

# HOW TO TALK

## About GUN STORAGE Options

Firearm injury is a leading cause of death in the U.S., particularly among children, teens, and individuals in crisis.<sup>1</sup> As a trusted provider, you can play a vital role in preventing suicide, unintentional shootings, and other firearm-related harm by having respectful conversations about safe storage.

### HOW TO APPROACH THE CONVERSATION

Colorado law **permits** clinicians to discuss and document firearm ownership or access. Research shows most gun owners support clinicians having these conversations when someone is at increased risk.<sup>2</sup>

Consider the following strategies to engage patients respectfully and effectively:

- Recognize the many reasons people own firearms such as hunting, sport, protection or tradition. Respecting these values builds trust and improves outcomes.<sup>3</sup>
- Using neutral, routine questions to ease into the topic has been shown to be effective.<sup>4</sup> For example: "Many people keep guns in their homes. Is that something you do?"
- Framing the discussion around safety, wellness, and harm prevention. Recognizing firearm owners' strong commitment to safety can foster greater alignment.<sup>5</sup>
- Avoid terms like "restrict" or "confiscate." Instead, use phrases like "temporarily store," "hold for safekeeping," or "keep secure." These alternatives have been shown to reduce defensiveness.<sup>6</sup>

### THE 5 L's METHOD CAN HELP ASSESS GUN SAFETY:

#### LOADED

Is the firearm stored unloaded?

#### LOCKED

Is it secured in a locked device?

#### LITTLE CHILDREN

Are children ever in the home?

#### LOW MOOD

Is anyone feeling depressed, anxious, or at risk?

#### LEARNED

Is the firearm user trained and cognitively capable?

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). Fast facts: Firearm violence prevention. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

<sup>2</sup> Simonetti, J. A., Azrael, D., Zhang, W., & Miller, M. (2022). Perspectives on clinician-delivered firearm safety counseling during routine care. *Preventive Medicine*.

<sup>3</sup> Betz, M. E., & Wintemute, G. J. (2015). Physician counseling on firearm safety: A new kind of cultural competence. *JAMA*.

<sup>4</sup> Barber, C., Hemenway, D., & Miller, M. (2016). How physicians can reduce suicide - without changing anyone's mental health. *The American Journal of Medicine*.

<sup>5</sup> Wolsko, C., Marino, E., & Keys, S. (2020). Affirming cultural values for health: The case of firearm restriction in suicide prevention. *Social Science & Medicine*.

<sup>6</sup> Marino, E., Wolsko, C., Keys, S., & Wilcox, H. (2018). Addressing the cultural challenges of firearm restriction in suicide prevention. *Archives of Suicide Research*.

# Safe Firearm STORAGE OPTIONS

There is a secure firearm storage option to match every household's needs, preferences, and routines.



## FULL-SIZE GUN SAFE

Best for securing multiple firearms in one place. Safest when bolted to the wall or floor. Some models include biometric locks for quick access.



## LOCK BOX

Passcode versions do not require batteries while biometric versions offer fast fingerprint access.



## VEHICLE GUN SAFE

Firearms should ideally be stored at home. If vehicle storage is necessary, use a console or trunk safe that locks in place to deter theft and prevent child access.



## GUN CASE

Suitable for temporary or transport use. It is recommended to add an external lock to reduce risk at home or while in transit.



## CARGO AREA STORAGE

Designed for SUVs and trucks. Offers concealed, locked transport of firearms to and from the range or field.



## TRIGGER LOCK OR CABLE LOCK

Both block the firearm's firing mechanism. While not theft-proof, they add a layer of protection, especially when paired with a safe.



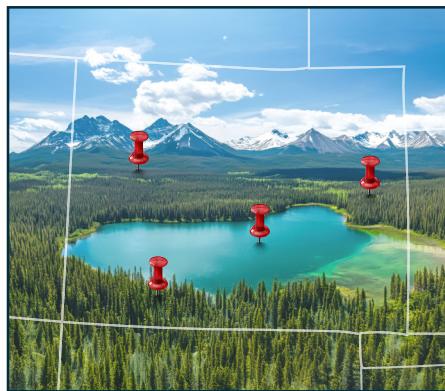
## LIMIT ACCESS TO KEYS AND CODES

Store combinations and keys securely. Only share with trusted adults. Restricting access is a critical layer of firearm safety.



## WIRELESS SAFE MONITOR

These devices alert you to unauthorized access, some through alarms, others through real-time smartphone alerts.



## TEMPORARY OUT-OF-HOME STORAGE

During times of crisis, travel, or home renovation, consider temporary, off-site storage. This can help reduce risk and prevent tragedy.



Learn more about gun storage options and access the out-of-home storage map at [LetsTalkGunsColorado.com/gun-owners/](http://LetsTalkGunsColorado.com/gun-owners/)