One Father’s Story

On the morning of their scheduled flight to Chicago, my son Aaron handed his travel bag to his mom. She took the bags to the car and waited. A few minutes passed before she went back into the house, noticed a light on outside the garage, walked through the garage door, saw him lying on the ground and thought he fell. Seconds later, she saw my firearm in his hand.

Aaron wrote:

“...I have been unhappy for awhile and there is nothing left for me on this planet except you guys. I don’t feel any connection with the rest of the family or any of my friends...Everything I have just wrote and done with my life is meaningless.”

I kept my loaded firearm in my backpack in the back room of my basement, without a trigger lock.

Your child’s life is precious; always keep it locked, you never know.

~Ronald Waltemeyer

FIREARM STORAGE OPTIONS

(If offsite storage is not possible)
• Lok-It-Up Campaign, lokitup.org
• Project Child Safe Campaign, projectchildsafe.org

MEDICATION DISPOSAL OPTIONS

• Colorado Medication Take-Back Project, coloradomedtakeback.info
• FDA Guidance, http://goo.gl/QYiYIT
• Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center, rmpdc.org or 1-800-222-1222

OTHER WEB RESOURCES

• Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado, suicidepreventioncolorado.org
• Means Matter Campaign, meansmatter.org
• Suicide Prevention Resource Center, sprc.org
• American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, afsp.org
How to Safe-Guard Your Home

If your child is experiencing a mental health problem or life crisis, these simple steps can help protect your family and possibly save your child’s life.

STORE FIREARMS OFFSITE
• Ask a trusted friend or family member to keep them temporarily until the situation improves.
• Call your local police precinct, gun range, or shooting club to see if they will offer temporary storage.
• If you can’t store the firearms away from the home, store them unloaded and locked in a gun safe or lock box. You can also lock them using a cable or trigger lock. Locking devices using combinations are safer than those using keys.

LOCK UP MEDICATIONS
• Store all medications in a lock box or locked medicine cabinet.
• To dispose of unused medications, locate a medicine take-back program in your community or follow the FDA guidance: Mix the medicines with kitty litter or used coffee grounds in a sealable plastic bag. Then throw away the mixture in the trash.

PROVIDE SUPPORT
• Pay attention to your child’s moods and behavior.
• If you notice significant changes, ask them if they’re thinking about suicide.
• If you think your child is in crisis, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. For a non-urgent consultation, work with your primary care doctor to make a referral to mental health services.
• Make sure your child knows how to access the suicide prevention lifeline.