

## CHILDREN & GUNS: A LETHAL COMBINATION

In 2004, nearly eight young people aged 19 and under were killed each day by a firearm in the United States. [1] In 2005, nearly 45 per day were non-fatally wounded. [2] The scourge of gun violence frequently attacks the most helpless members of our society - our children. Consider these facts:

- In 2004, 1,804 children and teenagers were murdered in gun homicides, 846 committed suicide with guns, and 143 died in unintentional shootings. A total of 2,852 young people were killed by firearms in the U.S., one every three hours. [3]
- In 2004, 82% of murder victims aged 13 to 19 years old were killed with a firearm. [4]
- During 2004, 55% of all murders of those under age 18 in the U.S. involved firearms. [5]
- Firearms are the second-leading cause of death (after motor vehicle accidents) for young people 19 and under in the U.S. [6]
- The rate of firearm death of under 14-years-old is nearly **12** times higher in the U.S. than in 25 other industrialized countries combined. [7]
- In 2004, for every child and teenager killed by a gun, nearly five were estimated to be non-fatally wounded. [8]
- From 1999 to 2004, firearms were responsible for 18% of injury deaths for Caucasian teens ages 13-19 in the United States, 51% of deaths for African-American teens, 31% of Hispanic teens, 18% of Native American/Alaska Native teens, and 19% of Asian/Pacific Islander teens. [9]
- In a study of inner-city 7-year-olds and their exposure to violence, 75% of them reported hearing gun shots. [10]
- "The firearm injury epidemic, due largely to handgun injuries, is **10** times larger than the polio epidemic of the first half of this century." [11]

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### Endnotes:

1. WISQARS, *Injury Mortality Reports*, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control, 2004 data, [http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/mortrate10\\_sy.html](http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/mortrate10_sy.html) (hereafter *Injury Mortality Reports*).
2. WISQARS, *Nonfatal Injury Reports*, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control, 2005 data, <http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/nfirates2001.html> (hereafter *Nonfatal Injury Reports*).
3. WISQARS, *Injury Mortality Reports*.
4. WISQARS, *Injury Mortality Reports*.
5. Ibid.
6. WISQARS, *Leading Causes of Death Reports*, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control, 2004 data, <http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/leadcaus10.html>
7. "Firearm-Related Death in 26 Industrialized Countries", *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1997, 46(5): 101-105.
8. WISQARS, *Injury Mortality Reports*; WISQARS, *Nonfatal Injury Reports*.
9. WISQARS, *Injury Mortality Reports*.

10. Hallam Hurt, MD; Elsa Malmud, PhD; Nancy L. Brodsky, PhD; Joan Giannetta, BA, "Exposure to Violence: Psychological and Academic Correlates in Child Witnesses," *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, December 2001, Vol. 55, No. 12, pp. 1351-1356.
11. Christoffel, Katherine Kaufer, "Handguns and the Environments of Children", *Children's Environments*, 12(1), 1995, p. 42.