



Resolution #1 Gun Violence Resolution

WHEREAS, gun violence is a pressing public health issue; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that 99.85% of Americans will know a victim of gun violence and 54% of U.S. gun owners admit that they do not store their guns safely. Nearly 1,300 children in the United States die from gun-related injuries every year. Nationally, occupational homicide by shooting has increased steadily since 2011; and

WHEREAS, in Washington State between 1999 and 2016, 9.2% of all deaths were gun related and since 2008 firearm deaths have exceeded motor vehicle deaths, with the state's suicide by firearm rate surpassing that of the United States; and

WHEREAS, in Washington State between 1997-2014, of the 678 weapons used in domestic violence homicides, 54% were firearms. A vital component to the overall profile of domestic violence is the use of firearms in non-fatal domestic violence injuries and intimidations; and

WHEREAS, during 2016 in Washington State, 75% of all deaths from firearms were suicides, and among Washingtonians who died by suicide, nearly half of all suicides used firearms. Firearms in the home equate to a higher risk for suicide; and

WHEREAS, a study of teen suicides by firearm found that most were carried out with firearms from the adolescent's home. More than 75% of firearms used in suicide attempts and unintentional injuries were stored in the residence of the victim, a relative, or friend; and

WHEREAS, gun injuries to children are preventable, and safe firearm storage can reduce the risk of youth suicide and unintentional firearm injuries. Counseling, advice and education for healthcare professionals and for parents to keep their children safe must include limited access to weapons; and

WHEREAS, public health policy and laws that reduce traffic and occupational injuries and fatalities are outstanding examples that may be easily adapted to firearm issues to reduce harm; and

WHEREAS, nurses, physicians and other public health professionals recognize that firearm related injury and death is a public health epidemic in the United states and must move toward developing primary prevention strategies that interrupt the transmission of violence; and

WHEREAS, continued research is needed to understand nurses' roles in reducing firearm related incidents along with continued nursing education to fill knowledge gaps around mental health policy, reforms and other firearm harm reduction approaches, including understanding differing views around gun ownership; and

WHEREAS, the American Nurses Association has issued the declaration “Stop the Madness, End the Violence” and has called for the enactment of meaningful gun control legislation.

BE IT THEREFORE,

RESOLVED, that WSNA assess and promote the availability of educational resources related to firearm safety in homes, schools, and the greater community; and

RESOLVED, that WSNA support public health research on the dimensions of firearm violence including evaluation of firearm storage practices and barriers to safe practices; and

RESOLVED, that WSNA identify resources and gather data to draft a white paper on firearm safety that includes the role nurses can play to address the epidemic of firearm violence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WSNA collaborates with a diverse coalition of partners to work towards a comprehensive approach for gun safety and the reduction of firearm related violence.

Submitted by Occupational-Environmental Health and Safety Committee October 24, 2018

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