

Washoe County Department of Juvenile Services



# Gun Safety & Suicide Prevention

Washoe County School District, Safe & Healthy Schools Commission  
Virtual Community Forum for Student Safety

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# Key Points

- **Occurrence of Firearms**
- **Occurrence of Suicide/Suicide by Firearms**
- **Reduction to Access**





## NRS Chapter 200, Crimes Against Public Health and Safety

*NRS 202.300: Use or possession of firearm by child under age of 18 years; unlawful to aid or permit child to commit violation; unlawful to store or leave firearm under certain circumstances; penalties; child 14 years of age or older authorized to possess firearm under certain circumstances.*

## Washoe County Code - Chapter 50, Public Peace, Safety and Morals



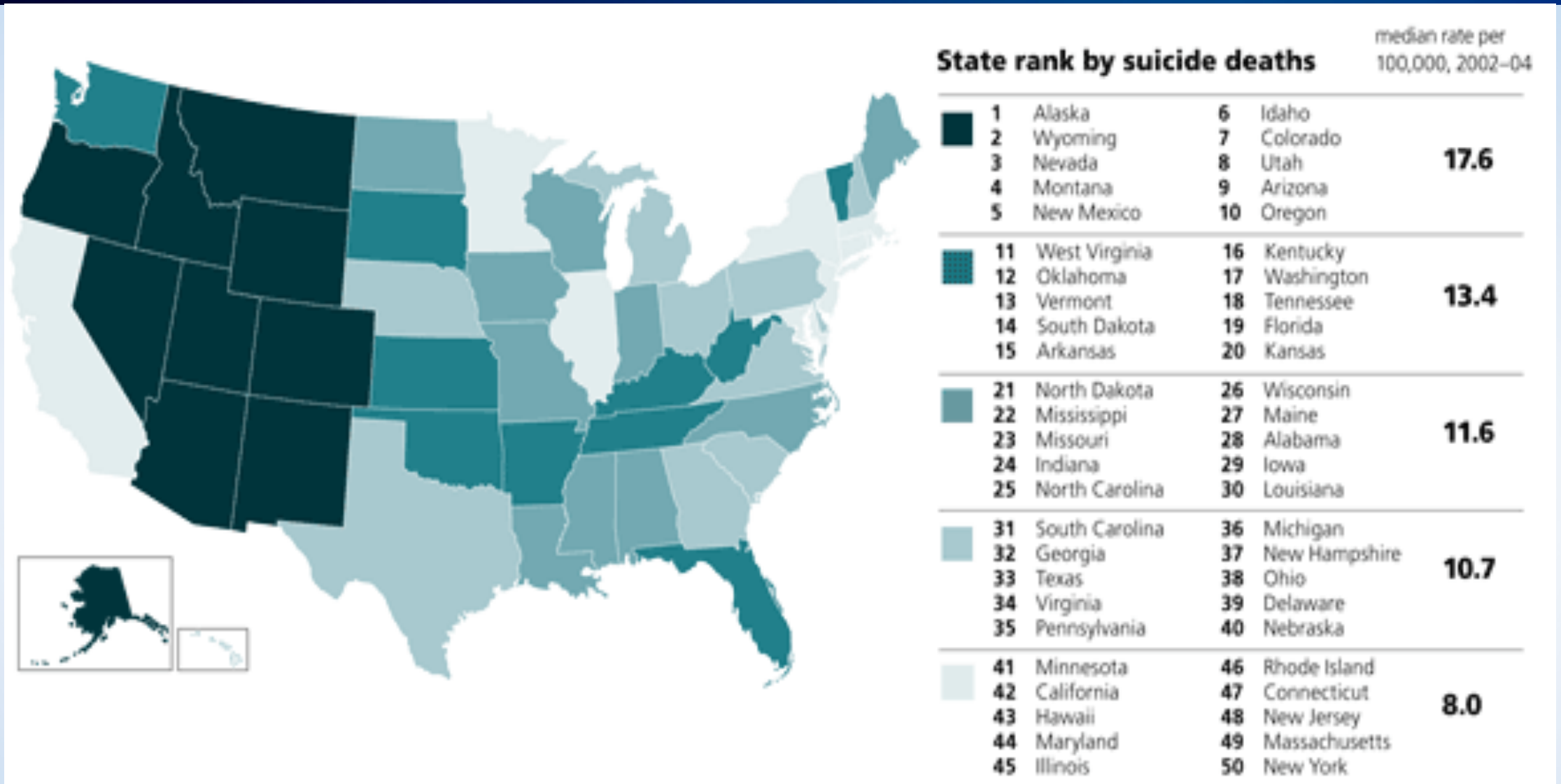


# Our World





# Occurrence of Suicide: National







# Occurrence of Suicide: Nevada

## Nevada

Suicide Rate (all methods)	20.83%
Total Suicides (all methods)	657
Suicide Rate (by gun)	11.49%
Total Suicides (by gun)	367

Percentage of Suicides in Nevada Involving a Gun = 56%		
By Race	White	57%
	Asian/Pacific Islander	48%
	Black	42%
	American Indian/Alaskan Native	N/A*
By Gender	Male	62%
	Female	37%
By Age	Teens (under 20)	44%
	65+	75%



# 2020 Suicide Statistics

## United States

- 45,979 suicide deaths
- Firearms used in 52.8% of suicide deaths (Nevada, 61.7%)
- 3.87 male deaths to every female death (NV, 3.98)
- One suicide death every 11.41 minutes

## Nevada

- 13<sup>th</sup> highest rate in US with 603 total deaths
- 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for ages 8-44
- Nevada's elders (65+) have the 4<sup>th</sup> highest rate
- More deaths by suicide than homicide (217) and transportation deaths (380) combined

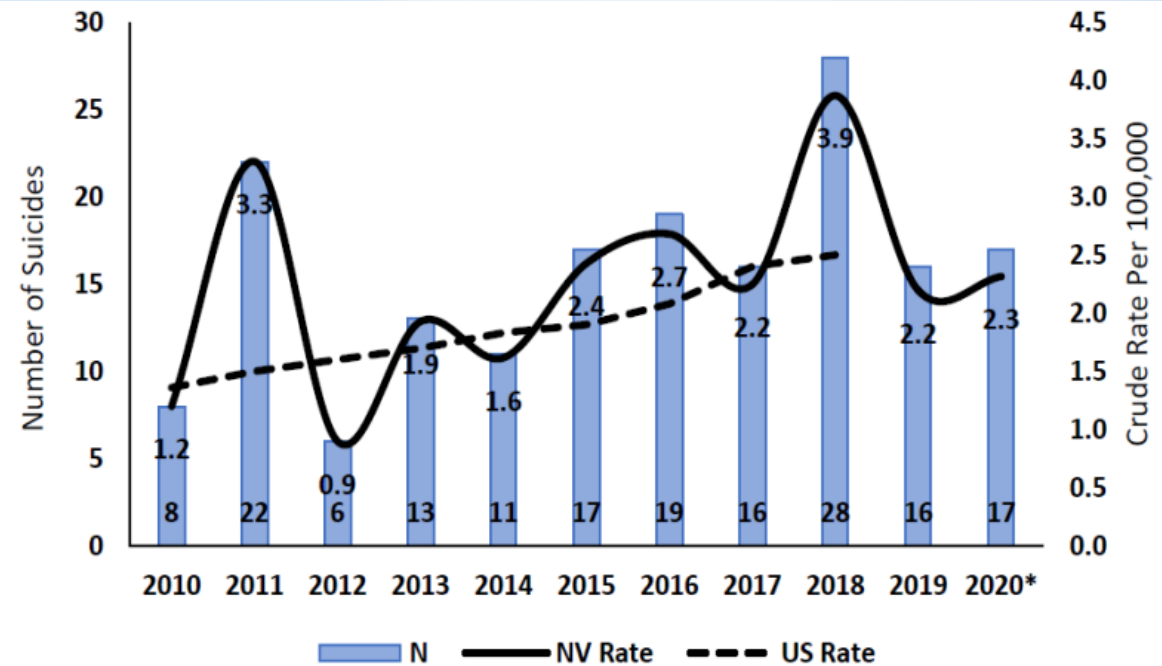


# Occurrence of Suicide: Nevada

## Youth (17 and Under) Suicide Counts and Rates by Year, Nevada Residents, 2010-2020\*

*Data are preliminary and subject to change.*

Year	N	NV Rate	US Rate
2010	8	1.2	1.4
2011	22	3.3	1.5
2012	6	0.9	1.6
2013	13	1.9	1.7
2014	11	1.6	1.8
2015	17	2.4	1.9
2016	19	2.7	2.1
2017	16	2.2	2.4
2018	28	3.9	2.5
2019	16	2.2	N/A
2020*	17	2.3	N/A



Rate is per 100,000 age specific population, provided by the State Demographer (Vintage 2019). Clark County has an average of 13 youth suicides a year, while Washoe County has an average of three youth suicides per year.

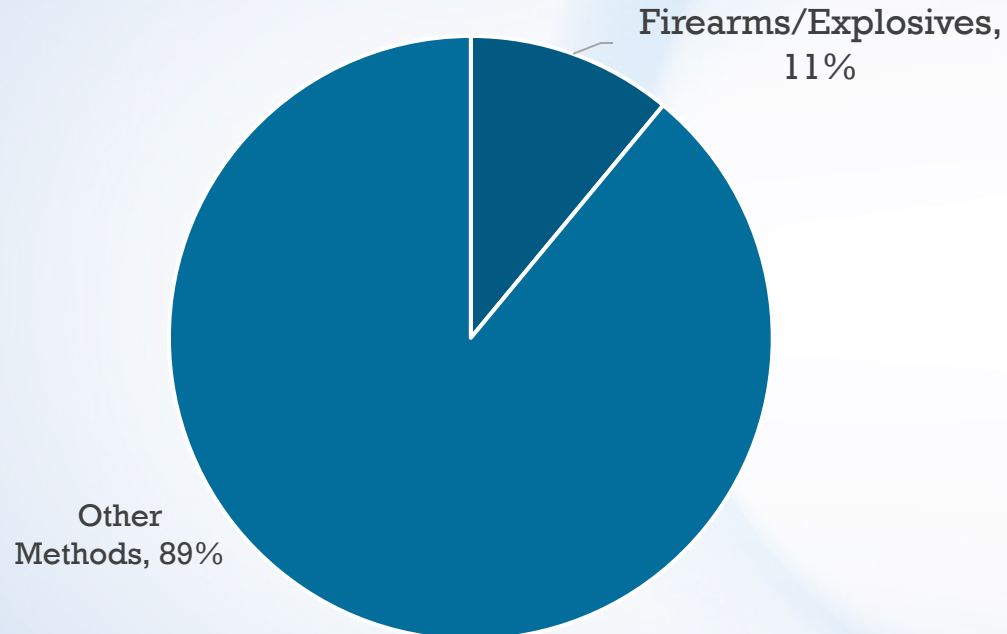




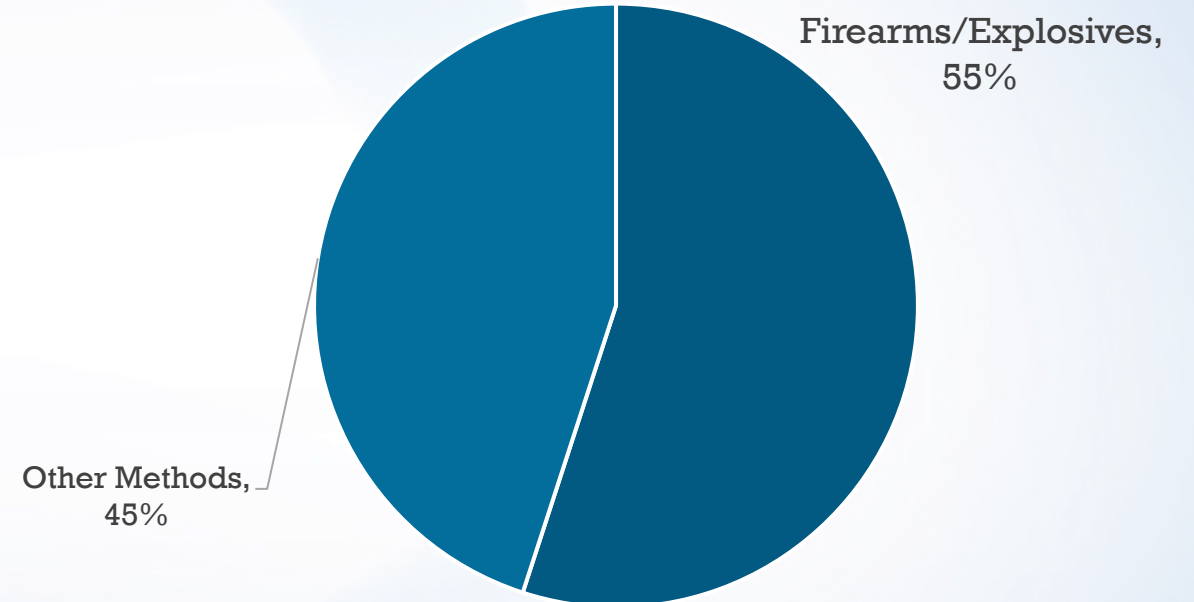
# Occurrence of Suicide: Nevada

## Method of Suicide by Gender, 2017-2020 combined

Females



Males





# “More Gun-Related Suicides Than Homicides In Nevada”

KUNR 2019

## RGJ/USA Today 2020

- Suicide rate for that age group almost **tripled** from 2007 to 2017.
- 2018 data from the CDC and Prevention show a **16% increase** from previous year.
- Youth “have **very few experiences** with dealing with outside stressors” and “tend to be **quite impulsive**”.
- CDC report found that from 2001 to 2016 such **visits for those 10 and older increased 42%**, with “substantial increases occurring in younger age groups”.
- Completed suicides are **getting younger**.
- Celebrity culture also plays a role (suicidal thoughts are sometimes romanticized or normalized).
- “**Death has become public**” on internet/social media)
- A 2018 Pew Research Center report on cyberbullying found 56% of youth **13-14 years old had experienced cyberbullying**.



## Other Information...

- Nevada law prohibits youth from unsupervised access to firearms. **Yet historically, about a dozen youth die each year by suicide using firearms.**
- Over recent years, suicide has been the **#1 cause of death for secondary school age youth.**
- For years, suicide has been the **2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death** for youth 15-24 years old in Nevada.
- According to the FBI's Crime Data Explorer, in recent years about **\$2.6 million worth of firearms are stolen annually in Nevada.** Only about 26% of those firearms are recovered.
- Historically, over 343 persons die by suicide with a firearm in Nevada annually.

*Experts are predicting Nevada's suicide rate to **increase** in 2020-2021.*





# Public Health Problem

- Firearm incidents of all kinds (suicides, homicides, and unintentional gunshot injuries) claim the lives of approximately 34,000 Americans each year.
- **4<sup>th</sup> leading cause** of years of potential life lost before age 65. A teenager in the US today is **more likely to die of a gunshot wound** than from all "natural" causes of disease combined"
- 15-19 year-olds
  - More than ½ of all African-American male deaths are by homicide (80% by firearm)
  - White teens, lower for homicide, higher risk of committing suicide with a gun
  - Suicide attempts with a firearm are completed approximately 85-90% of the time
- \$20 billion per year

## Emphasis on Prevention



- ✓ ✓ Education
- ✓ ✓ Safe Storage
- ✓ Reduce access to firearms by unauthorized persons
- ✓ Teaching safe behavior around firearms

- 50% of gun-owning households **have loaded firearm** at least part of the time
- 30% are **kept loaded and unlocked**
- National Rifle Association's (NRA's) *A Parent's Guide to Gun Safety* advises owners to "**Store guns so that they are inaccessible to children and other unauthorized users.**"
- Devices available that can render a firearm inoperative
- **Trigger locks, cable locks, lockboxes, and gun safes.**

**“When young children are unsupervised, they frequently touch and play with real guns, even after receiving clear and specific instructions not to do so.”**



# 3 out of 4 kids ages 5–14 know where guns are kept in the home

Studies in both pediatric practices and community settings have shown that providing firearm safety counseling combined with a safe storage device improves safe storage practices within the home, as opposed to providing safety counseling alone.

## Gun Safety Program at CHOP

(Children's Hospital of Philadelphia)





# Nevada

## Reduce Access to Lethal Means Project

- ☐ **Support for families (Nevada Office of Suicide and Prevention)**
- ☐ **Public service announcements (English/Spanish)**
- ☐ **Free safes and locks**

# S.A.F.E.R.

## You Can Keep Your Loved Ones S.A.F.E.R

*To all those who care about me,*

*I'm really struggling right now and I need you to know so you can take steps to keep me safe.*

*Sometimes, life can feel so overwhelming and I have yet to learn coping skills to manage some emotions.*

*If you notice I'm upset, it's ok to ask. I may not seem like I want to talk, but it would help to know there is someone I could talk to.*

*Until I'm feeling more like myself, please help me keep myself safe.*

*Love,  
Your child*



### Signs

- There is no single cause for suicide. Watch for changes in personality, appearance, or mood.

### Ask

- If you're concerned, ask about suicide directly.
- Listen. Provide hope. Let them know help is available.

### Find Resources

- If you or a family are in need of a firearm securing device, contact the Office of Suicide Prevention at [suicideprevention.nv.gov/sp/ralmp/](https://suicideprevention.nv.gov/sp/ralmp/)
- If you think your child is in crisis, call the Mobile Crisis Response Team: Southern or Rural NV [\(702\) 486-7865](tel:7024867865), Northern NV [\(775\) 688-1670](tel:7756881670), or call [9-1-1](tel:911).

### Education

- Counseling on Access to Lethal Means: [zerosuicidetraining.edc.org/](https://zerosuicidetraining.edc.org/)

### Reducing Access to Lethal Means

- Lock up and secure your guns by using trigger locks and/or gun safes.
- In more than 70% of all suicide attempts, the person acted impulsively within 1 hour of the triggering event.



**CRISIS  
SUPPORT  
SERVICES**  
OF NEVADA

**Call (800) 273-8255**

**Text CARE to 839863**

**We're here to help. 24/7.**

\*Provided by the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, Bureau of Behavioral Health Wellness and Prevention with Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act funding, also known as the CARES Act

## Is your home **SUICIDE-PROOF?**

Even if you think your child is not at risk for suicide, why take chances? These simple steps can help you suicide-proof your home and possibly save a teen's life.



### **MEDICATIONS**

#### **Lock and limit.**

Fact: Teens who attempt suicide use medications more than any other method.



### **SUPPORT**

#### **Listen and ask.**

Fact: Millions of kids and teens seriously consider attempting suicide every year.



### **FIREARMS**

#### **Remove. Lock.**

Fact: Firearms are used in close to half of teen suicide deaths.

## **HOW TO SUICIDE-PROOF**

### **Remove Firearms For Now**

- Ask a trusted friend or family member to keep it temporarily.
- Your local police precinct or shooting club might offer temporary storage.
- At the very least, lock them securely away from ammunition.

### **Limit Medications**

- Don't keep lethal doses on hand. A pharmacist can advise you on safe quantities.
- Consider locking up medications.
- Dispose of any medications you no longer need.

### **Provide Support**

- The warning signs of suicide are not always obvious.
- Pay attention to your teen's moods and behavior.
- If you notice significant changes, ask them if they're thinking about suicide.



**HELP IS AVAILABLE** if you're  
concerned that someone you care  
about is at risk of suicide.

**VISIT** [suicideproof.org](https://suicideproof.org)

**NATIONAL SUICIDE  
PREVENTION LIFELINE:**

24/7 free and confidential.  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

**IN CASE  
OF EMERGENCY:**

Call 911 or visit your local  
emergency room.



## HISTORICAL FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW

### On The Average

- 425+ Nevadan's seek medical care for gun related injuries each year. 507 Nevadans die by suicide each year, 280 (55%) used a gun.
- On average 213+ of our youth 0-24 have received medical care for gun injuries. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for adolescents and young adults ages 10-24.
- Almost 200 of our Nevadan's 25-64 years of age are injured by a firearms each year.
- 151 men ages 45-64 take their lives. Of those, 87 (58%) die by suicide with the use of a gun.
- Nevada elders 65+ who die by suicide, use a gun 82% of the time.

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Does relocating the guns for a while *always* work?**

Reducing access to firearms and other lethal means is only part of a broader suicide prevention plan. Those considered actively suicidal are best protected by not being left alone until they are feeling better. Getting professional help and the support of other family and friends is strongly advised. The Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available 24/7.

**Will a suicidal person just use something else if they can't get a gun?**

Sometimes, yes. But almost every other method is less lethal than a firearm so there's a greater chance the person won't die in their attempt. Also, other methods allow time for rescue or give the attempter some time to change their mind mid-attempt.

## NEVADA COALITION FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

### Mission Statement

*The Nevada Coalition for Suicide Prevention is dedicated to partnering and collaborating with local and state individuals and organizations for the development and implementation of evidence based suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention strategies and programs in the State of Nevada.*

205 N. Stephanie St. Suite D-149  
Henderson, Nevada 89014

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

To learn ways to get help for your loved one, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

1-800-273-TALK (8255)



# GUN

# SAFETY

# RULES

10 COMMANDMENTS OF GUN SAFETY

11 Look inside to see What's new!

**THANK YOU**  
**for your interest and attention**  
**to this topic.**



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