



# Store It Safe: Suicide Prevention

Family Discussion Guide provided by the  
Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Store It Safe is a unique partnership of healthcare providers, firearm advocates, and community organizations established to keep children safe from unintentional firearm deaths and teens safe from suicide by firearms. Young children are curious and will touch anything, while teens are still learning to control impulses. Our goal is to inform families of risks so they can keep their children safe.

## Suicide Facts:



Unsupervised teen firearm access **triples** the risk of death by suicide



**50% of survivors** made an attempt within 20 minutes of their decision to attempt suicide



Of youth who completed suicide, **82%** used a firearm from their home

## Emotional Triggers Should Not Be Lethal

### What can you do to keep your teen safe?

- The teen brain is still developing, which can lead to emotional situations that override their still-developing impulse control
- Knowing risks for injury and using a barrier can help keep your teen safe
- Teens can engage in risky behaviors and react to seemingly small stressors
- Even with no history of depression, teens sometimes make impulsive decisions with deadly results. **Education alone is not enough.**

## Barriers are Effective

### Risks

#### Firearms:

- 90% of suicide attempts with a firearm are fatal
- Nearly 2/3 of all US firearm deaths are due to suicide
- The rate of firearm suicide by teens is up 61% over the past 10 years
- Teens should not know the combination or location of keys to firearm safe



### Barrier as Prevention

- Even if experienced with firearms, teens should only have supervised access to them
- Keep any firearms that are not under your direct control locked away
- Ammunition should also be locked when not in use
- Consider temporarily removing firearms from the home if someone is suicidal

#### Medications:

- Teens often take medications in suicide attempts
- Both prescription and over-the-counter medications can result in overdose deaths
- **Tylenol**, when taken over suggested dosage, can cause life-threatening injuries or death, even if appearing symptom free for the first 24 hours



- Always keep prescription and over-the-counter medications locked away and out of the reach of children and teens
- Have a family conversation about the dangers of misusing medications
- Never share medications with family members
- Dispose of prescription medications after the period they are prescribed

#### Alcohol:

- Alcohol is the most commonly used and abused drug among youth in the US and is readily accessible in homes
- Alcohol causes more than 4,300 deaths among US teens each year



- Like medications, alcohol should be locked away and not accessible to teens
- Talk to your teen about alcohol and potential dangers. Keep the lines of communication open and let your teen know that they will not be in trouble if they come to you with concerns.

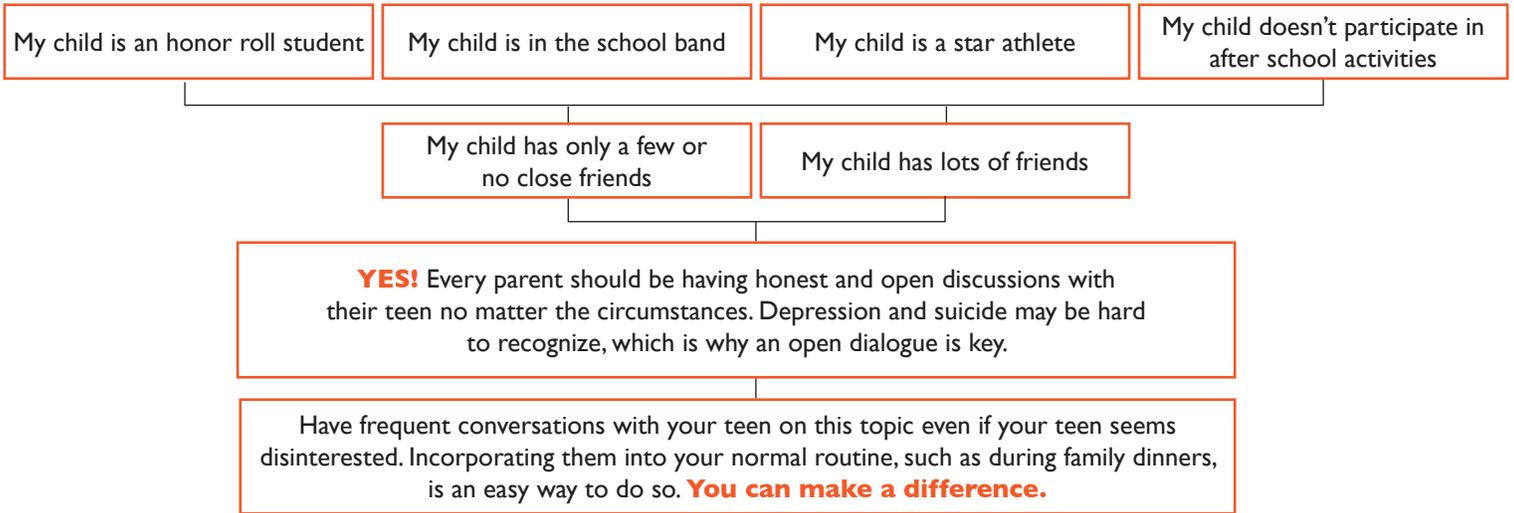




# Store It Safe: Suicide Prevention

Family Discussion Guide provided by the  
Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

## Should I talk to my child about mental health and suicide?



### Warning Signs:

- Depression and other mental concerns, or a substance abuse disorder
- Talking about feeling hopeless or worthless
- Previous suicide attempt(s)
- Withdrawing or isolating from friends, peers and family
- Family history of suicide, mental illness, or depression
- Knowing someone with suicidal behavior (i.e. family member, friend or celebrity)
- Severe stress or anxiety
- Sudden changes in behavior such as talking less or becoming disengaged



**Whether your child has mental health concerns or not, teenagers should not have unsupervised access to any lethal means. This includes firearms, prescription medication, and over-the-counter medicine.**



### Resources:

Your teen's safety is important to you, your doctor, and members of your community. You deserve to have all the information possible to prevent injury risks.

- 1) Have a discussion with your teen and their pediatrician
- 2) If you have further questions, refer to the following resources and continue to do frequent check-ins with your teen:
  - Suicide Prevention Resource Center - <https://www.sprc.org/>
  - Suicide Prevention Lifeline - <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
  - Suicide Prevention Lifeline - Call 1-800-273-8255
  - Crisis Text Line - Text HOME to 741741
- 3) If you have life threatening concerns go directly to your local emergency department

### Questions?

Ohio AAP resources can be found at: <http://ohioaap.org/storeitsafe>