



RUTGERS HEALTH

NJ Gun Violence Research Center

School of Public Health

Means Safety for Suicide Prevention

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AMONG THOSE WHO SURVIVE A SUICIDE ATTEMPT



Owens et al., 2002

When you prevent somebody from attempting suicide using a specific method on a specific occasion there is a profound chance you have prevented them from ever attempting suicide by any method



Gunnell et al., 2007; Kreitman, 1976; Lubin, 2010

Assessment of firearm storage practices in the US, 2022

What types of locking devices are most frequently used on firearms, what obstacles prevent firearm owners from using locks, and under what circumstances would firearm owners consider locking unlocked firearms?



Who was in our study

2,152

English-speaking firearm owning adults living within the US were recruited using probability-based sampling via KnowledgePanel. Firearm owners were presented with both images and text describing different types of firearm locking devices. Data were collected July 28-August 8, 2022.

Average age: 51.9 66.7% male



75.6% non-Hispanic White

What types of firearms are owned

Among handgun owners: average of 3.7 handguns owned



Among long gun owners: average of 4.5 long guns owned



25% own only handguns, 10.2% own only long guns, 64.8% own both handguns and long guns

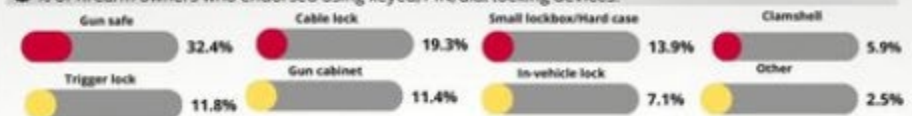
How common is lock use among firearm owners



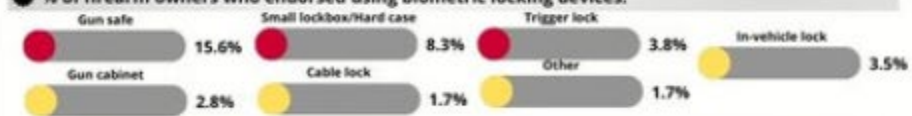
58.3% store 1+ firearms unlocked and hidden; 17.9% store 1+ firearm unlocked and unhidden

Individuals who own both handguns and long guns were the most likely to store 1+ firearm unlocked and unhidden 22.1%

% of firearm owners who endorsed using keyed/PIN/dial locking devices:



% of firearm owners who endorsed using biometric locking devices:



There was minimal variation in types of locks used based on types of firearms owned and reasons for firearm ownership

The most frequently endorsed reasons for using locking devices:

Theft prevention: 66% Preventing access by a child: 53.3% Keeping firearm in good condition: 55.7%

The most frequently endorsed reasons for not using locking devices:

Do not believe locks are needed 49.3% Concern that locked firearms take too long to access in an emergency: 44.8%

The most frequently endorsed reasons firearm owners would consider locking unlocked firearms:

Prevent access by a child: 48.5% Theft prevention: 36.9% Prevent access by an adolescent or teenager: 36.7%

What does this mean

- 1 Unsecure firearm storage is common.
- 2 Firearm owners who lock their firearms seem to prefer gun safes relative to cable locks and trigger locks, meaning that locking device distribution programs might not align with firearm owner preferences.
- 3 Promoting secure storage on a broad scale may require addressing disproportionate fears about home intruders and increasing awareness of the risk of firearm access beyond unauthorized access by children.

Anestis, M.D., Mocerri-Brooks, J., Johnson, R.L., Bryan, C.J., Stanley, L.H., Buck-Atkinson, J.T., Baker, J.C., & Betz, M.E. (2023). Assessment of firearm storage practices in the US, 2022. JAMA doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.1447

Firearm Owners' Preferences for Locking Devices: Results of a National Survey

What types of locking devices do firearm owners prefer, what aspects of locking devices are most important to them, and how much would they be willing to pay for different types of devices?

Who was in our study

70.8%

Used some form of locking device on 1+ firearm

65.3%

Stored 1+ firearms unlocked

66.7%

Male

75.6%

non-Hispanic White

64.8%

owned both handguns and long guns

A NATIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF

2,152

FIREARM OWNERS

What did we find

Most frequently endorsed priorities for locking device selection were:

Speed of access

57.4%

Ease of access

49.4%

Cost

33%

Strength/Security

30.4%

Compatibility with firearm(s)

25.3%

Most popular device choices were:

Biometric in-vehicle lock

17.1%

Key/PIN/dial trigger lock

12.2%

Participants were asked to imagine being "at a community event and a non-political group is giving out free firearm locking devices. You don't need to provide your name or contact information to get a device." When asked what type of device they would choose:

40.9%

Selected a device with a key/PIN/dial locking mechanism

41.9%

Selected a device with a biometric locking mechanism

The remainder chose a coupon towards the purchase of a gun safe, cabinet, or other large locking device – but ... **80%** said the coupon would need to be for 25% of more off the full price.

Participants were asked what locking devices they would consider purchasing at that same community event and how much they would pay for each. The top choices were:

Key/PIN/dial small lockbox

58.4%

Average cost willing to pay: \$60

Biometric in-vehicle locks

57.2%

Average cost willing to pay: \$87

What does this mean

▶ **Keyed cable locks** – which are low cost and lightweight – are frequently distributed by healthcare, public health, and community programs; however, these devices are rarely the preference of firearm owners.

▶ **Offering a wider variety of locking device options** – as well as financial incentives towards the acquisition of devices – may increase the use of secure firearm storage.

▶ **Factoring in the locking device preferences of firearm owners and understanding the reasons for those preferences could empower gun violence prevention programs to have a greater impact of firearm storage practices nationwide.**

US Residents' Accuracy in Recognizing Proper Use of Firearm Cable Locks

How accurate are firearm owners and non-firearm owners at identifying if cable locks are correctly installed?

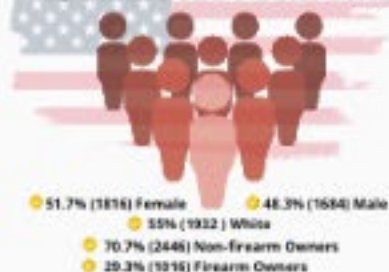
? Background



Firearm-related injuries and fatalities are a public health concern. **Secure firearm storage protects against firearm injury and death yet many firearm owners store firearms unsecured.** Cable locks are the most widely available secure storage mechanism; however, they require proper installation to be effective.

? Participants

3,462 U.S. residents



? Discussion

Key knowledge gaps about correct cable lock use exist for firearm owners and non-firearm owners. **This may contribute to firearms being stored unsecured and negative views about cable locks.** The unconventional application of cable locks on revolvers may be hindering individuals awareness of how to use cable locks for this type of firearm. Future efforts to educate firearm and non-firearm owners about how to correctly use cable locks on a variety of weapons is necessary.

? Results

Correct

Pistol



Firearm Owners: **67%**
Non-firearm owners: **28.3%**

Revolver



Firearm Owners: **44.8%**
Non-firearm owners: **19.7%**

Rifle



Firearm Owners: **60.7%**
Non-firearm Owners: **20.9%**

Shotgun



Firearm Owners: **62.7%**
Non-firearm Owners: **24.1%**

Incorrect



Firearm owners: **91.3%**
Non-firearm owners: **86.1%**



Firearm Owners: **95.9%**
Non-firearm Owners: **95.3%**



Firearm Owners: **96.3%**
Non-firearm Owners: **92.1%**



Firearm Owners: **98.3%**
Non-firearm Owners: **98.9%**

Both firearm and non-firearm owners were better able to accurately identify when cable locks were incorrectly installed relative to correct installation. Generally firearm owners were better able to accurately identify correct and incorrect cable lock installation compared to those who did not own firearms. Both firearm and non-firearm owners were less able to identify when cable locks were correctly installed on the revolver relative to other types of firearms.

How can we best position ourselves to prevent firearm suicide?

Go where the risk is and speak persuasively

Does treatment for mental health or substance use and previous suicidal thoughts, plans, or attempts differ among those who died by suicide using a firearm compared to other methods?



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New Jersey Gun Violence
Research Center

234,652
**US residents who
died by suicide
between 2003-2018**

*Data acquired via the
National Violent Death Reporting System

Those who used a method other than firearms were more likely to...

- be in treatment for a mental health/substance use problem at the time of their death
- have been in treatment for a mental health/substance use problem in their lifetime
- have previously attempted suicide before their death

Compared to those who used other methods, those who used firearms in their suicide death were more likely to have disclosed thoughts or plans of suicide to someone else in the month prior to their death.

Compared to those who died by overdose, those who died with a firearm were...

- more likely to have thoughts of suicide in their life
- less likely to seek treatment
- more likely to die on their first attempt
- more likely to tell someone about their suicidal thoughts and plans

Findings provide information for who is at risk to die by firearm suicide. Community-based interventions in suicide prevention can help reduce one's access to firearms during a time of crisis. The finding that firearm suicide decedents were more likely to disclose their thoughts/plans provides an important avenue for prevention.

Bryan, Bryan, Anestis, Khazem, Harris, May, & Thomsen (2019). Firearm availability and storage practices among military personnel who have thought about suicide: A cross-sectional study. *JAMA Network Open*.

- Suicidal service members less likely to have a firearm at home
- Suicidal servicemembers with firearms at home were far more likely to store them unsecured (loaded in a non-secure location)
- Anestis et al (2020) replicated these findings in the National Guard

**Those at greatest risk
– suicidal and with a firearm at home –
are the ones most likely to store firearms
unsecured**

Differences in firearm storage practices among United States military service members who had and have not disclosed suicidal thoughts or attended behavioral health sessions

Journals, H.S., Bond, J.E., Carter, S.M., Brown, A.G., & Brown, C.L. (2022). Differences in firearm storage practices among United States military service members who had and have not disclosed suicidal thoughts or attended behavioral health sessions. *Behavioral Health Services Research*, 29(1), 1-10.

What was our question?

Among firearm owning service members with recent suicidal ideation, do those who have hidden their thoughts from others and avoided behavioral health care tend to store their firearms less securely?

Who was in our study?

A representative sample of...

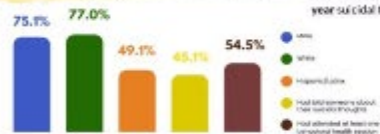
719 firearm owning US military service members was recruited via KnowledgePanel.

Our analyses focused on...

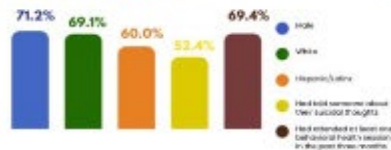
180 service members with past year suicidal thoughts.

85 service members with past month suicidal thoughts.

Those with past year suicidal thoughts



Those with past month suicidal thoughts



What did we find?

Among those with past year suicidal thoughts:

Service members who had not disclosed their suicidal thoughts to someone else **more frequently stored firearms at home and without locking devices.**

Service members who had not attended any recent behavioral health sessions stored firearms with locking devices less often, but also stored firearms loaded less frequently.



Among those with past month suicidal thoughts:

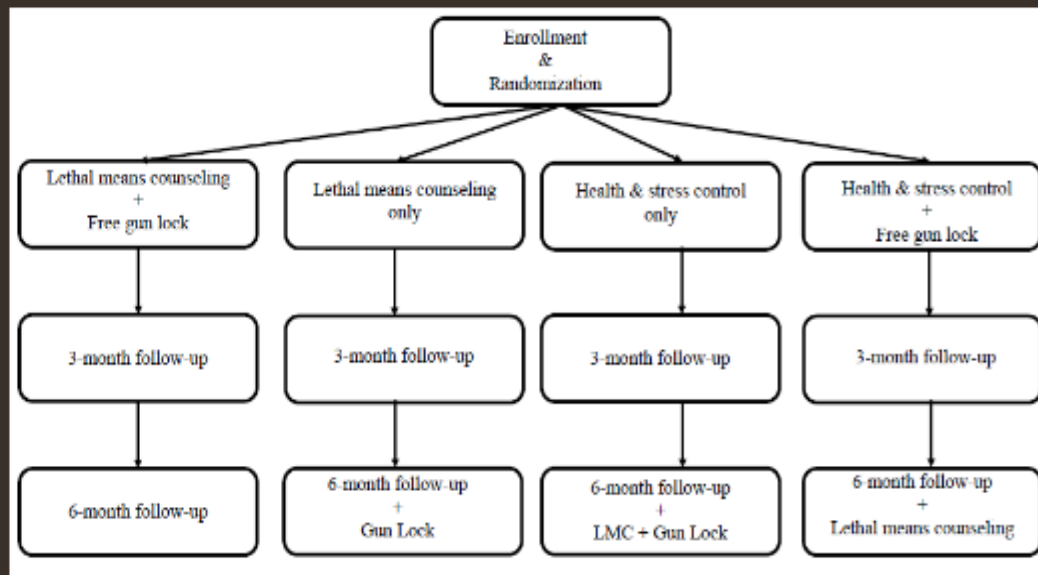
Service members who had not disclosed their suicidal thoughts to someone else **stored their firearms with locking devices less often.** Service members who had not attended any recent behavioral health sessions stored firearms with locking devices less often, but also stored firearms loaded less frequently.



What does this mean?

To prevent suicide, we generally try to provide help once someone has told us they are experiencing suicidal thoughts. These findings highlight that it is those most likely to hide their thoughts - and thus not be identified as high risk - who are most likely to store their firearms unsecured and thus have ready access to the most lethal method for a suicide attempt. We need to develop ways to broadly promote secure firearm storage among all firearm owners, particularly in the military, so we can lower the risk for suicide even when we are unaware that a firearm owner is struggling.





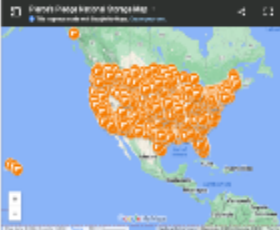


Means Safety Messaging



PIERCE'S PLEDGE

Home About Us Contact Us Services Firearms Storage Insurance



Firearm Storage Resources

Pierce's Pledge has an initial website and website will soon only as an alternative resource for individuals interested in finding storage options. For additional information and to understand more about the storage offerings of our Firearms Storage for the map or in the list below, please contact the business directly. Pierce's Pledge can provide an overview of our services. Please note that the map is not intended to be a substitute for a physical visit to the store. Please call or visit our website for more information. Please note that the map is not intended to be a substitute for a physical visit to the store. Please call or visit our website for more information.

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Thank you

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