



Connie Beck, Director
Social Services | Public Health | Behavioral Health

news release

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DHHS works closely with firearm retailers to promote 'lethal means safety'

Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Public Health's Suicide and Violence Prevention Program recently won a "Striving for Zero, Suicide Prevention Excellence Award" at a state conference for its work with local firearm retailers.

For the past nearly four years, the Suicide and Violence Prevention (SVP) Program has partnered with local firearm retailers and ranges to bolster lethal means safety by distributing informational resources and free lockboxes provided by DHHS's Keep it Safe Campaign. Partners include Pacific Outfitters, Ballistic Precision, RMI Outdoors, Bucksport and Fortuna Ace Hardware, as well as other local shops.

Gun Shop Project partners have also helped to reach the local firearms community by incorporating suicide prevention and lethal means safety education into their own firearms training and concealed carry weapons permit (CCW) courses. In the past year, the SVP Program has also partnered with a local firearms instructor to offer specialized training to Humboldt County's Behavioral Health clinicians, bridging the gap between firearms culture and lethal means safety planning. The SVP Program also recently collaborated with two of its Gun Shop Project partners to record and broadcast public service announcements on local radio stations emphasizing the importance of safe firearm storage. Most recently, SVP has been working with a local firearms instructor to develop a one-hour mental health curriculum to meet new state requirements for CCW training.

While firearm owners are not inherently at greater risk of suicide, the risk of death increases when someone who is experiencing a suicide crisis has easy access to a firearm. This, combined with the lethality of firearms, makes the collaboration between gun shops and Public Health a vital partnership in the effort to keep the community safe from suicide.

In addition to safely storing weapons, lockboxes can be used to store substances like prescription medications and cannabis and can help you

protect yourself and your loved ones from overdose, injury and suicide. Free lockboxes are available at Public Health's Community Wellness Center, 908 Seventh St. in Eureka. If you have questions about obtaining a lockbox or cannot make an in-person visit, email KeepItSafe@co.humboldt.ca.us or call the Healthy Communities Division at 707-268-2132.

Community agencies interested in becoming lockbox distributors can fill out and submit a [Lockbox Distributor Request Form](#).

Interested in getting involved in suicide prevention efforts locally? The Humboldt County Suicide Prevention Network (SPN) meets bi-monthly. There's also an SPN Lethal Means Safety Subcommittee you're welcome to join. Email humboldtspn@gmail.com for more information.

If you are concerned for yourself or someone else, know you are not alone, we can all play a role in preventing suicide, and help is available. Contact any of the following 24-hour hotlines:

- [Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#): 988, press 1 for Veterans.
[Ayuda en Español](#): 988.
- [Crisis Text Line](#): Text HOME to 741741
- [Humboldt County DHHS Behavioral Health](#): 24-hr Behavioral Health Crisis Line 707-445-7715 or **Toll-Free** 888-849-5728

Additional support can be found by exploring an expanded list of resources, click [HERE for English](#) and [HERE for Spanish](#).



From left, Oliver Anderson from Ballistic Precision in Eureka and DHHS Health Education Specialist II Jonathan Abidari work together to promote "lethal means safety."

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