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Teen in Melbourne Injured by Homemade Gun Accident

July 28, 2025

– Categories: *Crypto*



A Melbourne teenager has been hospitalised after accidentally shooting himself with a homemade firearm, raising concerns about the dangers of illegal weapons. This article examines the incident, the risks of unregulated firearms, and the broader implications for community safety in Victoria.

In a shocking incident in Melbourne's south-east, a 16-year-old boy was found with a gunshot wound in an alleyway off Scott Street, Dandenong, at approximately 1:15am on a Monday morning in April 2024. Victoria Police confirmed the teen had accidentally discharged a homemade gun, resulting in non-life-threatening injuries. "It is believed the teenager accidentally discharged the firearm at himself," a Victoria Police spokesperson told the Herald Sun. The makeshift weapon was recovered at the scene, and a crime

scene was established to investigate the circumstances. The teen was promptly taken to hospital for treatment.

The incident underscores the growing concern over homemade firearms, often crafted with rudimentary materials or 3D printers, which are illegal in Australia due to strict gun laws. Victoria Police are now probing how the teenager acquired or constructed the weapon, highlighting the challenges of enforcing firearm regulations in an era of accessible technology. A similar case in 2013 involved a 22-year-old man in Perth who shot himself with a homemade gun, showing this issue is not new but remains a persistent threat.

Community leaders and law enforcement have expressed alarm at the risks posed by such weapons, which bypass Australia's stringent gun control measures, enacted after the 1996 Port Arthur Massacre. That tragedy, where 35 people were killed, led to sweeping reforms, yet homemade guns continue to surface. "These devices are unpredictable and dangerous," said a Victoria Police representative, who declined to be named, citing ongoing investigations. The incident has sparked calls for tougher monitoring of online platforms where instructions for crafting such weapons can be found.

The current Labor government, under Premier Jacinta Allan, has been criticised for focusing on broader social policies while local safety issues, like illegal firearms, persist. As investigations continue, this incident serves as a stark reminder of the need for vigilance in upholding Australia's hard-won gun laws. The community awaits answers on how to prevent such dangerous mishaps in the future.