

## Facts About Suicide

- Suicide is the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the US.
- In 2018, firearms accounted for 50.7% of all suicide deaths.
- In GA 57% of all gun deaths are suicides. This represents an average of 886 deaths per year or one death every 10 hours.
- Over the past decade, the US firearm suicide rate has increased by 19%.
- This trend has been of particular concern for children and teens, whose firearm suicide rate has increased by 65% over the past 10 years.
- In addition, veterans have a firearm suicide rate 1.5 times higher than non-veteran adults.

## Sources

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- US Department of Veterans Affairs
- Journal of Urban Health
- Journal of the American Medical Association

## Resources

If you or someone you know is in crisis please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24/7. 1-800-273-8255  
1-800-273-TALK

Text TALK to 741741

Georgia Crisis Line: 800-715-4225

Veterans Crisis Line: send a text to 83855

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention:  
afsp.org

Be SMART for Kids:  
Besmartforkids.org

Connect to mental health resources in your community: [twloha.com/find-help](http://twloha.com/find-help)

## Suicide Awareness

September is Suicide Awareness Month



## Reducing the Stigma

Mothers' Stories,  
Facts, and Resources

Cherokee County Be SMART for Kids

[besmartgamom@gmail.org](mailto:besmartgamom@gmail.org)

## Miami Knight

“In the blink of an eye, my whole life changed.” I remember when my son, Ty-Key, wrote those lyrics - searching for the words to express the loss of his best friend, Keondrick, who was shot and killed on December 17, 2011. Miraculously, Ty-Key survived the double shooting being a key witness left behind.

Within the next five years, Ty-Key lived with a traumatic brain injury; where the bullet remained lodged in order to prevent paralysis. Due to this traumatic event Ty-Key suffered from several mental health conditions such as: survivor’s remorse, PTSD, anxiety, and depression. His rehabilitation required extensive therapy allowing him to somewhat recover physically, but never to heal the agony of the daily grievances he suffered.

Therapy helped him cope, but he never healed. And on January 27, 2017, Ty-Key shot and killed himself. Leaving behind in a written letter he stated he could no longer bear the pain.

Because of this significant loss I knew I had to do more. I’m the CEO/Founder of Miami Knight LLC.com, a gun violence survivor and prevention advocate, an Everytown Survivor Fellow, Moms Demand Action volunteer, and host of Grief Talk podcast. I live in the lovely DeKalb County, GA and work as a Grief Specialist & Shaman - counseling all griever; to include professional bereavement for families who had loved ones taken by gun violence.

## Diane Gillen

In January 2010, I lost my only child to suicide and my life has been forever changed. Since then, I have made it my mission to help ease the stigma attached to mental illness and suicide and to help people realize that most of the time, suicide is preventable!

Brendan was an amazing and a “one of a kind” young man. Brendan was an excellent problem solver, however, one problem he never figured out was how to deal with his depression. For a number of years Brendan had struggled with ADD and depression and had been receiving treatment from a psychiatrist. Depression is an illness...a physiological chemical imbalance that was often a roller coaster ride of emotions for Brendan. Unfortunately, he had stopped taking his medication. Apparently, he was unhappy with some of the side effects and was trying to deal with the challenges of depression on his own. In the isolation of his home one night, something must have snapped that made the darkness unbearable for Brendan, and led him to take his own life.

Sadly, while some non-lethal suicide attempts are cries for help that get answered and lead those who attempt it to wonder what could possibly have possessed them to try it, guns are not forgiving and rarely offer people a second chance at life.

It is our hope that by sharing our story we encourage others to reach out to those caught in the grip of depression.

## Amy Greene

Without any warning, my 15 year old son, Reed, took his own life in December, 2018 using a firearm we had in a safe in our basement. Reed was truly an extraordinary young man...he had a heart of gold, was loved by seemingly everyone who knew him, had lots of friends and a family who adored him. Reed had an extremely strong faith and love for Jesus, was an exceptional student and athlete and had a very bright future ahead of him.

We knew all of this about Reed but what we didn’t know was that he was secretly depressed and hurting inside. He didn’t tell anyone or ask for help. We believe, based on the notes that Reed left behind, that he wants us to share with our community and beyond that it’s OK to not be OK. There is help readily available for anyone considering suicide.

We have started a non-profit called LoveLikeReed, Inc. to financially support kids and adults in our community who need mental health services. No one should be at risk because they can’t afford or are afraid of receiving help. In my attempt to help prevent suicide in Cherokee County I am involved with the Cherokee County Coalition for Suicide Prevention, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Be SMART, and Everytown’s Survivor Network. I want to keep Reed’s memory alive by showing love to those who are hurting, helping them love themselves and keeping firearms out of their reach.

For more information about Reed’s story, or to learn how Love Like Reed Inc. can help you, please visit our website at [lovelikereed.com](http://lovelikereed.com)