

Smart parents inquire about guns' presence

Yes, it's a loaded question: "Is there a GUN where your Child Plays?"

But it's one that every parent or guardian should routinely ask before any new play date — just as they ask about who will be watching the kids, or if TV use is monitored.

To help drive that message home — and thanks to a \$5,000 grant from the Huron Foundation — the Cleveland chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women has posed that question on 10 billboards in Cleveland and East Cleveland.

The 12-by-25-foot posters feature 11 sweet-faced girls and boys beneath letters bigger than they are that spell out "ASK."

"We know from our research that, sadly, there is a tremendous need for education and awareness on issues of gun safety," said Mindi Axner, executive director of the local women's chapter.

The danger is real.

Last April, Braylon Robinson was fatally shot in his home on East 63rd Street.

He was 14 months old.

A 3-year-old male relative picked up a handgun while Braylon's mother had her back turned, according to Cleveland police.

The gun fired, striking Braylon in the head. He died about 30 minutes later in the emergency room of MetroHealth Medical Center.

In the immediate aftermath of the shooting, Cleveland Police Chief Calvin Williams condemned "this fascination" with guns.

Guns are everywhere, and almost anyone — as Braylon's death demonstrates — can access them.

Ask the question. It might save a life.