



## Kids Warn About Guns And Suicide

(NAPSA)—A new contest sponsored by the entertainment industry was created to inform young people about the role of guns and suicide—and hopefully help save lives.

Most people don't realize that guns are used far more often in suicides than they are to kill others. Fifty-eight percent of gun deaths are suicides while only 38 percent are homicides, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Guns are the top choice among Americans for killing themselves—used more often than all other methods combined.

With these sobering statistics in mind, the non-profit Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. (EIC), sponsored a contest in which high school students were asked to create a TV public service announcement (PSA) cautioning viewers to get weapons away from people who may be depressed or suicide-prone.

The first celebrity to join in the effort was Michael Douglas, whose own father Kirk, in a moment of despair, once put a gun to his head but fortunately came to his senses before pulling the trigger. Douglas lent his imposing voice to the PSA, reminding listeners that "You can't unpull a trigger."

Radio listeners may also hear Michael Douglas in the audio-only version of the PSA, now being distributed nationally.

The winning entry was created by Evie Hunter's film class at San Pedro High School in San Pedro, Calif. Hunter saw the contest entry form three days before the deadline. What caught her eye was the prize: a trip to Paramount Studios to meet actor Scott Bakula and tour the set of the *Enterprise*. "I knew the kids would really get a kick out of that."

So for the next three brainstorm-filled days, she and her class hammered out what became the winning entry.



**As part of a program to raise public awareness about the connection between guns and suicide, actor Michael Douglas is speaking out. The actor has taken a leadership role in a public service campaign sponsored by the Entertainment Industries Council, Inc.**

AnimAction, an animation production company, worked with them in bringing their concept to life. The class divided themselves into illustrators, tracers and colorers, completing hundreds of cell drawings needed to make up a 30-second animation.

As chief artist, 12th grader Adam Kean describes the resulting spot: "We were trying to show a guy who was really upset 'cuz his girlfriend just broke up with him. He knows his parents have a gun and he goes to look for it in their dresser. But he can't find it. Just then, his mother walks in and is shocked to see what he's doing. She tries to console him and at the end, he sort of smiles—leaving the audience to wonder what would have happened if he had found the gun."

EIC President Brian Dyak anticipates that the PSA will find a prominent niche on TV and radio stations around the country. "By raising awareness on the safe and proper storage of guns, we're hoping this project will end up preventing needless deaths," says Dyak.