Lethal Means Restriction

Cultural And Social Barriers and Avenues

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NAMI NH
The Connect Project
Lethal Means Restriction

- Part of the National Strategy
- Proven to be effective
- Anyone can implement it
Why Is it Effective?

- Suicide attempts are frequently impulsive
- Many people who attempt are ambivalent
- People do not typically substitute means
- Many people who attempt do not go on to die by suicide

Means Matter
Changing The Culture

Culture Change → Awareness
Action → Communication
Education →
Immediate Factors: Impulsivity

- Among survivors of near fatal suicides, when asked about time from their decision to proceed with suicide and the attempt:
  - 24% said less than 5 minutes
  - 47% more said an hour or less

- Youth are particularly impulsive
Longer Term Factors: Ambivalence

- 90% of those who survive a nearly lethal attempt do not go on to die by suicide (Owens, Horrocks and House, British Journal of Psychiatry, 2002)
- 92% of those prevented from jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge did not die by suicide
  - Those who survived the jump from the Golden Gate Bridge reported regret at their action once they lost their grip of the bridge (J Kevin Hines).
Substitution of Means?

Gas Composition (Great Britain)
Bridge Study (DC)
Ambivalence
Impulsivity
Buying Time
Saving Lives
Immediate Results

- Self-asphyxiation by domestic gas, Great Britain
- Pre-1957: Proportion of suicides = 40%
- 1957-1970: Transition from coal to natural gas:
  - CO content went from 12% to 2%
- 1971: Proportion of suicides = 10%
- Overall suicide rate: Reduced by 26%
# Mean Annual Suicides: Ellington vs. Taft Bridges: Pre v Post Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bridge</th>
<th>Pre: ’79–’86*</th>
<th>Post: ’87–’90</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ellington</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taft</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* one suicide during construction. Fences completed 1/’86
Changing Behavior
Changing Changing Culture

Awareness
Communication
Education
Advocacy
Action
Awareness/Ambivalence

Crisis Counseling
There is hope
Make the call

The consequences of
Jumping from this
Bridge are fatal
And tragic.
Advocacy

Bridge Rail Foundation:
http://www.bridgerail.org/
Communication

- What are our community risk factors?
- Who needs to be at the table?
- How do we educate them?
- What is the common denominator?
International Rates of Gun Ownership, Homicide and Suicide
Gun Death Rate per 100,000 People

- death rate >14
- death rate [12, 14]
- death rate [10, 12]
- death rate [8, 10]
- death rate [6, 8]
- Death rate <6

NOTES:
Source: VPC
http://www.vpc.org/ardeathchart09.htm

5-15-09
How do states compare?

Suicide in States with the Highest and Lowest Gun Ownership Levels, 2000-2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>High-Gun States*</th>
<th>Low-Gun States**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39 Million</td>
<td>40 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Of Adults With A Gun At Home</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearm Suicide</td>
<td>8,489</td>
<td>2,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Firearm Suicide</td>
<td>3,572</td>
<td>4,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Suicide</td>
<td>12,061</td>
<td>6,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearm Suicide</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Firearm Suicide</td>
<td>1,488</td>
<td>1,439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Suicide</td>
<td>2,748</td>
<td>1,615</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*WY, SD, AK, WV, MT, AR, MS, IO, ND, AL, KY, WI, LA, TN, UT
**HI, MA, RI, NJ, CT, NY

82% used a firearm belonging to a family member, usually a parent.

When storage status was noted, about two-thirds of the firearms had been stored unlocked.

Among the remaining cases in which the firearms had been locked, the youth knew the combination or where the key was kept or broke into the cabinet.
Lethal Means Restriction in the Live Free or Die State
Communication: Language and Culture

- Political Correctness

- "Firearms" not "weapons"

- Lethal means "reduction" not "restriction"

- It’s not about guns

- Training trainers and leaders to understand and respect the culture
Connect Training: All participants except first responders and law enforcement: n=336

1) In NH firearms are the method most frequently used by those who die by suicide
   - Pre-Test: (Answer = True) 29.7% correct
   - Post-Test: (Answer = True) 98.0% correct

2) Restricting access to lethal means is an effective suicide prevention practice
   - Pre-Test (Answer = True) 31.8% correct
   - Post Test: (Answer = True) 95.7% correct
Connect Training: First Responders and Law Enforcement – n=63
1) In NH firearms are the method most frequently used by those who die by suicide
   ▶ Pre-Test: (Answer = True) 50.8% correct
   ▶ Post-Test: (Answer = True) 98.4% correct

2) Restricting access to lethal means is an effective suicide prevention practice
   ▶ Pre-Test: (Answer = True) 27.0% correct
   ▶ Post Test: (Answer = True) 96.7% correct

Education: Changing Knowledge
Attitudes About Firearms and Suicide Prevention

- Firearms Are The Method...
- Restricting Access Is An...

Blue: Gatekeepers & Providers
Red: Law Enforcement & First Responders
Restricting Access

- Hide ammunition and firearm separately?
- Gun locks and safes?

The presence of a firearm in the home increases the likelihood of suicide in that home by 5x compared to a home without a firearm, regardless of whether the firearm is properly stored. (Kellermann et al, 1992)
Media Recommendations & Safe Messaging
### Finding Common Ground in Uncommon Places

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Dialogue Between</th>
<th>Action Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Injury prevention: research and practice</td>
<td>➢ Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Medical examiner’s office</td>
<td>➢ Safety Checklists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Gun shop owners/Firing Ranges</td>
<td>➢ Interview methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Suicide prevention</td>
<td>➢ Dissemination of NSPL materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ DHHS: Behavioral Health/Community Mental Health</td>
<td>➢ Educational Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Private practice/inpatient</td>
<td>➢ Training programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ NCIC</td>
<td>➢ Reducing liability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Safety Plans &amp; voluntary restriction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking Action

- Have your facts & research in place
- Contact the right people: passion + process + planning=synergy
- Use cultural sensitivity
- Story telling with Safe Messaging
- Find the common denominator
- Choose an achievable solution
- Publicize and celebrate successes

Every Effort Can Save A Life!

“Make Every Door the Right Door”

Jerry Reed
Cultural and Social Values: Moving Towards Life

- Ubuntu
- Denaa Yeets’
- “Our culture is our prevention”
- “Can I give you a hug?”

http://www.seacoastonline.com/articles/20100305-NEWS-100309875
NH Programs

- CALM: Counseling on Access to Lethal Means: Elaine.M.Frank@Dartmouth.edu

- Connect: Suicide Prevention & Postvention Training and Protocols
  - www.theconnectproject.org: