

Safe Storage Campaign

Purpose

In Montana in 2013-2017, the youth suicide rate for ages 11-17 was almost triple the national rate for the same age group. Studies have shown that the risk of suicide is 4 to 10 times higher in homes with guns than those without.¹ Statewide, 63% of youth suicides are completed by firearms.² Safe firearm storage saves lives. The partners listed below wish to pursue a teen suicide prevention initiative by increasing education and access to safe firearm storage.

GUN SAFETY & SUICIDE PREVENTION

Suicide is a leading cause of preventable death for Montana Teens. Learn how safe gun storage can reduce the risk of suicide fatality

63% OF MONTANA YOUTH SUICIDES
ARE COMPLETED BY GUN ¹

Guns are more lethal than other means of suicide. They are quick, they are nearly always irreversible.

Partnership

Missoula County Public Schools are institutions at the center of our community. Reducing access to lethal means of self-harm for a person at risk of suicide is an important part of a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention. We are proud to partner with Project Tomorrow Montana, Safe Kids Missoula led by Community Health Alliance, Be SMART MT, United Way, Safer Communities MT, Montana VA Health Care, and the Missoula Health Department to reduce access to lethal means in Missoula County. A special thanks to Cabela's for supporting this effort.

Plan

Gun locks will be available at the following locations starting **Monday, September 23** through Friday, October 4 or until supplies run out:

Big Sky High School – 3100 South Ave. W., Missoula, MT 59804
Sentinel High School – 910 South Ave. W. #7910, Missoula, MT 59801
Hellgate High School – 900 South Higgins Ave., Missoula, MT 59801

***** A Parent, Guardian, and/or Legal Adult must pick up the gun lock(s).
Students under 18 will not be allowed to pick up a gun lock without a parent, guardian, or
legal adult present *****

Our partners have secured funding for several hundred trigger and cable locks; for example, Master Lock model #94DSPT, which are “set your own combination” locks that retail for \$21.99 each. So **PLEASE** stop by the main office and get a **FREE** gun lock. Please get multiple locks if you have multiple firearms.

1. Oxford University Press. (2021, January 1). Teen suicide and guns. American Academy of Pediatrics. Retrieved September 3, 2024, from https://publications.aap.org/patiented/article/doi/10.1542/peo_document369/82026/Teen-Suicide-and-Guns?autologincheck=redirected

2. Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. (2022, March). Suicide prevention information and Resources. Suicide Prevention Information and Resources. Retrieved September 3, 2024, from <https://www.dphhs.mt.gov/suicideprevention/suicideresources>



Those receiving a gun lock(s) can also fill out a drawing sheet with their name, telephone number, and email address (for contact & survey purposes only) to be entered into a drawing for one of two Vaultek LifePod BLP10 Biometric Portable Safes or equivalent safes. The drawing will be held October 9, 2024, so HURRY and **GET ENTERED TODAY!**

Please feel free to contact the MCPS Superintendent's Office with questions or comments about this Safe Storage Campaign: Call (406) 728-2400 or email mhill@mcpsmt.org.