



# A Role for Everyone in Suicide Prevention

**Seattle Construction Industry  
Prevention Summit  
10.24.17**

**FOREFRONT**

SUICIDE PREVENTION



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON



# OUR MISSION

We are a social impact center at the University of Washington that empowers individuals and communities to take sustainable action to prevent suicide, that champions systemic change, and restores hope.

FOREFRONT



**W** SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK  
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON



# FOREFRONT'S SAFER HOMES MEMORIAL



# The Big Picture: U.S. Suicide

**44,000 Lives  
Lost Yearly**

**20  
Veterans  
Die Daily**

**Ages 15-24  
2<sup>nd</sup> Leading  
Cause of Death**

**50%  
Suicides  
Involve  
Firearms**



# SATURATION OF THE SUICIDE PREVENTION MESSAGE





# TRAININGS IN WASHINGTON STATE

Behavioral  
Healthcare  
Professionals



**Required,  
On-going  
45,000+**

All  
Healthcare  
professionals



**Required,  
One-time  
130,000+**

Firearms Retailers  
& Safety  
Instructors



**Voluntary  
1,500+**

Pharmacists  
& Dentists



**Required,  
On-going  
20,000+**





**Look for warning signs**

**Empathize and listen**

**Ask about suicide**

**Reduce the danger**

**Next steps**



# Warning Signs

LEARN™

## Behaviors and Situations

- Talking about being trapped.
- Increased drug/alcohol use.
- Giving away prized possessions.
- Withdrawing, isolating.
- Sleeping problems.
- Reckless behaviors.
- Joking about/threatening suicide.

*Change in  
behavior?*

*Trust your  
gut*

## Feelings

BURDENSOME

IRRITABLE

ANXIOUS

HOPELESS / HELPLESS

SHAME / HUMILIATION

Sudden unexplainable joy after  
periods of depression



# Helpful things to say

LEARN™

- *Is there anything I can do to help?*
- *Tell me more, I'm listening.*
- *Sounds like you are really hurting.*
- *What's been going on for you?*
- *I'm here to help.*
- *I care about you.*



**Just Listen**

**Avoid Judgement**

**Reflect back ONLY  
on the things  
they've told you**



**Be direct. Ask in a way that invites an honest response.**

*Are you thinking  
about suicide?*

*Are you thinking of  
killing yourself?*

**AVOID euphemisms - Vague Statements**

*You're not thinking of hurting yourself, are you?*

*You're not thinking of doing something stupid, are you?*



*Sometimes when people are*

*feeling really anxious, withdrawing from friends  
and losing interest in their activities*

*they are thinking about suicide.  
Are you thinking about suicide?*



# Remove the danger

- Firearms
- Prescription medications
- Over the counter medications
- Alcohol and drugs

- 
- Belts, rope, cords, plastic bags
  - Knives
  - Chemicals
  - Cars / car keys
  - Pesticides and poisons



**Checklist**

**Next Steps | Available 24/7**

**LEARN™**

**Call 911** *if someone is in immediate danger and/or refuses to stay safe.*

**Suicide Prevention Lifeline | 1-800-273-8255**

*National resources, questions or help determining level of risk.*

**Crisis Text | Text 741741 - then hit “Send”**

*National resource - Talk about anything.*



# What Can We Do Starting Today

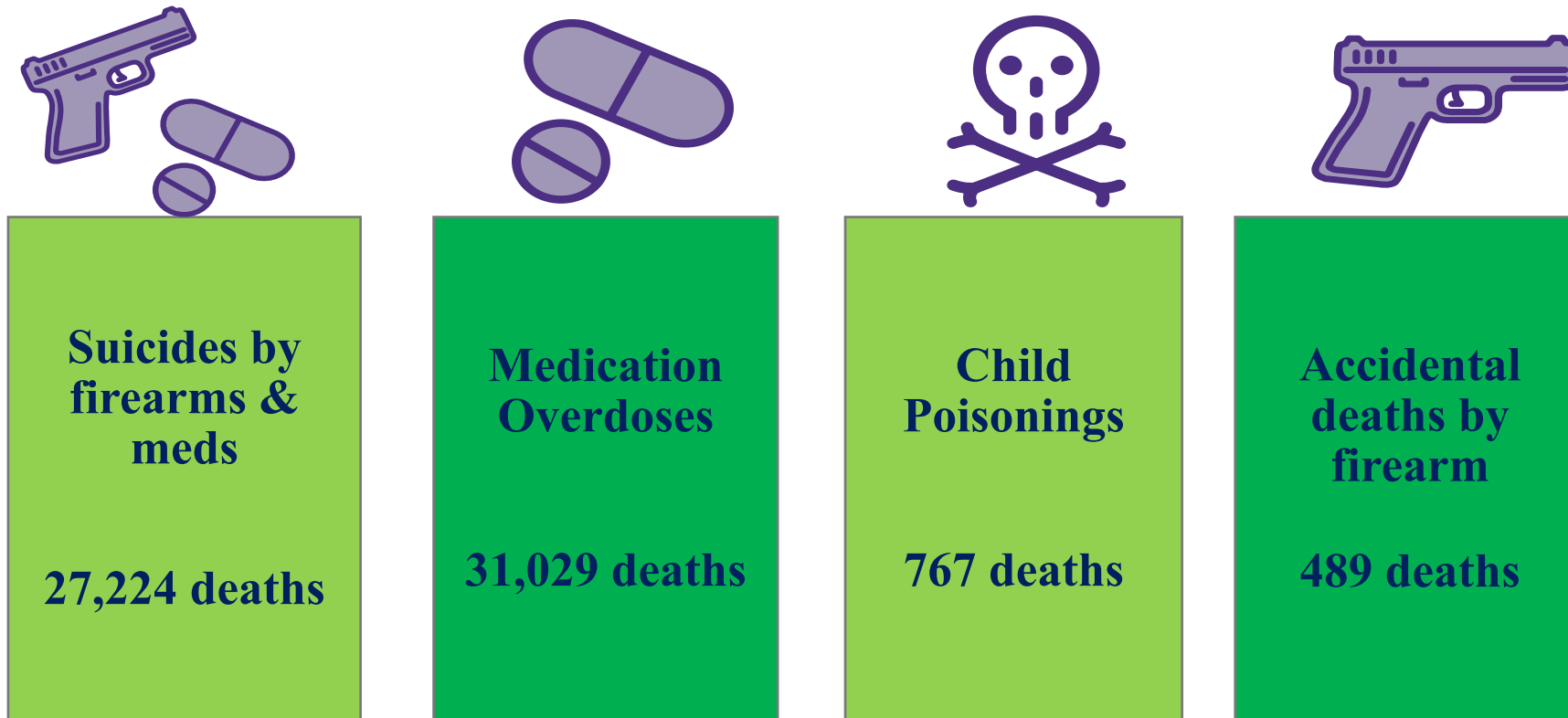
Instead of saying...  
“committed suicide”

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Let’s say...  
“died by suicide”  
“took their own life”



# Make Your Home Safer





# Medication Safety



You do so much to keep your loved ones safe...

- ✓ Car seats
- ✓ Smoke alarms
- ✓ First Aid kits
- ✓ Bike helmets
- ☐ **LOCK UP AND LIMIT ACCESS RX MEDICATIONS AND FIREARMS**

**SUICIDE IS PREVENTABLE**  
Medication overdoses too.

Go to [SaferHomesCoalition.org](https://SaferHomesCoalition.org)

These steps protect against suicide/overdose/poisoning



- 1 LOCK UP**  
your RX medications
- 2 LIMIT**  
in-home supply of over-the-counter medications
- 3 TAKE-BACK**  
go to [takebackyourmeds.org](https://takebackyourmeds.org)
- 4 DISPOSE**  
of meds with kitty litter or coffee grounds; place in your trash



**SAFER HOMES  
SUICIDE AWARE**

You Can Save A Life

# Firearm Safety thru a Suicide Prevention Lens

Do Young  
People Live  
In or Visit  
Your Home?

## **LOCK UP**

For their protection,  
do not allow children  
& teens unsupervised,  
unauthorized  
firearm access

## **LIMIT**

Only firearm owner  
should access keys  
and combinations

## **CHOOSE**

Carefully select  
a safe storage device  
for home-defense  
firearm with fast  
access for only you

**82% OF TEENS WHO DIE BY SUICIDE WITH A GUN USE A FAMILY MEMBER'S FIREARM**

Concerned  
About  
Yourself, Friend  
Or Family  
Member?

## **HOLD**

Give a trusted  
individual keys and  
combinations

## **TRANSFER**

Ask a friend or relative  
to hold firearms in  
an emergency  
temporary transfer

## **CALL**

The National Suicide  
Prevention Lifeline  
**1-800-273-8255**  
Veterans Press 1  
Crisis Text: 741-741



**SAFER HOMES  
SUICIDE AWARE**

**YOU CAN SAVE A LIFE**  
**SaferHomesCoalition.org**



The background of the image shows a large crowd of people gathered on the grounds in front of the U.S. Capitol building. They are holding up numerous white and yellow heart-shaped signs, creating a sea of hearts. The Capitol building is a large, classical-style building with many columns and a dome. The sky is overcast.

# FOREFRONT

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SUICIDE PREVENTION

[www.intheforefront.org](http://www.intheforefront.org)