

# Safety and Injury Prevention

## Firearms – Prevention

Firearms are often portrayed on television and in movies as glamorous. In addition, the consequence of firing a firearm may not be portrayed as seriously in the media, because children often see the "shot" actors alive in other movies. Toy guns may add to a child's perception that real guns, like toy guns, are harmless and fun. It is important that your child knows the difference between a real gun and a toy gun.

Although the only sure way to keep your child safe from unintentional firearm-related injury and death in your home is to remove all firearms from the home, there are other ways to improve the safety of your child around firearms.

- **Proper storage** – Firearms should always be stored unloaded and separate from ammunition. The firearm and ammunition should both be locked away and out of reach of children.
- **Educate your child** – Teaching your child the dangers of guns may help prevent unintentional firearms-related injuries and death. A parent should teach a child if he/she sees a firearm, to:
  - not touch the firearm.
  - leave the area.
  - tell an adult immediately.
- **Check with neighbors** – Even if your own home is free of firearms, your child may visit another home where firearms are kept. Always check with neighbors, friends, and relatives to make sure they safely store their firearms, out of reach of children.
- **Other safety devices** – Safety devices such as gun locks, lock boxes, and gun safes should be used for every firearm in the house. Safety devices on firearms could prevent most unintentional fatal shootings of children ages 5 and under.