Facts and Resources on Child Firearm Suicide

Gun violence has a devastating impact on children in America. **In fact, nearly 40 percent of child gun deaths are suicides**—nearly 700 child gun suicides each year.  

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. Most people who attempt suicide do not die—unless they use a gun. In fact, 90 percent of suicide attempts with a gun result in death—a much higher fatality rate than any other means of self-harm. This contributes to the fact that 41 percent of child suicides involve a gun.

A national survey of high school students found that 20 percent had seriously considered attempting suicide within the last year. And one study showed that 41 percent of adolescents in gun-owning households report having “easy access” to the guns in their home.

**Signs to look out for when concerned that a loved one may be suicidal:**
- 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 secure 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. The risk of gun violence and self-harm have grown during the COVID-19 pandemic, with kids experiencing increased levels of stress and isolation, and more guns being purchased. These factors make it even more important that firearms are stored securely.

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.

**Resources**

**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.

**988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** can be reached by calling or texting 988 or chatting on [http://988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org).
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For more information or to get involved visit BeSMARTforKids.org
Be SMART is a program of Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund
Updated: June 2022