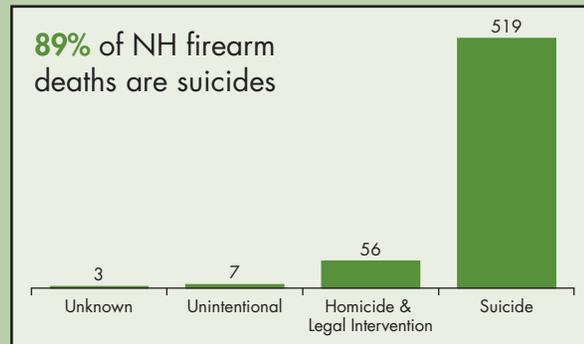


GUN OWNERS LEAD THE WAY ON SAFETY

Adding Suicide Prevention to Gun Safety

While unintentional firearm deaths are low in New Hampshire (averaging about 1 a year), over 500 residents took their lives with a gun in the five years ending 2016.



NH firearm deaths by type, 2012-2016 from CDC/WONDER 2018

Following the usual Gun Safety Rules will continue to keep unintentional gun deaths near zero. **Adding the 11th Commandment could save hundreds more lives.** If a family member is going through a tough time, make sure they can't get to your guns. If it's you yourself who is at risk, consider storing your guns away from home until things improve, or lock them and ask someone you trust to hold onto the keys or change the combination.

What does it mean to be at risk? Struggling with depression, alcoholism, addiction, or other mental health issues, especially when life crises like divorce, arrest, job loss, financial problems, etc., lead to feeling hopeless or trapped.

ABOUT THE COALITION



The New Hampshire Firearm Safety Coalition brings together individuals and organizations with a broad range of views on gun ownership who share a commitment to safety and preventing suicide. The group includes: gun shop owners and firearm instructors, legislators, injury prevention and mental health practitioners, public health researchers, and other committed volunteers.

The Coalition first formed in 1984 with a focus on preventing youth firearm deaths and injuries by producing and disseminating videos, printed materials and Firearm Safety Display Kits.

In 2009, the Coalition began its focus on preventing firearm suicide among those of all ages. The first project engaged gun shops and firing ranges in a suicide prevention effort that has come to be called **The Gun Shop Project**. It has been adopted and adapted by groups in about two dozen states across the country as well as nationally by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and the National Shooting Sports Foundation.

The Coalition is currently developing and distributing suicide prevention materials for firearm instructors to use in their classes.

For more information on these efforts go to www.nhfsc.org or contact one of the two co-chairs: Elaine Frank at elainefrank603@gmail.com or Ralph Demicco at ralph.demicco@comcast.net



GUN SAFETY RULES

11 / 10 COMMANDMENTS OF GUN SAFETY

Look inside to see what's new!

11 COMMANDMENTS OF FIREARM SAFETY

- 1. Treat every firearm as if it were loaded.**
- 2. Always point the muzzle in the safest direction.**
Be aware of where the firearm is pointed. Never point it at yourself or anyone else.
- 3. Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.** Your trigger finger should be extended, pointing forward, pressed against the side of the gun and outside the trigger guard.
- 4. Be sure of your target—and what's beyond.**
Be absolutely sure that you have identified your target. If there is any doubt, don't shoot. Also, if you don't have a backstop, be sure you know where the shot will go if it goes beyond your target.



- 5. Know how to safely operate and maintain your firearm before shooting.** Get proper training before firing any firearms. Also, learn the specifics of each gun before you handle, shoot or clean it.
- 6. Be sure that your firearm is safe to operate.**
While unloaded, verify that the muzzle is clear of obstruction and that the gun is well maintained.
- 7. Be sure your firearm and ammunition are compatible.** Use only the proper ammunition for the gun you are using.
- 8. Wear eye and ear protection when shooting.**
Since guns are loud and can emit debris, proper eye and ear protection can prevent injuries.
- 9. Never use alcohol or other drugs when operating or cleaning firearms.**

- 10. Safely store all guns to prevent theft and unauthorized access.** Store all firearms unloaded and locked when not in use. Lock ammunition in a separate location. Ensure that household members who shouldn't have unsupervised access (teens and children, adults at risk for suicide or other misuse) don't know the combination to the locks or where the keys are.

New

- 11. Consider temporary off-site storage if you or a family member may be suicidal or going through a rough time.**
When someone is going through an emotional crisis (e.g. break-up, job loss or legal issues) or a significant change in behavior (violence, depression, heavy drinking/drug use, sleeplessness), temporarily storing guns away from home may save their life. Friends and family, gun shops, shooting ranges, or the police may provide safe storage until the situation improves.

