
Letters

Gun safety begins at home

Whenever tragedies such as the unintentional shooting of 1-year-old Braylon Robinson in Cleveland occur, we ask ourselves how they could have been prevented. But when you learn guns are in 32 percent of homes across Ohio and approximately 33,500 children in our state live in a home with a loaded, unlocked firearm, it's easy to understand how easily these shootings occur.

Far too many children have access to guns and, more often than not, they know where the guns are stored. Many guns are kept unlocked and loaded, and every year thousands of children are killed or seriously injured as a result. Most kids who die by a gun die at home. When someone shoots the child, almost half the time the shooter is a family member, often a sibling.

The easiest and first place prevention can occur is at home. After weighing the risks and benefits of having a gun in the home — just as we do about other risky, dangerous items — parents and caregivers can make sure the gun is stored unloaded and locked, and ensure that the ammunition is stored separately.

I urge all parents — gun owners or not — to understand the risks of having a gun in the home and take simple steps to keep their children safe from guns. Ask if there's an unlocked gun where your child plays.

LINDA BARNETT,
Cleveland

*Barnett is president of the National Council of Jewish Women/
Cleveland.*