



NC Department of Health and Human Services

# **NC Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Focus on Youth**

Jane Ann Miller, MPH  
Comprehensive Suicide Prevention  
(CSP) Program Manager

December 7, 2022

# Suicide Prevention in North Carolina

## Funding

- 2020
- CDC grant
- \$4.8 million over 5 years

## Identified Populations

- Men
- Veterans
- Rural residents
- Youth, specifically LGBTQ+2A

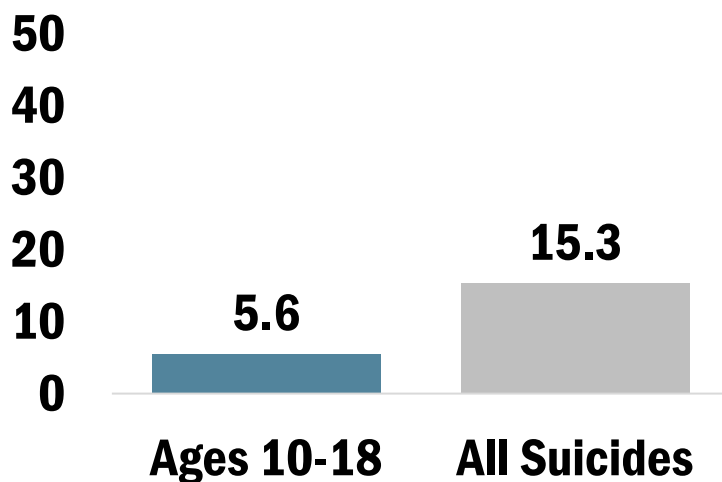
## Major Deliverables

- State-wide Advisory Council
- Gatekeeper Training
- Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM)
- Firearm Safety Teams
- Suicide Prevention Academies
- Community Support through RFA

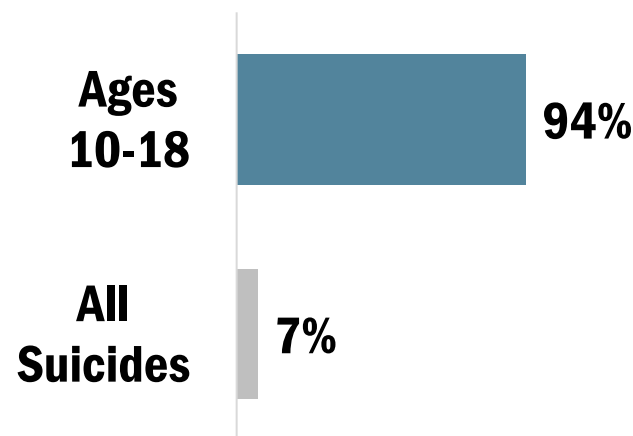
# Among youth, suicides are increasing.

Of the 1,436 suicides in 2020\*, 67 (5.6%) were among school-aged youth (10-18).

**2020\* Suicide  
Rate per 100,000**

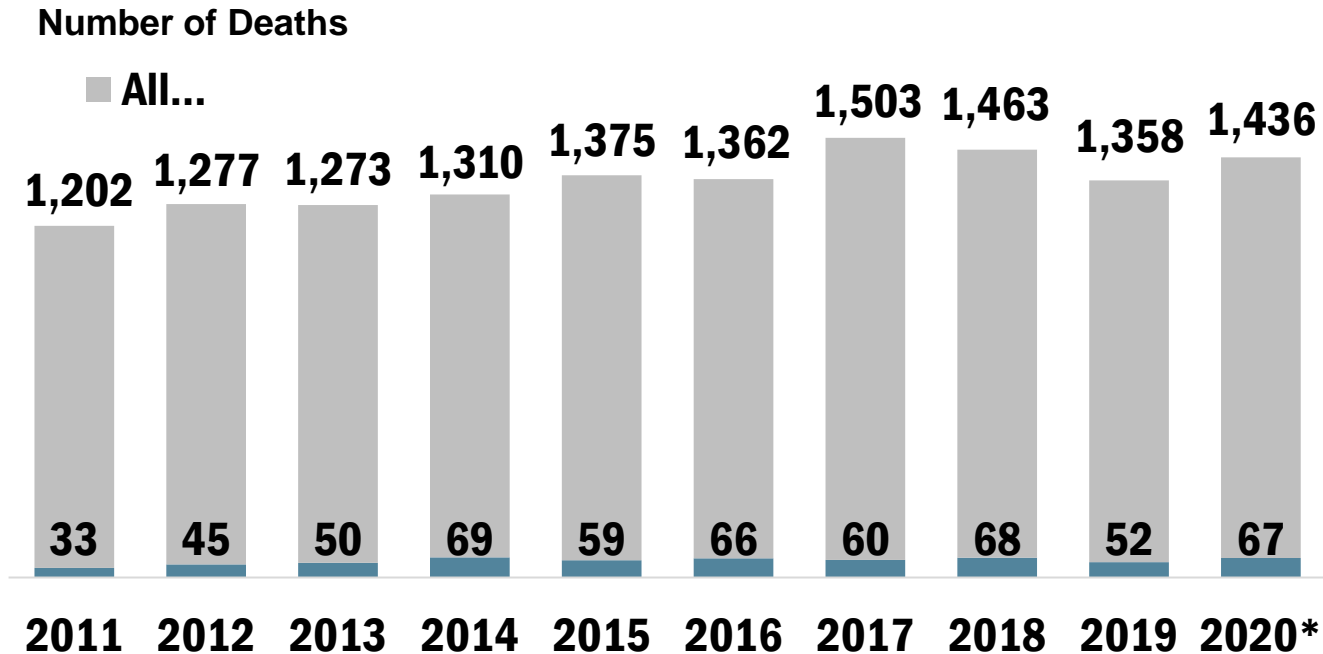


**Rate increase from 2011-2020\***



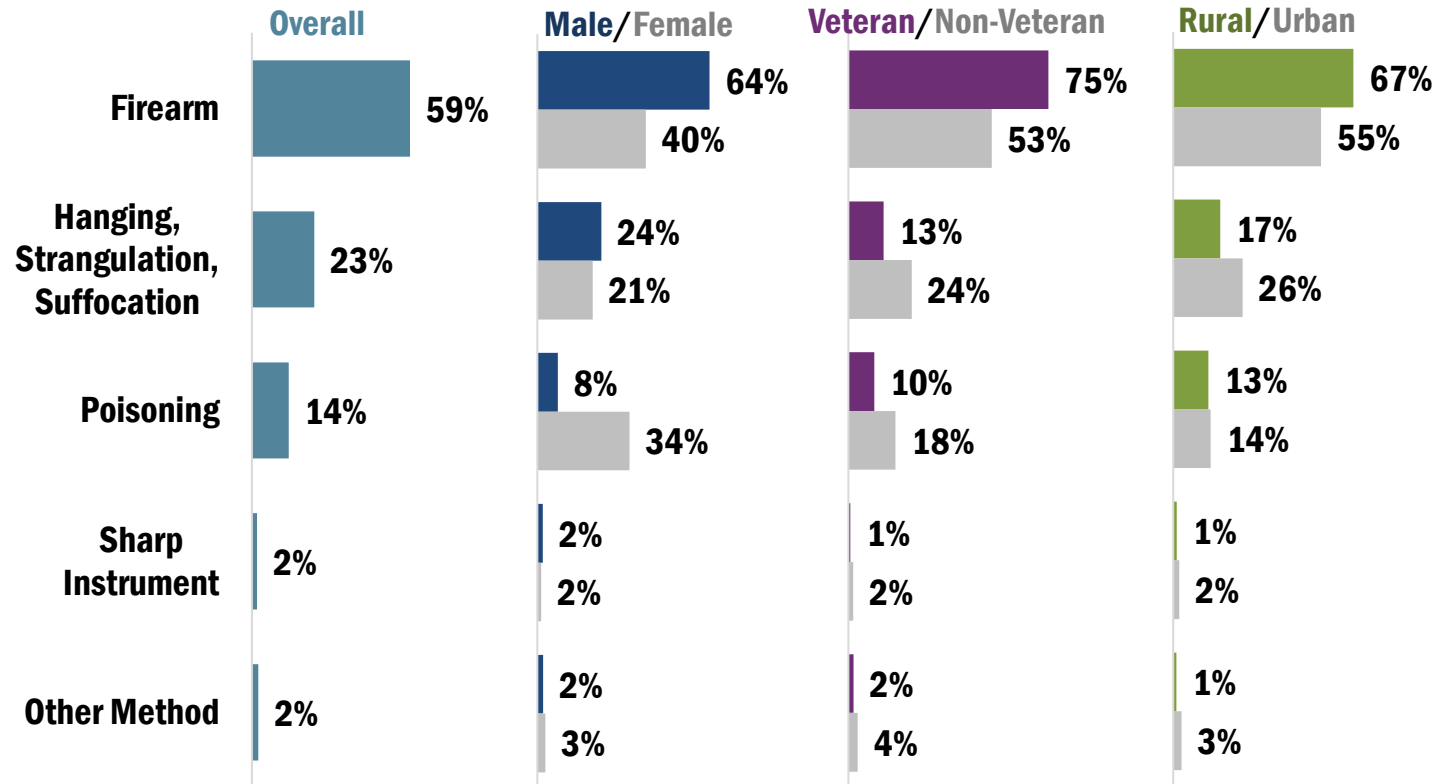
# The number of suicides among NC residents increased slightly (6%) from 2019-2020\*.

Youth suicides increased by 29% from 2019-2020\*.



Source: North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS), 2011-2020\*  
\*2020 data are provisional and subject to change; Note: Limited to NC Residents

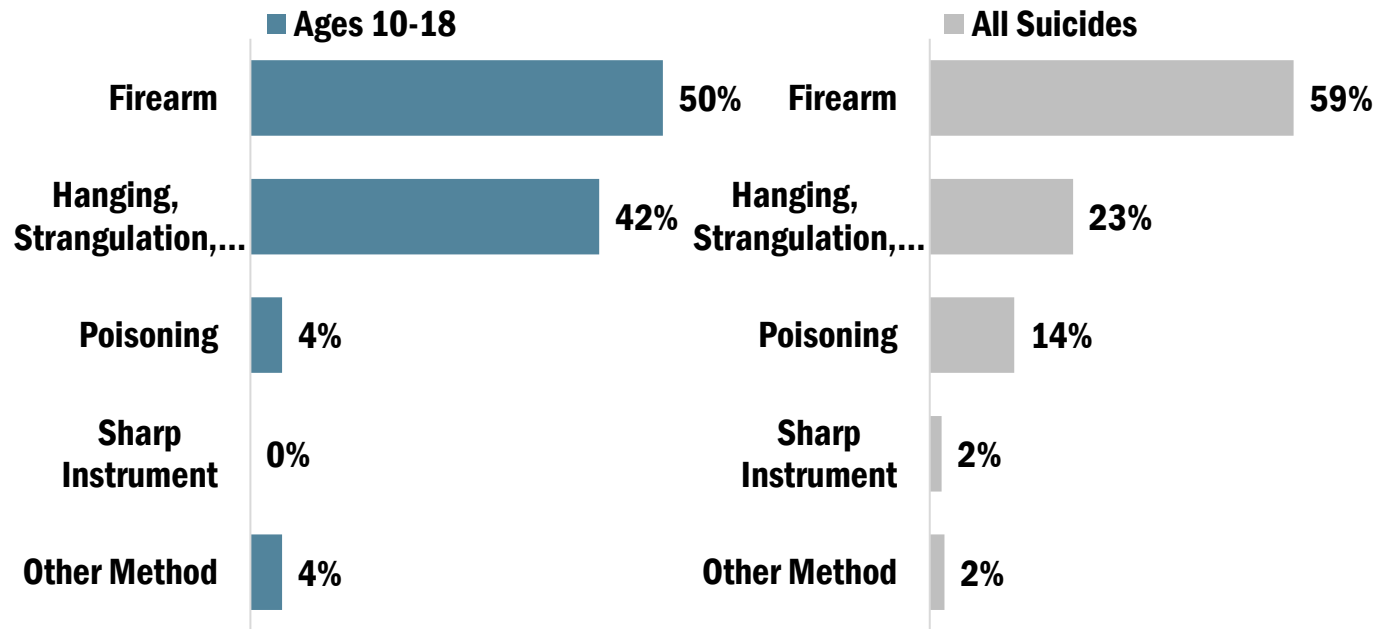
# Firearms are the leading method of suicide.



Source: North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS), 2018  
Note: Limited to NC Residents

# Firearms are the leading method of youth suicide followed by suffocation

## 2020\* Suicides by mechanism/method



Source: North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS), 2020\*  
Note: Limited to NC Residents

# Recent Report: Child Firearm Deaths

<https://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/crime/article255201326.html>

## NC CHILD FIREARM DEATHS

	Assault/ Homicide	Self-Inflicted/ Suicide	Unintentional	Other	Total	Child Firearm Death Rate per 100,000
2020	64	31	9	1	105	4.6
2019	36	15	4	1	56	2.4
2018	32	26	4	0	62	2.7
2017	26	18	2	0	46	2
2016	29	20	2	2	53	2.3
2015	20	15	3	0	38	1.7
2014	20	22	5	0	47	2.1
2013	21	16	6	1	44	1.9
2012	22	11	1	2	36	1.6
2011	24	9	9	0	42	1.8
2010	24	8	6	2	40	1.8
2009	17	19	2	0	38	1.7
2008	29	10	3	2	44	2
2007	38	8	6	0	52	2.3
2006	30	10	3	2	45	2.1
2005	38	17	5	1	61	2.9
2004	23	9	5	2	39	1.9
2003	26	10	6	0	42	2
2002	18	14	0	1	33	1.6
2001	17	15	4	0	36	1.8
2000	30	15	2	1	48	2.4

2020 data are provisional and subject to change. Other category includes legal intervention and undetermined causes.

Chart: David Raynor • Source: NC State Center for Health Statistics, Death Certificate Data, 2000-2020.

# NC DETECT

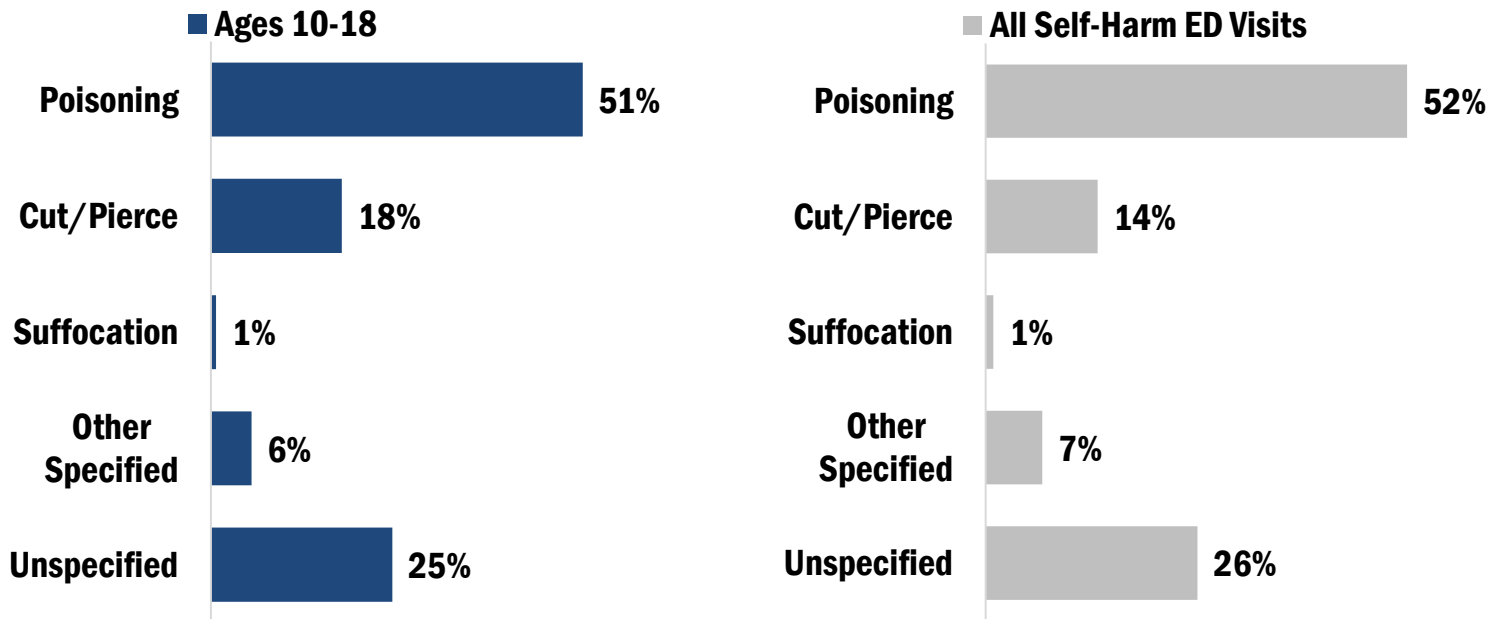
- State's syndromic surveillance system
  - Includes ED visit, EMS, and Poison Control Center data
- Near-real time data
- Scan ED visit records for any mention of a self-inflicted injury
  - Includes self-harm visits where there may or may not have had an intent to end their life
  - Monitor suicidal behavior
  - Exploring other mental health visits





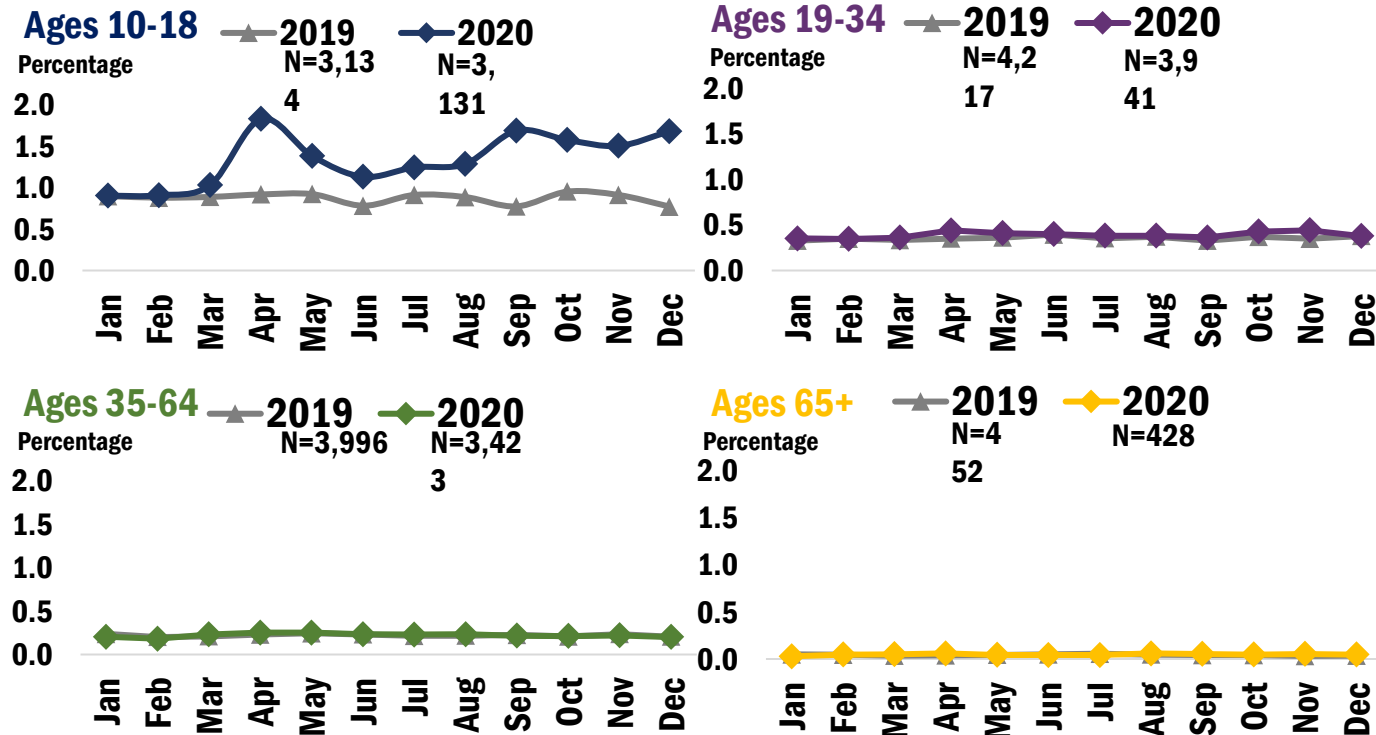
# Poisoning was the leading cause of youth self-harm ED visits.

## 2020 Self-Harm ED Visits by Mechanism/Method



Source: NC-DETECT Emergency Department Visits, 2020; Limited to NC residents ages 10 and older

# Proportion of Total ED Visits Related to Self-Harm by Age group, 2019-2020

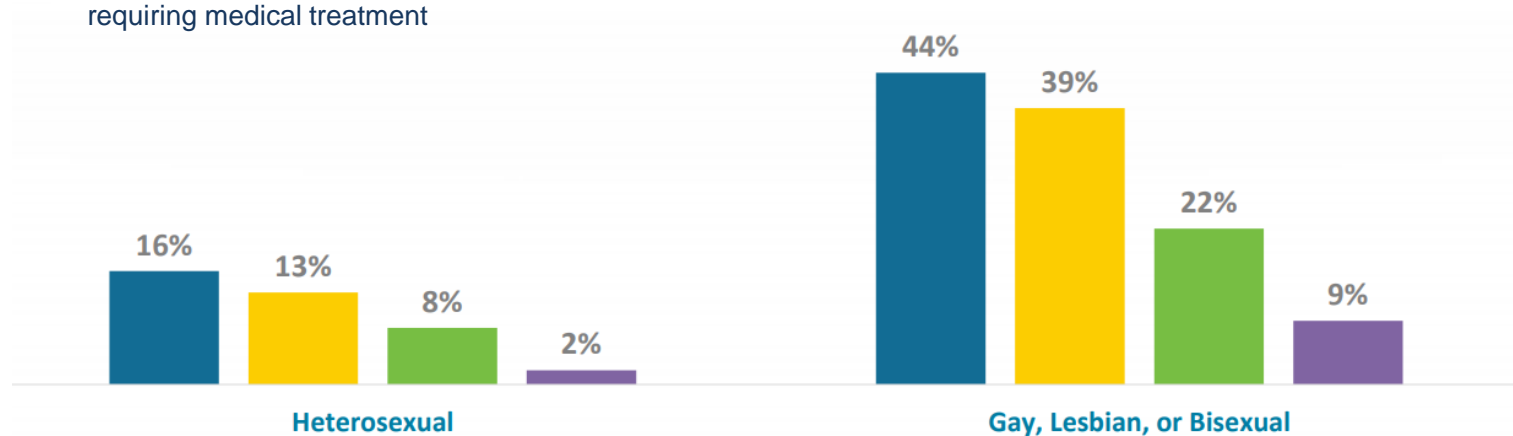


Source: NC-DETECT Emergency Department Visits, 2019-2020; Limited to NC residents ages 10 and older

# Suicidal behavior\* is more prevalent among youth identifying as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

In the past 12 months:

- Seriously considered attempting suicide
- Made a plan to attempt suicide
- Attempted suicide
- Made a suicide attempt that resulted in injury requiring medical treatment



\* Responses related to suicidal behavior in the previous 12 months

Source: North Carolina High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019; Spell, L. & Essex, E. (2020, Sept 23). *Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child: Data Drives the Work* [PowerPoint Presentation to the CFTF Intentional Death Committee]

# The Trevor Project: 2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health

LGBTQ youth who live in a community that is accepting of LGBTQ people reported **significantly lower rates of attempting suicide** than those who do not.

LGBTQ youth who felt high social support from their family reported attempting suicide **less than half the rate** of those who felt low or moderate social support

LGBTQ youth who found their school to be LGBTQ-affirming reported **lower rates of attempting suicide**

# From Data to Action

# Firearm Safe Storage

1. Promote safe storage practices through creation of local Firearm Safety Teams (FST).
2. Provide Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM).
  - Includes firearms, medications, other methods

# Firearm Safe Storage

1. Promote safe storage practices through creation of local Firearm Safety Teams (FST).
2. Example is the Durham Gun Safety Team
  - <https://injuryfreenc.dph.ncdhhs.gov/safestorage/docs/CreatingGunSafetyTeamImplementationGuide.pdf>
  - Member examples:
    - Health department
    - Health care providers
    - Faith Leaders
    - Domestic violence groups
    - Mental Health Providers
    - Neighborhood watches
3. Combined efforts: collaboration with Medicine drops

# Vidant Medical Center: messaging



## FIREARM SAFETY IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY.



### SECURE firearms

**Secure**  
all firearms  
in a lock box,  
firearm safe,  
locked cabinet,  
or with a trigger/  
cable lock.



### PROTECT loved ones

Safe storage  
**protects**  
everyone from  
unintentional  
harm.



### REDUCE harm

Safe storage  
**reduces**  
the risk of  
harm  
caused to  
oneself or  
others.





# Project Child Safe

## GUN STORAGE FOR YOUR LIFESTYLE

As a gun owner, you can choose from multiple options for safely storing and protecting your firearms when they're not in use.

Use this guide to determine which mechanism best suits your lifestyle, priorities and environment.

### A RANGE OF OPTIONS



#### CABLE LOCK

Price Range: \$10–\$50

A cable lock can be used on most firearms, allows for quick access in an emergency and offers security from theft. The cable runs through the barrel or action of a firearm to prevent it from being accidentally fired, requiring either a key or combination to unlock it.

- AFFORDABLE
- ACCESSIBLE
- THEFT DETERRENT



#### GUN CASE

Price Range: \$10–\$150

For those looking to conceal, protect or legally transport a registered firearm, a gun case is an affordable solution available in a variety of materials including plastic, fabric or metal. Be sure to lock it with an external device for added security.

- AFFORDABLE
- PORTABLE
- PROTECTS FROM DAMAGE



#### LOCK BOX

Price Range: \$25–\$350

With integrated locks, storage boxes provide reliable protection for firearms, and allow gun owners to legally transport them outside of their home.

- PORTABLE
- ACCESSIBLE
- PROTECTS FROM DAMAGE



#### ELECTRONIC LOCK BOX

Price Range: \$50–\$350

Electronic lock boxes are an effective way to store or legally transport firearms, and they also prevent theft since only the person with the code can access the contents. Some electronic lock boxes are specially designed for quick access to stored firearms.

- PORTABLE
- THEFT DETERRENT
- PROTECTS FROM DAMAGE



#### FULL SIZE AND BIOMETRIC GUN SAFES

Price Range: \$200–\$2,500

A gun safe protects its contents from the elements and allows owners to safely store multiple firearms in one place. Gun safes of all sizes are now available with biometric options to ensure only certain people have access.

- THEFT DETERRENT
- PROTECTS FROM DAMAGE

### VEHICLE STORAGE



#### CONSOLE STORAGE

Price Range: \$250–\$300

A solution for those who need a truly secure place to store their firearm in a vehicle. These custom-fitted devices provide concealment to deter prying eyes and would-be thieves. Various access options are available, including biometric.

- THEFT DETERRENT
- ACCESSIBLE
- PROTECTS FROM DAMAGE



#### CARGO AREA STORAGE

Price Range: \$500–\$1,500

Effective for transporting firearms to the range or field, cargo area storage models are available for sedans, SUVs and trucks. These devices allow for locked storage, concealment and protection from bumps and jostling.

- THEFT DETERRENT
- ACCESSIBLE
- PROTECTS FROM DAMAGE

### SECURE STORAGE ACCESSORIES



#### WIRELESS GUN SAFE MONITOR

Price Range: \$100–\$200

An electronic monitor can provide awareness and alert you if anyone is accessing your storage device or handling your firearm without your authorization. Some sound an audible alarm, others can be connected to your smartphone.

- THEFT DETERRENT
- REMOTE MONITORING



#### ELECTRONIC HOLSTERS

Price Range: \$200–\$300

Electronic holsters are a new type of secure storage device that enable fast access along with security to prevent unauthorized access. Holsters can be mounted or used independent of a mounting system and feature a programmable finger or thumbprint scan.

- PORTABLE
- ACCESSIBLE
- THEFT DETERRENT

### PLEASE HELP PREVENT ACCIDENTS. STORE FIREARMS RESPONSIBLY.

These are just a few of the storage options available to firearms owners. For the greatest level of security, consider using a combination of safety mechanisms and educate family members about handling firearms properly.

To learn more about firearms safety, visit [ProjectChildSafe.org](http://ProjectChildSafe.org)



Project ChildSafe is a program of the National Shooting Sports Foundation®

**NSSF**  
The Firearm Industry Trade Association

# Firearm Safe Storage

1. Provide Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM).
  - Includes firearms, medications, other methods
  - CALM is a conversation between a provider and the at-risk person and/or their family. It is discussion about ways to safeguard the home during the critical time period in which suicide risk is present.
  - Trainees: medical, health care, mental health, counselor, community resource

# Why Do Means Matter?

- Seventy-one percent of survivors of nearly lethal attempts stated that they deliberated for an hour or less.
- Approximately 82.5% of intentionally self-inflicted suicide attempts using firearms are fatal.
- The short time period of someone acting on suicidal ideation supports separation of ideation and method.
- Creating any gap in time between the thought of suicide and lethal means can provide time for self-interruption or intervention by others

# Trusted Gun Lock Distributors

Bandel, S., Bond, A., & Anestis M. From the New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center

- Interactions at point of sale by trusted firearm personnel can increase safe storage practices by firearm owners
- Distributing locks at point of sale for firearms and firearm related items is a best practice strategy

# Trusted Gun Lock Distributors

Research from the University of Pennsylvania

Adapted and evaluated the S.A.F.E Firearm program to discuss safe storage and distribute gun locks through pediatricians

- Material is better received when:
  - Pediatricians take a nonjudgmental and empathetic stance
  - The content is child-centered
  - The pediatrician has previously created a deeper relationship with the family
- With a collaborative approach to decision-making, neutral messaging, and provision of tangible resources, pediatricians can be a trusted safe storage partner

# Research Summary

- Not all people/partners are trusted safe storage sources
- Consider who delivers information and the gun locks themselves to increase use and effectiveness
- Firearm retailers and firearm ranges are trusted by the firearm-owning community
- Child-centered messaging about safe storage is effective among families

# Funded for FST & CALM Training

## Local Health Departments:

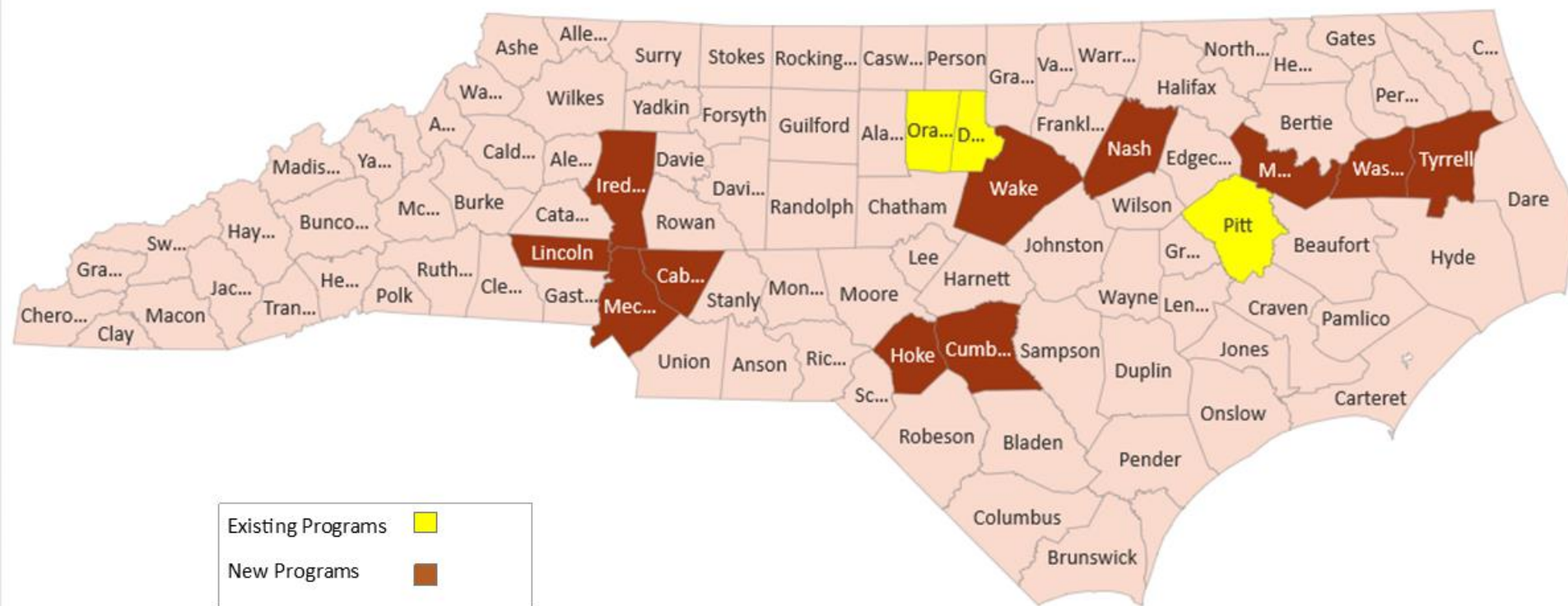
- Durham County Department of Public Health
- Hoke County Health Department
- Martin Tyrrell Washington District Health

## Non-Profits:

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention-NC
- Stop Soldier Suicide
- Vidant Medical Center

## Working in the following counties:

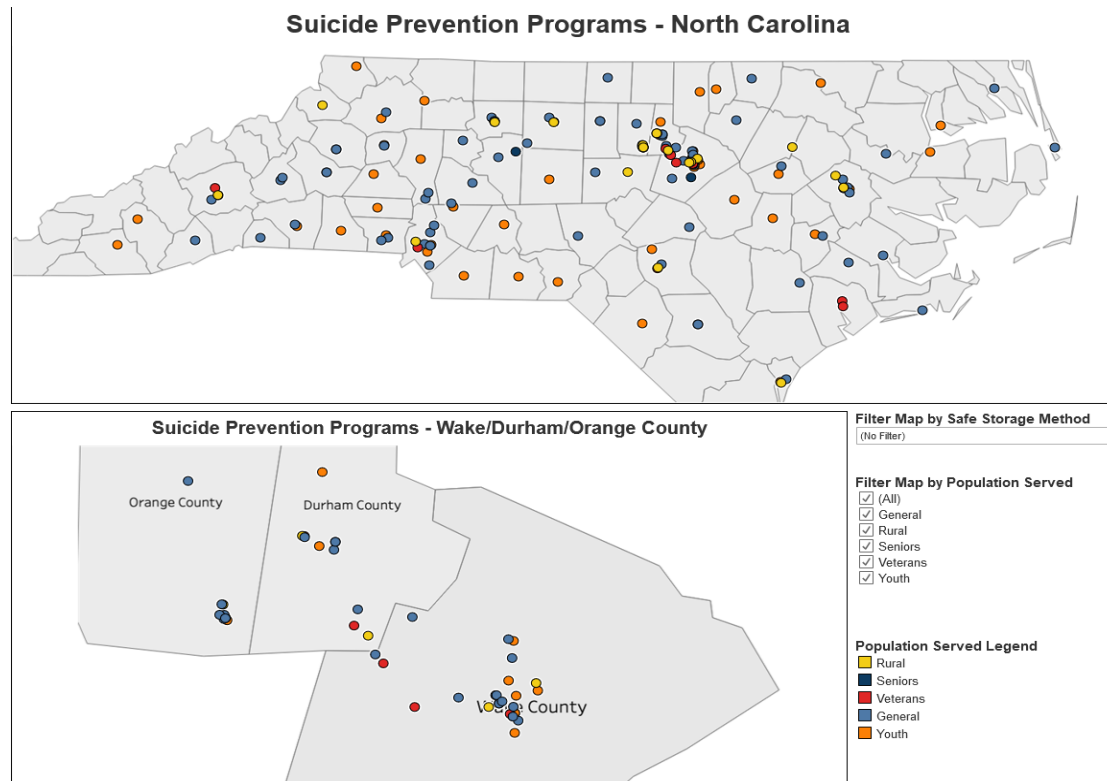
–Cumberland, Durham, Hoke, Iredell, Martin, Mecklenburg, Nash, Orange, Lincoln, Pitt, Tyrrell, Wake, Washington,& Cabarrus





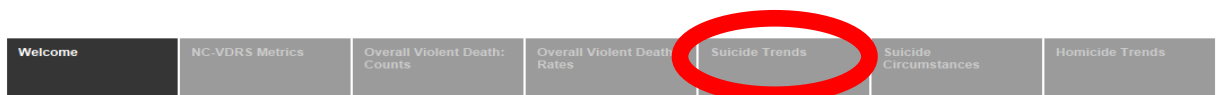
# New Resource: Suicide Prevention Program Inventory Map

[N.C. DPH: IVP Branch: Suicide Prevention \(ncdhhs.gov\)](http://ncdhhs.gov)



# New Resource: NC Violent Death Reporting System Data Dashboard

<https://dashboards.ncdhhs.gov/t/DPH/views/NCVDRSDashboard/NC-VDRSDashboard?:isGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&embed=y>



NCDHHS | NC Injury and Violence Prevention Branch | NC Violent Death Reporting System

Each year, **50,000 Americans die from violence**. Homicide and suicide are, respectively, the third and fourth leading causes of death for everyone in the United States under age 40, except infants. Overall, almost twice as many people in the United States die from suicide than homicide.

Most communities lack the information they need to understand and ultimately prevent these violent deaths. Responding to the need for better, more complete information, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention established the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) in 2002. Participation in NVDRS is through competitive cooperative agreements. North Carolina was awarded funding in August 2003. Today, NVDRS is implemented in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

The North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS) is a CDC-funded statewide surveillance system that collects detailed information on deaths that occur in North Carolina resulting from violence: homicide, suicide, unintentional firearm deaths, legal intervention, and deaths for which intent could not be determined. NC-VDRS is a multi-source incident based system that gathers information from death certificates, medical examiner reports, and law enforcement reports. The goal of this system is to aid researchers, legislators, and community interest groups in the development of public health prevention strategies to reduce violent deaths. NC-VDRS began collecting data in January 2004.

Check out the following 'How-To' video to learn about the different ways you can use the dashboard, navigate its features, and apply the information to best meet your needs.



FAQ and User Guide  
Click on the icon below to access the FAQ and user guide.



Questions? Contact us at [beinjuryfreenc@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:beinjuryfreenc@dhhs.nc.gov)  
State of North Carolina • Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health • Chronic Disease and Injury Section • Injury and Violence Prevention Branch  
[www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov) • [publichealth.nc.gov](http://publichealth.nc.gov) • [www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov)  
Terms of use: [www.nc.gov/terms](http://www.nc.gov/terms) | Privacy Policy: [www.nc.gov/privacy](http://www.nc.gov/privacy)



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES  
Division of Public Health

NORTH CAROLINA VIOLENT DEATH  
**NC VDRS**  
REPORTING SYSTEM

# SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION PLAN



# Focus Areas for NC Suicide Prevention State Action Plan

- 1) Create a coordinated infrastructure
  - State-wide team & advisory council, state action plan
- 2) Reduce access to lethal means
  - Community-level Firearm Safety Teams, suicide prevention education, safe storage map
- 3) Increase community awareness and prevention
  - Education, messaging, state-wide inventory of suicide prevention programs and resources
- 4) Identify populations at risk
  - Skills training, referral

# Focus Areas for NC Suicide Prevention State Action Plan, cont.

- 5) Provide crisis intervention with specific focus on people with increased risk
  - 988 National Crisis & Suicide Prevention Lifeline, behavioral health emergency response and training
- 6) Provide access to and delivery of suicide care
  - Promote best practices, reduce barriers to care
- 7) Measure our impact and revise strategies based on results
  - Expand and improve data systems and access

# 988: Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

The National Suicide Lifeline 1-800-273-8255 has changed to a three-digit number as of July 16, 2022



If you or someone you know  
needs support now,  
call or text **988**  
or  
chat **988lifeline.org**



PEP22-08-03-001

# Questions

# NC Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Team Contact Information



ANNE L. GEISSINGER, MPH

*CSP Team Lead*  
*anne.geissinger@dhhs.nc.gov*

All things CSP!



JANE ANN MILLER, MPH

*CSP Program Manager*  
*jane.miller@dhhs.nc.gov*

Suicide prevention expert,  
suicide prevention in NC,  
contract questions