



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
WESTCHESTER COUNTY

MIRIAM E. ROCAH
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

WESTCHESTER COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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Dear Families:

Providing students and staff in the Chappaqua school district with a safe educational environment remains one of our top priorities. This includes keeping our students safe from gun violence.

Even if you do not own a gun, your children may encounter one at the home of a friend or relative. You have an important responsibility under the law to protect your children from guns. Children often know where their parents' guns are kept and they can't always tell the difference between real and toy guns. One nationwide study found that [87 percent of kids know where their parents' guns are kept and 60 percent have handled them](#). Simply put, if guns are left loaded and unsecured in a home, children are at risk.

Every year in the United States, nearly [350 children under the age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else](#). That's roughly one unintentional shooting per day. Additionally, nearly [3,000 young people die by firearm suicide](#) each year. In the overwhelming majority of these incidents, the gun used was one that belonged to someone in their home. In New York, guns are the fourth-leading cause of death among children and teens and 63 children and teens die by guns every year.

[New York law](#) requires gun owners to secure their firearms if children 16 years old or younger live in or visit the home. All firearms need to be in a gun safe or locked with a trigger guard or similar gun locking device. Storing firearms unloaded, locked, and separate from ammunition prevents access and saves lives.

Please familiarize yourselves with [New York's safe storage law](#) which includes requirements that:

- Child safety locks or other commercially available locking mechanisms must be used on all firearms.
- Firearms must be locked in a secure location accessible to adults only.
- Ammunition must be locked in a secure location away from the firearms.

The Westchester County District Attorney's Office will provide free resources for you to learn more about safe storage of firearms. Click [here](#) to learn more and download helpful resources; including a secure storage fact sheet, information about talking to your children about guns, and facts and resources on child firearm suicide. Additionally, we will be providing a free virtual training that will help answer any questions you may have on firearm safety.

Sincerely,

MIRIAM E. ROCAH
DISTRICT ATTORNEY