Gun violence has a devastating impact on American children. **Nearly 40 percent of child gun deaths are suicides** — almost 600 child gun suicides each year.\(^1\) One study showed that over 80 percent of children under the age of 18 who died by gun suicide used a gun belonging to a parent or relative.\(^2\) For people of all ages, access to a gun increases the risk of death by suicide by three times.\(^3\)

Most people who attempt suicide do not die — unless they use a gun.\(^4\) In fact, 85 percent of suicide attempts with a gun result in death — a much higher fatality rate than any other means of self-harm.\(^5\) This contributes to the fact that 40 percent of child suicides involve a gun.\(^6\)

A national survey of high school students found that 17 percent had seriously considered attempting suicide within the last year.\(^7\) And one study showed that 41 percent of adolescents in gun-owning households report having “easy access” to the guns in their home.\(^8\)

**Signs to look out for when concerned that a loved one may be suicidal:**\(^9\)
- Prolonged sadness and depression
- Changes in mood or behavior
- Hopelessness
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Withdrawing/Isolation
- Aggression or agitation
- Increased alcohol or drug use
- Talking about killing themselves

Research shows that responsible firearm storage is associated with a decreased risk of child firearm suicide. One study showed that households that locked both firearms and ammunition had a 78 percent lower risk of self-inflicted firearm injuries among children and teenagers.\(^10\)

Some additional key steps you can take to support your loved one include: inviting an honest conversation, listening and supporting your loved one, and encouraging them to see a mental health professional or a primary care physician.\(^11\)

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\(^1\) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control, Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) Fatal Injury Reports. A yearly average was developed using five years of most recent available data: 2013 to 2017. Children aged 0 to 17.

\(^2\) Johnson RM, Barber C, Azrael D, Clark DE, Hemenway D. Who are the owners of firearms used in adolescent suicides? *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior.* 2010; 40(6): 609-611.


\(^4\) Everytown for Gun Safety, Disrupting Access: Addressing Firearm Suicide in the U.S. 2018 can be viewed at https://everytw.org/2N7oiq3.

\(^5\) Everytown for Gun Safety, Disrupting Access: Addressing Firearm Suicide in the U.S. 2018 can be viewed at https://everytw.org/2N7oiq3.

\(^6\) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control, Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) Fatal Injury Reports. A yearly average was developed using five years of most recent available data: 2013 to 2017. Analysis includes children aged 0 to 17.


National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
Call 1-800-273-8255. Available 24 hours a day.

Trevor Project, the LGBTQ youth suicide prevention line
Call TrevorLifeline at 1-866-488-7386.

Text HOME to 741741 from anywhere in the United States, anytime, about any type of crisis.

For more information or to get involved visit BeSMARTforKids.org
Be SMART is a program of Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund and Moms Demand Action