

# SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A great way to spread the ASK message is through your local newspaper. Many local and regional news outlets regularly accept letters to the editor (LTEs) and opinion pieces. Use the tips below to write an LTE spreading the ASK message.

## TIPS FOR PLACEMENT

1. Identify a local print or digital news outlet that you'd like to respond to.
2. When possible, tie your letter to a recent news article (such as a local gun-related tragedy, especially impacting a child) or respond to another letter.
3. Find details on how to submit an LTE on the outlet's website.
4. Keep your LTE within the publication's stated length — normally 150-300 words.
5. Customize your LTE by including a personal story, experience, or expertise.
6. Clearly state your call to action
7. Write using your own voice

## INCORPORATE KEY FACTS AND TALKING POINTS

- The ASK (Asking Saves Kids) campaign, developed in collaboration with the American Academy of Pediatrics, is a nationwide effort to educate parents about the significant risks of children having access to guns in the home.
- ASK Day falls during the start of summer when more kids are out of school and visiting other homes.
- Asking about guns in the home and volunteering information about how your guns are stored, helps create dialogue and trust to ensure that children are safe from unintentional shootings, firearm suicide, and other incidents of family fire or firearm misuse.
- 6.7 million children live in homes with access to an unlocked or unsupervised gun.
- More than [73% of children aged 5 to 14](#) know where their parents keep their firearms, and more than a third have handled those guns without their parents' knowledge.
- [Over 90%](#) of guns used in accidental shootings of children that resulted in death were left unsecured.
- Keeping guns locked and unloaded reduces the risk of unintentional shooting deaths and gun suicides among youth by 73%.
- Access to guns in the home increases the risk of suicide by 300%.
- 76% of school shootings are facilitated by kids having access to unsecured and/or unsupervised guns at home.
- If safe storage practices are deployed in just 20% more households with children, we could reduce firearm suicide and unintentional firearm fatalities among youth by up to 32%.

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# SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Use this template to assist you in writing your letter to the editor. Be sure to customize your letter to be relevant to your local community!

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Dear Editor,

In the United States, 6.7 million children live in homes with access to an unlocked or unsupervised gun. The consequences of this are deadly. Every day, eight children and teens are unintentionally injured or killed due to [family fire](#) — a shooting that results from someone misusing an unsecured firearm from the home.

[Insert details about relevant incident in your community or personal story]

According to [Brady](#), the nation’s oldest gun violence prevention organization, the most unintentional shootings by children occur during the summer, when children are on vacation and spending more time at home or the homes of others. Parents already ask all types of questions before their children visit other homes over summer break — questions about food, allergies, swimming, and safety. On June 21st, in honor of “Asking Saves Kids Day (ASK Day)” Brady reminds parents, guardians, and caretakers to add one more question to their list: “Is there an unlocked gun where my child plays?”

All of us — gun owners and non-gun owners alike — have a role in preventing family fire. For some ASKing could be the first step that encourages life-saving change.

Here in [Community name] we can all take the simple step to make ASKing about unsecured guns part of routine safety discussions. Raising awareness about the risks of unsecured firearms in our community will help us reshape our culture and bring ourselves closer to a future free from gun violence.

Sincerely,  
[Your Name]  
[Your Profession]  
[Your City]

