



Preventing Firearm Suicide

SUICIDE IS NOT INEVITABLE...YOU CAN HELP SAVE A LIFE
CT SUICIDE ADVISORY BOARD LETHAL MEANS AWARENESS SUBCOMMITTEE 2025



Preventing Firearm Suicide Presentation Notes

Hello.

Thank you for adding 5-8 minutes to your existing presentation to discuss suicide prevention. Although most suicide attempts don't involve a firearm, many do. As an authority in the field, you sharing information about suicide prevention can save a life.

This presentation was created by members of the Connecticut Suicide Advisory Board, including firearms dealers, pistol class instructors and others invested in reducing suicides in Connecticut. It includes three items. The PowerPoint, these teaching notes and an informational handout to be given to class participants.

The information in this presentation is evidence-based. You are asked to follow the content with fidelity for continuity, accuracy and safety.

The information below is broken out by slide and contains three types of prompts.
“Note to Instructor” is information to assist you as you prepare for the presentation.
“Say” is the script for you to read.
“Read the slide” is the instruction for you to read all the statements on the slide.

If you need assistance with this material or would like additional resources at no or low cost, please contact staff at the Connecticut Clearinghouse via email info@ctclearinghouse.org or call 860.793.9791.

Slide 1 Title Slide

NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR: THIS SHORT PRESENTATION IS PROVIDED BY THE LETHAL MEANS AWARENESS AND PREVENTION SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE CT SUICIDE ADVISORY BOARD. THE CONTENTS ARE DESIGNED TO PROVIDE THE FIREARMS COMMUNITY WITH BASIC INFORMATION REGARDING SUICIDE PREVENTION.

Say: Many people thinking about suicide still have a desire to live. Many that survive the attempt are grateful to be alive. Knowing the warning signs of suicide and connecting a person to care goes a long way toward saving a life.

Slide 2 Why talk about suicide by firearms

Say: We know firearms are not the only way people choose to die by suicide. However, they are the most lethal suicide option.

Read the slide.

Slide 3 Suicide is not inevitable...

Before reading the slide:

Say: The number of people in the United States who died by suicide has increased every year since 2020. In 2023, the number was close to 50,000 with over 50% involving a firearm.

The number of people that die by suicide is high, and unfortunately the number of people thinking about killing themselves is even higher. When someone notices and speaks up, it can save a life.

Read the slide.

NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR REGARDING THE THIRD POINT ON THE SLIDE: SOME PEOPLE THINK THAT IF A PERSON DURING THE TIME OF CRISIS CANNOT ACCESS A FIREARM, THEY WILL SEEK ANOTHER METHOD. THAT IS NOT GENERALLY TRUE. IN THE RARE CASE IT HAPPENS, THE PERSON IS MORE LIKELY TO SURVIVE A SUICIDE ATTEMPT USING SOME METHOD OTHER THAN A FIREARM.



Slide 4 There are things that increase risk

Say: Anyone can be at risk for suicide. Research shows the items on this list may increase the likelihood that someone will think about suicide. The more of these in a person's life, the greater the risk.

Read at least one example from each box on the slide.

Slide 5 Potential Warning Signs..

Say: Research shows people planning a suicide will generally "give clues." Like the previous slide, the more signs, the greater the risk.

Read at least one example from each box on the slide.

Slide 6 Don't let your firearm be used for a suicide

Say: Don't wait for a crisis or thoughts of suicide to arise. Always secure your firearm when not in use. Consider creating a safety plan. What storage option could you use if someone in your home is at risk of suicide?

Slide 7 How you can help..

NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR: THIS INFORMATION MAY BE COVERED IN OTHER PARTS OF YOUR TRAINING. YOU ARE ASKED TO STILL MENTION IT HERE.

Slide 8 Ask the Question

Read the first box of the slide. After the question, “Are you thinking about suicide?” THEN

Say: Asking the question directly may feel uncomfortable for both of you. However, having the brave conversation may save a life.

Read the Things to Know box THEN

Say: Some people think if they ask the question, it will put the idea of suicide in the mind of the person they’re concerned about. This is not true. If the person is not thinking it, they will know you noticed their distress and can make a change before the problem gets worse. If they are having thoughts of suicide, you can connect them to help.

Say this before going to the next slide: As mentioned in an earlier slide, people who attempt suicide often deliberate for a short time; **if a person says they’re thinking about killing themselves, you should stay with them until they’re connected to care.**

Slide 9 Make the Call

Say: These resources are for both a person in crisis and the people trying to help.

Slide 10 Learn more about suicide prevention

NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR: PREVENTSUICIDECT.ORG HAS RESOURCES FOR MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF SUICIDE RELATED SITUATIONS.

Please hand out the Suicide Safety Guide to everyone in your class.

Slide 11 References

NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR: THESE ARE THE SOURCES USED FOR THE DATA IN THIS PRESENTATION.



Slide 12 Closing slide

NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR: PARTICIPANTS MAY CHOOSE TO SPEAK WITH YOU ABOUT THIS CONTENT. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE AN EXPERT. THANK THEM FOR THEIR WILLINGNESS TO SPEAK ABOUT THIS ISSUE AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO USE THE RESOURCES MENTIONED IN THE SLIDES AND ON THE HANDOUTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR SUPPORT.

BY UNDERSTANDING MORE ABOUT SUICIDE AND PREVENTION, YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS WILL HAVE THE ABILITY TO HELP SOMEONE WHO'S STRUGGLING.