

# Keep Our Kids at Play, Lock Your Guns Away: A Community-Based Approach to Increase Safe Storage of Firearms within Family Homes of Rural Wyoming

Spencer M. Pecha | RUOP iii-3 | 2018 | University of Washington School of Medicine

**Hypothesis:** Distributing educational material with free firearm cable locks at a local community event will increase safe firearm storage practices within family homes.

## Background

- Douglas, Wyoming is a rural community of 6,120 residents located in Converse County
- Douglas is a community built upon natural resource extraction. The main economic drivers are surface coal mining and oil/natural gas drilling & extraction
- Firearms are naturally part of the community culture and many residents own firearms and enjoy activities such as hunting & shooting

## Literature Review

- Key findings:
- Distributing education with free firearm locking devices at community events leads to an increase in safe firearm storage practices within family homes
  - Partnering with respected community organizations such as local law enforcement or sheriff departments increases the power of interventions

## Deliverables to Community

- Comprehensive literature review provided to community partners
- Design of an up-to-date, evidence based informational flyer that was distributed at the community event and can be distributed at future events

## Next Steps

- Expand to additional community events to distribute education and free firearm cable locking devices. Possibilities include:
  - Converse County Health Fair
  - WY State Fair in Douglas, WY
  - Local businesses

## Acknowledgements

- A special thank you to:
- Melissa Ohnstad & Darcey Cowardin at Converse County Public Health
  - Converse County Sheriff Department – Sheriff Clint Becker
  - Wyoming Department of Health for providing cable locks
  - Lisa Patterson for providing cable locks

### Keep Our Kids at Play, Lock Your Guns Away

## FREE GUN LOCK

## Help Make Your Community Safer From Gun Accidents and From Suicide

- It is estimated more than 50% of gun owners don't securely lock their guns at home (Centers for Disease Control)
- It is estimated as many as 85% of the guns used in youth firearm suicides & unintentional injuries were obtained from the home (JAMA, 2001)

- Among youth ages 15-24 in Wyoming, suicide is the second leading cause of death (WY Department of Health)
- Of all firearm deaths in Wyoming between the years 2010 and 2014, **86%** were suicides (WY Department of Health)

### Help us keep our Community Safe

1. Store personally owned firearms locked and in a secure location

2. Store all firearms unloaded

3. Store ammunition in a locked AND separate location from all firearms

Please take these free cable locks to safely secure your household guns







## Community Health Project Design

- Utilize a back-to-school event to distribute educational material and free-of-charge cable gun locking devices to community members
- Provide additional education to children and parents regarding safe handling of firearms via partnering with Converse County Sheriff Department
- Partner with Converse County Public Health with endorsements/help from the Converse County Sheriff Department and WY Department of Health

Table set up at back-to-school event attended by over 140 families

Converse County Sheriff Clint Becker demonstrating the proper use of firearm cable locks

Educational flyer designed for distribution at community events