

Responsible gun ownership:

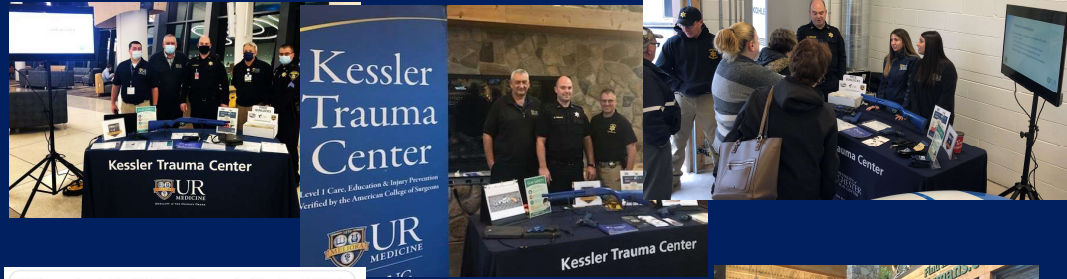
Using the ACS COT “Gun Safety and Your Health” program to drive community education related to gun safety.

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Background

Many trauma centers have experienced an increase in firearm related injury. The Kessler Trauma Center, the only Level 1 Trauma Center in Rochester, New York, experienced a 109% increase in firearm injuries in 2020. Conventional injury prevention around firearm injuries previously included targeting recidivism, engaging at risk youth, enforcement activities and scared straight style interventions. As part of a pre-existing project to reduce illegal gun use in the community, the Kessler Trauma Center became more aware of the number of guns stolen from legal gun owners which were then used in acts of violence. In evaluating formats to engage citizens in discussing gun safety, the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Committee on Trauma’s (COT) *Gun Safety and Your Health* content was thought to be a good platform that could be used to promote a non-polarizing program to address to issues related to firearm injuries.



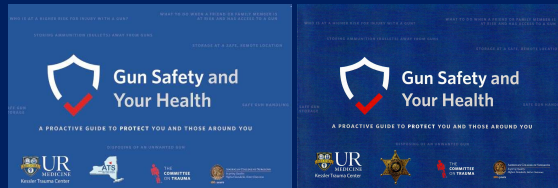
★ Monroe County Sheriff's Office @monroesheriffny · Dec 15, 2021
Gun Violence is a real problem, be part of the SOLUTION. Safe storage saves lives! @UR_Med @KesslerTrauma To learn more: facs.org/quality-progra...
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Objective

The objective of this intervention was to develop a novel public engagement activity to increase safe firearm behavior in legal gun owners based on the American College of Surgeons “*Gun Safety and Your Health*” program.

American College of Surgeons
Committee on Trauma
Gun Safety and Your Health
Booklets branded with local participants and provided framework for content



Program Design

It is important to navigate these discussions with expertise through supporting resources and partnering with firearms experts. The trauma center was able to partner with local firearms retailers, educators and law enforcement to develop these resources. Local data on firearm injury and theft of legal guns which were then used in crimes was shared to make the discussions specific to local audiences. Grant support was utilized for production of materials and provision of free gun locks. Law enforcement partners were able to provide inert mock firearms to demonstrate proper locking and storage techniques. Specific parent/child content was prepared to promote discussion amongst families. Firearms commerce donated gun safes, firearm logs and information about buyback programs. Subject matter experts in mental health were consulted to help develop resources for suicide prevention and mental health crisis support.

Program Content

- Gun safety
- Safe gun storage
- Guns and children
- Guns and mental health
- Guns and intimate partner violence
- Disposal of unwanted guns

Partner organizations



Lessons Learned

- Partnership with local law enforcement and subject matter experts is critical to success.
- Citizens want to talk about a wide range of topics including technical, legal, mental health and public policy
- The ability to provide gun locks and information about access to firearm safety courses is valuable at the point of interaction.
- Children have an underappreciated exposure and access to firearms, often without the awareness of their guardians.