

From: Sharon Miller mmiller924@aol.com
Subject: SB 522 Written Testimony
Date: March 6, 2022 at 6:21 PM
To: michael.welton@senate.ks.gov

Dear Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony on SB 522. I understand the committee's interest in keeping our children safe from firearms; however, I feel you are asking our children to be responsible when it is the adult's responsibility to keep children safe. I am a grandmother with three grandchildren, ages 9, 6, and 4. Our 9 yr old grandson is currently in counseling from anxiety brought on by shooter drills in school and no longer feels safe at school. Our once full of laughter, smiling, loving grandson has been traumatized and continues to be traumatized.

I have watched Eddie the Eagle gun safety video. Below are two preventable gun deaths in Lawrence, KS. In these deaths, loaded guns were found in the home.

Aug 2021

On Wednesday, a shooting that critically injured a 6-year-old boy was convicted in Douglas County District Court. A 5-year-old shot the 6-year-old in the man's house.

September 17th, 2021

Police say a shooting that took the life of a toddler in Douglas County was accidental.

To protect our children, we have to protect them from unlocked and loaded firearms. The guns are not found at the park on a bench. These unlocked, loaded guns are found in their own homes, friends, and family's homes. The program listed has NOT been proven to work to keep our kids safe. Research has found that programs like Eddie Eagle do not reduce the likelihood that children will mishandle firearms in unsupervised situations.

Haven't we traumatized our children enough with shooter drills? Rather than introducing a safety program that doesn't work in our schools, we should be addressing the root cause of why our children are dying from gun violence. The data shows that unintentional shootings involving our children are overwhelmingly due to easy access to unsecured firearms.

- 5.4 million American children live in homes with guns that are both loaded and unlocked.,
- 41% of adolescents in gun-owning households report having "easy access" to the guns in their homes.
- Research shows that households that lock both firearms and ammunition were associated with an 85% lower risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children.

Adults can protect vulnerable kids by storing guns locked, unloaded, and separately from ammunition and taking steps to make sure children never get unauthorized access to unsecured firearms. Please vote no on this dangerous bill. I encourage you to keep working on a bill protecting our children and making adults accountable for not storing their guns safely. A free training called BeSMART teaches gun owners what safe storage is. Teaches parents to ask about unsecured guns when going on playdates. Parents have a chance to role-play in asking family members and friends if they have guns in their home and are safely stored. You can find this program on their website [Besmartforkids.org](https://besmartforkids.org). Don't stop protecting our children. I'm asking you to stop making them responsible for what adult gun owners should be doing.

Thank you for listening, and I'm available to answer any questions. Sharon