

With each and every new “gun-control” proposal billed as just a “reasonable” compromise, it is time to ask: What if those “reasonable” gun laws compromise the safety of our children? Laws which bar responsible, law-abiding people from the ready access of firearms do NOT make our children safer—they only serve to place our children in greater jeopardy! Here’s why:

- **FACT:** When ordinary citizens carry concealed handguns, violent crime drops. The reduction corresponds very closely to the number of concealed handgun licenses issued. On average, murder rates in those states that ban concealed-carry are 127% higher than in states having the most liberal carry laws. *A 1% increase in firearm ownership reduces violent crime by 4.1%.* Urban areas benefit the most from concealed-carry laws.¹
- **FACT:** The benefits of concealed handguns are not limited just to those who carry them for purposes of self-defense. “Citizens who have no intention of ever carrying concealed handguns get . . . a ‘free ride’ from [armed law-abiding adults] . . . “ This is illustrated by the drop in murders of children which follows the adoption of “right-to-carry” concealed-handgun laws. (“Right-to-carry” laws require the issuance of a concealed-carry license to all qualified applicants.) “Arming older people not only may provide direct protection to these children, but also causes criminals to leave the area.”¹

“Arm All The Teachers? How Stupid!”

That, from the union leadership, mainstream media and misguided politicians, is an emotional response NOT supported by the facts. The point is NOT that ALL adults should carry guns in school, but rather that all responsible adults in our schools *who wish to do so* should be allowed to do just that!

- “. . . the recent rash of public school shootings . . . raise[s] questions about the unintentional consequences of laws . . . The possibility exists that attempts to outlaw guns from schools, no matter how well meaning, may have produced perverse effects.”²
- **FACT:** Between 1977 and 1995, 15 shootings took place in schools in states without right-to-carry concealed-handgun laws, and *only one* took place in a state which has such a law. There were 19 deaths and 97 injuries in states without right-to-carry laws, but only one death and two injuries in states with such laws.²

- **FACT:** The five school shootings which occurred during the ’97–’98 school year took place *after the 1995 Gun-Free School Zones law was enacted*, banning guns (including lawfully possessed concealed handguns) within 1000 feet of a school.²
- **FACT:** Deaths and injuries from mass public school shootings (like Jonesboro, AR and Littleton, CO) fall dramatically after right-to-carry concealed handgun laws are enacted. Between 1977 and 1995, the average death rate from mass shootings plummeted by up to 91% after such laws went into effect, and injuries dropped by over 80%!²
- **FACT:** “People who engage in mass public shootings are deterred by the possibility that law-abiding citizens may be carrying guns. Such people may be deranged, but they still appear to care whether they will themselves be shot as they attempt to kill others.”²

Armed Adults/Teachers Save Lives!

That’s how it worked before “gun-free” school zones disarmed those adults and marked schools as easy targets for criminals. It still does:

Example: Armed with a hunting rifle, 16-year-old Luke Woodham killed his ex-girlfriend and her friend, then wounded seven other students, in 1997 at a high school in Pearl, Mississippi. *Assistant Principal Joel Myrick* retrieved a handgun from his car, which he had forgotten to remove from the weekend, and interrupted Woodham’s shooting spree, holding him at bay until police arrived. Earlier that morning, Woodham had stabbed his mother to death.³

Example: A similar script played out in 1998 in Edinboro, Pennsylvania, when local merchant James Strand used his shotgun to “coax” 14-year-old Andrew Wurst into dropping his gun, and surrendering to police. *Wurst had just killed one teacher, and wounded another teacher plus two classmates.*³

Instead of dredging up the emotionally charged picture of a child killed with a gun, let the anti-self-defense lobby show us pictures of all those children saved by the presence of a gun when needed the most! They’ll need LOTS more room to do that: “Thousands of children are protected each year by parents or other adults using guns to defend themselves and their families.”⁴

Guns and Juvenile Delinquency

- **FACT:** Today’s “easy accessibility” of guns is a myth. There are more gun laws now than ever before, yet the prevalence of firearms in America—guns are present in about one out of two households—has remained constant since 1959.⁵
- **FACT:** A July 1993 U.S. Department of Justice study found that “boys who own legal firearms . . . have much lower rates of delinquency and drug use [than those who obtained them illegally] and are even slightly less delinquent than non-owners of guns.” It concluded that, “for legal gunowners, socialization appears to take place in the family; for illegal gunowners, it appears to take place on the street.”⁶

The DoJ study also found that children who get guns from their parents:

- Don’t commit gun crimes (0%); children who get illegal guns are likely to do so (24%).
- Are less likely to commit any kind of street crime (14%) than children who have no gun in the house (24%), and are dramatically less likely to do so than children who acquire an illegal gun (74%).
- Are less likely to use drugs (13%) than children who get illegal guns (41%), or have no gun in the house (15%).

Accidents & Suicides

- **FACT:** In 1994, fatal gun accidents reached the lowest annual level since record-keeping began in 1903. They dropped again in 1995, were lower still in 1996, and even lower in 1997. In 1997, with an estimated 240 million guns in America, there were 22 fatal gun accidents among children up to age 5. That same year, 600 children up to age 5 drowned. Motor vehicle accidents, falls, fires, drownings, poisonings, suffocation, and other accidents combined accounted for more deaths than did firearm accidents.^{7,8}
- **FACT:** California has a “trigger-lock” law and saw a 12% *increase* in fatal firearm accidents in 1994. Texas doesn’t but fatal gun accidents dropped 28% that year.⁷ Gun-owning parents must be doing something right, *despite the absence of trigger lock laws!*
- **FACT:** Trigger-lock laws don’t equal safety—education does!⁹ But trigger-locks do render guns inaccessible for self-defense.

Accidents & Suicides *cont'd*

- **FACT:** Accident and suicide rates are unaffected by the passage of right-to-carry handgun laws. ¹
- **FACT:** Suicide rates fluctuate independently of gun laws and gun ownership. Banning guns will not affect the suicide rate—other equally deadly implements will be substituted in their place. ¹⁰
- **FACT:** “Every day, 15 American children are killed with guns” is the claim made by Cease Fire and other anti-self-defense groups and politicians. But this is true ONLY if one includes 20-year-old armed robbers shot by the police and 19-year-old drug dealers shot by rivals as “children”! ⁷

Crime and No Punishment

The “politically-correct” assumption that crime is a function of the “easy” availability of guns is not borne out by the facts. Unbiased researchers tell us that just the opposite is true—that more guns in the hands of ordinary law-abiding citizens equals less crime. ¹ (Criminologists also tell us that swift and sure punishment drives the crime rate down.)

- **FACT:** Federal prosecution of felons who used guns in the commission of crimes is down 47% since President Clinton took office. ¹¹
- **FACT:** Of the 6,000 students caught at school with guns in the past two years, the Clinton administration prosecuted only 13. ¹¹
- **FACT:** During the last two years, the Clinton administration has prosecuted only 11 juveniles for illegal possession of handguns, 11 people for illegally transferring handguns to juveniles, and 37 people for illegally providing firearms to felons. ¹¹
- **FACT:** It is a crime for a felon to buy a gun. Yet, despite President Clinton’s claim that 250,000 prohibited buyers have been turned away by the Brady Act, three years after its 1994 enactment, only four people had gone to jail for Brady violations. ZERO Brady rejects were prosecuted by the Clinton administration in 1996, ZERO in 1997, and ZERO in 1998. ¹¹

If young adults are not made to face the consequences of their actions, and if those who have committed no crime are scapegoated and punished instead, we can only expect an escalation of the problems now facing our society.

References/Footnotes

1. “More Guns, Less Crime: Understanding Crime and Gun-Control Laws”; Lott, J.; University of Chicago; 1998
2. “Multiple Victim Public Shootings, Bombings, and Right-to-Carry Concealed Handgun Laws: Contrasting Private and Public Law Enforcement”; Lott, J., Landes W; Univ. of Chicago, Working Paper #73, 1999
3. “How to Stop Mass Public Shootings”; Lott, J.; L.A. Times, 3/25/98
4. “Gun Laws Can Be Dangerous, Too” Lott, J.; Wall Street Journal, 5/12/99
5. “Targeting Guns”; Kleck G; Aldine deGruyter Press; New York 1997
6. “Urban Delinquency and Substance Abuse”; U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; July 1993
7. National Center for Health Statistics
8. National Safety Council
9. “Children & Guns: Sensible Solutions”; Kopel, D.; Independence Inst. 1993
10. “Guns in the Medical Literature: A Failure of Peer Review”; Suter, E; Journal of the Medical Association of Georgia, March 1994
11. U.S. Department of Justice statistics

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Want To Do Something?

These Utah-based organizations are dedicated to making sure the school-shooting tragedies that have horrified other states will not happen here. We support “Eddie Eagle” and other gun safety programs for children. We don’t want to protect criminals and the mentally disturbed who would do our children harm by making it illegal for law-abiding citizens, teachers, custodians or administrators to legally defend themselves . . . *and the children for whom they are responsible* . . . if they wish.

Contact these groups for additional copies of this folder (or make copies if you wish) or for speakers at your next meeting or event.



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www.inconnect.com/~LPUtah



GOUtah! (Gun Owners of Utah)
Fax: 801/944-9937
www.slpsa.org/goutah!

Guns, Children, & Schools

Here Are The Real,
Documented Facts
that the Media,
the Governor,
Utah’s Teachers
Union and the PTA
Have Failed to
Communicate!

“Can anyone explain how leaving our school children undefended protects them?”

Women Against Gun Control

“Do we really want to make our schools as safe as Columbine? Our churches as safe as Ft. Worth?”

Libertarian Party of Utah

“We trust professional educators with our children. We also trust them with having a means of self-defense.”

Gun Owners of Utah