

# Ownership and storage of firearms in Kentucky

In 2008, 576 Kentuckians died because of injury by firearms.<sup>1</sup> Kentucky was 16th in the nation in firearm deaths at 13.3 per 100,000 people, compared with 10.3 deaths per 100,000 for the nation.<sup>2</sup> Firearms that are not properly handled and stored can pose a significant threat to the health of adults and children.

To learn about firearm ownership and storage habits among Kentuckians, the Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati and the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky included questions about firearms on the latest **Kentucky Health Issues Poll (KHIP)**.

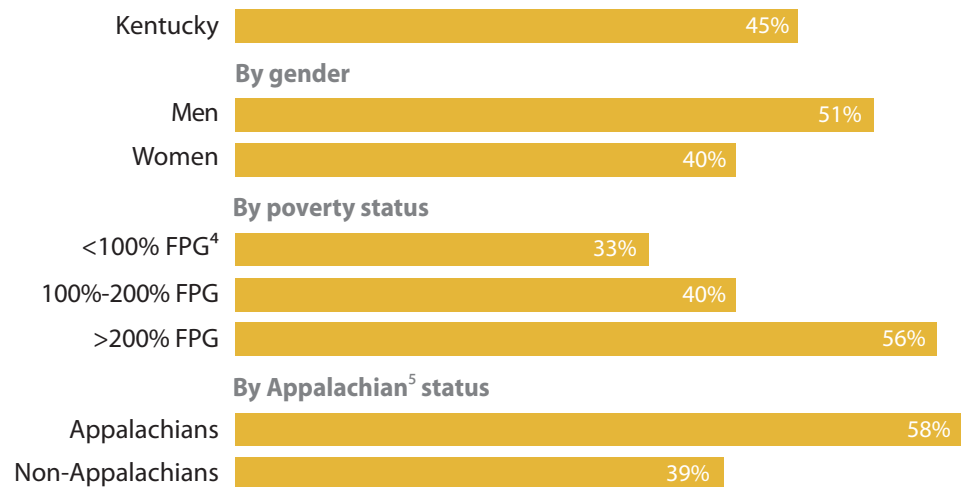
## Almost half report firearm around home, some loaded and unlocked

More than 4 in 10 Kentucky adults (45%) reported keeping firearms around their home, including in

<sup>1</sup> This includes accidental discharge of a firearm, intentional self-harm by a firearm, assault by a firearm, and legal intervention involving firearm discharge.

<sup>2</sup> The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Health Statistics, Division of Vital Statistics, National Vital Statistics Report Volume 59, Number 10, December 2011, Table 19. Retrieved Jan. 30, 2012, from [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr59/nvsr59\\_10.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr59/nvsr59_10.pdf).

### Are any firearms kept in or around your home?<sup>3</sup>



a garage, outdoor storage area or motor vehicle.<sup>3</sup> This means that an estimated 750,000 Kentucky homes have firearms. More than 3 in 10 adults (35%) with firearms in or around their home keep their guns loaded. This means an estimated 250,000 Kentucky homes have loaded firearms. One-fifth of adults

(20%) with firearms in or around their home keep their guns unlocked as well as loaded. This means an estimated 148,000 Kentucky homes have loaded and unlocked firearms.

## More than 4 in 10 homes with firearms have children present; some of the firearms are loaded and unlocked

Children are present in more than 4 in 10 homes (45%) that have firearms. This means an estimated 244,000 homes with children

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These findings unless otherwise noted are from the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, funded by the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati. The Kentucky Health Issues Poll was conducted Sept. 27-Oct. 27, 2011, by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. A random sample of 1,621 adults from throughout Kentucky was interviewed by telephone. This included 1,313 landline interviews and 308 cell phone interviews. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to  $\pm 2.5\%$ . There are other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording or context effects that can introduce error or bias.

For more information about the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, please visit [www.healthy-ky.org](http://www.healthy-ky.org) or [www.healthfoundation.org/khip.html](http://www.healthfoundation.org/khip.html).

younger than 18 have firearms present. In addition, children are present in 44% of homes that have loaded firearms and 39% of homes that have loaded and unlocked firearms.

### Men, those with higher incomes, Appalachians more likely to report firearms around home

Men (51%) were more likely to report having a firearm around their home than women (40%). The presence of firearms increased as income increased. One-third of

adults (33%) living below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines (FPG)<sup>4</sup> reported a firearm around their home, compared with nearly 6 in 10 adults (56%) living above 200% FPG. Nearly 6 in 10 adults (58%) of Appalachian heritage<sup>5</sup> report firearms around their home, compared with nearly 4 in 10 non-Appalachians (39%).

<sup>4</sup> 100% of the federal poverty guidelines (FPG) in 2010 was an annual household income of \$22,050 and 200% FPG was \$44,100, both for a family of 4.

<sup>5</sup> Appalachians are adults who were born or had at least one parent born in an Appalachian county, as defined by the Appalachian Regional Commission.

### Large urban areas report fewer firearms around home

More than half of Kentuckians living in Eastern Kentucky (57%) and Western Kentucky (51%) reported keeping a firearm in their home. That compares with 39% in the Lexington area, 37% in Northern Kentucky and 32% in the Louisville area.

#### Are any firearms kept in or around your home? (Map shows only the "yes" responses.)

