

# Gun Violence Prevention in Santa Clara County

WE ALL PLAY A ROLE IN  
A SAFE AND PEACEFUL  
COMMUNITY

## The Impact of Gun Violence in Santa Clara County<sup>1</sup>

- On average, 4.2 per 100,000 people died due to gun violence annually between 2004 and 2013 (58 to 87 total deaths per year).
- Suicide and self-inflicted injuries account for the majority of deaths from firearms.
- Emergency department (ED) visits due to firearm injuries increased by more than 50% from 2009 to 2013.
- Assault and homicide account for the highest percentage of firearm-related hospitalizations and ED visits.
- White residents experience the highest average annual number of firearm deaths.
- African American residents suffer the highest *rates* of death, hospitalizations and ED visits from firearms.
- Latino residents face the highest *number* of hospitalizations and ED visits due to firearms injuries.



**“The epidemic of intentional gun violence can be reversed with a science-based approach. It happened with Ebola, it worked for automobile crashes and it can absolutely reduce gun violence.”**

*- Dr. Georges Benjamin , Executive Director of the American Public Health Association*

## Why is Gun Violence a Problem?

- Guns are prolific across the United States.
- Guns are the second leading cause of death among children and teens in the US.
- Unsafe storage of guns increases the likelihood of accidental deaths, theft and illegal possession.
- Easy access to a gun in the home increases the risk of suicide and intimate partner violence.
- Injuries and loss of life due to gun violence in 2013 cost \$120 million in Santa Clara County, a significant economic burden on victims, families and communities.<sup>2</sup>

► **Gun violence is preventable.**

## How Adults Can Help Children Exposed to Violence and Trauma<sup>3</sup>

Adults play an important role in helping kids develop skills to cope with trauma and violence. The recommendations below may be useful to help all kids through many challenges they face.

- Make sure you are in **good health**.
- **Be a role model**—show how you solve problems calmly.
- **Be reliable**.
- **Be a good listener**—demonstrate empathy in what kids say.
- **Be honest** and age-appropriate.
- **Respect cultural background**—participation in cultural activities can foster identity and pride among kids and youth.
- **Encourage safe** extra-curricular **activities that reduce stress**.
- **Help** kids learn how to get out of and **stay out of danger**.
- **Help kids manage emotions**—when kids recognize their feelings they can regulate their response.
- **Create safe, stable and predictable environments**.



## How to Prevent Firearm Injury and Death in our Community

- Learn how to peacefully resolve conflicts among family, neighbors and strangers.
- Get to know your neighbors and community and create safe and caring relationships.
- **If you own a firearm, ensure safe, consistent storage of it at all times.**
- If you or someone you know is depressed or in a mental health crisis, seek support from trained professionals.
- If you have children, understand if guns are available and how they are stored *before* allowing your children to go on play dates or sleep overs.<sup>4</sup>
- Be mindful of—and reduce exposure to—video games, movies and other media that feature gun violence.
- **Understand how policy can prevent gun violence** such as requiring background checks.
- **Contact your elected leaders** to state your position on local, State and Federal firearm legislation.

▶ **If you or someone you know is in crisis or suicidal, call 1-855-278-4204 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

▶ **For more violence prevention resources and ways to play a positive role in our community, visit [www.ViolenceFreeSCC.org](http://www.ViolenceFreeSCC.org) or call 1-408-793-2724.**

### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> Santa Clara County Public Health Department, Firearms Injuries Fact Sheet, October 2015

<sup>2</sup> Santa Clara County Public Health Department, 2013 Death Statistical Master File; Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, 2011 Emergency Department Data and 2011 Patient Discharge Data; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System, 2010. Note: For annual economic costs, data are for non-fatal hospitalizations and non-fatal treat and release ED visits only and so may not match number reported in other tables and graphs. Costs are indexed to 2013 U.S. prices for hospitalizations and ED visits and in 2013 California prices for deaths. Hospitalizations and ED visits exclude undetermined intent.

<sup>3</sup> These recommendations have been adapted from Futures Without Violence. Accessed on December 1, 2015:

FuturesWithoutViolence.org, Everyday Magic: 16 ways adults can support children exposed to violence and trauma

<sup>4</sup> Accessed on December 1, 2015: AskingSavesKids.org, American Academy of Pediatrics and Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence