Data story about unintentional shootings involving children

The Brady Center for Gun Violence [estimates](https://www.bradyunited.org/key-statistics) that 8 children are killed each day in the US by accidental fire. This number has prompted the creation of a PSA by the AdCouncil in collaboration with the Brady Center, to educate gun owners about the importance of safe storage. In Texas, which is home to more guns than any other state in the US, lawmakers are considering legislation that directs the Department of Public Safety to create a similar PSA for the state.

Gun control advocates and the lawmakers pushing these PSA’s claim that the number of unintentional shootings among children is on the rise in the USA. I have not, however, been able to find any source that definitively confirms that fact. I would like to analyze data from the Gun Violence Archive, which has aggregated shootings across the country from media reports and police departments and categorized them by incident type (i.e. accidental shooting) and by age of “participants”.

Advocates and lawmakers pushing for the PSA also claim that “this can happen to anybody”. I would like to overlay the data about unintentional shootings among children with data about income by zip code to determine whether the problem truly cuts across socioeconomic brackets.

I plan to localize the story by comparing national results to Texas, which, again, is home to the most guns of any state in the US.

I foresee two challenges will come up in executing this data analysis. First is the fact that the data in the gun violence archive only goes back to 2014. The CDC [may have data](https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html) going back further. (I have not had time to explore it.) Second, the data in the gun violence archive includes street address, city and state for each incident, but does not include zip code. Unless there is some magic trick in R that can search the street address and match a zip code, I’ll have to manually search the addresses and assign zip codes.

Prior to my research, I’ll call the Brady Center ([media center](https://www.bradyunited.org/contact)) and talk to their experts about how/whether socioeconomic factors play into unintentional shootings as well as whether or not unintentional shootings have been shown to be increasing. After my analysis, I’ll call the NRA ([media center](https://home.nra.org/media-inquiries/)) and ask them why they oppose the safe storage campaigns as well as how my findings affect their position on the campaigns.

Income data by zip (US)

<https://www.irs.gov/statistics/soi-tax-stats-individual-income-tax-statistics-2016-zip-code-data-soi>

Unintentional shootings involving minors (US)

<https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/query/163d5205-63ef-4ebb-a046-7234de82abef>

Diversity statement:

I will speak to both gun control advocates and gun access advocates about my findings. Because I am exploring socioeconomic factors in relation to shootings, my article will reflect the diversity of this group. If there is a socioeconomic correlation, I’ll look into both typical cases and outliers.

Tinu Thomas will be my editing partner.