

Make every play date safer.

Start the conversation.



Talking with other parents about how they store their firearms may be awkward, but it could be the difference between a fun afternoon and a tragic accident. You'll learn more about the safety of homes your child is visiting, and you could help other families consider safer options for storing their firearms.

Here are some tips to ensure safe gatherings with kids:

- ✓ **Educate your children.** Children can be curious, and they may not always know the difference between a real gun and a toy. That's why it's so important that parents make sure their child knows what to do if they find a gun. They should never touch it, period. They should leave the room and alert an adult in the home immediately.
- ✓ **Start the conversation with the other parents.** Before bringing up gun safety, you might first ask about other points of safety — such as whether they have dogs, a fence around the pool, and parental controls on their internet browser.
 - » **If you're a gun owner,** describe how you store your firearms at home to reassure the parents that visits to your house will be safe. Then ask how they store any firearms they own.
 - » **If you're not a gun owner,** you could start the conversation by saying that your children have no experience with guns. Ask if there are any unlocked guns in the home.
- ✓ **Listen for red flags.** Consider whether the other parent's home sounds like a safe environment for your children. One red flag is a parent saying that their guns are hidden or "out of reach." Kids can find anything adults try to hide. If you don't feel comfortable with the parent's answer, consider other places the kids can get together. Alternatively, if it's an option, consider attending the get-together with your child.
- ✓ **If possible, consider extending the first invite.** When you invite someone's child into your own home first, you can clarify your safety protocols and reassure the other child's parent. Then, when it's your turn to ask about safety at their home, you've already broached the subject.

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