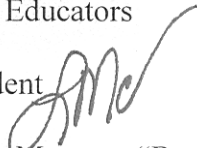




— Montana Office of Public Instruction —

Linda McCulloch
State Superintendent

TO: Shooting Sport Advocates and Educators

FROM: Linda McCulloch, Superintendent 

RE: Support for Gun Safety and the Montana "Be Safe" Program

DATE: March 7, 2003

Like all of the West, firearms played an important role in Montana's history and is an important part of our contemporary life. Lewis and Clark depended on guns for food and safety. Indeed, their expedition would have probably failed without firearms. Montana is proud of its Olympic and World shooting champions. Moreover, today, Montana is one of the premier sport hunting areas in the world.

Many Montanans own guns for hunting, sport shooting and collecting. It is not unusual for our children to see guns in vehicles, stores, or in the homes of neighbors or relatives. Unfortunately, sometimes kids have access to guns that are not properly secured. For this reason, many people have supported gun safety education for our children. I join in that effort.

The 1997 Montana Legislature passed the Montana Gun-Free Schools Act and the 1999 Montana Legislature passed a resolution supporting gun safety education in our elementary schools. The Montana Shooting Sports Association (MSSA) responded to this call for gun safety by developing the "Be Safe" program.

The "Be Safe" program is easy to use, is free to schools and was developed by Montanans for Montanans. The Office of Public Instruction supports gun safety programs in Montana schools, and provides schools with information on the "Be Safe" program.

We appreciate the safety efforts of the MSSA and support the expanded delivery of the "Be Safe" program to Montana schools.