

SAFE FIREARM CLINICIAN TRAINING



BACKGROUND

“I CARE” for 1- minute conversations about secure firearm storage

I Introduce: Acknowledge you’re pivoting to talk about prevention and safety in the home

C Common goal: Keeping homes and communities safe is the priority.

A Access prevention: Firearms may be accessible in patients’ home or in other homes in the community

R Recommend secure storage: Recommend locking firearms up to prevent unauthorized access by intruders, children, or loved ones who are struggling with mental health.

E Equip and empower: Offer free firearm cable locks

Why do clinicians have a role in firearm safety? Can I really make a difference?

- Firearms are **the leading cause of death** for pregnant women and youth, and a leading cause of death for the general population
 - Most pregnant women and parents had a care visit in the previous year
- Clinicians are trusted messengers about safety and prevention broadly
- Firearm-owning patients are open to *respectful conversations* about firearms
 - Today, we will teach you a strategy to have a 1-minute secure firearm storage conversation during all well-patient visits.

Why SAFE Firearm?

We can implement it at scale, and it is highly acceptable.

It's feasible!

In a prior trial, we were able to implement SAFE Firearm in 47,000+ well-child visits at Henry Ford Health and Kaiser Permanente Colorado.



It's acceptable!

Over 95% of both parents and clinicians agreed that SAFE Firearm was acceptable.



It's effective!

Parents who received SAFE Firearm were significantly more likely to report increasing secure firearm storage.





SCALE ASPIRE:
**Expanding SAFE Firearm to adult
primary care and women's health**

LET'S DIG IN

"[The terminology] probably was the most helpful thing because prior to that, it was our habit to ask, "Do you have firearms at home?" And you may not get an honest answer with that. So I think it was very beneficial to have the wording be, "If there are firearms, this is what we recommend." And I think people hear that better than having to answer the question."



Pediatric clinician

What is SAFE Firearm?



SAFE Firearm is an evidence-based secure firearm storage program that is delivered by clinicians to all patients during a primary care or Ob/Gyn well visit, regardless of firearm ownership

Brief
conversation
with a harm
reduction lens

Free cable locks

Universal program: all patients receive a conversation and are offered cable locks

Why universal?

An approach informed by firearm experts

Typical practice

Screening



Counseling for owners



Rarely offer firearm locks

SAFE Firearm

~~Screening~~



Counseling for all



Firearm locks for all

#1 Culturally relevant: “The huge thing is that people are worried about being put into a database.”

#2 Better coverage for firearm owners: Miss up to 1/3 of firearm owners using a screening approach.

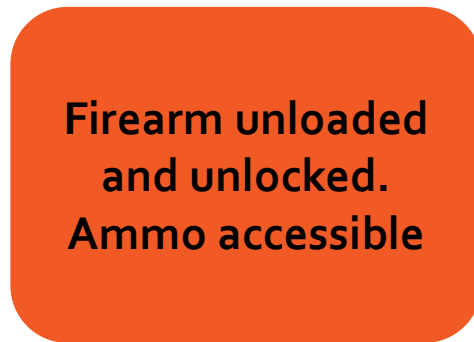
#3 People are injured with guns outside their own home: locks can be shared with others

What do you mean by harm reduction?

Least Secure

Support patients in reaching the most secure storage option they will accept

Most Secure



HOW TO HAVE THE CONVERSATION

"I'll be honest, I was kind of nervous when we started to talk about this with families. But I think families have been a lot more interested and a lot more open to it than I expected."



KPCO pediatric clinician

The 1-minute conversation

The Basics

- Non-judgement
- Normalize secure firearm storage by relating it to other universal prevention conversations
- Cable locks ***offered*** to everyone
- Emphasize with non-owners – “it is important to talk with families, neighbors, and friends to prevent unauthorized firearm access in the homes where your loved ones spend time”

The 1-minute conversation

Say this...



"I talk with all my patients about secure firearm storage"



"If there are firearms in your home, or other homes where your loved ones spend time, it's important they're secured..."

Not this...



"Are there firearms in your home?"



"How are your firearms stored?"

I



Introduce

Acknowledge you're pivoting to talk about prevention and safety in the home.

C



Common goal

"It's a priority at KP to help keep patients and their loved ones safe and well. That's why I talk with all my patients about firearm storage."

A



Access prevention

"If there's a firearm in your home or another home where your loved ones spend time..."

R



Recommend secure storage

"It's important to secure firearms to prevent unauthorized access, like by intruders, children, or loved ones struggling with their mental health."

E



Equip and empower

"Feel free to take a free firearm cable lock for anyone you know who could use one. We have a handout with locking options and conversation starters."

Patient says...

Suggested clinician response...



"We don't have any firearms."

"We believe firearm safety conversations are for everyone in our community. Our handout provides some conversation starters for family and friends, as sometimes our loved ones can access firearms in other people's homes."



"I need to be able to defend myself and my family."

"It sounds like keeping your family safe is a priority. This handout includes information on quick access safes, which allow fast access, but help ensure unauthorized people, like children or intruders, can't access firearms."



"My kids know not to touch my guns."

"It's great that many firearm owners in the community talk to their kids about firearm safety. Unfortunately, kids are naturally curious, and accidents can happen. This handout shares more about different locking options that help ensure unauthorized people don't access firearms."



Silence / dismissive response:
"sounds good, thanks."

Respect their signal that they don't want to talk about this and just move on.



Defensive response:
"I don't think it's appropriate to discuss firearms in this visit."

Keep the door open for the future: "Thank you for letting me know, I respect that. We don't need to discuss firearms any further. I want you to know that this is a routine part of all my [*primary care, OB/GYN*] visits, and my intent is to offer support for patients who are interested in discussing secure firearm storage."

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS!

Practice facilitation by Megan Rogers & Tobie Taylor McPhail

Develop an implementation plan

Our team is meeting with physician champions to plan for SAFE Firearm delivery at your clinic

Coaching & instruction

Megan and Tobie will provide guidance about how to do SAFE Firearm effectively

Monitoring & problem-solving

Megan and Tobie will work with champions to track lock distribution, troubleshoot challenges, and reinforce success

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Tobie Taylor McPhail, Tobie.E.Taylor-McPhail@kp.org



EHR nudge - **ACTION NEEDED**

- Document any conversation about firearm safety and/or cable lock offers!
- Regardless of firearm ownership!
- One-click Smartlist to make documentation easy
- Embedded within the following templates and associated patient instructions already:
 - ADULT 18-64 Wellness Express Lane
 - GERI EXPRESS 65-66 MEDICARE INITIAL
 - GERI EXPRESS >67 MEDICARE SUBSEQ
- If you use a personalized template, please add .FIREARMSAFETYSCREENING to your template today



Attach reference Clinical References [↗](#)

B

- Urinate every two hours during the daytime, whether you need to or not. Better bladder control can help you increase the time between trips to the bathroom.

Protect your bones: good health from the inside out:

Senior women should have at least one baseline bone density test (the test to evaluate bone strength). If you're a woman over 65 and have not had one yet, talk to your doctor to get one scheduled.

Home Safety:

Don't forget your home safety check-up!

*Kaiser Permanente is committed to firearm safety for everyone. Today, you spoke with your clinician about secure firearm storage, which can prevent unauthorized access. To learn more about secure firearm storage, please review this **handout [link to handout]** or visit safe-firearm.org.*

Stay Connected

- Our **Senior Resource Line** can provide you with loads of information on community services, financial aid, support groups, and much more. Call **1-866-279-0736** (TTY toll free: **1-800-659-2656**), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., weekdays.
- Seniors' Resource Center:
 - Denver Metro: **303-238-8151**
 - Conifer: **303-674-2843**
- Innovage (formerly Seniors Inc.)
 - Denver Metro: **844 704 9613**

Restore

Close

Previous

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PROGRAM MATERIALS & SUPPORTS

Cable locks

- We will make locks available to your clinic
- Distribute however makes sense in your clinic workflow (Tobie and Megan can help figure this out with you!)
- **RECOMMEND** storing locks in baskets in exam room as a visual reminder for you and your patients
- **Please offer locks to all patients** - Even patients who spontaneously share that they do not have firearms or that their firearms are already secured may still want to share locks with other people in their lives.



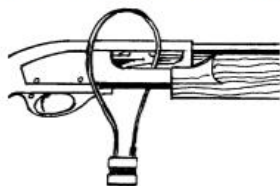
Cable lock installation instructions come with all locks (you don't need to know how to install locks)

Autoloading Pistols

With the slide locked back and magazine removed, insert the cable through the ejection port and out the magazine well. **To lock:** With key turned to farthest clockwise position, insert loose end of cable into padlock. Turn key counterclockwise and remove key. Check that cable is secure.



Autoloading and pump-action shotguns



With the bolt in the locked open position, insert the cable through the ejection port and out the loading port. **To lock:** With key turned to farthest clockwise position, insert loose end of cable into padlock. Turn key counterclockwise and remove key. Check that cable is secure.

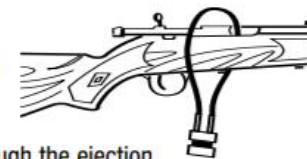
Revolvers

With the cylinder open, insert the cable through the barrel, or through an empty cylinder chamber. **To lock:** With key turned to farthest clockwise position, insert loose end of cable into padlock. Turn key counterclockwise and remove key. Check that cable is secure.



Bolt Action Rifles

Open the action (lock it open if your firearm has a bolt hold-open device) and remove the magazine. Insert the cable through the ejection port and out the magazine well. **To lock:** With key turned to farthest clockwise position, insert loose end of cable into padlock. Turn key counterclockwise and remove key. Check that cable is secure.



OR

Remove the bolt from the rifle. Insert the cable through the ejection port and out through the end of the receiver assembly. **To lock:** With key turned to farthest clockwise position, insert loose end of cable into padlock. Turn key counterclockwise and remove key. Check that cable is secure.

Posters and handouts to support your counseling

Poster

Handout

Firearm safety for everyone

The importance of secure storage

We're committed to the safety and well-being of our patients and the communities we serve. That's why we talk to everybody about firearm safety.

Get a firearm lock at no cost

Cable firearm locks are available to take home. Just ask your clinician or a member of your care team.



The SAFE Firearm program



The SAFE Firearm program is designed to promote conversations between clinicians and patients about secure firearm storage in and around the home, and in the homes of family and friends. To learn more, visit safe-firearm.org or scan the QR code. If you have questions about Kaiser Permanente's participation, email kpsafe@kp.org.



Firearm safety for everyone

The importance of secure storage

Secure firearm storage can help prevent unauthorized access by children, intruders, or loved ones who may be struggling with stress, substance use, or other challenges. Even if you don't have a firearm, many homes do. As with other safety issues, you can stay prepared by talking openly about firearm safety with your family, friends, and neighbors.

What to say

Here are some examples of how to talk about gun safety.

To adults at home:
 "Let's make sure our firearms are securely stored in quick-access safes so intruders can't get ahold of them."

To other parents:
 "Before our kids' playdate, can you confirm any firearms in your home are stored securely?"

To parents or siblings:
 "Our mother was recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's. We should sit down as a family and talk about securely storing any firearms in our homes."

To your partner:
 "Our son has been feeling really down lately. Let's make sure our firearms are stored securely to help keep him safe."

The SAFE Firearm program



The SAFE Firearm program is designed to promote conversations between clinicians and patients about secure firearm storage in and around the home, and in the homes of family and friends. Visit safe-firearm.org to learn more about how to talk with others about gun safety.

What does secure storage look like?



Options for locking up firearms

Many secure storage options are available. They come in various shapes and sizes and have different types of locks.

Cable locks available at no cost




Cable locks for unloaded firearms are available at no cost from Kaiser Permanente. Ask your clinician or a member of your care team for information.

Other options available for purchase outside Kaiser Permanente



For more information

For details on using cable locks, other storage options, ways to talk to children and adults about gun safety, and more, visit safe-firearm.org or scan the QR code. If you have questions about Kaiser Permanente's participation in the SAFE Firearm program, email kpsafe@kp.org.



You may receive an email with a survey about today's visit and the SAFE Firearm program. Please consider completing it. Thank you!

Short clinician guide to reinforce training concepts (2 pages)

Access via the clinical library. There is also a quick link attached to the smartlist.

<https://cl.kp.org/content/dam/clinicaLibrary/co/cpg/cpg/safety/firearm-clinical-guide.pdf>

SAFE Firearm Clinician Guide

Research shows that even **small improvements in secure firearm storage can prevent firearm injuries and deaths**—including suicides.

Program Goals

- **Normalize universal counseling** about secure firearm storage and offer **free cable firearm locks** as a routine part of visits.
- **Increase the number of people using secure firearm storage practices.**
- **Reduce firearm injuries and deaths** by promoting more secure home environments.

Next steps

- Remember **"I CARE"**
- Know your clinic's physician lead
- Know where your locks are located in the exam room
- **ROLE PLAY** with your peers!
- Access the **clinician guide**:
<https://cl.kp.org/content/dam/clinicallylibrary/co/cpg/cpg/safety/firearm-clinical-guide.pdf>
- Bookmark the **SAFE Firearm website** with resources and guidance: <https://safe-firearm.org/>

THANK YOU!

We look forward to collaborating on this important work.

APPENDIX

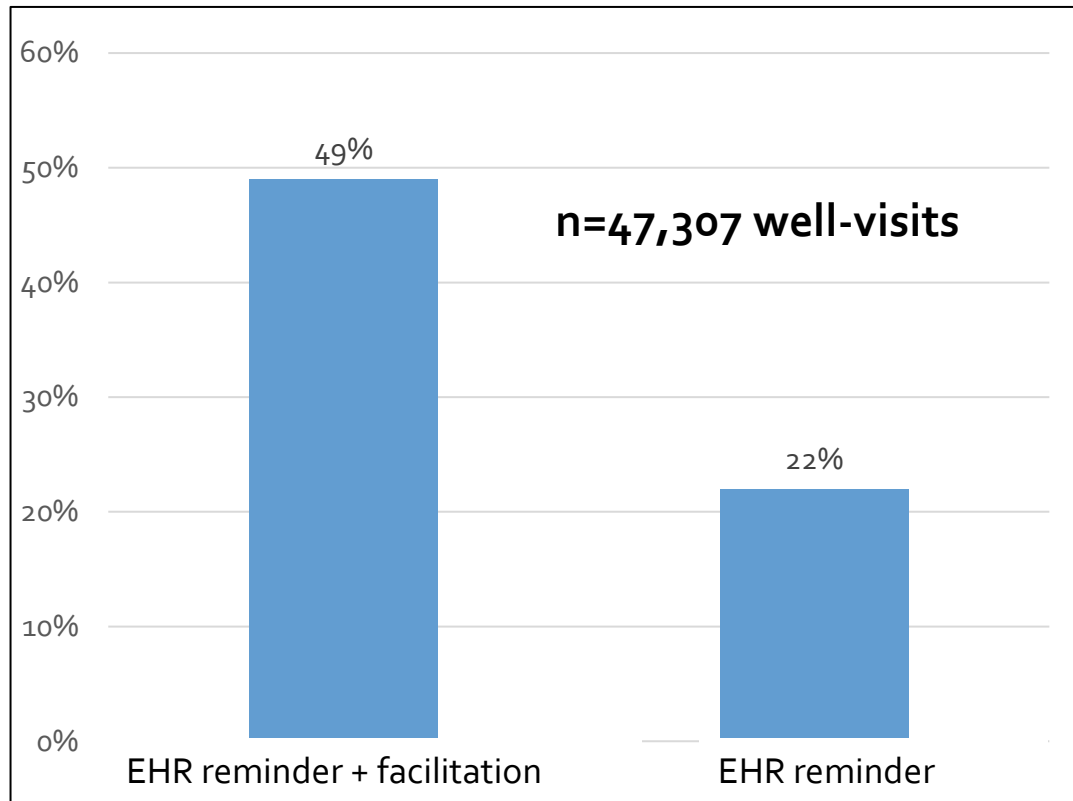


SAFE Firearm History

- Adapted from the Safety Check Intervention by [Shari Barkin](#)
- Implemented at all Kaiser Permanente Colorado and Henry Ford Health pediatric clinics in 2022 as part of a large implementation study funded by NIH to [Rinad Beidas, PhD at Northwestern](#)
- Over 12,000 cable locks distributed among 47,000 visits over 2 years
- Highly acceptable (>95%) to both patients and clinicians
- Pediatric teams continue the program even after research funding ended in 2025

Implementation strategies

Practice facilitation and EHR reminders



A screenshot of an EHR interface showing a 'Firearm Safety' dropdown menu. The menu is open, displaying four options with radio buttons:

- Both discussed safe firearm storage AND offered cable lock
- Only discussed safe firearm storage
- Only offered cable lock
- Neither discussed safe firearm storage nor offered cable lock

Other visible text in the interface includes: 'Meeting daily goals of 5 (fruits/vegetables) -2 (hrs or less screen time)- 1 (hr of activity/day- almost 0 (2 or less beverages/wk):', '3-4 servings a day of calcium containing foods:', 'Dental:', 'Sleep: 312596', 'Interval history for', 'Social History', 'Social History Na', 'Social History: 10 lives with', 'Siblings:', and 'Childcare/Schooling:'.

Important findings

- 1) Physicians need to understand the why and how to initiate the practice (facilitation most helpful here!)
- 2) Once physicians start doing the program, it's easy to continue when reinforced by EHR reminders

Secure storage behavior change after receiving SAFE Firearm

Parents who received SAFE Firearm were **significantly more likely to report making firearms more secure** following the visit compared to those who didn't receive the program

