Medical Students, Residents, and Fellowship Trainees:

Every child has the right to live in a safe home, play in the safety of others’ homes and live without fear of firearm injury. This statement was at the heart of our 2013-2014 advocacy campaign, Pediatricians Against Violence Everywhere (PAVE). Gun violence is a public health issue that profoundly affects children. Pediatricians see the devastating effects of firearms firsthand in the form of suicides and homicides, and by treating those who have been exposed to gun violence at school, in the community or at home. Over the past year, child health advocates from across the country worked to PAVE the way to firearm injury prevention.

On behalf of the PAVE advocacy team, we say THANK YOU to the thousands of medical students, residents, fellowship trainees, and pediatricians who engaged at the clinic, community, state, or federal level to work to keep children safe. Whether you counselled parents and patients about firearm injury prevention and screened for mental health illness in your clinic, staffed a community fair with resources to encourage parents to keep their firearms in the home unloaded and locked with ammunition stored separately, wrote an op-ed or letter to the editor to a local newspaper discussing the need for more firearm injury research or the importance of asking about firearms in the home, shared advocacy messages on social media with #PAVE, or among other things contacted your state or federal legislators urging them to enact common sense firearm legislation that protects kids, YOU made a difference. It is our hope, you feel empowered to continue to be a child health advocate, because children continue to need our voice to help keep them safe.

Before we work to FACE Poverty in the 2014-2015 campaign, we use our last PAVE update to provide a wrap up of firearm injury and gun violence prevention work at the state and federal levels.

2014 State Government Affairs Wrap-Up

On November 4th, elections will be held for 36 governors and for 6049 state legislators in 46 states. The majority of gun violence prevention policy will continue to be decided at the state level, so state-level elections are more important than ever for child health and safety advocates. It is important that all pediatricians make sure that they are registered to vote within their state or apply for an absentee ballot before their home state’s deadline. Become educated about the candidates for statewide offices and attend local candidate forums to ask questions about their positions on gun violence prevention and other child health issues.

For more information about state elections, see the 2014 AAP State Election Guide and
This year, some states are also considering ballot initiatives this year to address gun violence prevention. In November, Washington will vote on conflicting ballot initiatives:

- **I-594** would require background checks on all gun purchases.
- **I-591** would prohibit the state from enacting a background check law, unless a federal standard is set.

In August, Missouri enacted a constitutional amendment to guarantee and “inalienable” right to bear arms. Alabama is considering a similar constitutional amendment in November. Gun violence prevention groups have warned that these types of constitutional amendments can make it more difficult to pass laws to keep guns out of the hands of violent offenders.

**State Legislative Wrap-up**

State legislatures have wrapped up for the year in most states. This year, over 170,000 bills were considered in the 46 state legislatures that were in session and over 24,000 new pieces of state legislation was enacted.

States have seen legislative success strengthening mental health restrictions and preventing domestic violence offenders from obtaining firearms. In 2014, 7 states (Alaska, Arizona, California, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Virginia, and Wisconsin) strengthened mental health restrictions and 9 states (California, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming) strengthened laws prohibiting domestic violence offenders from using or obtaining firearms. California enacted the first “domestic violence restraining order” law which allows a judge to remove a gun owner’s weapons for up to 21 days if a family member fears the gun owner will commit gun violence.

Along with 2014 gun violence prevention successes have come challenges, most notably in Florida where in a 2-1 decision, a 3 judge panel of the US Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit issued a ruling in the appeal of Wollschaeger v. Florida. The panel’s majority held that there is no First Amendment protection for physicians providing their best medical advice to their patients and that a state legislature can prohibit a doctor from discussing with a patient (or patient’s parent, in the case of minors) any medical issue that the legislature finds politically distasteful. In doing so, the court found that Florida Firearm Owners' Privacy Act of 2011 is a legitimate regulation of professional conduct” and “that good medical care does not require inquiry or record-keeping regarding firearms when unnecessary to a patient’s care.”

A petition for rehearing has been filed with the US Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit. The full 11-judge panel that makes up the US Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit will decide whether to
rehear the case. In support of the petition for rehearing, the AAP joined the AMA and other national medical associations in filing an amicus brief that demonstrates what makes this unique among First Amendment cases, "...is that the communications at issue—those between physicians and their patients—are both a ubiquitous element of ordinary activity and are of critical importance to human welfare."

Although this lawsuit and ruling by the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals relates directly to the Florida law, at least 10 other states have introduced similar bills to restrict physician counseling on firearm safety since the Florida legislation passed in 2011, but none have passed.

Because this ruling is likely to embolden advocates of bills threatening physician firearm counseling, the AAP Division of State Government Affairs is expecting an influx of these types of bills during the 2015 state legislative sessions. AAP chapters in states where these bills are introduced will need “all hands on deck” to prevent passage. Section on Medical Students, Residents, and Fellowship Trainees (SoMSRFT) members are asked to continue to work closely with AAP chapters and lend your time and energy to opposing these types of bills.

A Note from the Division of State Government Affairs

On behalf of the AAP Division of State Government Affairs, we would like to thank you for your advocacy efforts to protect children from gun violence. Like change on most state legislative issues, strengthening gun laws will not be an easy task. We urge you to continue to advocate for stronger gun violence prevention laws as you are finishing up your training programs and starting your pediatric careers. Keep in touch with your state AAP chapters and keep in touch with the AAP Division of State Government Affairs. We look forward to continue to work with you all on this and many other issues!

Federal Wrap-up Gun Violence Prevention

Following the tragic December 14, 2012, shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT, AAP has been engaged in a sustained advocacy effort focused on engaging Congress, the White House, partner organizations, pediatricians, and the public in an effort to enact and improve federal policies aimed at reducing and preventing gun violence.

AAP’s top priorities in federal gun violence prevention advocacy are:

- Stronger gun laws. Enactment of common-sense firearm legislation, including stronger background checks, banning assault weapons, addressing firearm trafficking, and encouraging safe firearm storage.
• Violence prevention programs. Support for programs addressing the needs of at-risk children and children exposed to violence, including those at CDC and DOJ.

• Research. Funding for gun violence prevention research, including $10 million to support gun violence prevention research at CDC and $20 million to expand the National Violent Death Reporting System to all 50 states.

• Physician counseling. Protecting the crucial role of physicians in providing anticipatory guidance to patients about the health hazards of firearms.

• Mental Health Access. Ensuring children and their families have access to appropriate mental health services, particularly to address the effects of exposure to violence.

There has not been any activity on reform of major AAP federal priorities around strengthening gun laws since the failed April 2013 effort in the Senate. On the area of research and public health surveillance, there has been recent activity, including ongoing and expanded funding support for the National Violent Death Reporting System.

**CDC Research and the National Violent Death Reporting System**

Following the tragedy in Newtown, CT, President Obama announced two proposals in the Now Is The Time plan to address gun violence pertaining to research and public health surveillance. On the issue of gun violence prevention research, President Obama proposed the provision of $10 million to CDC to conduct research within the National Center on Injury Prevention and Control. Following the Now Is The Time announcement, the CDC commissioned an IOM report to identify research priorities for CDC to conduct once funding becomes available. The Obama Administration also confirmed that the current ban on using CDC funds to “advocate or promote gun control” does not preclude the agency from conducting public health research. The president has included this funding in his proposed FY 2014 and FY 2015 budgets but Congress has yet to approve it. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Related Agencies ( LHHS) included the funding in its FY 2014 appropriations bill and the House Appropriations Subcommittee on LHHS did not release bill text for FY 2014. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on LHHS did not include the research funding in its FY 2015 appropriations bill but did include report language encouraging CDC to adopt a public health research agenda on this issue.

On May 21, the AAP endorsed legislation introduced by Representative Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.) and Senator Ed Markey (D-Mass.) that would authorize $10 million in new funding annually for the CDC to conduct research on gun violence prevention. In a press release from Rep. Maloney and Sen. Markey’s offices, AAP President James M. Perrin, MD, FAAP, highlighted the disproportionate burden of gun violence on children and the importance of federal funding for gun violence prevention research. In addition, the AAP Section on Medical Students, Residents and Fellowship Trainees shared messages on social media about the importance of
the bill in helping to protect children from gun violence as part of their Pediatricians Against Violence Everywhere advocacy campaign. The bill has not advanced beyond introduction.

President Obama also proposed expansion of the CDC’s National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) to all 50 states as part of the Now Is The Time initiative. NVDRS is a public health surveillance system that collects comprehensive data on violent deaths that occur in the 18 currently participating states. Originally funded at $3.5 million, the program received $11.2 million in FY 2014. CDC is in the process of finalizing its NVDRS awards to states for FY 2014 funding. CDC announced in September that the program expanded from 18 to 32 states. President Obama’s FY 2015 budget would expand the program to all 50 states, and the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on LHHS would increase funding to $16.3 million in FY 2015. AAP has actively supported continued expansion of the NVDRS program to ensure all states can participate and will continue to do so during the debate over FY 2015 appropriations.

**AAP Federal Advocacy on Gun Violence Prevention**

On December 10, 2013, the AAP sent a letter to members of Congress highlighting the importance of taking federal policy action addressing gun violence as a public health problem. Noting the December 14 anniversary of 2012’s tragedy in Newtown, Conn., the letter urged Congress to find a way forward in addressing this pervasive threat to child health, particularly by: investing in gun violence prevention research; supporting community-based violence prevention programs; expanding access to mental health and substance use disorder screening and treatment; enacting commonsense gun laws; and educating the public. The AAP sent its letter in coordination with multifaceted efforts on promoting the importance of preventing gun violence centered on the commemoration of the Newtown anniversary, including a new video featuring AAP Past-President Thomas K. McInerny, MD, FAAP, and additional video clips of pediatricians speaking about the importance of gun violence prevention on AAP’s YouTube channel. The Academy also developed a new website, www.aap.org/gunviolenceprevention. A repository of resources highlighting AAP’s federal policy priorities and advocacy work in this area is also available at this website.

**Social Media Advocacy**

Throughout the year, SOMSRFT has used social media to advocate for firearm injury prevention. Continue to use social media for advocacy by engaging with the AAP SOMSRFT on Twitter and Facebook. We will continue to remember and honor those affected by gun violence, and raise awareness about the public health issue of firearm injury in social media. Follow and use #PAVE #KeepKidsSafe, or #PutKids1st in messages about firearm injury.
As our Section works to FACE Poverty with our next campaign, use and follow #FACEPoverty to share messages on social media about what you are doing to address poverty, notably Food Security, Access to Health Care, Community, and Education.

**2014-2015 Advocacy Campaign Preview**

**Pediatricians in Training will FACE Poverty with Latest Advocacy Campaign**

Poverty is a medical issue and a significant determinant of child health. This is why the AAP Section on Medical Students, Residents and Fellowship Trainees (SOMSRFT) has chosen to focus on childhood poverty in their latest annual advocacy campaign. This campaign, FACE Poverty, will kick off at the NCE, October 11th-14th in San Diego. Pediatricians have an incredible and unique opportunity to make a huge impact on how poverty impacts children. The FACE Poverty campaign will focus on empowering pediatricians-in-training to address many facets of poverty at the community, state, and federal levels. For more information on SOMSRFT’S FACE Poverty campaign visit: [http://www2.aap.org/sections/ypn/r/advocacy/FACEPoverty.html](http://www2.aap.org/sections/ypn/r/advocacy/FACEPoverty.html)

**Poetry for Prevention**

**From the PAVE advocacy team**

**October Poetry for Prevention:**

One year ago we started to PAVE the way
Pediatricians of all ages advocated each day
Keeping kids safe is something we hold most dear
So we united as Pediatricians Against Violence Everywhere

Working to bring to everyone's attention
The public health need for firearm injury prevention
All kids deserve to be safe, where they live, learn, and play
By treating those impacted we had much to say

From op-eds, to videos, social media, and patient education
The voices of pediatricians filled our nation
Advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels was robust
Pediatricians recognized being engaged on this topic was a must

Prevention is at the core of our profession
Firearm injury is preventable without question
The time has come for our campaign to transition to another cause
However, the work to keep kids safe will continue without pause

Pediatricians remain undeterred in our quest
To give kids an opportunity to reach their best
To keep them safe from firearm injury and gun violence
We will continue to give guidance and not be silenced
What we’re Reading, Tweeting, & Watching

- This Vox piece discussing 11 facts about gun violence in the United States
- AAP SOMSRFT (@AAPSOMSRFT) 9/22/14, 2:03 PM: Study finds geographic variation in gun-related deaths [sbne.ws/r/qmL5 #PAVE](https://sbne.ws/r/qmL5)
- In this video, Lisa Costello, MD, MPH, a med-peds resident in Morgantown, West Virginia and tri-chair of the AAP's Section on Medical Students, Residents and Fellowship Trainees' 2013-2014 advocacy campaign, called Pediatricians Against Violence Everywhere, describes the importance of advocating for children and the Section's role working to protect children from gun violence.
- In this video, pediatricians describe how the prevention of gun violence is a child health issue, and advocate to keep children safe where they live, learn and play.

Similar to change on most legislative issues, strengthening gun laws will not be an easy task. We urge you to continue to advocate for stronger gun violence prevention laws and continue to advocate for firearm injury prevention throughout your pediatric careers. Pediatricians must remain undeterred in our efforts to keep children safe, we encourage you continue to PAVE the way to firearm injury prevention. Thank you for all of your work over the past year!

#Forkids

Pediatricians Against Violence Everywhere Advocacy Team

- Toluwalase Ajayi, MD
- Lisa Costello, MD (chair)
- Shana Godfred-Cato, DO (chair)
- Wesley Henricksen, MD
- Erin Kelly, MD
- Ashley Lucke, MD (chair)
- Anita Shah, DO
- Natalie Stuntz, MD
- Lie Tjoeng, MD
- Elizabeth Van Dyne, MD
- Shannon Brockman, MS4
- Neha Joshi, MD
- Christian Pulcini, MD
- Kristin Schwarz, MD
- Puja Umaretiya, MS4

Thanks:
Thank you to our amazing Section on Medical Students, Residents, and Fellowship Trainee (SOMSRFT) staff members Julie Raymond and Barbara Miller for your dedication, encouragement, guidance, and support with this campaign and all of our advocacy and Section efforts.
Thank you Katie Crumley, MPP, State Government Affairs Analyst and the AAP Division of State Government Affairs for your support throughout the PAVE campaign.

Thank you Zach Laris and the Department of Federal Affairs for providing information about firearm injury prevention work at the federal level.

Thank you to Jamie Poslosky, Devin Miller, Cassandra Blohowiak, Gina Steiner, and the AAP Department of Public Affairs for helping us craft firearm injury prevention messages throughout the campaign.

Thank you to Kimberly Rose Batti who graciously donated her time to design the PAVE logo used throughout the campaign.


Thank you to all of our PAVE advocacy update guest writers, PAVE spotlight recipients, poetry for prevention participants, Christian Pulcini for our recurrent advocate in minutes, and the entire PAVE advocacy team, SOMSRFT executive team, medical student subcommittee, program delegates, and all SOMSRFT members for making our PAVE campaign a success.