

I am sure you have heard some of the alarming statistics concerning easy access to loaded guns. The one that always gives me a punch in the gut is the fact that over 4.5 million children live in a household with a loaded, unsecure gun. In Oregon, firearms are the second leading cause of death in children. At least four unintentional deaths of children by firearm happened in Oregon in 2020. And in Deschutes County where I live, suicide by teens is substantially on the rise. These deaths are preventable! Children are curious, and "hiding" a gun on a closet shelf will not prevent them from finding it. It's so important to remember the human side, the grief, the guilt, the unending wish to go back in time and stop what happened. I will never forget going to a friend's house after she found her 15-year-old son who had committed suicide with his stepfather's gun. She was covered in blood, and consumed with shock and sorrow. Requiring gun owners to safely lock and secure their unloaded gun is worth a child's life. Requiring gun owners to report a stolen gun will help to stop the cycle of gun violence. Please show your concern for child safety and community safety by supporting HB 2510.