



DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DEEP ROOTS • GREAT HEIGHTS



EXCELLENCE



EQUITY



INTEGRITY

Dear Dinwiddie County Public Schools Families,

The safety and well-being of every student is a shared responsibility. In accordance with Virginia law, Dinwiddie County Public Schools is providing the following information to help families reduce the risk of accidental injury and protect children.

Secure Storage of Prescription Medications

Prescription medications should always be stored securely and out of the reach of children and teens. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), unintentional medication overdoses are the leading cause of emergency department visits among young children, and from 2009–2020 there were an estimated 678,000 emergency department visits nationwide involving children ages 5 and younger who gained unsupervised access to medications.

To help prevent accidental poisoning or misuse:

- Store medications in their original containers.
- Keep medications in a locked cabinet or secure location.
- Properly dispose of unused or expired medications.

Safe Firearm Storage

Virginia law requires adults to take reasonable steps to prevent minors from accessing firearms. The CDC reports that firearm injuries were the leading cause of death for children and teens ages 1–19 in 2020 and 2021. Secure storage greatly reduces the risk of accidental shootings and youth suicide.

When firearms are not in use:

- Store them **unloaded** in a **locked safe, lockbox, or with a trigger/cable lock**.
- Store ammunition **locked and separate** from firearms.
- Ensure children and unauthorized individuals cannot access firearms.

The CDC also found that in fatal unintentional shootings involving children, 74% of firearms were stored loaded and 76% were stored unlocked.

If You Are Concerned About a Child

If you believe a child may be at risk of harming themselves or others:

- Contact your child's school counselor, principal, or healthcare provider.
- Call **911** if there is an immediate emergency.
- Contact or text the **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** by dialing **988** for immediate, confidential support.

Thank you for partnering with Dinwiddie County Public Schools to create safe schools and healthy communities. By securely storing medications and firearms, families play an important role in protecting every child.

Additional Resources can be found through the [Virginia Department of Education's Parent and Caregiver Resources](#).

Sincerely,

Dinwiddie County Public Schools
Office of Student Services & School Safety