

# Arming School Personnel Consensus Question Research

## TOPIC 4: Storage

8. Gun storage and management in a school setting is a complex process. What is the safest way to store/manage guns for armed school personnel?

- A. Guns are to be locked, unloaded, and stored in a locked gun safe. Ammunition to be stored in a separate locked safe.
- B. Guns should be stored in a locked storage safe but may be loaded.
- C. Schools should utilize biometric lock boxes for loaded guns and store them in the classroom.
- D. Schools should use Smart Guns to be used by specified armed personnel.
- E. The school personnel carry the loaded gun on their person at all times.
- F. Arming school personnel should not be permitted.

### Research:

The Ohio Bar Association affirms that before school boards authorize school personnel to carry guns, the safety and storage of the weapon should be taken into account. An American Medical Association study concluded that a safe storage practice for parents in homes with children and teenagers requires keeping ones' weapon locked and unloaded in one location and ammunition locked away in a separate location. While this does not prevent the occurrence of injury and death from illicit or licit gun violence in the home, it does reduce its occurrence. It could be possible to replicate these practices in schools, but the questions of the effectiveness of this practice in an emergency, and the added risk of injury to students and staff are still left unanswered.

<https://www.ohiobar.org/public-resources/commonly-asked-law-questions-results/industry-specialties/what-you-should-know-about-guns-in-schools/>

The second form of firearm storage that should be investigated further is biometric lock boxes and/or biometric firearms, also known as "smart guns". Biometric lock boxes and smart guns are tools that can be used in theory to ensure that the owner of the firearm is the only one who is able to use it by utilizing touch ID technology. An article published in the Connecticut Law Review provides an in depth look at each type of smart gun (i.e., trigger locks, magazine disconnects) and outlines how these new weapons could work in tandem with government policy and legislation, though it is important to note that the authors state that none of these new weapons are fool-proof. In regards to lock boxes, the same issues apply, while many biometric lock boxes used for safe gun storage are "child-resistant" none could be completely classified as "child-proof".

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/200330?resultClick=1>

<https://advance.lexis-com.hollins.idm.oclc.org/api/permalink/6ab640ec-cd0a-474c-8b73-68fc2ac2f1c4/?context=1516831>

Smart gun options are limited. Particularly in the U.S. In 2000, gun manufacturers, Smith & Wesson and Colt, combined resources to manufacture a smart gun. They were boycotted by gun owners, nearly putting them out of business. They ultimately took the smart gun off the market. Gun rights advocates are concerned the government would be able to limit gun owner's access to traditional guns.

<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/nicolenguyen/what-is-smart-gun-technology>

### Pro vs. Con:

Pro for storing and locking up guns and ammunition separately is that it is the safest option to prevent accidental discharge and/or injury.

Con for storing and locking up guns and ammunition is that during an active shooter event, these storage practices inhibit quick response time thus rendering the system ineffective.

9. Regarding students having access to the armed school personnel's firearm, with which statements do you agree?

- A. Students are curious and will likely be tempted to explore guns.
- B. Students can be taught appropriate gun safety practices.
- C. When guns are present, there is a higher risk of students being injured or killed with a gun.
- D. Guns should be hidden so students do not know guns are present in the schools.
- E. Arming school personnel should not be permitted.

#### Research:

Research indicates that children will show an interest in guns, will pick them up and even point and shoot a gun.

Rehearsal and practice with corrective feedback is the most effective method of teaching elements of gun safety: assessing a gun as dangerous, avoiding the situation, escaping the situation, and telling an adult. Though effective, this method does not completely mitigate the risk of improper handling of guns by children and it is time consuming and costly. Educating younger children (under 5) is even more challenging and less effective. Teaching parents, older peers and teachers to teach kids shows promise though the teaching/feedback may not be applied consistently.

1) "Seeing Is Believing: What Do Boys Do When They Find a Real Gun?" Geoffrey A. Jackman, Mirna M. Farah, Arthur L. Kellermann and Harold K. Simon. *Pediatrics*, June 2001, 107(6), 1247-1250.  
[doi.org/10.1542/peds.107.6.1247](https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.107.6.1247)

2) "A Firearm Safety Program for Children: They Just Can't Say No." Hardy, Marjories, S. Armstrong, F. Daniel; Martine, Breta L. Strawn, Keely N. Less. *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*, August 1996, 17(4), 216-221.

3) "Is Office-Based Counseling About Media Use, Timeouts and Firearm Storage Effective? Results from a Cluster-Randomized Controlled Trial." Shari L. Barkin, Stacia A. Finch, et al. *Pediatrics*, July 2008, 122(1), e15-e25.

4) "Teaching Firearm Safety to Children: Failure of a Program." Marjorie Hardy. *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*, April 2002, 23(2), 71-76.

5) "Teaching Safety Skills to Children: Prevention of Firearm Injury as an Exemplar of Best Practice in Assessment, Training, and Generalization of Safety Skills." Raymond G. Miltenberger. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*, Spring 2008, 1(1), 30-36.

6) "Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Teaching Package Utilizing Behavioral Skills Training and In Situ Training to Teach Gun Safety Skills in a Preschool Classroom." L.A. Hanratty, R.G. Miltenberger, & S.R. Florentino. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 2016, 25, 310-323.  
[doi.org/10.1007/s10864-016-9248-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10864-016-9248-1)

#### Weapons Effect Research:

Since 1967 when Berkowitz and La Page published their research that showed the mere presence of a weapon could increase aggressive thoughts and therefore behaviors, concern has been raised about the "weapons effect. In 2018, Kepes and Bushman examined all the subsequent research examining the "weapons effect" in a meta-analytic review of the weapons effect literature.

Their conclusions include the following: seeing images of weapons or actual weapons increases aggressive thoughts and “hostile appraisals”—the belief that other people are aggressive and will therefore behave aggressively in ambiguous situations. The effect is heightened when seeing an actual weapon regardless of the type of weapon. Being made aware of the weapons effect decreases both aggressive thoughts and hostile appraisals. Theoretically aggressive thoughts and hostile appraisals would lead to aggressive behaviors, though there are many mitigating factors that impact aggressive behavior. Further helpful research on the effects of being provoked the effect on physiological arousal, gender differences and cultural differences.

“Effects of Weapons on Aggressive Thoughts, Angry Feelings, Hostile Appraisals, and Aggressive Behavior: A Meta-Analytic Review of the Weapons Effect Literature.” A.J. Benjamin Jr., S. Kepes, & B.J. Bushman. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, November 2018, 22(4), 347-377.  
<http://ajbenjaminjr.tripod.com/articles/bkb18.pdf>