



Office of the District Attorney, Alameda County
Nancy E. O'Malley, District Attorney



PRESS RELEASE

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Public Awareness Campaign Promotes Gun Safety

Alameda County District Attorney Nancy E. O'Malley announces the first phase of a public awareness campaign focused on gun violence and the safe storage of firearms. When guns are not securely stored, accessibility to firearms too often leads to unintended tragedy as well as violent crime. In partnership with Clear Channel Outdoor, billboards and bus shelters with the message "Save a Life! Lock Up Your Guns" present a stark, graphic reminder of the legal responsibility of every gun owner to keep his or her gun secured and out of reach of children.

"The message is strong and clear and it will save lives," says DA O'Malley. "If there are children living in or visiting your home, your gun must be secured and locked in a place that no child can access. This is the law in our state. When gun owners follow this law, lives are saved and tragedies are prevented."

"This new campaign running on our bus shelters and billboards communicates a powerful message in an impactful way that can save lives," said Bruce Qualls, Vice President, public affairs, Clear Channel Outdoor – Northern California. "Gun safety is every gun owner's business and we want to help get that message out to protect children and families from unnecessary tragedies."

As these public service announcements were in final production, the nation witnessed the deadliest mass shooting in our country's modern history in Las Vegas, Nevada. While the messaging of this public service campaign is devoted to the safe storage of firearms, it is clearly a part of a much broader campaign centered on reducing gun violence and its tragic consequences.

Children are naturally curious and love nothing more than looking into hiding places. When an adult's negligent gun storage is combined with a child's interest in exploration, deadly consequences are far too common.

The tragedies are seemingly never-ending. Within just the past several weeks, the media reported stories from around the country of little children shooting themselves or others with guns they found. In late September, a 4-year-old boy in Parma, Ohio, got his hands on a gun in the family car and died after shooting himself in the head. Earlier in the month, a 4-year-old Florida girl put her hand into her grandmother's purse looking for candy, came upon a handgun, and accidentally shot and killed herself. News reports in St. Louis describe a 4-year-old boy who shot himself in the face with a gun he had found in his home, and, in a separate incident the same week, a 2-year-old boy shot and killed his father while playing with a handgun he found in

the home. Had the guns been locked away, inaccessible to children, lives would not have been lost nor children seriously injured.

California is one of several states in the nation that has laws prohibiting 'criminal storage' of firearms. These laws are aimed at preventing teens and children from gaining access to loaded guns and shooting themselves or others. This campaign aims to inform every gun owner of his or her legal responsibility to ensure that no child can access the firearm.

A study published in June of 2017 in the American Journal of Pediatrics reports that on average, 19 U.S. children per day are killed by or receive emergency treatment for gunshot wounds, and that among injury-related deaths, firearms are the second leading cause behind car accidents for children aged 1-17.

In the months ahead, the District Attorney's Office will continue the campaign to address gun violence, highlighting important messages such as safe storage to reduce the theft of firearms that are often then used in violent crimes.

For high resolution images of the campaign and additional information on gun safety, please visit http://www.alcoda.org/gun_safety. Attached to this press release are three hi-res images of the billboards on display.

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