



Bureau of Justice Assistance

# Program Brief



## Project ChildSafe

**P**roject ChildSafe ([www.projectchildsafesafe.org](http://www.projectchildsafesafe.org)) is a nationwide firearm safety education program that teaches firearm owners how to properly store and safely handle their weapons. Accidental firearm-related injuries and deaths in the home, particularly those that involve children and teenagers, can be reduced when firearm owners fully understand their responsibilities. To educate gun owners, Project ChildSafe distributes firearm safety kits containing a gunlock and safety information. The project also helps local law enforcement agencies schedule firearm safety events in their communities.

Project ChildSafe is a component of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a comprehensive, strategic approach to reducing gun crime nationwide. PSN ([www.psn.gov](http://www.psn.gov)) addresses gun violence through prevention, enforcement, and prosecution. Project ChildSafe is part of PSN's prevention efforts.



Domingo S. Herraiz, Director  
[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA)  
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## About BJA

The Bureau of Justice Assistance was established in 1984 as a component of the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. BJA provides leadership and resources to state, local, and tribal governments and communities to reduce crime, violence, and drug abuse and to strengthen the nation's criminal justice system. BJA provides this assistance through formula and discretionary grants, training and technical assistance, publications, and the BJA web site.

## For Further Information

For information about Project ChildSafe, contact:

### **National Shooting Sports Foundation**

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For publications and information on other BJA-funded programs, contact:

### **Bureau of Justice Assistance Clearinghouse**

P.O. Box 6000  
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[www.ncjrs.org](http://www.ncjrs.org)

Clearinghouse staff are available Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. eastern time. Ask to be placed on the BJA mailing list.

### **Office of Justice Programs**

Partnerships for Safer Communities  
[www.ojp.usdoj.gov](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov)

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## Funding and Administration

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, administers the Project ChildSafe program. Congress appropriated \$50 million for the project in fiscal year (FY) 2002 to distribute 20 million firearm safety kits, \$25 million in FY 2003 to hand out an additional 10 million kits, and \$5 million in FY 2004.

Project ChildSafe is managed by the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), a trade association for the firearms and recreational shooting sports industry. NSSF was chosen to implement Project ChildSafe because of its experience and expertise in providing gunlocks and safety education to firearm owners through Project HomeSafe, which NSSF launched in 1999 to promote safe handling and storage of firearms. Project ChildSafe is an expansion of Project HomeSafe and puts an emphasis on keeping children from accessing loaded firearms in the home.



## Firearm Safety Kits

Each safety kit contains a cable-style gunlock and a pamphlet on gun safety and safe storage practices. Cable locks require that many types of firearms be unloaded before a lock can be installed, which adds another level of safety. The locks meet the testing protocol issued by the California

Department of Justice, which is serving as an interim standard until the ASTM International (American Society for Testing and Materials) standard is finalized.

*“In addition to prosecuting gun crime in order to take those who commit it off the streets, Project Safe Neighborhoods is working to prevent gun crime by reaching potential perpetrators before it’s too late.”*

*—Attorney General John Ashcroft*

## Safety Kit Distribution

Project ChildSafe establishes partnerships with governors, lieutenant governors, U.S. Attorneys, mayors, community leaders, and law enforcement agencies in the 50 states, Washington, D.C., and six U.S. territories to set up safety tours to distribute the kits. NSSF works with each state and territory’s leadership to determine local distribution, which is done by NSSF and local law enforcement agencies.

The safety tours begin with a state kickoff event, often with the governor or his or her designee in attendance. Each of a fleet of 15 education vehicles, which began touring in summer 2003, makes numerous stops around the state at local police stations and events such as state and county fairs, outdoor shooting sports events, fishing and hunting expos, sporting goods shows, and retail store events. A comprehensive television, radio, and print media campaign complements the distribution.

At the distribution sites, a trained program representative and local law enforcement officers distribute the kits, demonstrate how to use the locks, and answer questions about firearm safety and storage. Parents are encouraged to have their children sign the Project ChildSafe pledge to be safe around firearms.

During a safety tour visit, kits also are left for law enforcement agencies to distribute. If a local law enforcement agency does not have safety kits available, that agency can contact the NSSF representative to request a supply.



## Program Accomplishments

As of March 31, 2004, Project ChildSafe had distributed more than 9 million safety kits in nearly 12,000 communities in 46 states. These distributions, which take place at law enforcement agencies and events around the state, include the following:

- ◆ Illinois: 698,200 kits at 646 law enforcement locations and 3 events.
- ◆ Michigan: 779,000 kits at 452 law enforcement locations and 4 events.
- ◆ Montana: 156,800 kits at 161 law enforcement locations and 8 events.
- ◆ New York State: 712,500 kits at 520 law enforcement locations and 13 events.
- ◆ Washington State: 332,500 kits at 197 law enforcement locations and 13 events.
- ◆ Wisconsin: 465,500 kits at 492 law enforcement locations and 3 events.

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
Office of Justice Programs  
*Bureau of Justice Assistance*

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Additionally, in spring 2003, in response to a shooting accident that involved a police officer's child, Project ChildSafe donated 33,000 gunlocks to members of the New York Police Department—enough to cover all sworn officers—through the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association.

Funding received from FY 2003 and FY 2004 appropriations ensures that lock distributions will continue through 2004. The goal is to ensure that every firearm-owning household in the nation has a gunlock.

*Photos courtesy of National Shooting Sports Foundation.*