Children's Defense Fund
Protect Children Not Guns Factsheet

2014 Child Gun Deaths

December 2015

A child or teen dies from a gun every 3 hours and 28 minutes.

- 2,525 children and teens died from guns in the United States in 2014, one every 3 hours and 28 minutes.
- The children and teens who died from guns in 2014 would fill 126 classrooms of 20 children.
- As shocked as the nation was by the 2012 Newtown massacre, more children and teens died from guns every three days in 2014 than died then.

2014 reversed a seven-year decline in child and teen gun deaths.

- Child and teen gun deaths have been declining every year since 2007, however in 2014, 80 more children and teens were killed by guns than in 2013.
- The number and rate of children and teens killed by guns in 2014 remains lower than at any other year in the 21st Century save for 2013.

Guns killed more children under 5 in 2014 than law enforcement officers in the line of duty.

- 78 children under 5 died from guns in 2014, compared to 48 law enforcement officers killed by guns in the line of duty.

Black and American Indian and Alaska Native children and teens are disproportionately more likely to die from a gun.

- In 2014, 40 percent of gun deaths were among Black children and teens, although they made up only 14 percent of all children and teens.
- 1,020 Black children and teens were killed by guns in 2014, one every eight hours and 35 minutes.
- Black children and teens were three and a half times as likely to die from a gun as White children and teens and 10 times as likely to die from a gun as Asian and Pacific Islander children and teens.
- Black children and teens were the most likely of all racial and ethnic groups to die from a gun homicide. American Indian and Alaska Native children and teens were the most likely to die from a gun suicide, followed by White children and teens.
- American Indian and Alaska Native children and teens were more than one and a half times as likely to die from a gun as White children and teens, and more than four and a half times as likely to die from a gun as Asian and Pacific Islander children.

Child and teen gun death rates remain higher than in the early 1960s.

- In 2014, the rate of gun deaths among children and teens was 27 percent higher than in 1963, when data were first collected from all states.
- Between 1963 and 2014, 63,520 Black children and teens have been killed by guns — more than 16 times the recorded lynchings of Black people of all ages in the 74 years from 1877 to 1950.
- While Black children and teens have been disproportionately more likely to die from guns since the early 1960s, over half the deaths since 1963 were among White children and teens.
- On average 3,402 children and teens — 170 classrooms of 20 children — were killed by guns *every year* from 1963 to 2014.

Since 1963, over three times more children and teens died from guns on American soil than U.S. soldiers were killed in action in wars abroad.

- 176,903 children and teens died from guns on American soil between 1963 and 2014, while 52,907 U.S. soldiers were killed in action in the Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq wars during that same period.

The U.S. has as many guns as people.

- The U.S. accounts for less than 5 percent of the global population, but owns an estimated 35 to 50 percent of all civilian-owned guns in the world.
- The most recent estimate of U.S. civilian gun ownership is as high as 310 million, about one gun per person. In contrast, U.S. military and law enforcement agencies possess approximately 4 million guns.
- American companies manufacture enough bullets each year to fire 31 rounds into every one of our citizens.

A gun in the home increases the risk of homicide, suicide and accidental death.

- A gun in the home makes the likelihood of homicide three times higher, suicide three to five times higher, and accidental death four times higher. For each time a gun in the home injures or kills in self-defense, there are 11 completed and attempted gun suicides, seven criminal assaults and homicides with a gun, and four unintentional shooting deaths or injuries.
- More than half of youth who committed suicide with a gun obtained the gun from their home, usually a parent's gun.

Note: Gun injury data are not yet available for 2014.

Sources: Gun deaths: CDC WONDER Online Database, http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html. Gun injuries: CDC Nonfatal Injury Reports, http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/nfirates2001.html, based on the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System All Injury Program. All child and teen data are for ages 0 -19 and exclude deaths for interactions with law enforcement. Law enforcement deaths (includes felonious and accidental deaths by firearms): Federal Bureau of Investigation http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/leoka. War casualties (as of Dec 11, 2014): Defense Casualty Analysis System, https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/casualties.xhtml . International comparisons: World Health Organization, Inter-country comparison of mortality for selected cause of death, http://data.euro.who.int/dmdb/. Lynching: Equal Justice Initiative. 2015. Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror. Note: CDF has previously used data from Tuskegee University for this statistic but EJI's recent research incorporated that work and documented several hundred more lynchings through reviews of local newspapers, historical archives and court records as well as interviews with historians, survivors and victims' descendants. For other sources see the Children's Defense Fund's Protect Children, Not Guns 2013 report, http://www.childrensdefense.org/child-research-data-publications/data/protect-children-not-guns-2013.html.