

Resolution on Child Safe Gun Storage

Whereas: Section 7, Item c, of the Illinois PTA Legislative Platform provides that the Illinois PTA promote and support legislation designed to protect all children and youth; and

Whereas: Section 4, Item g, of the Illinois PTA Legislative Platform also provides that Illinois PTA promote and support strengthening and enforcing existing legislation to control sales, distribution, possession of firearms, and the sale of handgun ammunition; and

Whereas: Illinois currently prohibits any person from storing or leaving his or her firearm unlocked and accessible to a minor under the age of 14 if that person knows or has reason to believe that the minor under the age of 14 who does not have a Firearm Owner's Identification (FOID) card is likely to gain access to the firearm and the minor causes death or great bodily harm with that firearm; and

Whereas: Over 600 children die by gun suicide each year, most often using guns belonging to a family member. Nearly 350 children under the age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else each year. Additionally, between 70% and 90% of guns used in school shootings perpetrated by shooters under the age of 18 were acquired from the home or the homes of relatives or friends; and

Whereas: More than half of gun owners store at least one gun unsafely, without any locks or other safe storage measures. Nearly a quarter of all gun owners report storing all their guns in an unlocked location in the home. Approximately 4.6 million minors live in homes with loaded, unlocked firearms. Research indicates that strong child access prevention laws decrease unintentional shootings, suicides, and school shooting; and

Whereas: States with laws that hold gun owners accountable when children access unsecured guns saw an 8% decrease in overall suicide rates, and 11% decrease in firearm suicide rates, among adolescents aged 14 to 17; therefore be it

Resolved: That the Illinois PTA and its constituent bodies disseminate information with respect to child safe gun storage so that they are inaccessible to children who are at risk of harming themselves or others; and be it further

Resolved: That the Illinois PTA will work with other like-minded organizations to education and raise awareness about child safe gun storage; and be it further

Resolved: That the Illinois PTA and its constituent bodies support legislation which strengthens child safe gun storage laws, requiring gun owners to store firearms, whether they are loaded or unloaded, in securely locked container, by raising the age from 14 to 18 if a person under the age of 18 is likely to gain access to the weapon without permission; and further be it

Resolved: That, as the issues involved in connection with child safe gun store is a national issue, the Illinois PTA submit this resolution in the appropriate format to the National PTA for consideration by delegates to the 2022 National PTA convention.

Submitted by, Hadley PTA