

**THIS IS HOW MANY SAFETY
REGULATIONS OUR GOVERNMENT
IMPOSES ON THE PRODUCT
THAT KILLS 3,000 AMERICAN
CHILDREN AND TEENS A YEAR.**

Protect Children
Not Guns

Children's Defense Fund 2008

Firearm Deaths Among Children and Teens Increase for the First Time Since 1994: 3,006 in 2005

A ccording to the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 3,006 children and teens were killed by firearms in 2005, the first increase since 1994 and the first rise in gun deaths since Congress allowed the Assault Weapons Ban to expire in 2004.

When 32 people were killed at Virginia Tech and five at Northern Illinois University, the public was outraged. Yet every four days we have the equivalent of a Virginia Tech tragedy that passes unnoticed. Our gun violence epidemic robs parents of their children, wastes our human potential, and drains resources from our health care system.

What is it going to take for us to stop this senseless loss of young lives? We need to ensure that those we elect to public office enact legislation that will really protect children by limiting the number of guns in our communities, controlling who can obtain firearms and the conditions of their use. Individuals and communities must act to end the culture of violence that desensitizes us, young and old, to the value of life.

We cannot allow these shots to go unheard. Our children and our society deserve no less.

- **The number of children and teens in America killed by guns in 2005 would fill 120 public school classrooms of 25 students each.**
- **In 2005, 69 preschoolers were killed by firearms compared to 53 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty.**
- **Since 1979, gun violence has snuffed out the lives of 104,419 children and teens in America. Sixty percent of them were White; 37 percent were Black.**
- **The number of Black children and teens killed by gunfire since 1979 is more than 10 times the number of Black citizens of all ages lynched in American history.**
- **The number of children and teens killed by guns since 1979 would fill 4,177 public school classrooms of 25 students each.**

The latest data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that 3,006 children and teens died from gunfire in the United States in 2005—one child or teen every three hours, eight every day, 58 children and teens every week.

1,972 were homicide victims
822 committed suicide
212 died in accidental
or undetermined circumstances

2,654 were boys
352 were girls

404 were under age 15
131 were under age 10
69 were under age 5

1,624 were White
1,271 were Black
614 were Latino*
60 were Asian or Pacific Islander
51 were American Indian or Alaska Native

More than five times as many children and teens suffered non-fatal gun injuries.

* Persons of Hispanic/Latino origin can be of any race; these 614 deaths are included in the four race categories.

Did You Know?

- 181 more children and teens died from firearms in 2005 than in 2004—the first annual increase since 1994.
- 168 more children and teens died from homicide in 2005 than in 2004.
- 56 more White, 122 more Black, 40 more Hispanic, and 9 more Asian and Pacific Islander children and teens died in 2005 than in 2004.
- More 10- to 19-year-olds die from gunshot wounds than from any other cause except motor vehicle accidents.
- Almost 90 percent of the children and teens killed by firearms in 2005 were boys.
- Black children and teens are more likely to be victims of firearm homicide. White children and teens are more likely to commit suicide.
- The firearm death rate for Black males ages 15 to 19 is more than four times that of comparable White males.
- A Black male has a 1 in 72 chance of being killed by a firearm before his 30th birthday; a White male has a 1 in 344 chance.
- Eight times as many White children and teens committed suicide by gun as Black children and teens.
- Males ages 15 to 19 are almost eight times as likely as females that age to commit suicide with a firearm.



© iStockphoto

Step Up and Take Action: We Can Protect Children and Teens from Gun Violence if Everyone Does His or Her Part

To confront America's deadly, historic romance with guns and violence and protect children from firearms in their homes, schools, communities and nation, you can:

1. Support Common Sense Gun Safety Measures

Because federal law requires criminal background checks *only* for guns sold through licensed firearm dealers, 40 percent of all firearms in the United States are purchased *without* a background check, including those bought at gun shows. Congress must enact legislation that closes the gun show loophole by requiring criminal background checks on those who purchase guns from unlicensed gun dealers. Six states require background checks on all firearm purchases and others require them only for handguns, but 35 states have no laws that affect the gun show loophole. Contact your elected officials to express your views on the need for gun measures to protect children. Call the White House at (202) 456-1414 or your Members of Congress at (202) 224-3121.

2. Remove Guns from Your Home

There are over 200 million firearms in the United States, including more than 65 million handguns. Reports have shown that the presence of guns in the home increases the risk of homicide and suicide. Removing guns from the home is one of the best ways to protect children and teens from gun deaths.

3. Stress Nonviolent Values and Conflict Resolution

Family violence is epidemic, child abuse and neglect are widespread, and children are being continuously exposed to television programming crammed with scenes of brutality. Concerned citizens along with schools and churches must organize nonviolent conflict resolution support groups in their communities. Excellent resources include: Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith's *Peace by Piece: A Guide for Preventing Community Violence* and "Violence Prevention Curriculum for Adolescents," as well as "Resolving Conflict Creatively" by Linda Lantieri, co-author of *Waging Peace in Our Schools*, available on the Educators for Social Responsibility website at www.esrnational.org.

4. Refuse to Buy or Use Products for Children and Teens That Glamorize Violence

Our culture frequently glamorizes guns and violence in movies, television shows, music and on the Internet. Many shows targeted at children contain violent themes and language. Protest and refuse to buy or use products that glamorize violence or make it socially acceptable or fun. Turn off violent programming and read with your children instead.

5. Raise Awareness of Child and Teen Gun Deaths and Injuries

What you can do:

- Urge local newspapers and radio and television stations to publish and broadcast photographs of children and teens killed in your community.
- Encourage the reading at your place of worship of the names of children and teens in your community killed by guns and publish their photos in your congregational bulletin.
- Write a letter to the editor or an op-ed piece about the tragic loss of young lives to gun violence.

The number of children and teens in America killed by guns in 2005 would fill 120 public school classrooms of 25 students each.

6. Invite Community Leaders to Witness the Effects of Gun Violence for Themselves

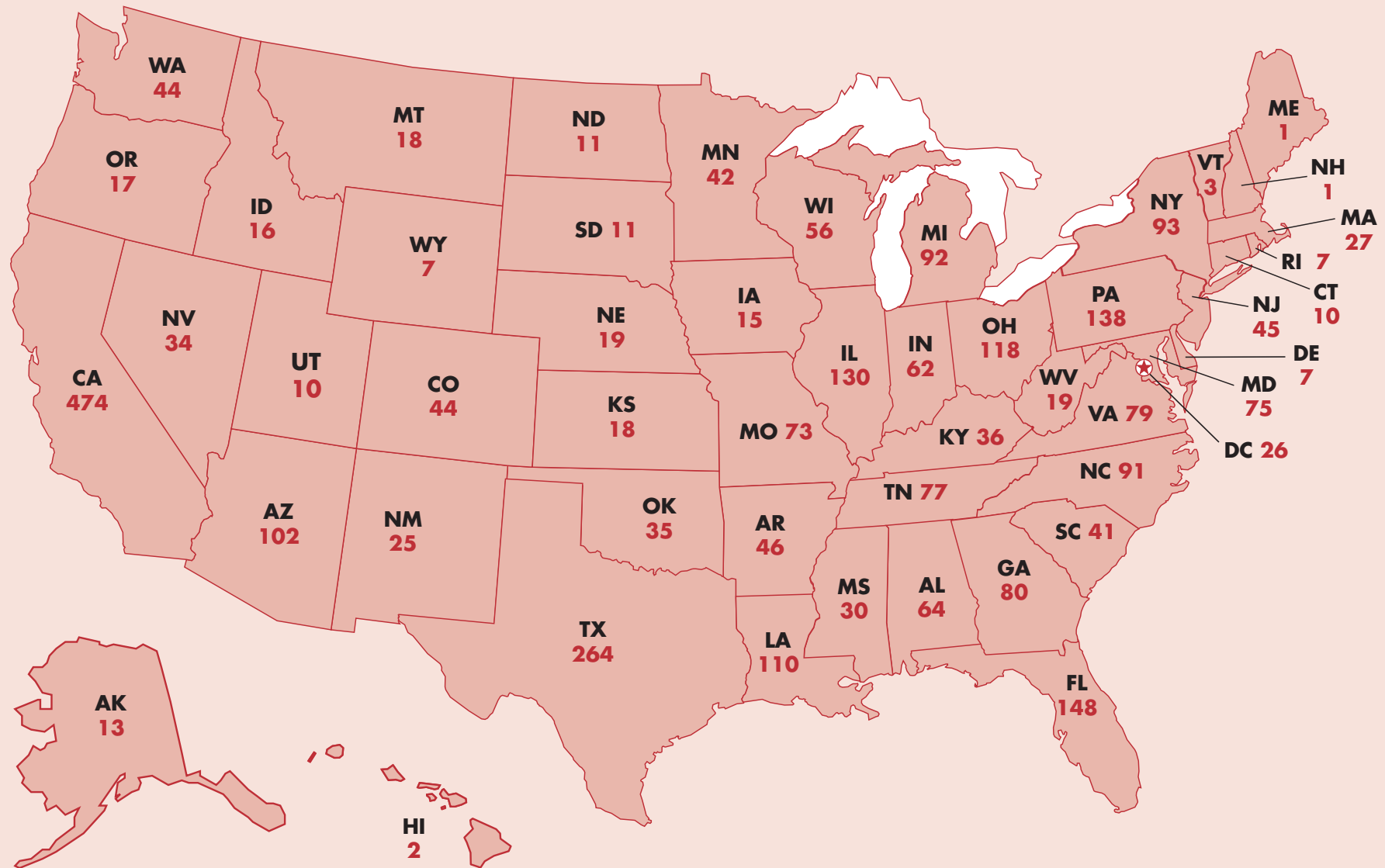
Organize a “Child WatchSM” visit for influential members of your community to see first-hand the effects of gun violence. Ask your local hospital to arrange visits with medical teams that can share their experiences of dealing with the victims and families impacted by gun violence.

7. Provide Children and Teens Positive Alternatives to the Streets Where They Can Feel Safe and Protected

Gangs, drugs and guns are available to many children seven days a week, 24 hours a day. We must offer positive alternatives and role models to children during after-school hours, weekends and summers. We need to open our congregational, school and community doors and engage them in purposeful activities. Check CDF’s website at www.childrensdefense.org/freedomschools for more information about the CDF Freedom Schools[®] reading and enrichment model, which includes nonviolence training.

Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens, 2005

United States Total: 3,006



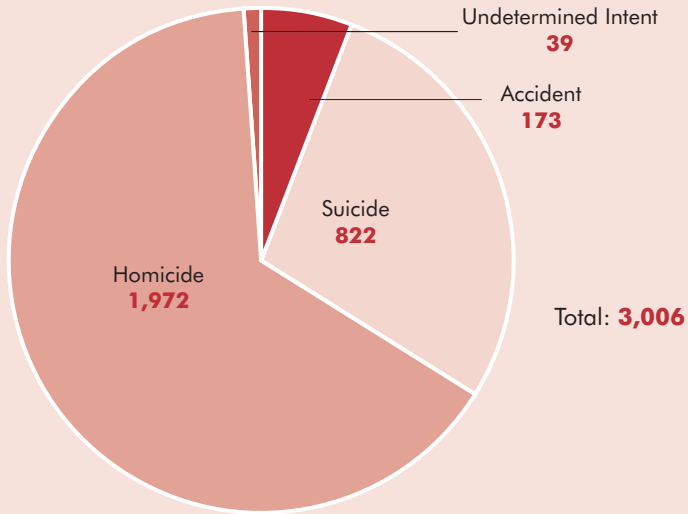
Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens, by Manner, 2003-2005

	Total ¹			Homicide ¹			Suicide			Accident			Undetermined Intent		
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
Alabama	59	52	64	34	31	39	17	16	17	7	4	7	1	1	1
Alaska	26	22	13	10	7	5	13	15	8	2	0	0	1	0	0
Arizona	64	76	102	38	43	62	21	25	35	3	6	2	2	2	3
Arkansas	27	16	46	11	8	17	9	4	23	5	3	5	2	1	1
California	429	468	474	355	406	392	55	49	54	15	10	25	4	3	3
Colorado	32	48	44	20	23	19	10	24	20	1	1	4	1	0	1
Connecticut	12	11	10	10	9	7	1	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Delaware	10	9	7	6	7	4	3	1	3	0	1	0	1	0	0
District of Columbia	28	40	26	28	39	26	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Florida	109	111	148	81	76	96	23	30	46	3	5	5	2	0	1
Georgia	83	89	80	58	57	54	24	27	21	1	4	5	0	1	0
Hawaii	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Idaho	13	16	16	4	3	5	9	10	9	0	3	2	0	0	0
Illinois	158	143	130	131	123	111	20	17	13	7	3	6	0	0	0
Indiana	54	56	62	32	33	41	15	19	18	6	4	1	1	0	2
Iowa	12	16	15	1	2	4	11	13	10	0	1	1	0	0	0
Kansas	26	26	18	10	13	11	13	12	4	3	1	3	0	0	0
Kentucky	34	40	36	9	18	17	13	20	16	10	2	2	2	0	1
Louisiana	88	88	110	57	54	67	22	25	30	8	8	12	1	1	1
Maine	9	10	1	1	0	0	7	10	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Maryland	80	71	75	67	61	64	13	9	10	0	1	0	0	0	1
Massachusetts	22	32	27	17	26	26	5	6	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Michigan	79	104	92	49	57	65	25	34	23	2	8	2	3	5	2
Minnesota	40	39	42	17	15	16	19	24	23	3	0	1	1	0	2
Mississippi	38	43	30	23	23	12	8	15	9	7	4	7	0	1	2
Missouri	53	61	73	32	38	44	18	21	16	1	2	10	2	0	3
Montana	14	12	18	5	1	2	9	10	15	0	1	1	0	0	0
Nebraska	17	15	19	6	4	3	10	9	15	1	2	1	0	0	0
Nevada	27	27	34	13	18	20	12	7	14	1	2	0	1	0	0
New Hampshire	5	4	1	0	1	1	3	3	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
New Jersey	36	48	45	35	41	40	1	7	4	0	0	1	0	0	0
New Mexico	35	28	25	18	11	11	15	17	12	1	0	2	1	0	0
New York	131	89	93	94	69	66	32	16	20	5	4	6	0	0	1
North Carolina	100	70	91	59	40	58	33	22	26	7	5	6	1	3	1
North Dakota	7	10	11	4	1	1	2	6	9	1	1	1	0	2	0
Ohio	75	80	118	49	46	78	21	28	28	5	5	12	0	1	0
Oklahoma	34	29	35	12	13	19	21	13	12	1	3	2	0	0	2
Oregon	15	21	17	7	12	2	7	6	12	0	3	3	1	0	0
Pennsylvania	130	132	138	81	87	99	41	39	32	4	5	4	4	1	3
Rhode Island	6	4	7	4	2	6	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
South Carolina	50	44	41	36	19	24	10	18	12	3	6	5	1	1	0
South Dakota	9	10	11	0	1	2	8	7	7	1	2	2	0	0	0
Tennessee	58	73	77	32	30	48	19	29	22	6	10	7	1	4	0
Texas	244	236	264	146	144	164	85	79	84	10	10	13	3	3	3
Utah	25	15	10	3	4	3	18	11	7	4	0	0	0	0	0
Vermont	4	3	3	1	0	1	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Virginia	83	76	79	58	50	54	22	21	22	2	4	1	1	1	2
Washington	48	49	44	17	18	20	25	27	21	3	4	1	3	0	2
West Virginia	14	12	19	7	4	9	6	8	9	1	0	0	0	0	1
Wisconsin	63	43	56	31	14	33	26	27	20	5	1	3	1	1	0
Wyoming	11	8	7	2	2	3	7	4	4	2	2	0	0	0	0
United States	2,827	2,825	3,006	1,822	1,804	1,972	810	846	822	151	143	173	44	32	39

¹Total firearm deaths and homicide firearm deaths exclude firearm deaths by legal (police or corrections) intervention.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, WISQARS, at <http://www.cdc.gov/nipc/wisqars/>, data accessed December 2005, January 2007 and February 2008. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens, 2005



States with the Most and Fewest Child Gun Deaths

The eight states with the most firearm deaths of children and teens in 2005:

- 1. California**
- 2. Texas**
- 3. Florida**
- 4. Pennsylvania**
- 5. Illinois**
- 6. Ohio**
- 7. Louisiana**
- 8. Arizona**

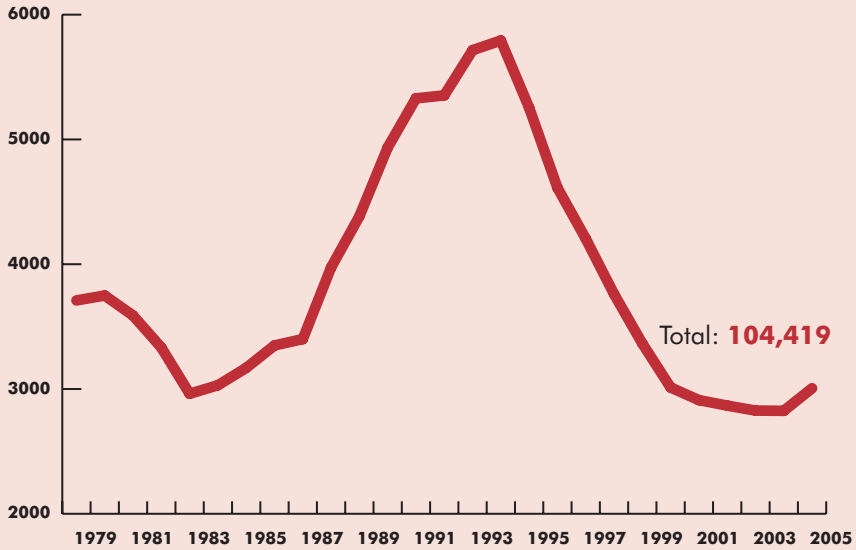
These states accounted for 1,484, or 49.4 percent, of all firearm deaths among children and teens in 2005.

The seven states with the fewest firearm deaths of children and teens in 2005:

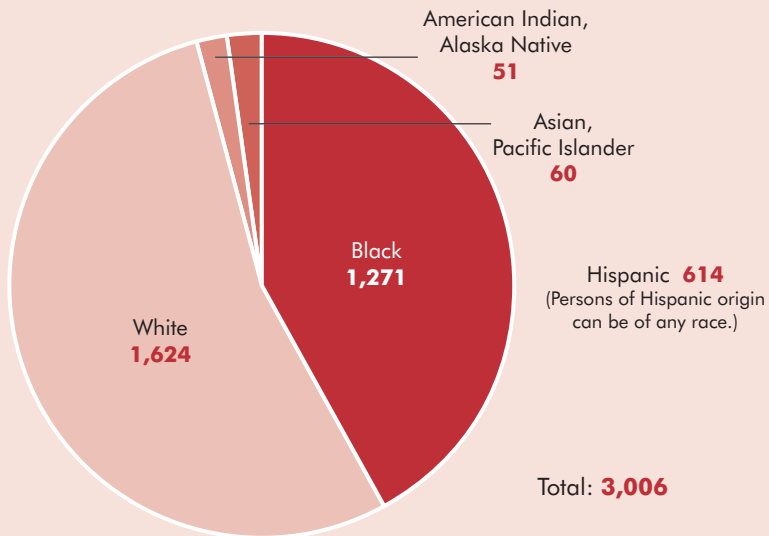
- 1. Maine**
- 2. New Hampshire**
- 3. Hawaii**
- 4. Vermont**
- 5. Delaware**
- 6. Rhode Island**
- 7. Wyoming**

These seven states accounted for 28 firearm deaths of children and teens in 2005.

Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens, 1979-2005



Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens by Race/Hispanic Origin, 2005



Firearm Deaths by Manner and by Race/Hispanic Origin, Persons under Age 20, 1979–2005

	Manner					Race/Hispanic Origin				
						American			Black	White
	Total	Homicide	Suicide	Accident	Unknown	Indian, Alaska Native ¹	Asian, Pacific Islander ¹			
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	49	27	—
1982	3,332	1,498	1,207	550	77	811	2,450	55	23	—
1983	2,962	1,238	1,150	504	70	739	2,155	42	25	—
1984	3,030	1,289	1,114	552	75	716	2,238	44	32	—
1985	3,169	1,322	1,256	519	72	850	2,241	42	36	—
1986	3,349	1,513	1,293	472	71	938	2,337	43	31	—
1987	3,400	1,573	1,281	467	79	1,117	2,199	28	54	—
1988	3,974	1,953	1,387	543	91	1,458	2,405	76	53	—
1989	4,384	2,367	1,380	567	70	1,694	2,563	50	76	—
1990	4,935	2,852	1,476	541	66	2,047	2,753	47	87	748
1991	5,329	3,247	1,436	551	95	2,297	2,878	60	91	883
1992	5,353	3,336	1,426	501	90	2,359	2,834	55	105	924
1993	5,715	3,625	1,460	526	104	2,600	2,925	51	139	977
1994	5,793	3,579	1,565	512	137	2,559	3,024	75	135	993
1995	5,254	3,249	1,450	440	115	2,153	2,898	73	130	1,005
1996	4,613	2,836	1,309	376	92	1,976	2,475	64	98	817
1997	4,205	2,562	1,262	306	75	1,687	2,357	59	102	748
1998	3,761	2,184	1,241	262	74	1,416	2,197	60	88	661
1999	3,365	1,990	1,078	214	83	1,301	1,934	57	73	605
2000	3,012	1,776	1,007	193	36	1,149	1,762	44	57	568
2001	2,911	1,771	928	182	30	1,128	1,695	49	39	518
2002	2,867	1,830	828	167	42	1,112	1,639	52	64	581
2003	2,827	1,822	810	151	44	1,172	1,554	50	51	553
2004	2,825	1,804	846	143	32	1,149	1,568	57	51	574
2005	3,006	1,972	822	173	39	1,271	1,624	51	60	614
Total	104,419	58,242	32,659	11,431	2,087	38,516	62,713	1,333	1,727	11,769

¹ Data for American Indian/Alaska Native and Asian/Pacific Islander not available for 1979–1980.

² Persons of Hispanic origin can be of any race. Hispanic data not available prior to 1990. For 1990 to 1996, a small number of states with small Hispanic populations did not include Hispanic identifiers in their reporting to the federal government.

Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC WONDER, at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/mortSQL.html>, accessed December 2004; and 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 December 2004, January 2006, December 2006 and January 2008. Calculations by Children’s Defense Fund.

**In 2005, 69 preschoolers were killed by firearms compared
to 53 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty.**

Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens, by Age, Manner and Race/Hispanic Origin, 2005

	Under Age 1	Ages 1-4	Ages 5-9	Ages 10-14	Ages 15-19	Total under age 20
All Races	7	62	62	273	2,602	3,006
Accident	1	22	15	37	98	173
Suicide	0	0	0	84	738	822
Homicide	6	37	44	143	1,742	1,972
Undetermined intent	0	3	3	9	24	39
White	4	33	31	178	1,378	1,624
Accident	0	10	6	31	67	114
Suicide	0	0	0	75	628	703
Homicide	4	23	24	63	668	782
Undetermined intent	0	0	1	9	15	25
Black	3	27	25	85	1,131	1,271
Accident	1	12	8	6	24	51
Suicide	0	0	0	6	80	86
Homicide	2	13	16	73	1,019	1,123
Undetermined intent	0	2	1	0	8	11
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	1	4	3	43	51
Accident	0	0	1	0	3	4
Suicide	0	0	0	2	20	22
Homicide	0	0	3	1	19	23
Undetermined intent	0	1	0	0	1	2
Asian, Pacific Islander	0	1	2	7	50	60
Accident	0	0	0	0	4	4
Suicide	0	0	0	1	10	11
Homicide	0	1	1	6	36	44
Undetermined intent	0	0	1	0	0	1
Hispanic¹	2	7	8	39	558	614
Accident	1	1	1	2	17	22
Suicide	0	0	0	6	78	84
Homicide	1	6	7	31	457	502
Undetermined intent	0	0	0	0	6	6

¹Persons 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 Prevention and Control, WISQARS, at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars>, accessed January 2008. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

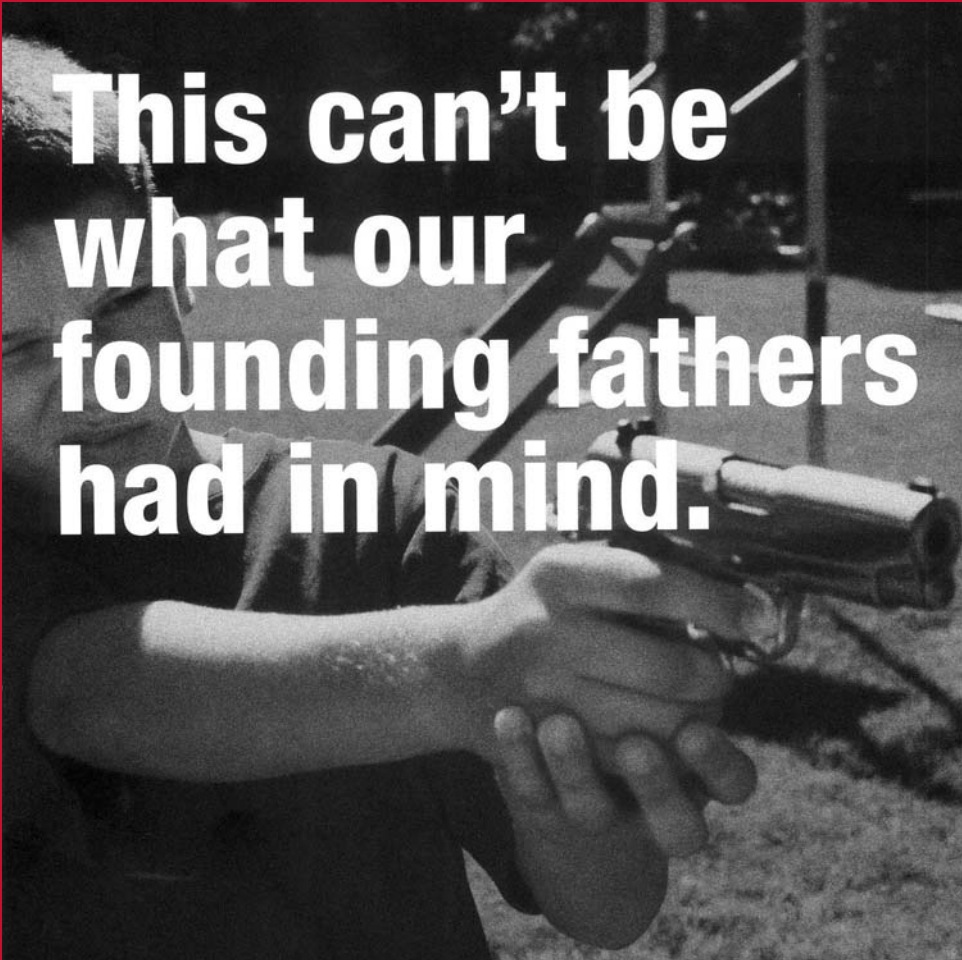
More 10- to 19-year-olds die from gunshot wounds than from any other cause except motor vehicle accidents.

**W H A T D O E S
I T T A K E F O R A
K I D T O B U Y A
\$ 1 0 0 H A N D G U N ?**



A B O U T \$ 1 0 0

**For more information, call (202) 628-8787
or visit us at www.childrensdefense.org**



**This can't be
what our
founding fathers
had in mind.**

The Children's Defense Fund's Leave No Child Behind[®] mission is 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 began in 1973 and is a private, nonprofit organization supported by foundation and corporate grants and individual donations. We have never taken government funds.



Children's Defense Fund

25 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 628-8787 or 1 (800) CDF-1200
www.childrensdefense.org