Hawaii	0	1	5	0	1	2	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Idaho	23	13	25	7	0	3	13	11	17	3	2	5	0	0	0
Illinois	228	186	175	182	157	139	37	23	28	7	5	6	2	1	2
Indiana	91	82	59	57	43	30	27	31	23	6	5	5	1	3	1
Iowa	23	21	27	2	1	3	17	18	22	2	2	2	2	0	0
Kansas	31	31	36	12	16	15	14	13	18	3	2	3	2	0	0
Kentucky	39	35	34	21	11	12	11	17	15	5	7	7	2	0	0
Louisiana	93	94	95	52	63	62	27	22	27	11	9	6	3	0	0
Maine	9	8	5	2	1	1	5	7	4	1	0	0	1	0	0
Maryland	98	79	81	78	59	66	16	18	12	0	1	2	4	1	1
Massachusetts	20	11	24	10	9	18	9	2	5	0	0	1	1	0	0
Michigan	116	100	105	66	66	61	40	26	39	7	5	4	3	3	1
Minnesota	45	36	37	15	11	12	27	23	24	3	2	0	0	0	1
Mississippi	72	67	34	37	31	14	17	23	13	11	13	5	7	0	2
Missouri	92	81	92	47	47	55	34	27	29	7	7	4	4	0	4
Montana	19	18	13	2	3	3	12	11	9	5	3	1	0	1	0
Nebraska	18	23	18	6	12	3	11	10	14	1	0	1	0	1	0
Nevada	26	31	28	15	19	20	10	12	7	1	0	0	0	0	1
New Hampshire	4	7	8	1	2	1	3	5	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Jersey	32	39	25	25	23	19	6	13	5	0	2	1	1	1	0
New Mexico	45	55	27	24	31	14	17	19	11	4	5	2	0	0	0
New York	132	123	135	101	90	102	25	28	27	5	3	6	1	2	0
North Carolina	93	95	86	54	60	48	33	29	31	4	5	7	2	1	0
North Dakota	9	7	2	2	1	1	6	5	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Ohio	81	75	85	38	40	50	30	30	26	10	4	6	3	1	3
Oklahoma	62	33	41	28	10	18	21	15	16	12	7	7	1	1	0
Oregon	33	27	17	7	3	7	21	22	9	5	2	1	0	0	0
Pennsylvania	124	110	103	77	69	63	39	37	33	5	4	6	3	0	1
Rhode Island	8	10	6	6	8	6	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Carolina	51	41	42	22	23	20	20	13	15	8	5	6	1	0	1
South Dakota	14	8	8	1	0	1	9	4	7	3	4	0	1	0	0
Tennessee	85	87	65	47	48	34	22	33	24	12	6	7	4	0	0
Texas	254	252	241	141	117	140	89	108	84	21	21	15	3	6	2
Utah	21	16	27	3	2	7	17	14	20	0	0	0	1	0	0
Vermont	3	4	3	0	0	2	2	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Virginia	86	72	77	48	41	50	35	26	23	3	3	3	0	2	1
Washington	62	49	38	20	23	17	34	22	20	6	2	1	2	2	0
West Virginia	19	24	13	8	9	5	10	13	5	0	2	3	1	0	0
Wisconsin	74	67	61	41	28	28	27	34	26	6	5	7	0	0	0
Wyoming	11	4	9	0	0	0	11	2	9	0	2	0	0	0	0
United States	3,365	3,012	2,911	1,990	1,776	1,771	1,078	1,007	928	214	193	182	83	36	30

\*Total firearm deaths and homicide firearm deaths exclude firearm deaths by legal (police or corrections) intervention and deaths by air rifles.

Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, Table III: Deaths from 358 selected causes [1999, 2000]; and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, WISQARS, at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars/> [2001]. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

## Firearm deaths of children and teens, by age, manner, and race/Hispanic origin, 2001

	Under 1	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	Total under 20
All races						2,911
Accident	0	15	18	39	110	182
Suicide	0	0	0	90	838	928
Homicide	11	55	59	121	1,525	1,771
Undetermined	0	0	2	4	24	30
White						1,695
Accident	0	10	14	31	79	134
Suicide	0	0	0	73	714	787
Homicide	8	33	47	72	593	753
Undetermined	0	0	0	4	17	21
Black						1,128
Accident	0	5	2	6	26	39
Suicide	0	0	0	13	88	101
Homicide	2	18	12	45	902	979
Undetermined	0	0	2	0	7	9
American Indian						49
Accident	0	0	2	1	3	6
Suicide	0	0	0	2	22	24
Homicide	1	4	0	2	12	19
Undetermined	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian/Pacific Islander						39
Accident	0	0	0	1	2	3
Suicide	0	0	0	2	14	16
Homicide	0	0	0	2	18	20
Undetermined	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other races*						88
Accident	0	0	2	2	5	9
Suicide	0	0	0	4	36	40
Homicide	1	4	0	4	30	39
Undetermined	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic**						518
Accident	0	1	1	3	19	24
Suicide	0	0	0	5	67	72
Homicide	4	12	5	25	371	417
Undetermined	0	0	0	1	4	5

\*Includes races other than Black, White, American Indian, or Asian/Pacific Islander.

\*\*Persons of Hispanic origin can be of any race.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Control and Prevention, WISQARS, at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars/>, accessed November 2003. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund.

The mission of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) is to *Leave No Child Behind*® and to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start*, and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.

CDF provides a strong, effective voice for *all* the children of America who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. CDF educates the nation about the needs of children and encourages preventive investment before they get sick, into trouble, drop out of school, or suffer family breakdown.

CDF began in 1973 and is a private, nonprofit organization supported by foundation and corporate grants, and individual donations. We have never taken government funds.



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