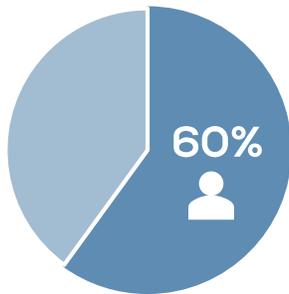


SUICIDE BY FIREARM

A Critical Part of Gun Violence Prevention

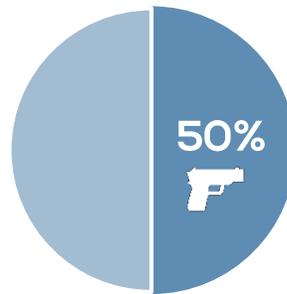
Suicide by firearm is an overlooked form of gun violence -- violence against oneself in a moment of overwhelming hopelessness. Suicide was the leading cause of violent death in the U.S. in 2016.¹ Still, suicide is preventable and suicide prevention must be part of gun violence prevention.

BY THE NUMBERS



Firearm Deaths in the U.S.

60% of all gun deaths in the U.S. are suicides.²



Suicide Deaths in the U.S.

Firearms make up half of all suicides and take an average of 21,000 lives annually -- over 59 every day.³

↑19%

Increase in Firearm Suicide

The firearm suicide rate has increased 19% over the last decade.⁴

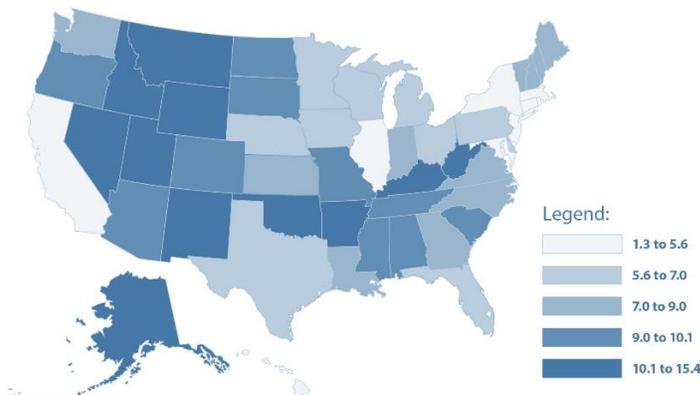
\$1,087,866

Average Medical and Lifetime Work Loss

Costs of a Single Firearm Suicide

All firearm suicides cost over \$21 billion per year.⁵

FIREARM SUICIDE RATES IN THE UNITED STATES



Years 2012-2016, Rates per 100,000 population⁶

Firearm suicide rates vary substantially across the country.

On average, the District of Columbia has the lowest firearm suicide rate and Wyoming has the highest firearm suicide rate.

FIREARM ACCESS AND SUICIDE

- Suicide rates (both overall and by firearm) are generally higher in places where household firearm ownership is more common.⁷
- Access to a gun in the home increases the odds of suicide more than three-fold.⁸

LETHALITY OF FIREARMS

- While firearms account for less than 1% of nonfatal self-harm injuries, they comprise more than half of all deaths by suicide.⁹
- Suicide by firearm is almost always deadly -- 9 out of 10 firearm suicide attempts result in death.¹⁰
- By comparison, the more frequently chosen suicide attempt method of poisoning/overdose is significantly less fatal, resulting in death in less than 2% of attempts.¹¹

LIFE SAVING POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Temporarily Removing Firearms

- The time between suicidal ideation and a suicide attempt can be mere minutes, therefore putting time between a gun and a person with suicidal ideation saves lives.¹⁰
- There are multiple policies and practices to temporarily reduce access to firearms for individuals at risk of suicide:¹²
 - Extreme risk laws
 - Voluntary self-prohibitions
 - Lethal means safety counseling
 - Gun shop projects
 - Safer storage

Gun Violence Prevention Policies

- Other gun violence prevention policies have also been found to reduce firearm suicide rates:¹³
 - Universal background checks with permit-to-purchase laws
 - Mandatory waiting periods for firearm purchases
 - Child access prevention laws¹⁴

¹ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, CDC. Fatal Injury Reports, 1999-2016. Available: <http://cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, CDC. Cost of Injury Reports, 2010. Available: <http://cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/cost/index.html>

⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2016 on CDC Wonder Online Database. Available: <http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html>

⁷ Siegel M & Rothman EF. (2016). Firearm ownership and suicide rates among US men and women, 1981–2013. *American Journal of Public Health*.

⁸ Anglemeyer A, Horvath T, & Rutherford G (2014). The accessibility of firearms and risk for suicide and homicide victimization among household members: A systematic review and meta analysis. *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

⁹ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, CDC. Nonfatal Injury Reports, 2000-2016. Available: <http://cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/nonfatal.html>

¹⁰ Azrael D & Miller M (2016). Reducing suicide without affecting underlying mental health: Theoretical underpinnings and a review of the evidence base linking the availability of lethal means and suicide. In *The International Handbook of Suicide Prevention*, 2nd Ed (pp. 637-662).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Simon TR et al. (2001). Characteristics of impulsive suicide attempts and attempters. *Suicide and Life Threatening Behavior*.

¹³ Allchin A, Chaplin V, & Horwitz J (2018). Limiting Access to Lethal Means: Applying the Social Ecological Model for Firearm Suicide Prevention. *Injury Prevention*.

¹⁴ Webster DW, Vernick JS, Zeoli AM, Manganello JA (2004). Association between youth-focused firearm laws and youth suicides. *JAMA*.