

The Maryland Licensed Firearms Dealers Association, Inc. is committed to promoting the safe and lawful use of firearms. We are very concerned about the misuse of firearms by people who are at risk of suicide. We are providing this information with the intent of helping us work together to save lives.

Suicide is the most frequent cause of firearm death in the U.S. In 2013 45% of the suicide deaths in Maryland involved firearms. In recent years this has increasingly included young people and Veterans.

The Maryland Licensed Firearms Dealers Association, Inc. urges everyone to:

- Become familiar with warning signs and risk factors for suicide.
- Share Suicide Prevention Lifeline and other resources with others.

If you have concerns about someone, PLEASE ask them if they are having thoughts of suicide. Asking this question can open the door to hope, and getting help. If they have access to firearms, take action to be sure they are removed for safe storage until the crisis has resolved. **Putting time and distance between a firearm and a suicidal person is critical to saving lives.**

To order brochures please contact:  
[mlfdasafety@gmail.com](mailto:mlfdasafety@gmail.com)

WITH APPRECIATION TO THE NEW HAMPSHIRE FIREARM SAFETY COALITION FOR SHARING THEIR MATERIALS

## SUICIDE CRISIS LINES

**THE SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE**  
1-800-273-TALK (8255), 1-800-SUICIDE  
[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

**VETERANS CRISIS LINE**  
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1  
CONFIDENTIAL CHAT AT:  
[www.VeteransCrisisLine.net](http://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net)

**MARYLAND CRISIS NETWORK**  
1-800-422-0009  
<http://www.Facebook.com/MDSuicidePrevention>  
<http://www.help4mdyouth.org> crisis chat

## GENERAL PREVENTION RESOURCES

**AMERICAN ASSN. OF SUICIDOLOGY**  
[www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org)

**AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION**  
1-888-333-AFSP (2377)  
[www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)

**SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTER**  
1-877-438-7772  
[www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org)

## MENTAL ILLNESS SUPPORT & INFORMATION

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)  
[www.NAMI.org](http://www.NAMI.org)  
NAMI-Maryland 1-877-878-2371, 1-410-884-8691  
[www.namimd.org](http://www.namimd.org)

NAMI offers free education, support groups, resources and trainings.

# IMPORTANT FIREARM SAFETY AND SUICIDE PREVENTION INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

**BE SAFE  
BE AWARE  
BE PREPARED TO HELP**

**WORKING TOGETHER  
WE CAN SAVE LIVES**



**MARYLAND LICENSED  
FIREARMS DEALERS ASSN.**

## **SHOOTING A FIREARM**

**SEEK PROPER INSTRUCTION** Attend a reputable firearm safety handling course or seek private instruction before attempting to use a firearm.

Before handling a new firearm, learn how it operates. This includes knowing its basic parts, how to safely open and close the action, and how to safely remove any ammunition if loaded. Remember, a firearm's mechanical safety device is never foolproof. The safety device can never replace safe firearm handling.

**WEAR APPROPRIATE EYE AND EAR PROTECTION** Firearms are loud. They can also emit debris and hot gases that can cause injury. For these reasons, safety glasses and ear protectors are recommended.

**BE SURE YOUR FIREARM AND AMMUNITION ARE COMPATIBLE** Only cartridges or shells designed for a particular firearm can be safely fired from that firearm. Most firearms have their cartridge or shell type stamped on the barrel. Ammunition can be identified by information printed on the box and stamped on each cartridge. Do not fire if there is any question about the compatibility of the firearm and the ammunition.

**CARRY ONLY ONE GAUGE/CALIBER OF AMMUNITION WHEN SHOOTING** Smaller ammunition can be accidentally placed in a firearm chamber designed for larger ammunition, creating a very hazardous

situation. Remove unfired ammunition from clothing when you are through shooting to avoid accidentally mixing different ammunition next time you go shooting.

**BE SURE OF YOUR TARGET-AND WHAT'S BEYOND** Be absolutely sure you have identified your target without any doubt. Equally important, be aware of the area beyond your target. This means observing your prospective area of fire before your shoot. Never fire in a direction where there are people or any other potential for mishap. It's simple: THINK FIRST, SHOOT SECOND.

**DON'T MIX ALCOHOL OR DRUGS WITH SHOOTING** Alcohol, as well as any substance likely to impair mental or physical functions of the body, should not be used before or while handling firearms.

## **OWNING AND HANDLING A FIREARM**

**KEEP YOUR FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER UNTIL YOU ARE READY TO SHOOT** There's a natural tendency to place your finger on the trigger when holding a firearm. AVOID IT! Your trigger finger should be against the side of the firearm, above the trigger area.

**KEEP THE ACTION OPEN AND THE FIREARM UNLOADED UNTIL READY TO USE** Whenever you pick up any firearm, immediately check the action and check to see that the chamber is unloaded. If the firearm has a magazine, make sure it is empty. Even if the magazine is empty

or removed, a cartridge may still remain in the firing chamber. If you do not know how to open the firearm's action, leave it alone or get help from someone who is knowledgeable.

**ALWAYS POINT THE MUZZLE IN A SAFE DIRECTION** Whether you are shooting or simply handling your firearm, never point the muzzle at yourself or at others. Common sense should dictate which direction is safest depending on your location and various other conditions. Generally speaking, it is safest to have the firearm pointed upward or towards the ground.

**STORE FIREARMS SAFELY AND SECURELY WHEN NOT IN USE** Hiding firearms where you think children or others will not find them is not enough. Always store firearms unloaded and locked in a case or safe when not in use, with ammunition locked and stored in a separate location.

**CONSIDER TEMPORARY OFF-SITE STORAGE IF A FAMILY MEMBER MAY BE SUICIDAL** When an emotional crisis (like a break-up, job loss, legal trouble) or a major change in someone's behavior (like depression, violence, heavy drinking) causes concern, storing firearms outside the home for a while may save a life. Friends, family members living elsewhere, some shooting clubs, police departments, or firearm's dealers may be able to store them for you until the situation improves. **Putting time and distance between a firearm and a suicidal person is critical to saving lives!**