



Facts on Guns and Youth

- 1) In 1998 guns killed 612 American children less than 15 years old. Of these gun-related deaths: 317 were homicides, 154 were suicides, 121 were unintentional and 20 were of undetermined intent.
- 2) In 1998 guns killed 3,792 American children and teenagers 19 years of age and younger. Of these gun-related deaths: 2,215 were homicides, 1,241 were suicides, 262 were unintentional, and 74 were of undetermined intent.
- 3) Of the 1,737 teenagers aged 15 to 19 who committed suicide in 1998, nearly two thirds (1,087 victims or 63 percent) killed themselves with guns.
- 4) Of the 2,311 teenagers aged 15 to 19 that were murdered in 1998, more than eight out of 10 (1,898 victims or 82 percent) were killed with guns.
- 5) A 1997 CDC study that compared gun-related death rates in 26 industrialized countries among children less than 15 years old found that the gun-related homicide rate among U.S. children was nearly 16 times higher than the rate among children in the other 25 industrialized countries combined; the gun-related suicide rate was nearly 11 times higher; and the unintentional gun-related death rate was nine times higher.
- 6) In 1998 guns were the third leading cause of death among all children aged five to 14 years old behind accidents and cancer, and the second leading cause of death for teenagers aged 15 to 19.
- 7) Federal law mandates that a person must be at least 18 years of age to purchase a rifle or shotgun and 21 years of age to buy a handgun from a holder of a Federal Firearms License.
- 8) A CDC survey of youth risk behavior revealed that in 1997 more than one in 20 high school males reported carrying a gun within the 30 days preceding the survey.
- 9) A recent National Institute of Justice (NIJ) study reported that one third of juvenile arrestees said they had used a gun in committing a crime.
- 10) According to the FBI, between 1980 and 1997, 73 percent of male juvenile homicide offenders used a firearm.