

3/27/2019

Dear Members of the Education Committee,

I am a mother of 2 elementary aged children, one of whom is 5 years old. He is a stereotypical boy who loves all things BOY; truck, cars, machines, cranes, trains, cowboys, and guns. I had already begun teaching him basic gun safety but felt it wasn't quite getting through. We watched a gun safety program online with 4 easy, clear steps. Now he recites the 4 step chant regularly, sometimes while talking to his stuffed animals. He clearly understands the difference between toy guns and real ones and will not hesitate to get an adult if he encounters an unfamiliar gun.

Gun safety is so important to teach when kids are young because that is when they need it. We educate our children on many safety elements before they need to use them. We teach our kids how to look for cars before crossing the street, to wear a seatbelt, not to run in a parking lot, and not to run with scissors. These are all universal safety rules that we teach young children as preventative measures. Teaching gun safety is just another preventative measure. It's for their safety and those around them. Like with drug and alcohol prevention, knowledge is empowerment. Clear, easy steps for our kids to remember can empower them to save lives, including their own. We never know what situation our kids might find themselves in but we can give them the tools to be safe in those situations.

Thank you,
Katilin Niemeyer