



SUICIDE SAFER HOMES



When someone is at risk for suicide in your home, there are caring steps and safety steps you can take. 24% of persons who attempt suicide indicate less than five minutes elapsed between the decision and the action to end their life. Anything you do that can put distance between someone at risk and means of suicide can save a life.

If someone is actively suicidal, do not leave them alone. Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**, or 211 for assistance, the mobile crisis outreach team in your area, or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.

Introduction

You cannot remove all risk from your home, but you can make it suicide safer by talking with your loved one and by securing access to things that can kill.

Even if you think your family member is not at high risk for suicide right now, why take chances?

Suicide risk can sometimes escalate rapidly. Not having lethal means quickly at hand is like keeping the keys to the car away from a person who has been drinking. It reduces tragic outcomes in high stress situations.

- * In Texas, there are close to twice as many firearm suicides as there are firearm homicides (2011).
- * One in ten high school students in Texas report having attempted suicide, the vast majority of these attempts are with pills.
- * 85% of youth under 18 who died by firearm suicide used a family member's firearm.

Caring Steps

- * Listen non-judgmentally.
- * Be a caring presence.
- * Inquire about their well-being.
- * Ask them what type of support would be most helpful.
- * Encourage involvement in activities the person enjoys.
- * **ASK:** "Are you feeling so badly you are considering suicide?"
- * **SEEK:** more information to get clarity of their intent or plan.
- * **KNOW:** how and where to refer them for help. (ASK About Suicide to Save A Life App available free via your App store.)
- * Ask them if they have a safety plan in place.
- * If someone is actively suicidal, do not leave them alone.
- * Seek assistance for them and for yourself. You cannot do this alone.

Safety Steps

Important Statistics

- * Do not keep lethal doses of medication in your home, vehicle, or on your person.
- * Consider locking up ALL medications.
- * Properly dispose of medications that are outdated or that you no longer need.
- * Keep only small quantities of alcohol in the home.

Firearms

- * Know the law: It is against the law in Texas to allow a child under 17 unsupervised access to a loaded firearm.
- * Ask them if they have a safety plan in place.
- * Secure outside the home with a trusted friend or relative or use storage facilities for safest option.
- * Purchase a gunlock or safe if you must secure a firearm inside the home. Store firearms and ammunition separately.
- * About Gun Locks and Safes: Keep your firearm locking keys secure and inaccessible; do not store these keys as your house or car keys.

Resources

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Texas Suicide Prevention Council
www.TexasSuicidePrevention.org

Texas Resources on the Web
Mental Health America of Texas
www.mhatexas.org

Texas Poison Center Network
www.poisoncontrol.org
1-800-222-1222

Texas Department of State Health Services
www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhsa/

National Resource & Info from Other States
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
www.afsp.org

Centers for Disease Control
www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide

Harvard School of Public Health
Means Matter Campaign
www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/

National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention
www.actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org

New Hampshire Firearm Safety Coalition
www.nhfsc.org www.theconnectprogram.org/firearms-safety-coalitions-role-nh-suicide-prevention

Rhode Island Department of Health
www.health.ri.gov/violence/about/suicide

Suicide-Proof Your Home
www.suicideproof.org

Suicide Prevention Resource Center
www.sprc.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
www.samhsa.gov/prevention

This suicide prevention information was collected under the Texas Youth Suicide Prevention Project, funded by the Texas Department of State Health Service grant number 2016-048043-001A and in part by grant number SM61468 from SAMHSA. The views expressed in this publication and training do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of CMHS, SAMHSA, HHS or DSHS; nor does mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the State of Texas or U.S. Government.

Success Story: Securing Access to Lethal Means

Suicide Prevention Gatekeepers

“As suicide prevention gatekeepers, my husband and I are both comfortable asking about suicide. But until recently, we had never asked about securing access to lethal means.

“Recently, a friend told us of his high stress week combined with high intensity family problems resulting in a brush with suicide. The previous week, he had seriously considered taking his life with a firearm. He thought of pulling the trigger...but he did not complete the attempt.

“After listening non-judgmentally, we acted to refer our friend to help and asked if he would consider securing his firearms, for now, outside the home. Our friend agreed to counseling and willingly gave us the small gun we knew he carried in his pocket until the period of high stress was over.

“We followed up to help his wife secure his other guns outside the home and assisted them in making an appointment with a mental health professional. The period of stress is past, he is mentally healthy, and his firearms are back in his house, safely stored.”

Suicide Safer Home App & Report

To download App, search “Suicide Safer Home” in App store (iTunes or Google Play)
www.texasuicideprevention.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/TexasSuicidePreventionSuicide_Safer_Home-20141110.pdf

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Credit:

- Merily Keller, Suicide Prevention & Postvention, Co-founder Texas Suicide Prevention Council
- Catherine Barber, Means Matter, Harvard Injury Control Research Center, Harvard School of Public Health
- Jennifer Battle, Helpline Director, MHMRA of Harris County
- Mike Cox, Texas/NRA Certified Firearms and CHL Instructor
- Elaine Frank, Center on Access to Lethal Means, Dartmouth College & New Hampshire Firearms Safety Coalition
- Jennifer Haussler Garing, Epidemiologist and Suicide Attempt Survivor
- Jenna Heise, Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Texas Department of State Health Services

Note: This information is intended to provide public health education and information only. It is not intended to be used as legal, medical or mental health advice. Following the guidelines in the App should decrease the risk of suicide but we cannot eliminate ALL risk of suicide. Safe storage of firearms and medications should be part of a larger suicide prevention plan developed with your primary care or mental health provider, that may include treatment with talk therapy and/or medication and increased supervision. If someone you care about is at high risk, please follow the recommendations of your health or mental health provider and call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, if time permits, 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or take that person to your nearest hospital emergency room.



TexasSuicidePrevention.org
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