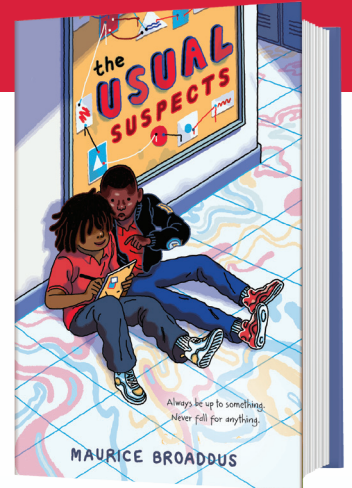


# Firearm Safety Tips for Parents and Kids

In Maurice Broaddus's *The Usual Suspects*, two friends must prove their innocence when they're blamed for bringing a gun to a neighborhood hangout near their school.

Like the main characters in the book, kids across the country deal with tough topics every day, and one of the most discussed subjects in homes and classrooms is access to guns. Because of this, it's important to have open dialogue with kids on what to do if they find a firearm or hear of someone bringing one to school or anywhere else.



**Not sure how to broach the subject or what advice to give to kids? Here are some tips to start.**

## Tips for Parents

- **Be honest with your kids on what school shootings are.** Many people don't believe a shooting will ever happen at their school or in their community, but it's important to have an honest conversation about what they are, rather than be unprepared.
- **Explain to kids that guns on TV or in video games are different from guns in real life.** Many TV shows, movies, and video games seem to glorify gun violence, but in real life, guns are dangerous and need to be treated with care.
- **Take a gun safety course with your kids.** Getting professional instruction helps teach kids proper procedure on handling guns so that accidents are less likely to occur.

## Tips for Kids

**Don't know what to do if you encounter a firearm? Follow these steps:**

- **Stop.** Stopping allows you the time to think about what you should do in the situation.
- **Don't Touch.** Many times, it's hard to tell if a gun is loaded, so you should avoid touching any firearms for your own safety and that of others.
- **Run Away.** Leave the firearm where it is and run away. It's unlikely an untouched firearm will fire but running away removes the temptation to touch and minimizes the chance that an accident might occur.
- **Tell a Grown-Up.** Find a trusted adult and tell them about the firearm so they can alert the authorities or properly store it.

**For more information visit [kidshealth.org](http://kidshealth.org)**