

Universal Background Checks for Gun Purchases

OVERVIEW

Current federal law requires background checks to be performed for anyone purchasing a firearm at a federally licensed gun dealer—however only 40% of guns sold in the US are sold through a federally licensed dealer.

In most states, sales at gun shows, flea markets, and private gun sales are not subject to regulations.

States with universal background check laws require that all sales of firearms take place through a licensed dealer who can perform a background check prior to the sale.

AAP POSITION

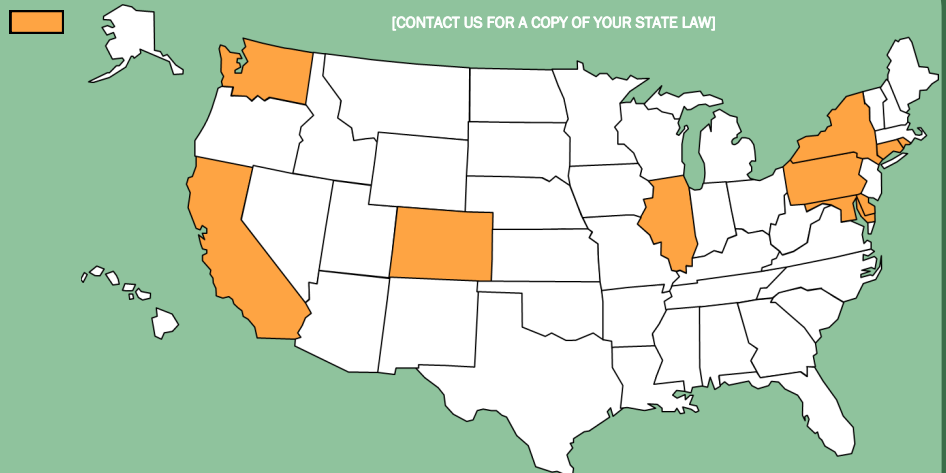
- The AAP is committed to protecting children from firearm-related injury and violence.
- The absence of guns in homes and communities is the most reliable and effective measure to prevent firearm-related injuries in children and adolescents.
- To prevent gun-related death and injuries, the AAP recommends that pediatricians provide firearm safety counseling to patients and their families.
- The AAP supports a number of specific measures to reduce the destructive effects of guns in the lives of children and adolescents, including the regulation of the manufacture, sale, purchase, ownership, storage, and use of firearms.
- In addition to background checks for purchasers, other measures aimed at regulating access of guns should include mandatory waiting periods, closure of the gun show loophole, and mental health restrictions for gun purchases.

FACTS

- 30% of guns involved in criminal trafficking are connected to gun shows, where background checks aren't required. The trafficking of guns generally involves a highly efficient, organized, and profitable business that moves guns from legal manufacture to dealers to criminals and young people who can't buy guns legally.
- States that have not closed the gun show loophole are twice as likely to be the sources of crime-use guns recovered in other states when compared to states that have closed the loophole, according to a 2008 report by Everytown for Gun Safety.
- With thousands of Web sites that offer firearms for sale, the Internet marketplace for guns is vast and growing. The number of gun ads listed by private sellers on popular online retail sites has expanded almost 7-fold, from 12,000 in December 2011 to 83,000 active ads in August 2013.
- 88% of those surveyed in the US, including 85% of gun owners, favor universal background checks on sales of all weapons.

PROGRESS

- 10 states—laws requiring universal background checks for firearms purchases



Pending Legislation:
[2015 StateTrack Profile: Universal Background Checks](#)

MORE

- [AAP Policy—Firearm-Related Injuries in the Pediatric Population](http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/130/5/e1416.full)—<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/130/5/e1416.full>
- [AAP Division of State Government Affairs—State Gun Safety Laws \(MyAAP login required\)](http://www.aap.org/en-us/my-aap/advocacy/state-government-affairs/Documents/GunSafetyLaws.pdf)—www.aap.org/en-us/my-aap/advocacy/state-government-affairs/Documents/GunSafetyLaws.pdf
- [Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence](http://bradycampaign.org)—<http://bradycampaign.org>
- [Children's Defense Fund \(CDF\)—Protect Children, Not Guns](http://www.childrensdefense.org/child-research-data-publications/data/protect-children-not-guns-2013.html)—www.childrensdefense.org/child-research-data-publications/data/protect-children-not-guns-2013.html
- [Everytown for Gun Safety](http://www.everytown.org)—www.everytown.org
- [Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence](http://smartgunlaws.org)—<http://smartgunlaws.org>