round the country, many students keep an eye out for neighborhood ice cream trucks. Students in Modesto, California, however, are thinking about something other than ice cream. Ice cream trucks in their town have also been selling toy guns, and concerned students are studying this issue. By working cooperatively with government officials and educating community members, this Project Citizen team is making sure that people are hearing their message.

Community Connection  When a young student in Modesto was shot in the eye with a pellet fired from a toy gun that was bought from an ice cream truck, older students took notice. The extent of the problem became clear when three students were suspended from school and a second student was injured in BB gun incidents. Student Leela Lowe, who was the second person shot, said, “When they sell the guns, kids just buy them like they are nothing. They just shoot people.”

Taking Action  Now students in Mr. Nicholas Kellner’s and Ms. Patty McLean’s classes are researching the problem as part of the Project Citizen program and are working on a policy to help prevent future accidents. These students are trying to develop different ways to stop ice cream trucks from selling toy guns. The Modesto students have held a student public awareness assembly within their school and reached out to the community through local public television and newspapers. They have also organized a protest and planned a meeting with the city council. They hope their actions will get more people involved in creating solutions to the toy gun problem.

Keeping Students Safe

1. Why do the Modesto students think that selling toy guns from ice cream trucks is a problem?
2. If you were a student in Modesto, what are some of the ways you could address the issue of toy gun sales?