

Recent accidental shootings of minors rekindle safety debate

LAUREN E HERNANDEZ
STATESMAN JOURNAL

In the past 2 1/2 years, seven Oregon minors have been injured and one killed in accidental shootings, according to new data compiled by the USA Today Network and the Associated Press.

Of those shootings, four involved minors injuring themselves, three involved adults injuring minors, and one involved a minor shooting and killing himself.

The data includes shootings involving mi-

nor in Oregon between January 1, 2014 and June 30 of this year, according to statistics compiled by the Gun Violence Archive, an independent data collection and research group that compiles shooting information nationwide.

"Safe storage and child access prevention are always talked about among groups who support it," said Penny Okamoto, executive director of Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation, a Portland-based organization aiming to reduce gun

injuries through education and outreach in Oregon.

Oregon currently has no law requiring firearm owners to prevent minors from gaining access to firearms, nor a law requiring firearm owners to lock their weapons, according to the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence.

State Sen. Ginny Burdick, D-Portland, said she has been trying to introduce legislation since the 1990s to make it a criminal offense for a gun owner if a child gains access to their guns, but has been unsuccessful, mostly because she said the state is focusing on other forms of gun legislation.

Governor Kate Brown has three legislative priorities for guns in the 2017 session, including banning extended-capacity magazines; expanding definitions of "domestic violence" so those convicted of domestic crimes and stalking won't have access to firearms; and closing the "Charleston Loophole," which would ensure individuals who should be barred from owning guns won't purchase guns simply because law enforcement are unable to complete a background check in the current timeline.

"It's such a tremendous effort to take on the gun lobby on any gun issue, but child access prevention is serious, and gun owners need to be held accountable," Burdick said. "There are too many times where there are no charges brought and there should be strong civil liability."

Accountability is weighed during investigations following unintentional shootings, but in the case of some unintentional shootings in the past two and a half years, charges were not filed against the gun owners.

In the case of a 4-year-old Gresham boy who unintentionally shot off one of his ring fingers during a family barbecue on February 7, 2015, no charges were filed against the gun owner, who was the child's grandfather.

Chuck Sparks, Chief Deputy District Attorney of Multnomah County District Attorney's Office, said the boy entered the grandfather's room, pushed a piece of furni-



This undated photo provided by Ruthie Price of Shreveport, La., shows her younger son, Cameron. In 2015, the 4-year-old was accidentally shot by his 6-year-old brother, Ka'Darius, who thought a chrome and black .40-caliber pistol was a toy. Ka'Darius later told police he "pushed the bad button" and that he understood his brother, who "had a hole in his head," was going to the hospital and was not coming home.

About the series

An investigation by The Associated Press and the USA Today Network shows minors have died from accidental shootings — at their own hands, or at the hands of other children or adults — at a pace of one every other day, far more than limited federal statistics indicate.

Page 1B

ture closer to a firearm sitting atop a gun safe and fired the gun.

Following a review of the incident, police decided the grandfather did not recklessly endanger the boy because he did not think the child could reach the gun, he had a permit for the gun and did not have a history of being careless with his firearm.

"The family was upset but were not asking to file charges," Sparks said. "The reaction was that it could have been worse."

In the case of a 13-year old boy who shot himself in the leg with a revolver while he was alone at his Prineville home on Jan. 1, 2015, no charges were filed against the parents.

The parents said they thought the gun was unloaded and left in the

parents' room, but the teen managed to find bullets and discharge the weapon, according to Sergeant Jimmy O'Daniel.

Kevin Starrett, director of Oregon Firearms Federation, a gun rights organization that follows gun legislation and monitors bills and amendments, said gun safety is born from gun education.

Starrett said he raised his own children in a household where gun safety was at the forefront of creating a safe environment for his family.

"Every time a child is hurt or killed by an act of negligence, that's inexcusable, but it troubles me when all we want to focus on is firearms with children," Starrett said.

He said the federation would support any legislation supporting gun education to children, but not necessarily child access prevention laws.

Although Starrett's guns are locked up in a home safe, he said his 17-year-old son does have access to it due to his extensive knowledge of how to properly handle a firearm.

"The state doesn't know the best way for me to safely lock my firearm," Starrett said.

Burdick said the civil liberties issue as it relates to the idea of requiring gun owners to lock their firearms in a specific way is difficult.

Multnomah County has its own child access prevention ordinance, which requires gun owners to prevent access to a loaded or unloaded firearm by a minor without the permission of a parent or guardian.

Starrett said Multnomah County's ordinance violates state law and if the state legislature ever considers making child access to guns illegal, it should consider making child access to other objects with the ability to be dangerous illegal like explosives, chemicals, kitchen knives and lawn mowers.

He likens a 6-year-old child knowledgeable in handling drain cleaner to fix a clogged drain to a child knowledgeable safely handling a firearm - both sharing dangerous qualities but safe under the right circumstances.

"With appropriate legislation and statutes, individuals who are gun owners will be more aware, conscious and more compliant with state law," Prozanski said. "It goes back to making law more clear."

Investing is about more than money.
At Edward Jones, we stop to ask you the question: "What's important to you?" Without that insight and a real understanding of your goals, investing holds little meaning.

Contact your Edward Jones financial advisor for a one-on-one appointment to discuss what's really important: your goals.



www.edwardjones.com
Member SIPC
LOCAL ADVISORS

Salem Area	Keizer Area	Surrounding Area
Vin Searles FINANCIAL ADVISOR South 503-363-0445	Jeff Davis FINANCIAL ADVISOR Liberty 503-581-8580	Sheryl Resner FINANCIAL ADVISOR Keizer 503-304-8641
Michael Wooters FINANCIAL ADVISOR South 503-362-5439	Garry Falor FINANCIAL ADVISOR West 503-588-5426	Mario Montiel FINANCIAL ADVISOR Keizer 503-393-8166
Derek Gilbert FINANCIAL ADVISOR Commercial 503-362-9699	Chip Hutchings FINANCIAL ADVISOR Lancaster 503-585-4689	Tim Yount FINANCIAL ADVISOR Silverton 503-873-2454
Caitlin Davis FINANCIAL ADVISOR West 503-585-1464	Tim Sparks FINANCIAL ADVISOR Commercial 503-363-0445	Walt Walker FINANCIAL ADVISOR Stayton 503-769-4902

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Church Directory

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
303 N. Church Street Silverton, OR 97381
Phone: (503) 873-8656
Pastor Leah Stolte-Doerfler
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Service time 10:30 a.m.
Nursery Available

SILVERTON PRAISE CENTER
Church of God
814 N. Second St. 873-1206
Sunday morning worship 10:00 AM
"Committed to Christ,
Committed to the Community"

ST. MARY'S CHURCH
Pastor: Fr. Philip Waibel
575 E. College St. 503-845-2296
Weekday Mass 6:50 a.m.
Saturday Vigil Mass 5:30 p.m.
Sunday masses 7:30 a.m., 10 a.m.,
and 12:30 p.m. (Spanish Mass) at
St. Mary Parish. Mass for Holy Rosary
Mission at Crooked Finger
is at 10:00 a.m.
Confession: 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
on Saturday

Silverton Friends Church
"Loving God... loving others"
Pastor Bob Henry
Silverton Christian School
229 Eureka Ave. • 873-5131
silvertonfriends@frontier.com
Adult Sunday School at 9:00 am
Sunday Worship Service: 10:45 am
Full Nursery Care • Youth Group
meets Thursday 7:00 pm

St. Paul Catholic Church
Pastor:
Fr. William Hammelman, OSB
503-873-2044
1410 Pine Street
Silverton
www.stpaulsilverton.com
Weekday Mass 8 a.m.
Saturday Vigil 5:30 p.m.
Sunday Morning Mass
8:00 & 10:30 a.m.
12:00 Noon (en español)
Holy Days 7 am & 7 pm

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST COMMUNITY CHURCH
Pastor Jose Galvez
Saturday Services
Sabbath School 9:30-10:30 am
Worship Service 10:50 am
1159 Oak Street 873-8568
Inviting All to a
Friendly Bible-Based Church

Trinity Lutheran Church, ELCA
Pastor Carl Hansen
500 N 2nd Street
Silverton, OR 97381
(503) 873-2635
**Sunday,
Worship 11am**
www.trinitysilverton.org
trinitysilverton@gmail.com