

# Planning for Living

*Means Safety for Suicide Prevention*



# Please Take Care of Yourself

Suicide is a very delicate topic.  
Emotions may rise to the surface.

*We are loss survivors, attempt survivors and people with lived experience.*

Please make taking care of yourself during  
and after the presentation a priority.

If you or someone you know needs support, please contact:  
**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988 or (800)273-8255**  
**Crisis Text Line: Text “HELLO” to 741-741**

# Means Safety: Striving to Keep a Loved one Safe from Suicide

Welcome. This website is designed to support you to increase safety for yourself or a loved one, friend, colleague, or client when suicide risk is elevated. Limiting a person's access to means by which they may cause themselves harm is called *lethal means safety*, and here you'll find information about a range of strategies to promote safety in times of crisis or in anticipation of crisis.

Adding time between thoughts of suicide and a person's ability to obtain lethal means for an attempt represents a practical, lifesaving approach to prevent suicide.

[strivingforsafety.org/](https://strivingforsafety.org/)

# Means Safety: Principles and Background



# www.MeansMatter.org

The screenshot shows the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health website. The header includes the Harvard logo and name, the school's name, and a navigation menu with links for Email, People, Departments, Calendar, Careers, Give, Frontiers, and my.harvard. Below this is a secondary navigation menu with links for ABOUT, FACULTY & RESEARCH, ADMISSIONS & AID, ACADEMICS, EXECUTIVE/CONTINUING ED, and NEWS. The main content area features the title "Means Matter" followed by a 3x6 grid of speech bubbles. Each bubble contains the word "WHY?" in white, except for the bubble in the second row, fourth column, which contains the word "HOW?" in white on a blue background. At the bottom left, the text "MEANS MATTER" is followed by a horizontal line. To the right of the line, the text "Suicide, Guns, and Public Health" is displayed.

**HARVARD**  
**T.H. CHAN**

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Email People Departments Calendar Careers Give Frontiers my.harvard

ABOUT | FACULTY & RESEARCH | ADMISSIONS & AID | ACADEMICS | EXECUTIVE/CONTINUING ED | NEWS

## Means Matter

WHY? WHY? WHY? WHY? WHY? WHY?

WHY? WHY? WHY? HOW? WHY? WHY?

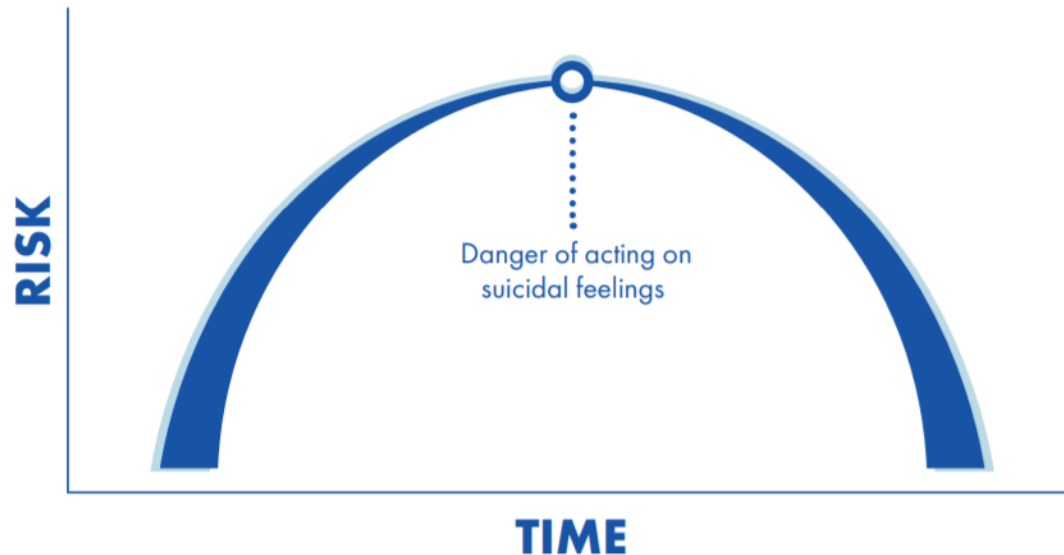
WHY? WHY? WHY? WHY? WHY? WHY?

MEANS MATTER

Suicide, Guns, and Public Health

# Understanding Suicide Risk

## SUICIDE RISK CURVE



### Suicide risk fluctuates over time

Risk is greater when:\*

- Thoughts are more frequent
- Thoughts are of longer duration
- Thoughts are less controllable
- Few deterrents to acting on thoughts
- Stopping the pain is the “reason”



# Reducing access to lethal means saves lives

**“Means safety” (reducing a suicidal person’s access to highly lethal means) is an important part of a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention.**

**It is based on the following understandings:**

1. Intent isn’t all that determines whether an attempter lives or dies; means also matter.
2. Firearms are lethal in 85-95% of suicide attempts
3. As opposed to 0.5-2% of suicide attempts by overdose, and 1-3% of cut/pierce attempts
4. 90% of attempters who survive do NOT go on to die by suicide later
5. 70% do not attempt again
6. Numerous studies have demonstrated a lack of substitution for means

# Reducing access to lethal means saves lives

- The effectiveness of reducing access to lethal means has been demonstrated using a wide range of intervention in multiple countries
- Examples:
  - United Kingdom: reduction of suicide following replacement of coal gas with natural gas
  - Israel: 40% reduction in suicides of soldiers when policies changed to require weapons to be stored on base
  - Sri Lanka: Ban on certain chemicals used in pesticides associated with reduction in suicides
  - New Zealand: Suicide deaths reduced to zero after barriers were reinstalled on bridges
  - Multiple Countries: Limiting prescription size and altering packaging resulted in fewer suicides
- Most effective strategies for lethal means restriction are physical deterrents



# Won't people just find another way?

*Numerous studies have shown no evidence that individuals experiencing thoughts of suicide sought alternative means, and in many cases suicide overall decreased.*

- *Effectiveness of barriers at suicide jumping sites: a case study (Beautris)*
- *Preventing suicide by jumping: the effect of a bridge safety fence (Pelletier)*
- *Securing a Suicide Hot Spot: Effects of a Safety Net at the Bern Muenster Terrace (Reisch)*
- *The coal gas story. United Kingdom suicide rates, 1960-71 (Kreitman)*
- *The impact of pesticide regulations on suicide in Sri Lanka (Gunnell)*

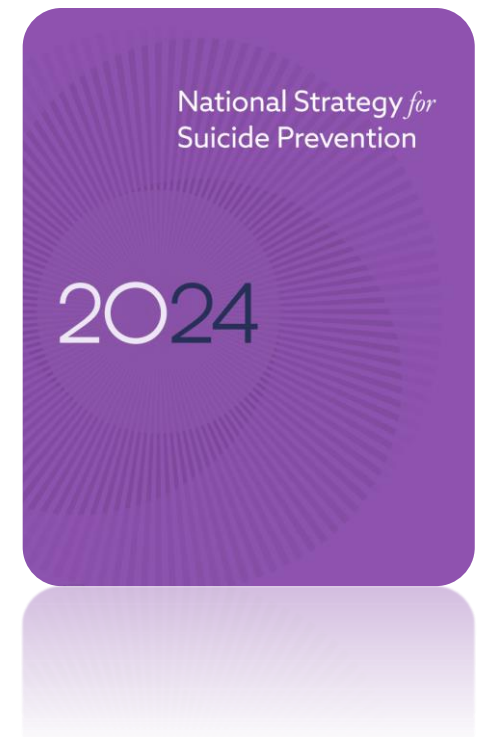
# How can we restrict or reduce access to lethal means?

- Place the person in a safer environment
- Put a barrier between the person and the means
- Create time between the person and the means
- Make the means (and an attempt) less lethal

# National Strategy

Below are the objectives for Goal 3 that will help advance the National Strategy to improve suicide outcomes in the country.

- Objective 3.1: Train community members and implement effective ways to reduce access to lethal means among people at risk, including safe and secure storage of firearms, medications and poisons, ligatures, and other means in homes, workplaces, communities, and the physical environment.
- Objective 3.2: Evaluate policies, programs, and practices that put time and space between a person at risk and a lethal means of suicide, including their impact in historically marginalized communities.
- Objective 3.3: Partner with firearm and other relevant organizations and communities to incorporate suicide awareness and prevention as basic tenets of firearm safety and responsible ownership.
- Objective 3.4: Implement effective substance use prevention and harm reduction programs, practices, and policies that can help reduce suicide risk at the individual and community levels.



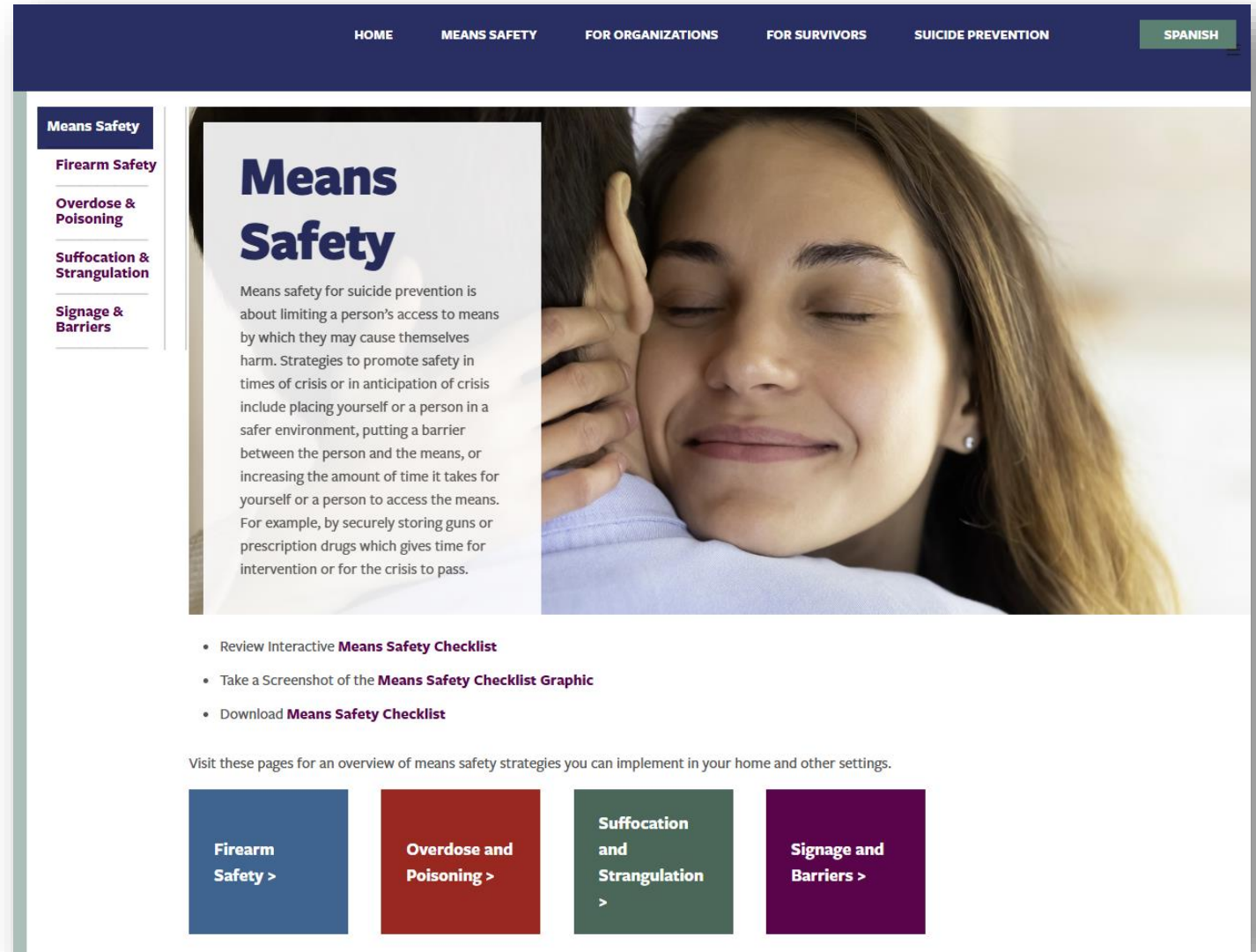
## Means Safety: Striving to Keep a Loved one Safe from Suicide

Welcome. This website is designed to support you to increase safety for yourself or a loved one, friend, colleague, or client when suicide risk is elevated. Limiting a person's access to means by which they may cause themselves harm is called *lethal means safety*, and here you'll find information about a range of strategies to promote safety in times of crisis or in anticipation of crisis.

Adding time between thoughts of suicide and a person's ability to obtain lethal means for an attempt represents a practical, lifesaving approach to prevent suicide.

## Website Features:

- Public facing website with resources for individuals, friends and family to help reduce access to lethal means during time of crisis
- Includes means safety tips for various methods





# Means safety is one the most effective strategies for suicide prevention...

## Means Safety Checklist

If you are concerned about how to keep yourself or a loved one who is thinking about suicide or has attempted suicide safe in the home, this checklist offers a starting point.

- ☒ Learn the warning signs of suicide
- ☒ Have a conversation about suicide prevention
- ☒ Share crisis resources
- ☒ Keep medications securely stored at all times
- ☒ Dispose of unused, unwanted, or expired medications
- ☒ Review the steps to respond to a suspected drug overdose
- ☒ Keep guns securely stored
- ☒ Familiarize yourself with California law when considering storing a firearm outside the home
- ☒ Trust your instincts
- ☒ Remember you are not alone

You are not alone. For immediate help call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24/7) at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**.

Visit [www.Striving4Safety.org](http://www.Striving4Safety.org) for more information.

Most efforts to prevent suicide focus on why people take their lives. But as we understand more about who attempts suicide and when and where and why, it becomes increasingly clear that how a person attempts – the means they use – plays a key role in whether they live or die

- MeansMatter.org

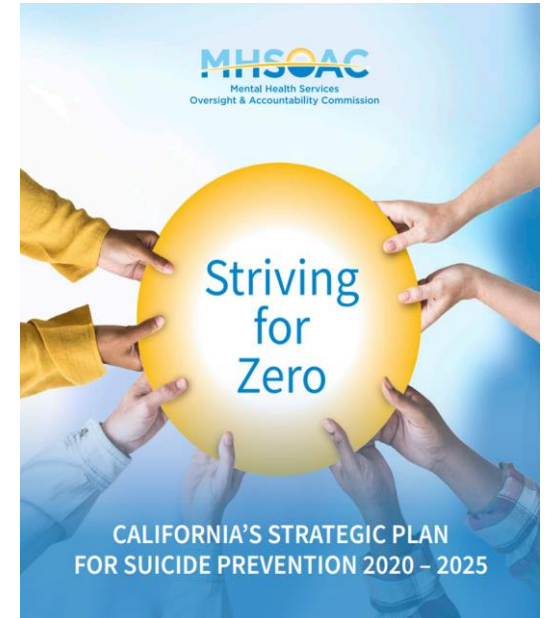


# Statewide Plan - Strategic Direction

**Objective 4f** Disseminate information to local gun shop and range owners to increase awareness of suicide prevention efforts, suicide warning signs, and available resources. Partner with local firearm safety trainers to incorporate suicide prevention awareness into trainings. Invite local gun shop and range owners to join local coalitions. Partner with law enforcement to guide dissemination of lawful options for temporarily transferring firearms for storage in times of suicide crisis or when Gun Violence Restraining Orders apply.<sup>26</sup> Resources to support this strategy can be found here: <https://emmresourcecenter.org/resources/suicide-prevention-gun-shop-activity>.

## Steps to implementation:

- Disseminate information to local gun shops (awareness materials and gatekeeper trainings to staff)
- Partner with local firearm safety trainings to incorporate suicide prevention into trainings
- Disseminate information on lawful options for safe storage
- Provide information on Gun Violence Restraining Order
- Disseminate information to raise awareness of suicide prevention and safe storage/transfer in firearm owner community



# Firearm Suicide Prevention:

- Includes information for “in the home” and for “retailers and ranges”

HOMEMEANS SAFETYFOR ORGANIZATIONSFOR SURVIVORSUICIDAL PREVENTIONSPANISH

Means Safety

Firearm Safety

Overdose & Poisoning

Suffocation & Strangulation

Signage & Barriers


# Firearm Safety

Firearms are a leading method of suicide in the United States. Every step we can take to put barriers or “speed bumps” between someone’s thoughts of suicide and access to means to end their life reduces the risk of a suicide attempt. This page offers strategies to incorporate suicide prevention into firearm safety practices.

In the Home >

For Retailers and Ranges >

I Need Help Now



Means Safety

Firearm Safety

Overdose & Poisoning

Suffocation & Strangulation

Signage & Barriers

## Firearm Safety

Firearms are a leading method of suicide in the United States. Every step we can take to put barriers or “speed bumps” between someone’s thoughts of suicide and access to means to end their life reduces the risk of a suicide attempt. This page offers strategies to incorporate suicide prevention into firearm safety practices.

### In the Home

There are a number of ways you can help keep yourself or a loved one safe in the home.

**1. Learn the warning signs for suicide and crisis resources.**

If you are concerned about yourself or someone else and observe one or more warning signs,

[More >](#)

**2. Keep guns securely stored at all times.**

It’s important to keep guns securely stored at all times. This is even more important when

[More >](#)

**3. Have a conversation about suicide prevention.**

When you’re worried that someone may be having thoughts of suicide, the only way to know is

[More >](#)

**4. Consider additional safety precautions such as storing a firearm outside the home.**

Putting time and distance between a person at risk for suicide and a gun can save a life. To keep yourself, your family, or your friends safe when someone is experiencing thoughts of suicide, one of the most effective steps you can take is to limit access to firearms by securing firearms safely outside of the home. There are some things to consider before transferring firearms to a gun shop or to a family member or friend. Please note that the law can change and that these tips were written based on information available in May 2022.

Storing a gun at a gun shop or shooting range ▼

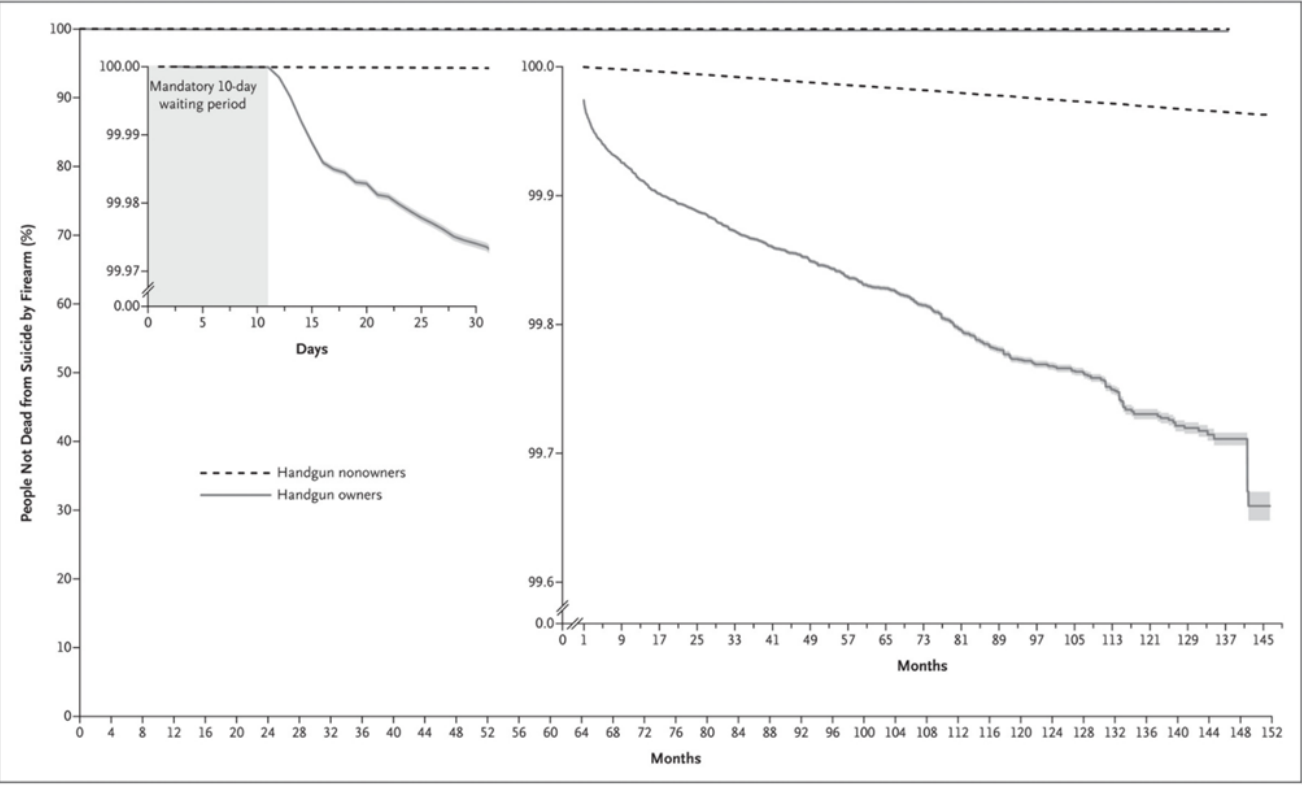
Storing a gun with a friend or family member ▼

Storing a gun with law enforcement ▼

What if storage or disposal isn’t an option? ▼

# Suicide rates of firearm owners over time

People Not Dead from Suicide by Firearm (%)



----- Handgun nonowners  
———— Handgun owners

Owners  
(N=676,425)

Nonowners  
(N=25,637,011)

Cause of Death	Owners		Non-owners	
	# / Rate		# / Rate	
Suicide	1,354	47.73	16,540	9.38
Suicide by Firearm	1,200	42.30	5,491	3.11

# Suicide rates of firearm owners over time

SPECIAL ARTICLE

## Handgun Ownership and Suicide in California

David M. Studdert, LL.B., Sc.D., Yifan Zhang, Ph.D., Sonja A. Swanson, Sc.D., Lea Prince, Ph.D., Jonathan A. Rodden, Ph.D., Erin E. Holsinger, M.D., Matthew J. Spittal, Ph.D.,  
Garen J. Wintemute, M.D., M.P.H., and Matthew Miller, M.D., Sc.D.

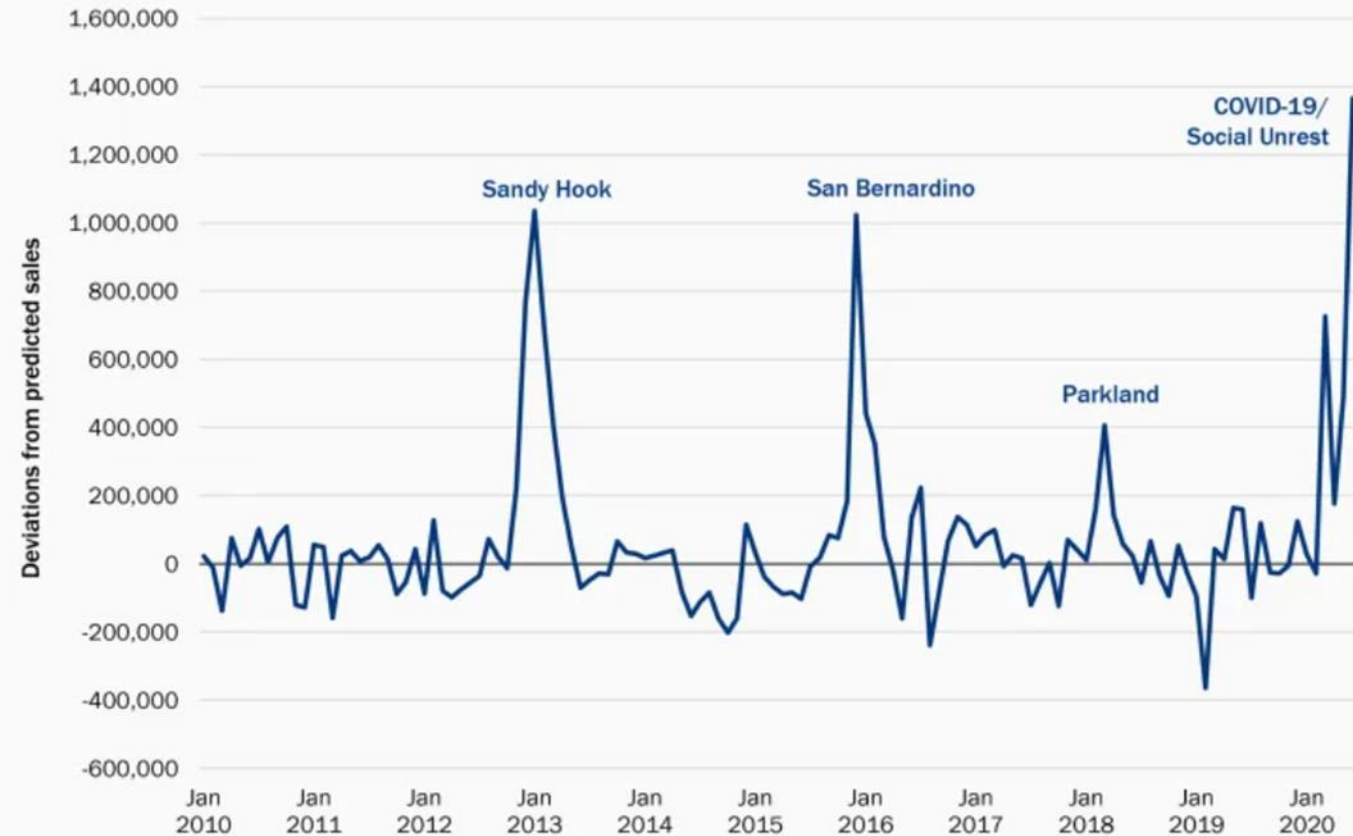
**Table 3.** Counts, Crude Rates, and Adjusted Hazard Ratios for Suicide by Firearm among Handgun Owners, According to Time Period after First Handgun Acquisition.\*

Suicides by Firearm	Period Since First Handgun Acquisition						
	1–10 Days	11–30 Days	31–90 Days	91–365 Days	366 Days–3 Yr	4–6 Yr	7–12.2 Yr
Suicides — no./total no. (%)	1/1200 (0.08)	172/1200 (14.33)	154/1200 (12.83)	251/1200 (20.92)	309/1200 (25.75)	194/1200 (16.17)	119/1200 (9.92)
Crude rate per 100,000 person-years	5.41	470.80	147.30	60.71	45.87	18.55	14.28
Adjusted hazard ratio (95% CI)	4.59 (0.82–25.52)	100.10 (55.75–179.90)	16.62 (12.98–21.29)	12.40 (10.48–14.67)	5.35 (4.64–6.17)	1.58 (1.34–1.86)	2.61 (2.14–3.19)

\* “Acquisition” refers to the time of the application to purchase. California requires a 10-day (240-hour) waiting period from the date and time of the application to purchase to the time at which the purchaser is permitted to take possession of the firearm.

# Firearm Sales

**Monthly Firearm Sales, 2010 to 2020**



**Source:** Authors' calculations based on data from the NICS database on background checks conducted.

**Note:** Predicted sales adjust for trends over time and seasonal variation.

**B** Economic Studies  
at BROOKINGS



# “Safe Harbor” update to CA Penal Code

- Section 27545 does not apply to the transfer of a firearm if all of the following conditions are satisfied:
  - The firearm is **voluntarily and temporarily transferred** to another person who is 18 years of age or older for safekeeping **to prevent it from being accessed or used to attempt suicide by the transferor or another person that may gain access** to it in the transferor’s household.
  - The **transferee does not use the firearm for any purpose** and, except when transporting the firearm to the transferee’s residence or when returning it to the transferor, keeps the firearm unloaded and secured in the transferee’s residence in one of the following ways:
    - Secured in a locked container.
    - Disabled by a firearm safety device.
    - Secured within a locked gun safe.
    - Locked with a locking device as described in Section 16860 that has rendered the firearm inoperable.
  - The **duration of the loan is limited to that amount of time reasonably necessary** to prevent the harm described in paragraph (1).



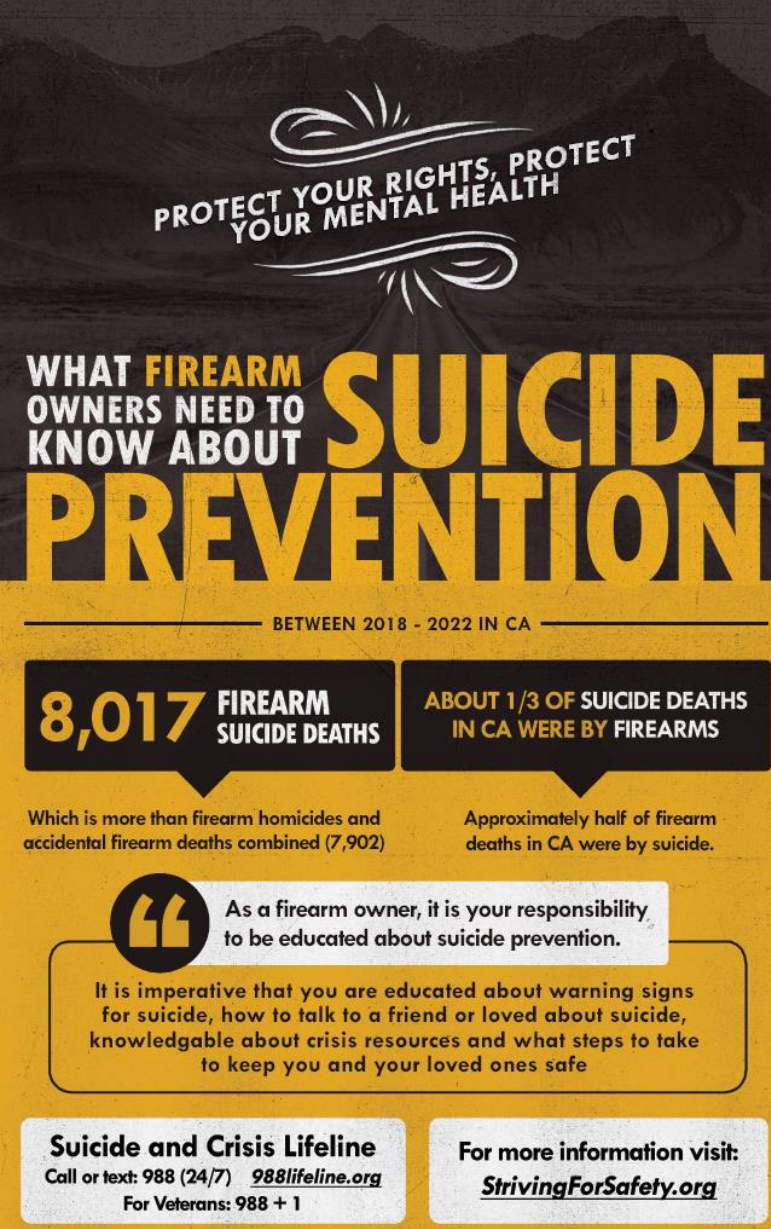
# CA Distribution and Dealer Requirements

- . 26165: The course (CCW) shall include, no less than one hour in length on mental health
- . 31640: Firearm safety certificate standardized test shall include information on suicide prevention
- . 23640: Packaging of firearms shall include the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (English and Spanish)
- . 26835: Requires posting of National Suicide Prevention Lifeline in business

## Materials available:

- **Fliers** with firearm suicide prevention information
  - For passive display
  - To be included with each firearm sale
- **Decals/stickers** that prominently display National Lifeline
- **Posters** for display that include National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and general suicide prevention messaging
- **Training** content for use by firearm safety instructors

# Firearm Suicide Prevention Flier (front/poster)



The flier features a dark background with a mountain range and a stylized white graphic of a person's head and shoulders. The text is primarily in white and yellow. The top section reads 'PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS, PROTECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH'. The main title is 'WHAT FIREARM OWNERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SUICIDE PREVENTION'. Below this, it states 'BETWEEN 2018 - 2022 IN CA'. Two statistics are highlighted in yellow boxes: '8,017 FIREARM SUICIDE DEATHS' and 'ABOUT 1/3 OF SUICIDE DEATHS IN CA WERE BY FIREARMS'. Below these, two paragraphs provide context: 'Which is more than firearm homicides and accidental firearm deaths combined (7,902)' and 'Approximately half of firearm deaths in CA were by suicide.' A quote from a firearm owner is presented in a white box, followed by a paragraph emphasizing the importance of education about warning signs, communication, and crisis resources. At the bottom, two white boxes provide contact information for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and a website for more information.

PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS, PROTECT  
YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

WHAT FIREARM  
OWNERS NEED TO  
KNOW ABOUT **SUICIDE  
PREVENTION**

BETWEEN 2018 - 2022 IN CA

**8,017** FIREARM  
SUICIDE DEATHS

ABOUT 1/3 OF SUICIDE DEATHS  
IN CA WERE BY FIREARMS

Which is more than firearm homicides and  
accidental firearm deaths combined (7,902)

Approximately half of firearm  
deaths in CA were by suicide.

“ As a firearm owner, it is your responsibility  
to be educated about suicide prevention.

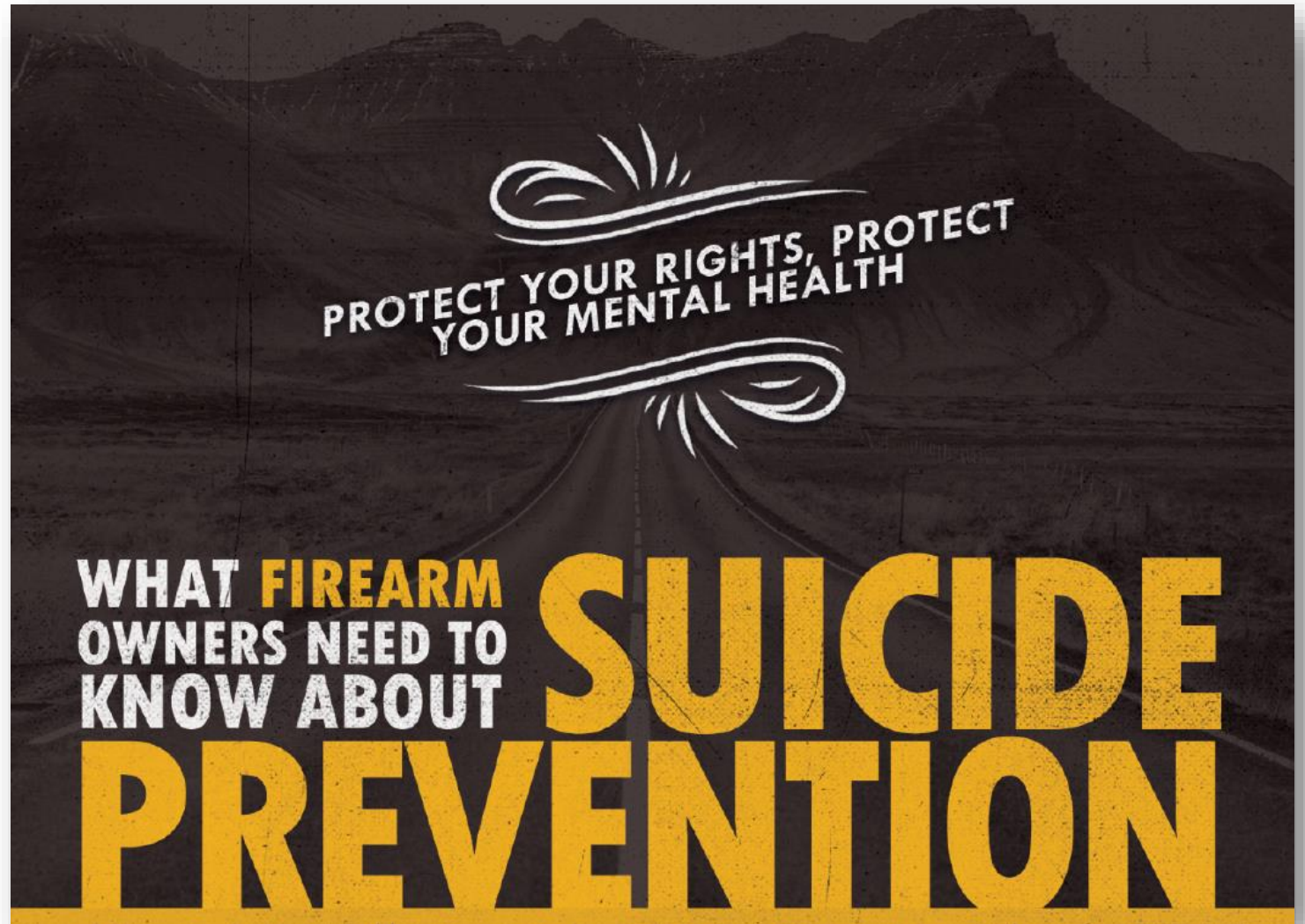
It is imperative that you are educated about warning signs  
for suicide, how to talk to a friend or loved about suicide,  
knowledgeable about crisis resources and what steps to take  
to keep you and your loved ones safe

**Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**  
Call or text: 988 (24/7) [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)  
For Veterans: 988 + 1

For more information visit:  
[StrivingForSafety.org](https://StrivingForSafety.org)

## Feedback from Focus Groups and Stakeholder Interviews:

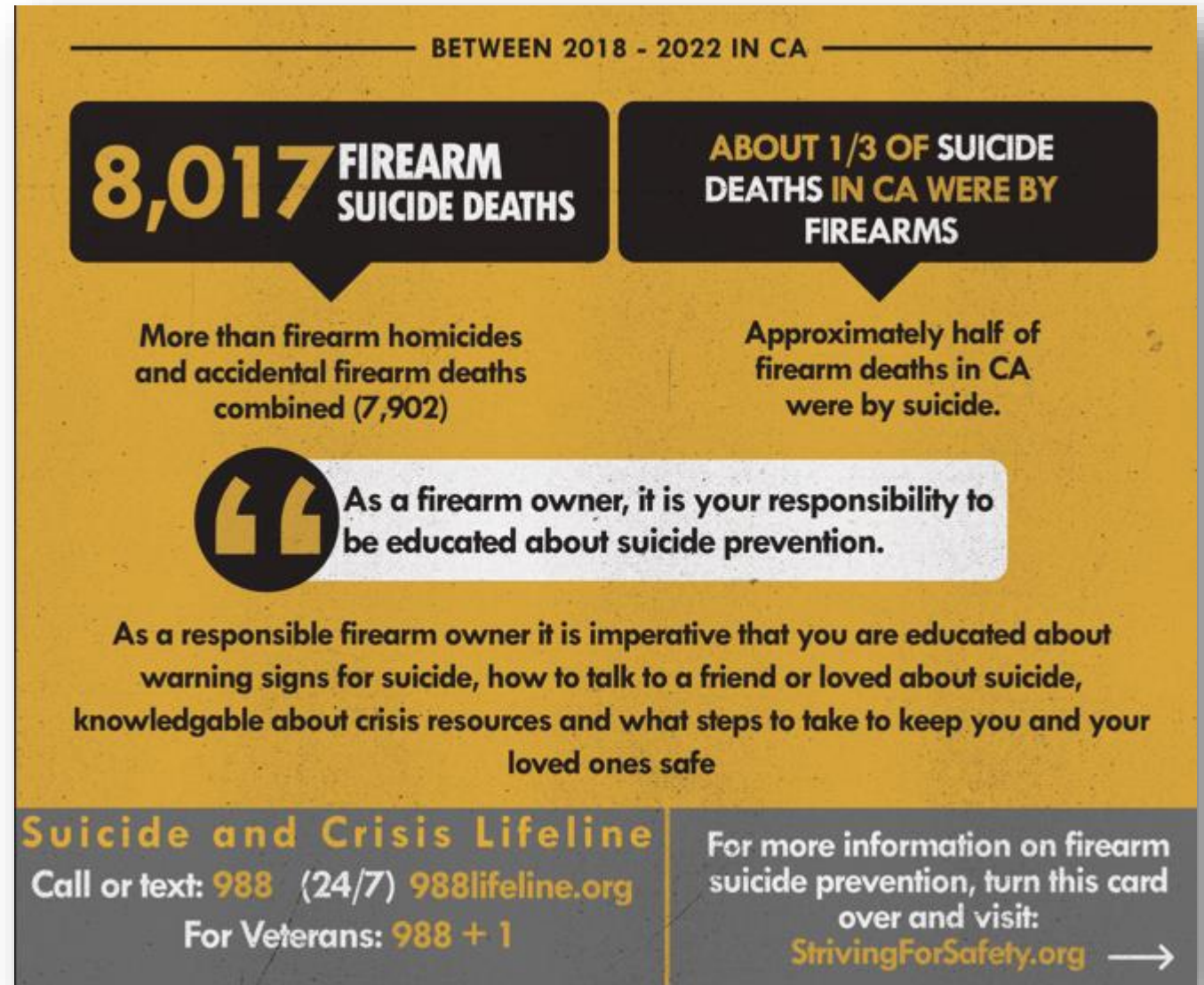
- Be direct
- Connect rights to mental health
- Terms: protect, accountability, responsibility





# Feedback from Focus Groups and Stakeholder Interviews:

- Tell us why we should care
- Don't "hide behind gun safety"
- Then tell us what to do



# Firearm Suicide Prevention Flier (back)

**PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS, PROTECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH!**

Adding time between thoughts of suicide and a person's access to lethal means for an attempt represents a practical, lifesaving approach to prevent suicide.

**Many people own firearms to protect their loved ones.**

If you are having thoughts of suicide, and have access to a firearm, as a responsible firearm owner you must acknowledge that the greatest risk to the wellness of your family is...YOU. Take steps to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

**— WON'T THE PERSON JUST FIND ANOTHER WAY? —**

**90%** OF PEOPLE WHO SURVIVE A SUICIDE ATTEMPT WILL NOT GO ON TO DIE BY SUICIDE.

**67%** OF PEOPLE WHO ATTEMPT WILL NEVER ATTEMPT AGAIN.

**KNOW THE SIGNS:**

It is vital that all firearm owners are aware of warning signs for suicide risk. For more information on warning signs visit: [SuicidelsPreventable.org](https://SuicidelsPreventable.org)

**Know your Rights, Protect your Rights:**

- By taking steps to be accountable for your wellness and safety, you are not only protecting yourself and others, you are protecting your rights.
- Temporarily removing firearms during times of crisis has shown to be effective in reducing suicides.
- California Penal Code 27882 provides an exemption that friends and family are allowed to store firearms for someone during time of suicide distress (as long as the person holding the firearms is not restricted from having a firearm and can store them safely). No forms or government involvement is required to utilize this "safe harbor" exemption.
- Local gun shops and ranges may be able to store the firearms securely outside of the home.

**HAVE A CONVERSATION ABOUT SUICIDE TALK NOW!**

Talking about suicide does not cause it to happen. Don't wait for a crisis.

Talk to your friends and loved ones now and make an agreement to store firearms for each other if suicide risk occurs.

**Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**  
Call or text 988 (24/7)  
For Veterans: 988 + 1  
[988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)



## Feedback from Focus Groups and Stakeholder Interviews:

- Explore “what to be a protector means”
- Help us understand why *Means Safety* works
- Respond to “won’t people just find another way”



**PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS, PROTECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH!**

**Many people own firearms to protect their loved ones.**

If you are having thoughts of suicide, and have access to a firearm, as a responsible firearm owner you must acknowledge that the greatest risk to the wellness of your family is...YOU. Take steps to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

Adding time between thoughts of suicide and a person's access to lethal means for an attempt represents a practical, lifesaving approach to prevent suicide.

**— WON'T THE PERSON JUST FIND ANOTHER WAY? —**

**90%** OF PEOPLE WHO SURVIVE A SUICIDE ATTEMPT WILL NOT GO ON TO DIE BY SUICIDE.

**67%** OF PEOPLE WHO ATTEMPT WILL NEVER ATTEMPT AGAIN.



# Feedback from Focus Groups and Stakeholder Interviews:

- Give us “action steps”
- Help us protect our rights with specific details
- Tell us “to talk”

## KNOW THE SIGNS:

It is vital that all firearm owners are aware of warning signs for suicide risk. For more information on warning signs visit:  
[SuicidelsPreventable.org](https://SuicidelsPreventable.org)

## Know your Rights, Protect your Rights:

- By taking steps to be accountable for your wellness and safety, you are not only protecting yourself and others, you are protecting your rights.
- Temporarily removing firearms during times of crisis has shown to be effective in reducing suicides.
- California Penal Code 27882 provides an exemption that friends and family are allowed to store firearms for someone during time of suicide distress (as long as the person holding the firearms is not restricted from having a firearm and can store them safely). No forms or government involvement is required to utilize this “safe harbor” exemption.
- Local gun shops and ranges may be able to store the firearms securely outside of the home.

**HAVE A CONVERSATION  
ABOUT SUICIDE  
TALK NOW!**

**Talking about suicide does  
not cause it to happen.  
Don't wait for a crisis.**

**Talk to your friends and  
loved ones now and make  
an agreement to store  
firearms for each other if  
suicide risk occurs.**

**Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**  
Call or text 988 (24/7)  
For Veterans: 988 + 1  
[988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)

# Means Safety: Strangulation and Suffocation



# Striving for Safety: Suffocation and Strangulation

## Suffocation & Strangulation

It can be challenging to limit access to some types of means within the home. If you are concerned that someone in your home is at risk for suicide, have a conversation with them. Ask directly if they have thought about how they might attempt suicide, or what items they might use. Most often, people thinking about suicide have specific methods they plan to use and oftentimes they don't deviate from their plan. Identifying an intended method can help you make a plan to reduce access to particular means.

**In the Home >**

**In Controlled Environments >**



Informs community members and professionals:

- Steps to reduce risk in home
- When to seek higher level of care
- Emphasizes general prevention
- Resources for controlled environments

### In the Home

#### 1. Take a good look around your home.

Reducing access to certain points (e.g., beams, door lock changing knobs to non-lock attempt). However, it is important to consider periods of time.

#### 2. Complete a safety plan.

The Safety Planning Interview. A safety plan should be developed. **Suicide Safety Plan** safety plan. Consider downloading Google Play.

If you are thinking about personal stories by those coping strategies. Their

#### 3. Stay vigilant and

If you are concerned that a sharp object, or suffocation care may be needed such as a loved one to explore the op

#### 4. You are not alone

You are not alone in helping and more are available to you. Assess the level of risk in a crisis last for a brief period remove items that could be

### In Controlled Environments

A number of suicide prevention strategies can be put in place in controlled environments such as hospitals, jails and prisons, and police custody.

#### 1. Learn to recognize suicide warning signs and risk factors.

One effective strategy that organizations can implement is offering trainings on recognizing and responding to suicide risk to all staff in the organization. Another is to offer educational materials and crisis resources to family members and caregivers during visitation and at discharge.

#### 2. Have suicide risk screening and assessment trainings and protocols in place to determine suicide risk level.

It's important to provide staff with training in determining risk level using screening and/or assessment. By clearly defining protocols to follow based on risk level, staff will be more effective in recognizing and responding to suicide risk and able to use the strategies they've learned to help keep people safe.

#### 3. Conduct an environmental scan and implement safety technologies.

Such as effective monitoring and supervision; collapsible shower heads, light fixtures, and door knobs; and specially designed bedding that's resistant to tearing.

#### 4. Include counseling on access to lethal means and development of a safety plan as part of discharge protocols.

These interventions have been shown to reduce suicide risk and suicide attempts following discharge. For more information, please review **Recommended Standard Care for People with Suicide Risk: Making Health Care Suicide Safe**.

#### 5. Have a postvention plan in place to guide the response if a client, inmate, or staff member dies by suicide.

Responding effectively after a suicide death can help people to process trauma in healthier ways and reduce the risk of additional suicides.

## National Commission on Correctional Health Care, Suicide Prevention Portal

This website details requirements for a comprehensive, multipronged suicide prevention and intervention program in various settings: Jails, Prisons, Juvenile Facilities, Mental Health Services and Opioid Treatment Programs.

[www.ncchc.org/](http://www.ncchc.org/)

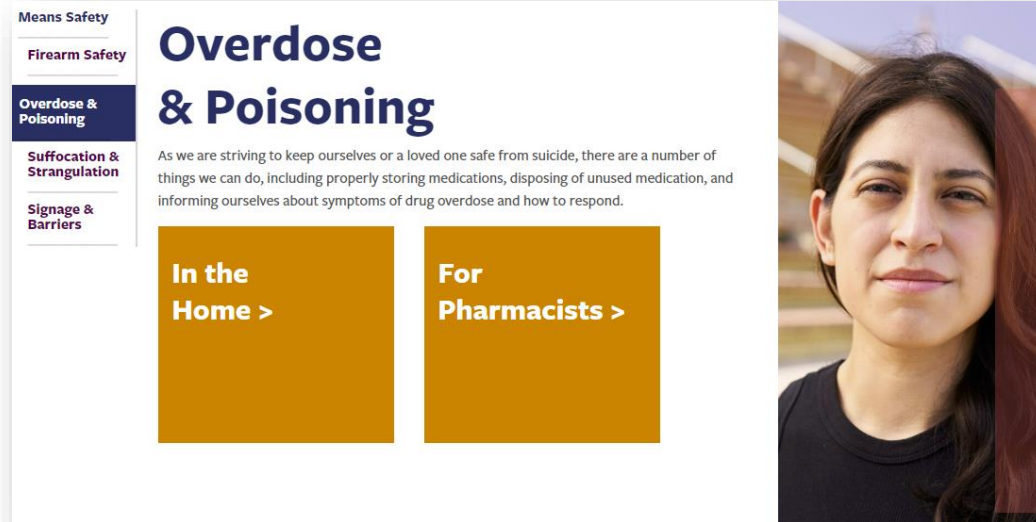


# Means Safety: Poisoning (overdose) focused efforts





# Striving for Safety: Overdose



The screenshot shows a website layout. On the left is a sidebar menu with the following items: 'Means Safety', 'Firearm Safety', 'Overdose & Poisoning' (highlighted in dark blue), 'Suffocation & Strangulation', and 'Signage & Barriers'. The main content area has the title 'Overdose & Poisoning' in large blue font. Below the title is a paragraph: 'As we are striving to keep ourselves or a loved one safe from suicide, there are a number of things we can do, including properly storing medications, disposing of unused medication, and informing ourselves about symptoms of drug overdose and how to respond.' Below this paragraph are two orange rectangular buttons: 'In the Home >' and 'For Pharmacists >'. To the right of the text is a portrait of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a black top, looking directly at the camera.

Informs community members about steps to prevent suicide including:

- Awareness and tools for conversation
- Steps for safe storage
- Safe disposal

## Overdose & Poisoning

### In the Home

Implementing safety precautions in your home is a starting point for keeping your loved one safe.

**1. Keep medications securely stored at all times.**

Medications, including over the counter and prescription, should always be kept in their original

**More >**

**2. Be vigilant about keeping track of your inventory of pills and refills.**

Carefully note when and how much medication has been taken, so you're aware of how much is

**More >**

**3. Dispose of unused, unwanted, or expired medications.**

The best way to dispose of medications is to drop them off at a local safe disposal site. You can

**More >**

**4. Use the proper containers.**

Always use products with child-resistant caps but remember they are **not childproof**. Keep

**More >**

**5. Be aware of poisonous substances.**

Poisons are any substance that in a high enough quantity can cause illness, injury, or death when

**More >**

**6. Maintain working carbon monoxide detectors.**

Carbon monoxide is a deadly gas that you cannot hear, smell, or see. Every home with at least

**More >**

**7. Review the steps to respond to a suspected drug overdose.**

Taking drugs (legal, illegal, prescribed, or over the counter) in amounts higher than necessary or

**More >**

**For Pharmacists >**

# Safe Disposal Efforts



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ★ DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION  
**DIVERSION CONTROL DIVISION**

Controlled Substance Public Disposal Locations - Search Utility

Zip Code:

-Or-

City:

State:

Search Radius:  
☒ 5 miles ☐ 10 miles ☐ 20 miles

FDA Flush List: <https://www.fda.gov/media/109643/download>

DEA Disposal Location Search:

<https://apps2.dea diversion.usdoj.gov/pubdispsearch/spring/main?execution=e2s1>

# Resources For Pharmacists

## Pharmacists Can Play a Key Role in Suicide Prevention

Reach out to your patients if you observe one or more warning signs.

### HERE'S WHAT TO LOOK FOR:



### Columbia Suicide Risk Screening Tool for Pharmacists

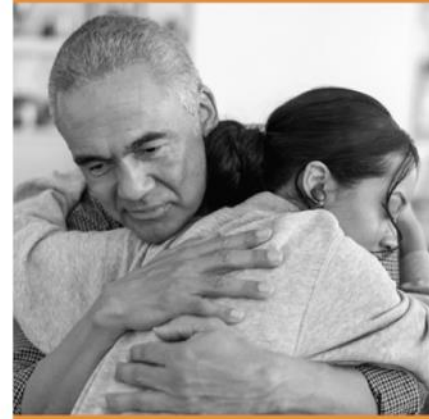
**ASK** your patients  
**CARE** for your patients  
**ESCORT** your patients

Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS)		Past Month
1) Have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?		
2) Have you actually had any thoughts about killing yourself?		
If YES to 2, answer questions 3, 4, 5 and 6 If NO to 2, go directly to question 6		
3) Have you thought about how you might do this?		
4) Have you had any intention of acting on these thoughts of killing yourself, as opposed to you have the thoughts but you definitely would not act on them?		High Risk
5) Have you started to work out or worked out the details of how to kill yourself? Do you intend to carry out this plan?		High Risk
Always Ask Question 6		
6) Have you done anything, started to do anything, or prepared to do anything to end your life? Examples: Collected pills, obtained a gun but changed your mind, cut yourself, tried to hang yourself, etc.		High Risk

Any **YES** indicates the need for further care (see reverse for resources). However, if the answer to **4, 5 or 6** is **YES**, immediately **ESCORT** to Emergency Personnel for care, **call** 1-800-273-8255, text 741-741.



## You are Not Alone



If you are concerned about a loved one or yourself, you are not alone. By recognizing the warning signs, trusting your instincts and reaching out for help, you have the power to

### Warning signs to look for:

- Talking about wanting to die or suicide
- Looking for a way to kill themselves
- Lack of care for themselves
- Exhibiting moodiness, tearfulness, or depressed affect
- Anxiety or agitation
- Sudden changes in medications
- Has prescriptions from another pharmacy
- Attempting to fill medications early
- Filling prescriptions for high-risk medications
- No sense of purpose

### Suicide Prevention Resources

#### National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Veterans: Press 1

En Español: 1-888-628-9454

For Deaf & Hard of Hearing: 1-800-799-4889

#### Local Resource 1 Name Contact Number

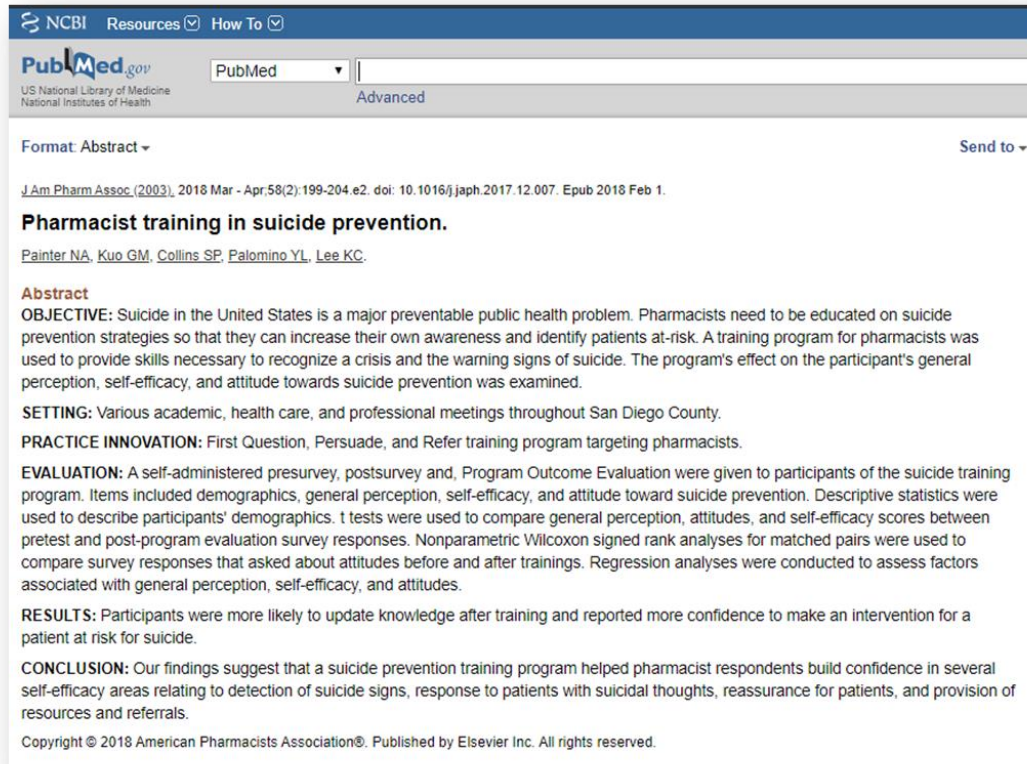
Description/URL/Text

Description/URL/Text

*Pharmacy bags with information on crisis support and suicide prevention resources*



# Medication and overdose prevention



## CONCLUSION:

Our findings suggest that a suicide prevention training program helped pharmacist respondents build confidence in several self-efficacy areas relating to detection of suicide signs, response to patients with suicidal thoughts, reassurance for patients, and provision of resources and referrals.

# Means Safety: Site and location specific efforts

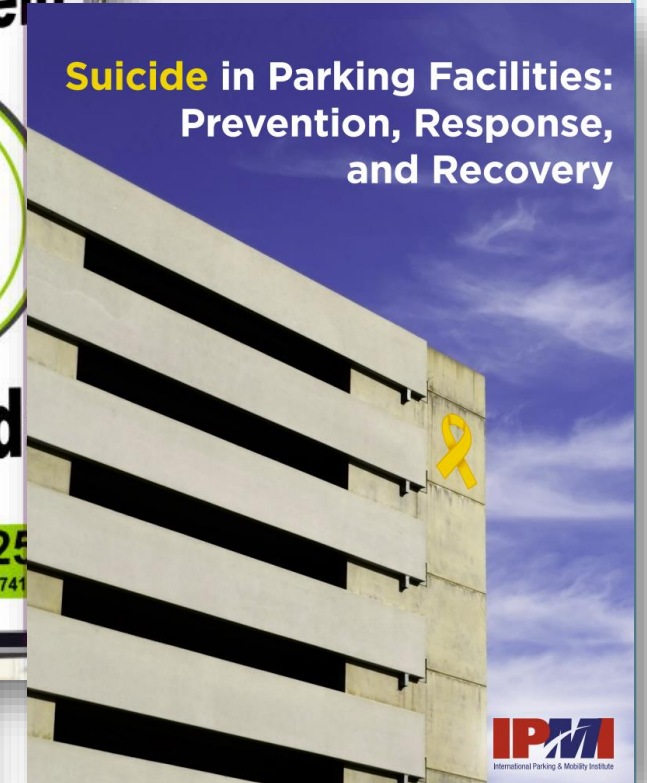
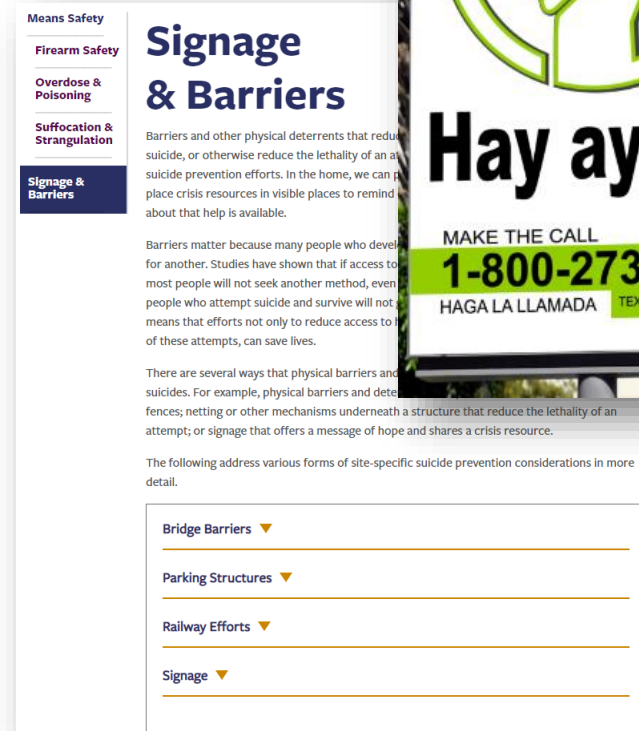




# Striving for Safety: Signage and Barriers

Provides information, toolkits, and research related to implementation of safety barriers at various sites:

- Bridge and overpass barriers
- Parking structures
- Railway efforts
- Signage (examples)



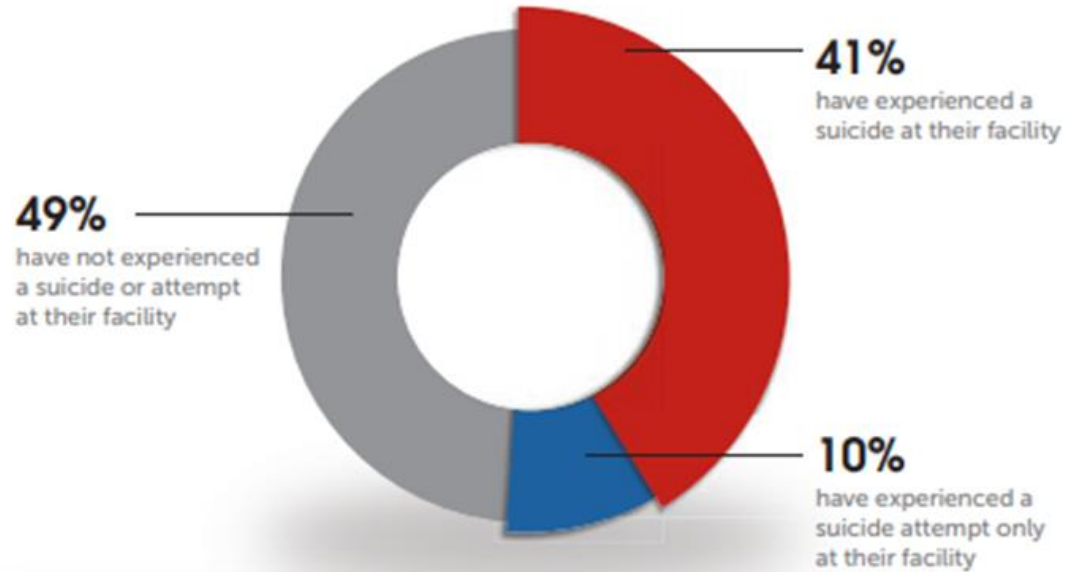
# Means Safety: Barriers on Bridges

## Comparing Different Suicide Prevention Measures at Bridges and Buildings: Lessons We Have Learned from a National Survey in Switzerland

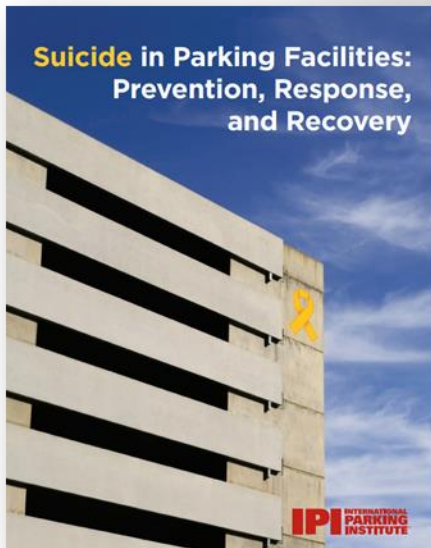
- Installation of structural measures led to a 71.7% reduction in suicides
  - Safety nets led to a 77.1% reduction of suicides
  - Barriers (fences) led to a 68.7% reduction of suicides
    - *NOTE: Safety nets were not statistically significant more preventive than safety barriers*
- “Complete” barriers led to elimination of suicides at locations
  - Two key characteristics:
    1. Secure the jump site across the entire length
    2. Prevent climbing around the bridgeheads



# Means Safety: Barriers on Bridges



- Installing physical barriers, such as:
  - chain-link fencing
  - screening
  - security netting (which is less dense and more attractive)
  - vinyl-coated mesh
  - metal grating, stainless steel, glass barricades
- Other deterrents include geofencing (using closed-circuit television camera coverage) and landscaping



# Railway Means Safety



- **Prevention of access to right-of-way is most effective strategy for prevention**
- *Other efforts:*
  - *Blue Lights* implementation
  - Gatekeeper trainings
  - Public Awareness campaigns
  - Signage
  - Reduction of Perceived Viability of Railroad Right-of-Way as Means for Suicide
    - Media Guidelines/Trainings
    - Public Awareness Campaigns



# Using signage for means safety

**Suicide  
is not the  
route.**

If you are struggling emotionally  
or thinking of suicide, call

**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

Free and confidential.

Crisis Support Services of Alameda County, Contra Costa Crisis Center  
San Francisco Suicide Prevention, StarVista: San Mateo County

**bART**

Theme line courtesy of MTA Long Island Rail Road

**BE SAFE AROUND  
TRAINS**

**M**  
METRO

**CRISIS LINE 24/7** **LÍNEA DE CRISIS 24/7**

**There is help**



**Hay ayuda**

**MAKE THE CALL**

**1-800-273-8255**

**HAGA LA LLAMADA** **Text/Texto 741741**

**EachMind  
MATTERS**  
California's Mental Health Movement

**sonoma county**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

**HEALTHY  
HUMAN  
SERVICES**  
Health. Wellbeing. Safety.



Thank You!  
*Questions?*

Email: [stanpcollins@gmail.com](mailto:stanpcollins@gmail.com)

