

Pasco Sheriff's Office Expands Project ChildSafe

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Pasco Sheriff's Office Child Protective Investigators who are tasked with investigating child-abuse allegations will have another tool to help keep children safe. The Sheriff's Office has started distributing 2,000 ChildSafe gunlock safety kits, doubling the number of gunlocks distributed in 2004.

The free gunlock safety kits will be given to each of the 36 Child Protective Investigators covering all of Pasco County. They will also be available at various Sheriff's Office locations, and road patrol supervisors will have the gunlocks available for deputies on the road.

The Child Protective Investigators with the Pasco Sheriff's Office conduct more than 5,000 child abuse investigations in the county each year, where they often speak to parents about child safety issues. If a CPI sees an unsecured gun in a house, they can now provide the gunlocks to Pasco citizens at no cost.

Project ChildSafe is a nationwide program that provides free gunlocks and education on responsible firearm ownership



Sgt. Michael Schreck, who oversees Community Policing for the Pasco County Sheriff's Office, demonstrates how one of the gunlocks work. PCSO is distributing 2,000 free ChildSafe gunlock safety kits – double the amount given out last year.



and storage. The program was developed by the National Shooting Sports Foundation and is supported by a U.S. Department of Justice Grant.

The safety kits include a gunlock and a pamphlet explaining how you can safely lock your handgun, rifle or shotgun. The goal of the program is to prevent a child or any other unauthorized person from accessing a firearm in the home and to encourage parents to develop a gun safety plan.

Project ChildSafe encourages parents to do more than simply lock up guns in the house. There is also a

section in the pamphlet parents can use to speak to their kids about gun safety. The No. 1 tip that parents are encouraged to share with their children is this: If you find a gun in your house or anywhere else, STOP! Leave it alone. Don't touch it and don't let anyone else touch it.

For more information about Project ChildSafe, visit the program's Website: www.projectchildsafef.org. The Pasco County Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention Unit can be reached at: 727-834-3376. ☎