



Children have easy access to gun magazines that encourage and even celebrate the killing of animals for 'sport'. Such publications are on sale in high street newsagents, such as WHSmith, and on supermarket shelves across the country. But a recent poll shows that the overwhelming majority of people want these magazines kept away from children.

End the sale of gun magazines to children





© RICH THREPALLOW

Gun magazines feature shooters posing boastfully beside animals they have just slaughtered. Grinning young children are also shown holding up or standing over shot pheasants, rabbits, ducks and pigeons.

Such magazines act as front-line advocates for a shooting lobby that is anxious about the declining level of gun use. Government figures show that the number of

shotgun certificate holders in England and Wales has fallen at a significant rate for more than 20 years. The gun lobby's own research shows that if people don't learn to shoot by the age of 14, the chances of them subsequently getting involved rapidly diminish.

To counter this downward trend, politically well-connected gun lobby groups, such as the Countryside Alliance and the British Association for Shooting and Conservation, direct substantial resources towards the recruitment of children.

Between them, they organise shooting lessons for youngsters, produce educational materials for schools, and even encourage sympathetic parents to become school governors in order to 'educate the educators'.

Among the gun lobby's major political triumphs is its success in resisting moves to restrict the age at which children can pick up a shotgun and use it to kill animals for 'sport'. A child of any age can legally do so. In fact, there is no minimum age to acquire a shotgun certificate.

An NOP poll, commissioned by Animal Aid, found that 74 per cent of people want gun magazines consigned to the 'top shelf', out of the hands of children, and a massive 84 per cent backed a ban on their sale to children.

// It seems imperative that shooting magazines celebrating the... 'casual cruelty' of shooting wild animals – a kind of 'shooting porn' – should not be on sale to children and young people (under 18) and that shops and retail outlets selling such magazines should position them both out of reach and sight of children and young people. //

Peter Squires, Professor of Criminology and Public Policy at the University of Brighton

Action

Animal Aid needs your help to achieve the following objectives:

- Magazines that encourage the killing of animals for 'sport' to be consigned to 'top shelf' positions in shops, out of sight and reach of young people, on whom the pro-violence content could have a negative, long-lasting effect.
- The sale of these publications to be restricted to over 18s, thereby bringing them in line with tobacco products and magazines with an explicit sexual content.



How you can help

- Sign our petition at <http://tinyurl.com/Ban-shoot-mags>
- Join our E-news list at www.animalaid.org.uk so that we can send you updates on this campaign

Animal Aid, The Old Chapel, Bradford Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1AW Tel: 01732 364546 Email: info@animalaid.org.uk www.animalaid.org.uk

Incorporated under the name Animal Abuse Injustice and Defence Society, a company limited by guarantee. Registered in the UK no. 1787309. V.A.T. No. 395 2761 19.

We may arrange for you to receive information from like-minded organisations. Please tick here if you would prefer not to receive this information.

