

Reducing Bridge and Rail Access

The Golden Gate Safety Net. The proximity of the Golden Gate Bridge and surrounding bridges underscore the urgency of creating deterrent systems that can interrupt or delay an attempt. Fortunately, the Safety Net Project at the Golden Gate Bridge will be completed by 2024 and is a major deterrent to prevent attempts at jump sites. In addition to physical barriers, there is 988 signage on patrol and crew vehicles and posted on the bridge.

SMART Train and Physical Barriers. In addition to physical barriers at crossing areas and placement of 988 signage near the tracks, SMART train provides awareness messaging for train passengers and the community, including conductor announcements, brochures, and personal hygiene kits for those living unhoused.

Bridge and rail suicides can have lasting emotional stress on families, friends, as well as work crews, first responders, witnesses, etc.

Resources

- Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988
- Veteran's Crisis Line. Dial 988 then Press 1, chat online, or text 838255
- Teen Crisis Line: 415-621-2929
- The Trevor Project 1-866-488-7386. LGBTQ+ youth
- Friendship Line (60+): 888-670-1360
- OD Free Marin: odfreemarin.org
- Speak for Safety: speakforsafety.org
- Felton Institute Survivors of Suicide Attempt Support Group and Youth Loss Survivor Support Group: sbalestreri@felton.org
- Buckelew Programs Allies of Hope Support Group: steved@buckelew.org
- Marin County School Gun Safety Resource Website: <https://shorturl.at/coD07>

Safety Plans

You can request a safety plan for your loved one from your provider, mental health or hotline counselor. A safety plan provides a person in distress a specific set of coping strategies to use to reduce suicidal thoughts/behaviors.

While it can be difficult to monitor a loved one 24/7 or ensure a safety proof home, hospitalization may be a choice where they can receive support in a safe environment.

Hospitalization

While it can be difficult to monitor a loved one 24/7 or ensure a full safety proof home, hospitalization may be a choice where your loved one can receive support in a safe environment, especially if:

- They are expressing thoughts about suicide, a plan with intent and time/date, and have access to means to carry out their plan
- Show multiple warning signs
- If health care professionals believe they are an immediate risk to themselves or others, your loved one could be brought to the hospital for an involuntary 72 hour hold. (In California this is called a 5150 for adults and 5585 for minors).

Training and Education

- Counseling for the Assessment of Lethal Means (CALM)
- Gun Violence Restraining Order
- Suicide Prevention Foundation 101
- Narcan
- Safety Planning

Email:

Marin County Suicide Prevention Collaborative
BHRSPreventionandOutreach@MarinCounty.org

Reducing Access to Lethal Means in Marin County: A Guide for Caregivers



**Marin County Department of Public Health
Division of Behavioral Health
Recovery Services**

Marin County BHRS Access Line:
888-818-1115

Marin County Crisis Stabilization Unit:
415-473-6666

**Marin County Suicide Prevention
Collaborative**
<https://prevention.marinbhhrs.org>



Suicide Can Be Prevented

Everyone can play a role by learning the facts, having a conversation with someone we are concerned about, and connecting them to safety. Talking about suicide will not cause someone to take their life. In fact, by not talking about it, a person remains at risk.

- **Know the signs.** Most people in distress express warning signs through **feelings, words or actions**, including: feeling burdensome or trapped, experiencing chronic pain, changes in substance use, lacking reasons for living, talking about suicide, feeling rejected, having access to lethal means, etc. Any warning sign is a door opener for a conversation.
- **Ask directly.** “Sometimes people experience thoughts of suicide when they lose hope/are sad/withdrawn. Are you thinking of suicide? Can we store your firearm/ammunition (or substances) until your feelings are resolved and you can stay safe?”
- **Listen.** “I’m sorry you’re in this much pain. I’m here to listen and support you.”
- **Connect.** “I’ll sit with you. I want to make sure that you stay safe. Let’s call 988 (or therapist, parent, etc.) together for support.”
- **Follow up.** Connect to foster belonging and support by a phone call, text, etc.

[i] American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Accessed 11/9/23. [https://afsp.org/an-introduction-to-firearms-and-suicide-prevention].
[ii] Gunnell et al. (2005). The epidemiology and prevention of suicide by hanging: A systemic review. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 34(2), 433-442.
[iii] SAMHSA. Substance use and suicide: A nexus requiring a public health approach. Accessed 11/9/2023. [https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma16-4935.pdf].

Create a Safe Home

Many suicide attempts take place during a short-term crisis, so it is important to understand a person’s access to lethal means to reduce the potential for impulsive use. Means restriction include:

Reducing Common Ligatures and Ligature Points in the Home

Suicide by ligature, also known as suicide by hanging, involves individual items to suffocate oneself from a weight bearing item. It’s lethality is similar to firearms.[i]

- The majority of suicides by hanging occur in the community, at home or public spaces.[ii]
- Asphyxiation “games” that are common among youth can result in choking, passing out, or unintentional death.

Common Ligatures/Ligature Points

- While it may be impossible to remove any ligature point and ligature, you can consider limiting the most common ligatures within the home or lock them away, including belts, ropes, cables, and scarves.
- Ligature points include: beams, trees, door knobs, curtain/show rods.



Safely Securing Firearms and Ammunition

Across the nation, 60% of suicides are by firearms and most suicide attempts with a firearm are fatal.[i]

- Firearms should be stored unloaded and locked when not in use, separate from ammunition, and inaccessible to children.
- In California, the Gun Violence Restraining Order may be available to temporarily remove and prevent the purchase of firearms.
- Firearms can be voluntarily relinquished or temporarily stored by contacting your local law enforcement office.



Safely Secure Medications, Substances, and Toxins

Substances are often involved in suicide. Those living with a substance use disorder are at increased risk for suicide.[iii]

- Remove or safely secure all medications
- Lock up toxins such as bleach, laundry packets and household chemicals.
- Keep only a small amount of medication on hand
- Discard expired/unneeded meds safely at a disposal location
- Take a Narcan training to prevent overdose

Health providers can screen for suicide risk if you or a loved one have conditions for which opiates are prescribed, especially chronic pain, and in those with a substance use disorder.