

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SUICIDOLOGY RELEASES STATEMENT ON FIREARMS AND SUICIDE

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The American Association of Suicidology
(AAS) recognizes that firearm access
and storing firearms unlocked and
loaded are risk factors for death by
suicide. Although firearm access does

not cause suicidal thoughts, it makes it more likely that suicidal individuals will die. Every year, almost 23,000 Americans die from suicide by firearm. [View the full AAS statement here.](#)



“AAS hopes to do our part to contribute, like those who have recently and heroically addressed gun violence as it relates to mass shootings. As a suicide prevention organization, we feel we can help best by making a clear statement about firearms and suicide. With this statement, we hope to provide a list of specific ideas we have to help ensure that the steps we take to address gun violence in our country will help end suffering that comes from any form of death, be it homicide or suicide,” said Michael D. Anestis, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Psychology at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Means safety – efforts to make methods for suicide less deadly or less available during a suicide attempt - represents a promising tool for lowering the national suicide rate through a specific focus on firearms – the most common method of suicide death in the United States. AAS believes that the success of such an initiative hinges upon the development of collaborative relationships with the firearm-owning community.

“This statement reflects the best research in the area of firearms and suicide, of which AAS members have played a significant role. It is my hope that AAS can provide opportunities for our members and others to engage in meaningful action to reduce firearm deaths by suicide,” said Julie Cerel, PhD, AAS President.

For the media: We urge members of the media to share suicide prevention resources in all of their reports. Responsible reporting on suicide and the inclusion of stories of hope and resilience can prevent more suicides. [You can find more information on safe messaging around suicide here.](#)

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About AAS: AAS promotes suicide as a research discipline, public awareness programs, public education and training for professionals and volunteers. The membership of AAS includes mental health and public health professionals, researchers, suicide prevention and crisis intervention centers, school districts, crisis center volunteers, survivors of suicide loss, attempt survivors, and a variety of lay persons who have an interest in suicide prevention. You can learn more about AAS at www.suicidology.org.

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