



Toy Gun & Violent Video Game Exchange

*Promoting a Culture of Peace,
Changing the Way our Children Play*

Bring a toy gun or violent video game and receive a Ben & Jerry's ice cream and enter to win one of five raffle prizes!*

ipad, New Bike, Six Flags Passes, Movie Tickets, Leapster

Let's have a conversation with our children and raise their awareness about our culture of violence.

- ◆ Novato Police Department, October 4, 10am-1pm
- ◆ Ben & Jerry's Bon Air Center, October 11, 10am-1pm
- ◆ Town Center Corte Madera, October 18, 10am-1pm
- ◆ Sausalito Police Department, October 25, 10am-1pm

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Visit www.c4dp.org for more information.

Sponsored by: Center for Domestic Peace & Ben & Jerry's

Endorsed by: Marin County District Attorney's Office

CENTER FOR DOMESTIC
PEACE

*No purchase necessary to enter raffle.
Must be 18 years old to enter, or on behalf of minor.





OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

*Prevention * Prosecution * Protection*

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September 18, 2014

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PRESS RELEASE

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TOY GUN & VIOLENT VIDEO GAME EXCHANGE PROGRAM

I, as the Marin County District Attorney, along with the Center for Domestic Peace and Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream are sponsoring a Toy Gun & Violent Video Game Exchange Program.

These items can be turned in during the month of October on four dates:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>
October 4, 2014	Novato Police Department	10 AM to 1 PM
October 11, 2014	Ben & Jerry's at Bon Air Center	10 AM to 1 PM
October 18, 2014	Town Center in Corte Madera	10 AM to 1 PM
October 25, 2014	Sausalito Police Department	10 AM to 1 PM

I wanted to address toy guns and violent video games a couple of years ago when I did a gun buyback program. I backed off when it became apparent that outdated toy guns and violent video programs may be turned in with the money I provided then enabling the kids to go out and buy the newer versions of the same things. I have had discussions with the Center for Domestic Peace and we agreed to co-sponsor along with Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream a program tied into Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October to try and get some of these replica firearms and violent video games turned in. The model we developed was to incentivize the process by giving free ice cream to all participants and also construct a raffle to give age appropriate prizes to some of the participants. So it is clear we are not "buying" these items with cash as we did with the gun buy-back program two years ago. Everyone gets free ice cream and some of the parents of the participants could be awarded raffle prizes in November.

There are a couple of reasons why I am supporting this effort. One, I want to do all I can from the "prevention side" to avoid an Andy Lopez (recent Sonoma County police shooting incident) event here in Marin. The Lopez incident I mention involved a juvenile who was carrying a replica toy gun that an officer believed to be a firearm and when handled in a provocative manner resulted in the officer shooting and killing the juvenile. Several years ago we had some kids playing some type of "war games" at night at one of our Marin schools. They were dressed out and carrying replica toy guns and the police were called to a report of vandals at a school. Imagine sorting out quickly what they had and were these guns or what – luck was on our side and no one got hurt.

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Also just as important and compelling is my belief that we, as parents and grandparents, need to provide “non-violent modeling” in our homes and try in my opinion to get this violence imprinting reduced as much as possible. This is the tie-in to Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October.

We know that guns in homes of domestic violence incidents increase the potential for very tragic events. We know kids are present in a high percentage of our domestic violence incidents. We know these kids become adults and unfortunately often repeat the patterns of violence they were exposed to as kids. Add to that the years of “desensitizing violence imprinting” that will have an impact on how a volatile domestic violence incident unfolds.

“Children’s play with toy guns and violent video games reinforces fantasies of being in control and dominating,” noted Donna Garske, Executive Director for Center for Domestic Peace. “We have to ask the critical question of how dominance and control expressed in adult relationships has been learned and reinforced over an individual’s life time, including through this seemingly harmless play.”

Marla Hedlund, Development and Community Relations Manager for the Center for Domestic Peace, notes, “Children reflect the culture they live in. This is really all about having a conversation with our community and our children about the culture of violence. We’re trying to inspire people to become part of the movement to create peace in a violence-free environment.”

None of us want to be complacent or naïve and say this could not happen in Marin – tragically it can happen here!

Contact:

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