

# ISSUE BRIEF:

## Gun Safety & Children's Health

### Child Firearm Deaths in SC

- Pediatricians across the state are treating children who were preventably injured by firearms.
- At least 12 accidental shootings in 2019 occurred after unsecured weapons were obtained by children aged 2, 4, 9, 12, 14, 15, and 17.
- At least 29 children died by suicide using firearms in 2019 in South Carolina.

### Safe Storage Matters

- A recent study found that more than 75% of the firearms used in youth suicide attempts and unintentional injuries were stored in the residence of the victim, a relative, or a friend.
- At least 2 studies have found that the risk of suicide increases in homes where guns are kept loaded and/or unlocked.

### Safe Storage Law Options

- Child access prevention (CAP) laws impose penalties on adults who negligently leave firearms accessible to children or otherwise allow children access to firearms.
- The RAND Corporation recently evaluated CAP laws. A review of rigorously designed studies, published between 1996 and 2015, showed that enacting these laws may reduce accidental and intentional firearm deaths for children under 16. (They also showed limited evidence that safe storage reduces deaths of adults).
- While not yet studied for impact, Texas enacted a \$1 million publicly-funded media campaign encouraging the safe storage of firearms.



Source: RAND Corporation