



A Monthly Insight of Practical Tools to Help Your Family

Wellness Today

For Parents & Families

Medication Safety

In addition to firearms, medications are another form of lethal means of suicide. A lethal mean is a method someone could use to attempt suicide. Firearms are the most lethal, but medications could also be deadly if taken in excess.

- Keep lethal amounts of medication out of your house. Talk with your pharmacist or doctor if this is a problem.
- Lock up medications and put them in a safe place, high up and away from children.
- Properly, and safely, throw away medication you don't need anymore. Check the [FDA website](#) or find resources in your own community to see what your options are.

If you or someone you know is struggling, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-8255). If someone is in immediate danger, call 911.

Mitigating Risk of Firearm Suicide

Whether directly or indirectly, your family has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The disruptions it has caused can create many negative feelings and behaviors, including the following:

- Loneliness
- Economic stress
- Anxiety
- Distress
- Increased alcohol use

These are all risk factors of suicide, and all could be exacerbated due to the pandemic. And when firearms are thrown into the equation, it could mean disaster. That is why reducing access to firearms is so important: it could be the difference between life and death for members of your family and loved ones.

How to Reduce Firearm Suicide Risk

Simply owning a gun doesn't make someone suicidal; however, guns are the most lethal method of suicide, so it's im-

portant to take several steps to ensure your children are safe.

- **Take apart the firearm**, if possible.
- **Store the firearm unloaded** in a lock box or gun safe.
- **Store ammunition in a different location**, away from the firearm.
- **Keep storage box keys or combinations away from children**, especially if they are struggling with suicidal thoughts.
- **Remove the firearm from the house if needed.** If someone in your household, whether it's you, your spouse, or your child, is struggling, the safest place for the firearm to be is out of your house temporarily, until the crisis is over.
- **Check in with people who have access to firearms**, especially family members or friends who your children frequently visit or those who are struggling with suicidal thoughts. Ask if their firearms are stored safely.