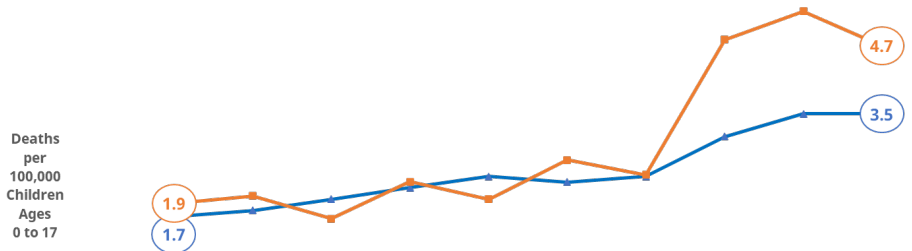




Support recurring funding to sustain programs that prevent firearm deaths and violence: NC S.A.F.E. & the NC Office of Violence Prevention

Rates of firearm deaths to NC children have more than doubled since 2013ⁱ



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
—US	1.7	1.8	2.0	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.5	3.5
—NC	1.9	2.1	1.7	2.3	2.0	2.7	2.4	4.8	5.3	4.7

From 2013 to 2022 there have been more than 680 firearm-related deaths among NC kids ages 0 to 17.

More than half of all gun owners store at least one gun unsafely.

Most guns used in youth suicide and school shootings come from home.

In 2022, firearms were the lethal means used in 58% of suicides and 95% of homicides occurring among teens ages 15 – 17.

A 2021 survey showed 30% of NC high school students reporting that it would take them less than an hour to get and be ready to fire a loaded gun without a parent or other adult's permission.

Evidence is clear that many guns are not stored safely and that reducing access to guns saves lives.

A 2021 survey indicated that more than 2/5 of North Carolina adults have a firearm in or around the home, and over half of firearms that are stored loaded are also unlocked.ⁱⁱ Studies have shown that most kids know where parents keep their guns, but parents often think they don't.ⁱⁱⁱ A study published in JAMA Pediatrics in 2019 estimated that up to 32% of suicide and unintentional youth firearm deaths could be prevented through safe storage of firearms in homes with youths.^{iv}

Child homicide rates in NC are rising, and in 2022, firearms were the lethal means used in 72% of all child homicides (ages 0 to 17), and 95% of homicides for teens ages 15 to 17. When gun sales rose significantly in 2020, that's when the trendline for homicides (and all firearm deaths) also rose significantly.

It is critical to sustain recent statewide efforts to prevent firearm deaths and violence.

NC S.A.F.E.: Legislation requiring a statewide firearm safe storage initiative that was recommended by the Child Fatality Task Force became law in 2023, however there was no funding for this initiative. Progress was nevertheless made through efforts by the Department of Public Safety (DPS) which was able to get temporary funding for a safe storage media campaign, "[NC S.A.F.E.](#)" (Secure All Firearms Effectively), however there is currently no source of recurring funds to keep this effort going. This campaign involves multiple media strategies to encourage firearm safe storage, toolkits and flyers for various community-level prevention efforts as recommended by the Task Force, and includes the purchase and distribution of gun locks and gun safes. **See next page to learn about NC S.A.F.E achievements during its first year.**

NC Office of Violence Prevention: The [NC Office of Violence Prevention](#) (OVP) was established in 2023 within the Department of Public Safety and works in partnership with the NC Department of Health and Human Services to ensure a whole of government and public health approach to reducing violence. The mission of OVP is to “serve as North Carolina's central hub for coordinating and supporting evidence-based public health strategies that enhance public safety, prevent violence, and foster community healing.” This office was created by Governor Cooper through Executive Order 279, which remains in effect until March 31, 2025, unless rescinded or superseded by another applicable Executive Order. Sustaining and supporting the important work of this office is a critical component of North Carolina’s efforts to prevent violence, including firearm violence.

Funding: The combined funding amount being sought for the NC S.A.F.E. campaign and the Office of Violence Prevention is \$2,459,884 recurring (\$2.16 million for NC S.A.F.E.).

Achievements of the NC S.A.F.E. campaign from May 2023 through January 2024*

- From May 2023 through January 2024, the paid media campaign garnered 82.56 million impressions, which helped drive a total of 152,492 visits to the NC S.A.F.E. website.
- The 2023 campaign included ads on radio, Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) screens, digital out-of-home platforms (billboards, gas station pumps, bus wraps, etc.), and a public service announcement distributed across the state. Digital ad channels included Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Nextdoor, Google Search, programmatic display, and connected TV.
- The radio campaign ran four different ads for three months (June, July, and October) and earned over 16 million impressions.
- The initiative’s public service announcement ran on three radio stations from June through October. In total, the PSA received 1,187 airings that generated nearly 1.6 million impressions.
- NC S.A.F.E. ran ads on television screens in 15 DMV locations across the state. Locations were chosen based on the amount of foot traffic they receive and the number of firearm-related incidents in the area.
- Digital out-of-home ads ran for eight months, from June 2023 through January 2024, earning nearly 9.6 million impressions. Ads were placed across the state on screens in sports bars, on digital billboards, at gas stations, and in other locations.
- NC S.A.F.E. published 231 posts on its Facebook, Instagram, and X/Twitter accounts, receiving 114,111 impressions, 1,866 video views, and 4,314 engagements.
- NC S.A.F.E. purchased bus wraps and ads that drove awareness in Charlotte, Durham, Fayetteville, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem in June and July.

The Child Fatality Task Force is a legislative study commission that recommends policy solutions to prevent child death, prevent abuse and neglect, and support the health and safety of children.

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ⁱ This chart represents rates of firearm-related deaths per 100,000 children ages 0 to 17; this includes homicides, suicides, unintentional, and undetermined firearm deaths. Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics & CDC/National Center for Health Statistics.

ⁱⁱ Information presented to the NC Child Fatality Task Force by the NC Division of Public Health, sourced from the 2021 North Carolina Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System, Firearm Safety Module: <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/brfss/2021/nc/all/topics.htm#fr>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Baxley F, Miller M. Parental Misperceptions About Children and Firearms. Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2006;160(5):542–547. doi:10.1001/archpedi.160.5.542.

^{iv} Monuteaux MC, Azrael D, Miller M. Association of Increased Safe Household Firearm Storage With Firearm Suicide and Unintentional Death Among US Youths. JAMA Pediatr. 2019;173(7):657–662. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2019.1078

* Source: NC S.A.F.E. 2023 Wrap-Up Report provided by the NC Department of Public Safety.