



1 SMALL ACT



RESOURCES

LETHAL MEANS SAFETY

THREE ACTIONS TO TAKE to Practice Lethal Means Safety

Preventing suicide is an all hands, community effort. This year, consider adding “taking steps to prevent suicide” to your New Year’s resolutions. Whether you take time to support a friend following a challenging time or equip members of your team with free and confidential resources for psychological health, we all can play a role in completing small ACTs to help others.

Although some are planned in advance, the majority of suicides and attempts are impulsive reactions to stress, and many suicide attempts are made during a short-term crisis period. Storing lethal means properly can interrupt the impulse and give someone in crisis just enough time to reconsider a suicide attempt. Practicing lethal means safety is one way you can support yourself and others in reducing suicide risk. Lethal means safety is the process of ensuring that lethal means of suicide, like firearms and prescription drugs, are out of reach during times of increased stress.

PRINCIPLES OF RESILIENCE

BENDING WITHOUT BREAKING

Predicting challenges, maintaining a sense of control, strengthening relationships, fostering trust and finding meaning are critical to building resilience and navigating stress.

CONTROLLABILITY
Keep an Even Keel
Learning to make choices that help restore a sense of empowerment is key during adversity, from emotional responses to problem-solving actions.

TRUST
Know Who to Turn To
Presence of trust increases willingness to confide in others, utilize resources and address concerns before stress injuries occur.

PREDICTABILITY
Be Ready
Negative outcomes are less likely when we prepare for expected challenges and plan for the unexpected.

RELATIONSHIPS
Stay Connected
With strong relationships, individuals and groups can thrive under stress despite profound challenges.

MEANING
Find Purpose
A sense of purpose promotes health stress navigation, thoughtful decision making and better performance.

The concept behind lethal means safety is exactly that – storing any lethal means safely. Take these steps to practice lethal means safety and help prevent suicide:

1. SECURE ANY CURRENT PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS AND DISPOSE OF UNWANTED, UNUSED OR EXPIRED MEDICATIONS. Visit your local Military Treatment Facility (MTF) which has convenient, safe and anonymous drop boxes as part of the Military Health System’s year-round prescription drug take back program. Instead of working to address what might be an outcome in the long-term, focus on short-term, manageable next steps and ask yourself a few questions: Should I ask a few clarifying questions to get some information? What are the facts? What parts of this situation can I control?



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2. STORE YOUR FIREARMS SAFELY. Whether it's within your own home, or in a home you may be visiting, make sure firearms are safely stored, separated from ammunition and secured in a locked location or with a safety device.

3. UNDERSTAND AND SHARE THE PRINCIPLES OF RESILIENCE WITH OTHERS. Navigate stress with confidence by predicting challenges, maintaining a sense of control, strengthening your relationships, fostering trust and finding meaning. Additionally, use the Stress Continuum to know your zone and recognize your level of stress and actions you can take.

For more resources on lethal means safety and actions you can take to take to help prevent suicide, visit the following resources:

- **Improving the Safety of Lethal Means Prevents Suicide**, Veteran's Affairs
- **Lethal Means**, National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention
- **Reduce Access to Lethal Means of Suicide**, Suicide Prevention Resource Center
- **Risk and Protective Factors for Suicide**, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- **5 Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain**, National Institutes of Mental Health

WHERE TO GET HELP:

- Your local Navy chaplain, Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) or medical
- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:**
 - Call: 988, press 1
 - Text: 838255
- **Chat online:** <https://988lifeline.org/chat/>
- Military OneSource: call (800) 342 9647 or visit www.militaryonesource.mil
- Sailor Assistance and Intercept for Life (**SAIL**)
- Crisis Text Line: text 741741

For access to more resources:



LEARN MORE!



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