



Ownership and storage of firearms among adults in Ohio

The **Ohio Health Issues Poll (OHIP)** is conducted every year to learn more about the health opinions, behaviors and status of adults in Ohio. In 2017, OHIP asked Ohio adults several questions about gun ownership and storage.

Adults with a firearm in the home have a choice about how to store their firearm. Research has shown that having a firearm in the home can increase the risk of unintentional injury, including homicide and suicide.¹ Safe storage practices can reduce these risks. This includes keeping the weapon unloaded and locked in a secure location, a practice supported by the National Crime Prevention Council,² the American Academy of Pediatrics,³ Giffords Law Center⁴ and others.

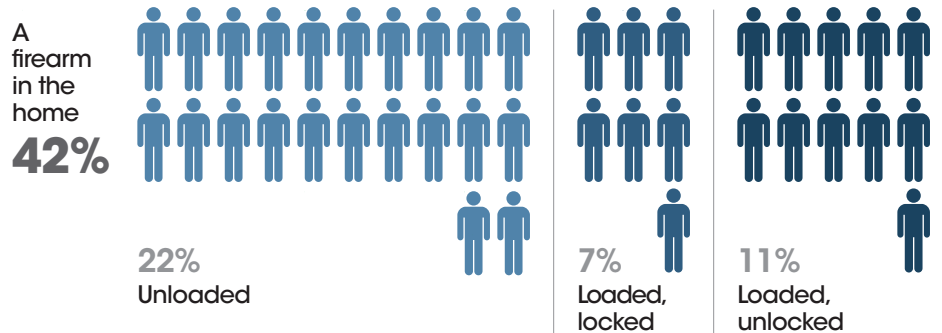
¹ Anglemyer, A., Horvath, T., & Rutherford, G. (2014). The accessibility of firearms and risk for suicide and homicide victimization among household members. *Ann Intern Med* 160, 101-110.

² National Crime Prevention Council. (2015). *Safe Storage Options*. Retrieved March 2018 from <http://bit.ly/2fBp2mQ>.

³ American Academy of Pediatrics. (2018). *Handguns in the Home*. Retrieved March 2018 from <http://bit.ly/2p8E1dH>.

⁴ Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. (2017). *Safe Storage*. Retrieved February 2018 from <http://bit.ly/2tGER69>.

Ohio adults with ...



WHAT DID OHIP FIND?

4 in 10 Ohio adults say they have gun in home

OHIP asked, "Are any firearms kept in or around your home?"⁵ Four in 10 Ohio adults reported keeping at least one firearm in or

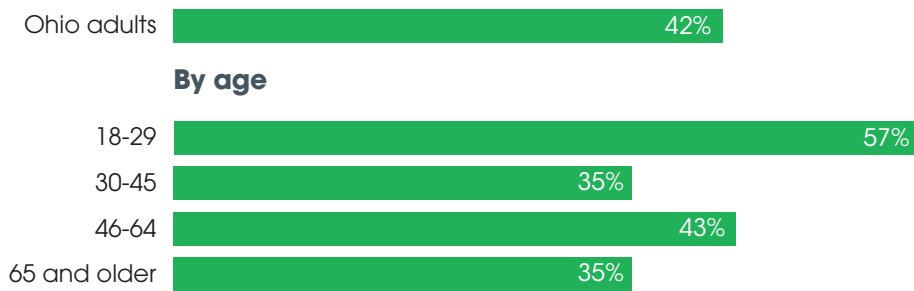
⁵ OHIP said, "In your answers, please include weapons such as pistols, shotguns and rifles; but not BB guns, starter pistols or guns that cannot fire. Include those kept in a garage, outdoor storage area or motor vehicle."

around their home (42%). This is slightly higher than in 2013 when 36% of Ohio adults reported having a firearm in their home.

OHIP asked respondents who had a firearm in their home whether or not these firearms were loaded. Nearly 2 in 10 Ohio adults said they had a loaded firearm in their home (18%). OHIP also asked, "Are any of these

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Percentage of Ohio adults who have a firearm in or around their home



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loaded firearms also unlocked?” One in 10 Ohio adults had a loaded, unlocked firearm in or around their home (11%).

Half of homes with children have firearms

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has taken the position that it is best not to have a firearm at all in a home with a child. If there is a firearm in the home, AAP recommends the firearm be unloaded and securely locked in storage away from the ammunition.⁶ Among Ohio adults living in homes with children, nearly half (46%) reported having a firearm.

Men, young adults more likely to have firearm

Men (50%) were more likely than women (35%) to report having a

firearm in or around their home. Responses also varied by age. Adults between the ages of 18 and 29 (57%) were more likely than older adults (38%) to report having a firearm.

WHY DO WE ASK THESE QUESTIONS?

The rate of deaths related to firearms has been increasing in Ohio and in the nation in recent years.⁷ In the wake of this and multiple high-profile shootings in our nation, debate about current legislation, possible legislation and best practices is prominent at both the state and national level. An important step in the process is to better understand the current firearm ownership and storage practices in Ohio.

⁶ Dowd, M.D. & Sege, R.D. (2012). Firearm-related injuries affecting the pediatric population. *Pediatrics*, 130 (5). Retrieved from <http://bit.ly/1gQYMTQ>.

⁷ National Center for Health Statistics. (2018). *Firearm Mortality by State*. Retrieved February 2018, from <http://bit.ly/2nk0J2z>.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

Safe storage laws are designed to ensure that only the owner of a firearm is able to access and use that firearm. Eleven states in the U.S. have laws related to safe storage of firearms. Ohio's law requires that any federally licensed firearms dealer must offer a lock when selling a firearm. However, this does not apply to private sales, and there are no standards for the lock. There is also no law requiring the firearm owner to use this lock.⁸

⁸ Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. (2017). *Safe Storage*. Retrieved February 2018 from <http://bit.ly/2tGER69>.