RESOLUTION ON SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS

Amend the resolution “Safe Storage of Firearms” as follows:

Whereas, Firearms are the leading cause of death for American children and teens, and injure thousands more annually; and

Whereas, An estimated 4.6 million children live in homes with loaded, unlocked firearms, while more than half of owners acknowledge storing at least one firearm unsafely, without any locks or other safe storage measures, and nearly a quarter of all gun owners report storing all their firearms in an unlocked location in the home; and

Whereas, Over 80% of child firearm suicides involved a gun obtained from their own home or that of a friend or relative. Suicide rates among children who live in homes with firearms are four times higher than among those in homes without firearms. Most unintentional firearm-related shootings among children occur in or around the home, and most firearms used in school shootings perpetrated by shooters under the age of 18 are acquired from the home or the homes of relatives or friends; and

Whereas, Research indicates that strong child access prevention laws decrease unintentional shootings, suicides, and school shootings. States with secure storage or child access prevention laws had the lowest rates of injury or death from unintentional child shootings but only 14 states have secure storage laws; and

Whereas, Evidence strongly suggests that limiting access to firearms by children and teens limits the risk of injury and death, and the storage of a firearm locked, unloaded, or separate from ammunition can reduce the risk of suicide in children and teens; now therefore be it

Resolved, That National PTA urges its constituent organizations to raise awareness that secure gun storage, storing guns locked, unloaded and separate from ammunition, can prevent theft and access by children, unauthorized users, and anyone who may pose a danger to themselves or others, and that secure gun storage can save children’s lives; be it further

Resolved, That National PTA will work with other like-minded organizations to raise awareness about safe firearm storage and encourage its constituent organizations to collaborate with other community organizations that have similar interests and recognize that secure storage is an adult responsibility and is essential to preventing unauthorized, unsupervised access to firearms by children; be it further
Resolution: **Safe Storage of Firearms**

Resolved, That National PTA urges its constituent associations to encourage state governments to enact laws which require owners to store firearms, whether they are loaded or unloaded, in a securely locked container, to prevent access by children under the age of 18; and be it further

Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent associations support legislation that educates, incentivizes, or requires adults to **store their firearms safely, to be accountable for storing their firearms safely**, in coordination with programs and information as described above; and be it further

Resolved, That this resolution shall be in full force and effect until the last day of June 2030.

Adopted: by the 2023 Convention delegates

**Rationale for the Amendment to the Resolution**

Evidence strongly suggests that limiting children’s and teens’ access to firearms limits the risk of injury and death, and that storing firearms locked, unloaded and separate from ammunition can reduce the risk of suicide and unintentional shootings amongst children and teens. Nevertheless, an estimated 4.6 million children live in homes with at least one loaded and unlocked firearm in the U.S.

There have been several tragedies, most notably in Michigan in 2021, where a child or teenager got a hold of a firearm that was improperly stored and then caused injury or death of other children. Research shows that the majority of unintentional firearm-related shootings among children occur in or around the home, and most firearms used in school shootings perpetrated by shooters under the age of 18 were acquired from the home or the homes of relatives or friends.

The proposed amendment to this resolution would enable our association to engage more deeply around secure firearm storage by promoting education on how to store firearms safely and calling for reasonable accountability measures when firearms are stored insecurely and unsafely. In February, Edge Research conducted a nationwide survey commissioned by National PTA and Everytown for Gun Safety to better understand parents' perspectives on gun safety. The survey found that 86% of parents surveyed support holding gun owners legally responsible if a firearm is not properly secured in their home and is used by a child or teenager to harm or kill themselves or others. This support for storage accountability is consistent across party lines, including 83% of parents who identified as being Republican indicating they support legal accountability, 91% of parents who identified as being Democrat and 85% of parents who identified as being Independent. Advocacy around this issue is also timely, as there are currently ongoing legislative efforts at the national level—including legislation gaining momentum called Ethan's Law—to make it unlawful for a person to unsafely store a firearm if they know or reasonably should know that a minor would gain access to the firearm. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, at least 27 states have already enacted child access prevention laws to help stop these tragedies when a child gains access to an improperly secured firearm.
At PTA, we believe that no parent should fear for the safety of their child every time they leave home, but the reality is that over six in 10 parents today report worrying about school violence, and firearm injury is now the leading cause of death for children under the age of 19. School safety is a critical priority for all parents, educators, students and community members, and with this amendment to the resolution our association can bring the family voice into important policy decisions around the safe storage of firearms happening at the local, state and national levels.