

# Grandparents for Gun Safety

**STAND WITH US!**

grandparentsforgunsafety.org

## **BECOME AN ACCOMPLISHED ADVOCATE... THE TIME IS NOW!**

Public opinion has finally reached a tipping point about gun violence.

That means you and other supporters of gun reform can feel empowered to continue making progress on firearm safety, secure storage and legislative change.

Advocacy takes persistence and patience. You may already attend rallies, write letters, make phone calls and use social media urging changes to gun reform and other issues that are important to you. Consider taking just one additional action each day to help make our communities safer from gun violence.

This booklet offers some practical ways advocating for gun reform can be even more effective.

# EDUCATE

## Legislators

### What they care about:

- » Their own constituents
- » Phone calls, emails, lobbying
- » Local and national press coverage and editorials
- » Local famous people, big contributors
- » A single request in a communication

### What they *do not* care about:

- » Form letters, petitions, Tweets, Facebook
- » A single constituent from their district
- » People outside their district
- » A laundry list of issues

### What they're looking for:

- » Satisfied constituents whose concerns are addressed
- » Favorable local news coverage
- » A vote on a bill to tout in a positive press release

### What they want to avoid:

- » Losing re-election
- » Negative news coverage
- » Negative constituent letters
- » Being overwhelmed by calls and emails supporting or opposing a bill

# ADVOCATE

- » Show up and speak out!
- » Town halls; attend them when scheduled
  - Ask the candidates their position on gun reform
- » Visit legislators' local offices and let them know your position on legislation
- » Call state and national representatives and senators every day
  - Senior staff tally the number of calls, sorted by topic and zip code
- » Your calls count!
  - Research shows Republicans call four times more than Democrats; if it's a controversial issue, the call ratio can multiply by 11



## Phone Call Strategies

Legislators from Missouri and Kansas need to hear from gun reform supporters like you. Make the call whether or not the legislator supports your point of view.

Your voice counts!

### Calling tips:

- » **Know the specifics:** before calling, know what you plan to say. Write down the topic (e.g. background checks), the bill number and what you want the legislator to do. For example, “I’m asking Senator Smith to co-sponsor (or support or oppose) bill number 123 dealing with background checks.”
- » **Be frank:** if you’re calling about a vote already cast, let the legislator know you’re disappointed and explain why. Equally important, let the legislator know when you’re pleased with a vote taken.
- » **Go to the top:** whenever possible, call the legislator’s Washington, DC office. Ask for the staffer in charge of gun reform legislation. If no one knows, ask the name of the staffer who answered the phone, then start talking!
- » **Leave voicemail:** if no one answers the phone, leave a clear, concise message, including the bill number and your reason for calling.
- » **Emphasize your locale:** when calling your own senators and/or representative, give your zip code right away. Elected officials pay more attention to calls from their constituents. When calling legislators from other states, give your zip code only if asked.

» **Get personal:** if you have an experience that adds weight to your call, share it. For example, “I’m a gun violence survivor” or “I lost someone to gun violence.”

» **Use technology:** make calling easy by downloading 5 Calls, a phone app that lists the major issues before Congress and provides phone contact information for legislators. You can connect to them with the press of a button. Congress.gov is another phone app with information about bills and how to connect with your legislators. Once you’ve got the phone numbers, add them to your contacts list, then just click when ready to call.

» **Practice makes perfect:** after making a few calls, you’ll see how easy it is and find it rewarding, even fun. Feel proud knowing you’re doing something important by speaking out!



# PARTICIPATE

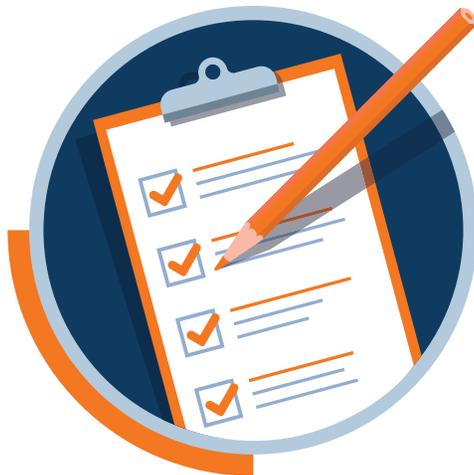
Advocating is the most effective way to participate. Organizations like Grandparents just need to adhere to the IRS restrictions placed on nonprofits. (Individuals, however, are not limited by those IRS rules.)

## A nonprofit cannot:

- » Be partisan. That means no financial support or endorsement of political candidates
- » Actively lobby: Efforts can't exceed 20% of an organization's budget and must be carefully tracked

## A nonprofit can:

- » Inform and educate its members and the community about upcoming legislation
- » Communicate with a legislator (and staff) to express a view about particular legislation
- » Provide legislator contact information to members: names, email addresses, phone numbers etc.
- » Encourage members to "Get involved." "Support our efforts." "Take action."



# RESOURCES

Many excellent sources for information on gun violence prevention and gun safety can help you stay well-informed for your advocacy efforts.

Among them:

- » [everytown.org](http://everytown.org)
- » [lawcenter.giffords.org](http://lawcenter.giffords.org)
- » [sandyhookpromise.org](http://sandyhookpromise.org)
- » [bradyunited.org](http://bradyunited.org)
- » [gunviolencearchive.org](http://gunviolencearchive.org)
- » [stophandgunviolence.org](http://stophandgunviolence.org)
- » [csgv.org](http://csgv.org) (the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence)
- » [thetrace.org](http://thetrace.org) (the daily online newsletter dedicated to covering gun violence)
- » [gunsdownAmerica.org](http://gunsdownAmerica.org)
- » [97percent.us](http://97percent.us) (A bipartisan group of Americans that supports the Second Amendment, gun safety and responsible gun ownership)
- » [responsibleownership.org](http://responsibleownership.org) (Gun owners, outdoor enthusiasts and veterans who believe Second Amendment rights come with responsibilities and believe in common-sense efforts to reduce gun violence and promote gun safety)

To learn about additional organizations that support gun rights, google 'gun rights advocacy groups in the United States.'

*Wishing you much success in your advocacy efforts!*

# Grandparents for Gun Safety

**STAND WITH US!**

[grandparentsforgunsafety.org](http://grandparentsforgunsafety.org)

Grandparents for Gun Safety is a local, nonprofit organization founded in 2013, shortly after the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary. Grandparents stands with other like-minded groups and people of all ages to make the community we share safe for all.

## **VISION**

All members of our community have the right to feel safe from gun violence.

## **MISSION**

We focus on solutions by promoting gun safety, educating the community and seeking common ground gun reform that respects the rights of gun owners and non-owners alike.

## **WHAT WE BELIEVE**

By standing together, we can add power to our combined voices to make an impact on legislation and gun safety.

We invite people of all ages and persuasions to Stand With Us! Advocate to achieve the goals we share. Visit our website for more information and the opportunity to join us!

[grandparentsforgunsafety.org](http://grandparentsforgunsafety.org)



SCAN ME