

# When Firearm Safety and Safe Storage is Your Goal

The **safest** thing to do while someone is at increased risk for suicide in your home is to **store your firearms outside your home**.



First, watch this **short video** about what youth experience and how you can help **protect your child**.



Next, learn about **safety planning** with help from a therapist and firearms expert to make your home safe.



Firearms are the **leading method of suicide**. Putting time and distance between a person in crisis and firearms saves lives. Protect teens and help prevent suicide by locking up guns and ammo in secure safes or moving them off-site until the crisis has been averted. **Watch this video** for one example of how gun safety can help protect lives.



► English



► Español



## Safe Off-Site Storage Options Include:

**A Trusted Family Member or Friend:** Phone a friend or family member. It will not only keep you and your loved one safe, but it will also provide you with more support to manage this difficult time.

**Law Enforcement:** Call local law enforcement to understand the procedures for giving them your firearms and returning them to you.

**Offsite Storage at a Self-Storage Rental Facility:** Some facilities have safety deposit boxes and smaller options if you are storing handguns. If you have shotguns and rifles, you may need a bigger space.

**Shooting Ranges or Gun Shops:** Some facilities have storage options. Call ahead to find out. You could also take your firearm(s) in to be cleaned and serviced and have them hold them until the risk is decreased.

**Pawn Shops:** Many pawn shops will hold your firearms either as a pawn item or for a small fee. Call ahead to verify with your local pawn shop.



## When Off-Site Storage is **not** an Option, the Next Best On-Site Storage Options Include:

**Store Your Firearm(s) in a Gun Safe or Firearm-Specific Storage Lock Box:** Gun Safes are the most secure on-site storage option. Lock unloaded firearms with a cable-style gun lock, remove the firing pin and store them securely, change codes and secure keys. Family members often know "family passwords" to gun safes, update for added security.

**Temporarily Store Ammunition Off-Site:** Temporarily remove ammunition from your home or keep it in a separate locked location from secured firearms.

**Trigger Locks and Cable Locks:** Trigger and cable locks aren't as safe as locking in a secure gun safe, but they are better than not locking at all. In addition, they can be used with a gun safe for extra protection.

**Remove a Key Component of the Firearm:** Remove the firing pin, slide, or other critical component and give it to a family member or friend to hold until the risk has passed.



## Other Options



Your safety is our top priority. A free, anonymous **decision support tool** can help you make decisions about temporarily reducing access to potentially dangerous things such as firearms, medicines, sharp objects, or other household items.



## What Options are **not** Recommended?

**Hiding Firearms is not Recommended:** Family members often know each other's hiding places.

**Doing Nothing is not Recommended:** If someone in your home has had suicidal thoughts or made a plan or attempt, please take them seriously; make your home safe by changing the codes on your safes and following these and other safety recommendations.

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, please call 988



# 4 SIMPLE STEPS TO A MEDICATION-SAFE HOME

As a parent, you do everything you can to keep your children safe. You cover electrical outlets when they start to crawl. You give them bicycle helmets when they learn to ride. You talk about what to do if a stranger approaches them in public. You do these things not because you believe something will happen, but because if anything goes wrong they are much less likely to be seriously hurt.

The same goes for something most of us have in our homes: over-the-counter and prescription medications. Medications can be helpful when used according to the directions on the label, but they can become deadly if someone takes too much—on purpose or by accident—or uses a medication prescribed for someone else.



## The risks to children under 5

More children are brought to the emergency room each year for potential medication poisoning than for car accidents. Most of them took medication when their caregiver wasn't looking.



## The risks to preteens and adolescents

Medication overdoses—of both over-the-counter and prescription medications—are the most common method of attempting suicide and the third most common cause of suicide death.

*These simple steps will help protect your children from serious harm.*

# 1 TALK WITH YOUR KIDS ABOUT MEDICATION SAFETY



Just like you teach your 6-year-old to look both ways before they cross the street and sit your teen down to talk about drinking, you need to teach your children how to use medicines safely.

### Key points for kids under 10

- Medications should be used only when they are needed.
- Adults are in charge of giving you medication when you need it.
- You should never take medication given to you by someone other than your caregivers.

### Key points for teens and tweens

- If they take over-the-counter or prescription medications on their own, they should take them only when they need to and follow the directions on the label. Read dosing amounts and timing together to make sure they understand the correct dose and how often they can safely take it.

## 2 KEEP ONLY SMALL AMOUNTS ON HAND



- A lot of over-the-counter medications, which are safe when used as directed, can become lethal in larger amounts—and those amounts may be smaller than you realize.
- Buy and keep small bottles on hand. If you need to buy in bulk, lock up most of the medication and keep only a small supply on hand. Your pediatrician or pharmacist can advise you on safe amounts.

## 3 LOCK UP MEDICATIONS



- Make sure safety caps are properly closed.
- Keep all medications locked away and out of sight so you can be in charge of when and how much your children take.
- Use a cash box or other lockable container. Local health departments sometimes give away lockboxes for free.
- Throw out expired medications or leftover prescriptions you no longer need. Many police departments and pharmacies have drop boxes for old or unused meds.

## 4 TALK WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH



Medication safety is important for all families, but it is especially important when you are concerned your child is struggling with their mental health.

Talk with your children about mental health. If you are concerned about them, ask directly if they have thought about harming themselves and reach out to a health-care provider you trust. It can be scary to start these conversations, but it gets easier with time and practice. Here are two guides for starting potentially lifesaving conversations:

- 10 Tips for Talking to Your Teen About Mental Health



- How to Ask Someone If They Are Thinking About Suicide



The Jed Foundation (JED) is a nonprofit that protects emotional health and prevents suicide for our nation's teens and young adults, giving them the skills and support they need to thrive today—and tomorrow.

Visit us at [jedfoundation.org](https://jedfoundation.org)



The Jed Foundation

# YOUR CHILD HAS TALKED ABOUT ENDING THEIR LIFE: WHAT'S NEXT?

TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT SUICIDE MAY BE THE TOUGHEST AND MOST UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATION YOU EVER HAVE, BUT IT MAY ALSO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT.



## HERE ARE FOUR TIPS TO USE WHEN TALKING TO YOUR CHILD:

1. Discuss changes you have noticed and why you are concerned.
2. Ask your child directly, "Have you thought about killing yourself?"
3. Do not try to solve your child's issues. Instead, show care, concern, and support.
4. Let them know that you will be there for them. Give your child an opportunity to come to you when they are ready to talk.

## THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP

1. Find treatment that works for your child. This could include a mental health counselor and a physician.
2. Lock up hazardous items like firearms and medications.
3. Encourage healthy coping strategies, including physical activity and positive sleep habits.
4. Talk with your teen about unhealthy coping habits, like substance use or social media misuse, and how to change them. Check out [Social Media Side Effects](#) from The Liv Project.

## WHAT DO I NEED TO WATCH FOR?

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Withdrawing from activities
- Looking for a way to kill themselves, such as searching online for materials or means
- Isolating themselves from family or friends
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Displaying one or more of the following moods: depression, anxiety, loss of interest, irritability, humiliation, agitation, rage
- A sudden or unexplained calm happiness after a long period of depression
- Saying goodbyes or tying up loose ends, such as giving away prized belongings

## WHAT SHOULD I BE LISTENING FOR?

- Talk of suicide: "I just want to go to sleep and never wake up," "If \_\_\_\_ happens, I'll kill myself."
- Talk of hopelessness: "What is the point? Nothing is going to get better."
- Talk of feeling like a burden to others: "They would be better off without me."

## WHERE CAN I TURN FOR HELP?

Pediatrician or Family Doctor  
Mental Health Therapists  
School Counselor  
Psychologists  
Psychiatrists  
Free 24/7 Resources like the  
988 Crisis Line or SafeUT App

Take a free suicide  
prevention course  
anytime by following  
@LiveOnUtah on  
Instagram

*Live on.*



## HOW CAN I START THE CONVERSATION?

**You don't seem like yourself.** Letting your loved one know you have noticed something different about them shows them you care. It's important to let them know you are concerned about them, not upset with them.

**I'm sorry I snapped at you earlier. I've had a tough week but I want to do better. How was your week?** Taking accountability and being a little vulnerable can help smooth over past communication issues and encourage your teen to open up.

**How are things going at school/work, or with your friends/partner?** Making the question specific is a good way to get the conversation started. Remember that it might not be just one thing that is bothering them. It could be a combination of things or maybe nothing in particular - just a general mood they've been having.

**Your care and support can make all the difference.**

# Side Effects of Social Media



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**Active ingredients:** Connection, community, good feels, humor, information, fake news, cruelty, insults, emotional turmoil.

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**Uses:** ■ connect with friends, family ■ communicate ■ offer and gain support  
■ build relationships ■ share inspiring stories ■ find community ■ plan together ■ gain information ■ share photos, videos ■ promote work ■ create

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**Warnings -- May cause:**

■ Sleep disruption, daytime drowsiness ■ Inattentiveness ■ Diminished feelings of accomplishment ■ Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) ■ Feelings of inadequacy  
■ Feelings of exclusion ■ Decreased face-to-face interaction ■ Unrealistic appearance standards ■ Screen addiction ■ Feelings of anxiety ■ Chest or stomach pain ■ Lost motivation ■ Delays in learning ■ Increased risk-taking ■ Bullying ■ Isolating behaviors ■ Decreased physical activity ■ Depressive symptoms ■ Compromised eye health ■ Unrealistic views of self ■ Increased self-absorption  
■ Relationship discord

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**When using this product -- keep in mind:**

Short clips (posts, videos, stories) do not truly represent real life. Photoshop edits, filters, and retouching apps intensify unrealistic beauty standards.

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**Directions: not recommended for ages 13 yrs and under**

**For Ages 14 yrs and up:**

■ Note which active ingredients you're consuming and various effects.  
■ Be aware of associated thoughts and feelings during use.  
■ Curate your feed to experience positive feelings during use.  
■ Do not use a minimum of thirty minutes prior to bedtime.

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**Keep out of reach:**

■ When feeling down, alone, or isolated-can cause negative downward spiral.  
■ During breakups-can increase difficult feelings, excessive app checking, hinder ability to let go.  
■ When use prevents RL interactions- opting out of in-person events, use limits eye contact.  
■ If drinking alcohol-may cause excessive messaging; increase embarrassment following day.  
■ If receiving unwanted advances, nude pics, scams. If instincts say "this feels off."  
■ Following a crisis or trauma-seek professional help and in-person connections.

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**Possible Negative Interactions -- Do not mix with:**

■ Insecurities-can increase current or create new self-doubts.  
■ Boredom or infatuation-may cause binge scrolling.  
■ Feelings of depression or anxiety-may heighten negative emotions.

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**Stop Use or Seek Support if:**

■ Use causes obsessive behavior, excessive app checking.  
■ Use exceeds more than two hours per day.  
■ Confusion occurs between reality vs. non-reality.  
■ You feel yourself being sucked into the illusion of perfection.  
■ Comparisons cause destructive thoughts and feelings.  
■ Difficult feelings worsen.

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# My Social Media Rx

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**Active ingredients:** Describe how social media impacts:

- your thoughts:
- your mood:
- how you view yourself:

**Uses:** How do you want to use your time online?

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**Warnings -- May cause:**

What issues concern you about social media?

**When using this product -- keep in mind:**

What have you noticed about yourself or your friends when going online?

**Directions:** not recommended for ages 13 yrs and under

What do you recommend for yourself?

- Specific apps to delete?
- Who / What to follow?
- Who / What to unfollow?
- Hard stop for time online?

**Keep out of reach:**

- When...
- If...
- 
- 
- 

**Possible Negative Interactions:** What should you avoid mixing with social media?

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**Stop Use or Seek Support if:**

- Use causes obsessive behavior, excessive app checking.
- Use exceeds more than two hours per day.
- Confusion occurs between reality vs. non-reality.
- You feel yourself being sucked into the illusion of perfection.
- Comparisons cause destructive thoughts and feelings.
- Difficult feelings worsen.

WHAT ELSE?

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