



Re: NSSF-AFSP Suicide Prevention Toolkit

Dear NSSF[®] Member:

The National Shooting Sports Foundation[®] and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention have created a groundbreaking partnership to develop educational materials firearms retailers and shooting facilities can use to raise awareness among their staff and customers about suicide prevention.

The result of this partnership is the toolkit in your hands, containing materials that have been reviewed by NSSF's Retailer and Range Advisory Councils. We ask that you use these materials at your business to help develop a basic understanding of suicide and how to recognize and possibly assist individuals who may be going through a difficult time – individuals you may decide not to sell or rent a firearm to, or provide access to your range.

Suicide accounts for nearly two-thirds of all firearm deaths in the U.S., more than 23,000 annually – a sobering statistic. Myths about suicide sometimes get in the way of helping others. One of those myths is that a person in crisis who cannot access the means to do themselves harm will simply look for other means. Research tells us that a person is not likely to look for another way to die. There is a brief but intense period of despair leading to a suicidal crisis, and by putting time and distance between a person in crisis and their chosen method for suicide – such as by temporarily removing access to a firearm – can help to save a life.

Suicide is preventable. Knowing what to look for, having a brave conversation and helping promote the secure storage of firearms when not in use can make a huge difference to someone. The circumstances of a person's life can change over time – sometimes quickly. At some point, you, your staff, customers, family members and friends may benefit from knowledge of suicide prevention.

By participating in this program, you will be connected to a nationwide effort developed by AFSP called Project 2025, which seeks to reduce the annual U.S. suicide rate by 20 percent by the year 2025. It is an effort that NSSF fully supports.

The toolkit contains the following items:

- Firearms and Suicide Prevention brochure – for staff and customer education
- Poster and flyer – for business use
- Counter cards – for business use
- Window decals – for business use
- After a Suicide guide for firearms retailers and range owners – contains guidance and resources to support staff and customers in the aftermath of a suicide attempt or death at your business should such an incident unfortunately occur
 - This resource includes key steps to take as well as pages for notes where you can write down contact information for emergency and mental health organizations
 - NSSF recommends keeping this booklet in the program's plastic materials folder for quick access should it be needed

We encourage that your staff view several short videos providing an introduction to this program and an overview of suicide prevention. Watch at nssf.org/safety/suicide-prevention. The videos are available online only.

It sounds simple, but materials such as posters, brochures and counter cards are a good way to help your staff learn more about suicide prevention, and they may be all your customers need to start a conversation with a buddy who could use some support. With greater understanding of mental health and suicide prevention, and a community that is supporting each other, we can help save lives.

Materials also are posted at afsp.org/firearms and nssf.org/safety/suicide-prevention. The educational brochures may be reordered via the NSSF website as needed. Questions about the program can be directed to Bill Brassard, NSSF Senior Director of Communications, at bbrassard@nssf.org or 203-426-1320, ext. 212. AFSP Chapters are active in every state and are a good resource for information. Locate one near you at afsp.org/chapters.

Sincerely,



Joe Bartozzi

President and CEO

National Shooting Sports Foundation

Sincerely,



Dr. Christine Moutier, M.D.

Chief Medical Officer

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention