

A Survey of  
**Massachusetts Firearm Instructors:**  
Covering Suicide Prevention in Firearm Classes



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*A collaboration between the*

Massachusetts Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide  
Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families  
(Lethal Means Safety Workgroup)

*and the*

Massachusetts State Police

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November 2022

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over 1,000 instructors who teach classes fulfilling Massachusetts firearm licensees' education requirement responded to a survey from the Massachusetts State Police. Results indicated that while most instructors know that suicide is the leading type of firearm death, 57% do not currently touch on the topic of preventing suicide in their classes. After viewing an example of a brief suicide prevention module for firearm classes, 67% said they would be interested in covering the topic, 22% were unsure, and 11% said they would not. Their free-text comments were generally thoughtful; most were supportive and embraced using classes to spread awareness. For those who did not, the most common reason offered in comments was that this was a topic for mental health professionals, not firearm instructors. Most instructors were interested in receiving free materials to help them cover the topic in their classes. Items they considered most useful were student handouts, powerpoint slides with an embedded video, and a teacher's guide.

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## OBJECTIVE

The Lethal Means Safety Group of the Massachusetts Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families undertook a survey of instructors who teach Massachusetts Basic Firearms Safety (BFS), the course that is required for people seeking a firearm license in the Commonwealth. The purpose was to learn whether instructors currently cover suicide prevention in their classes and if so which curriculum they use, whether they would like to cover this topic if they do not already, what training or resources would help them do so, and what their current attitudes and behavior are pertaining to reducing the use of firearms in suicide attempts.

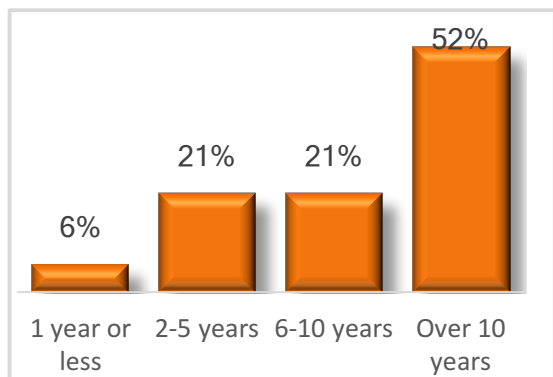
## METHODS

An email of invitation with a link to the survey was sent to 548 LEOSA instructors and to 2,462 Basic Firearm Safety (BFS) instructors on September 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> by Kristin Ryan, Office of the Superintendent, Massachusetts State Police, the office that certifies Massachusetts firearm instructors. Approximately half of LEOSA instructors are also BFS instructors. Instructors were asked to participate in a survey regarding possible changes to the BFS curriculum and were assured their answers would be anonymous. A reminder was sent a week later. A total of 1,152 responded as of October 11<sup>th</sup> for a response rate of 42%.

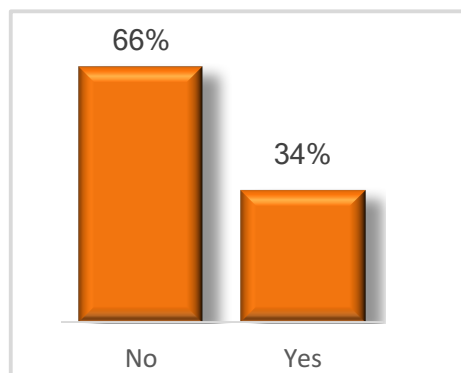
## RESULTS

### *About the Respondents*

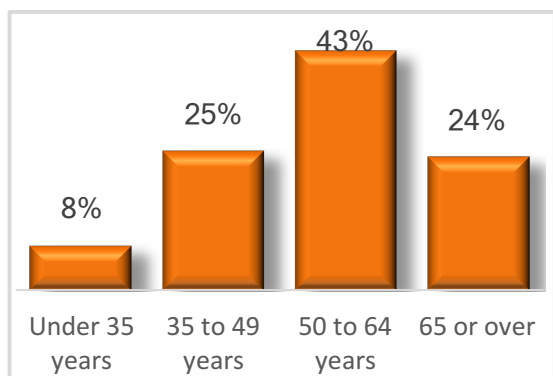
About half of respondents had been teaching classes for more than ten years, and a third were Veterans. Over two-thirds were age 50 or older; only 8% were under age 35.



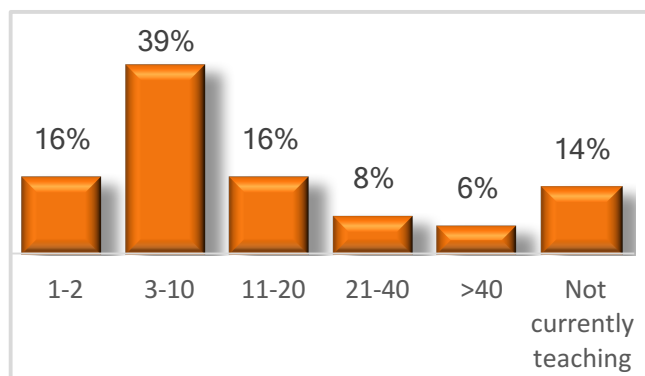
**Figure 1.** How many years have you been a firearm instructor? n=1,149



**Figure 2.** Are you a current or former member of the U.S. military? n=1,141



**Figure 3.** Which age group are you in? n=1,130



**Figure 4.** About how many firearm classes do you currently teach per year? n=1,141

### *Current Teaching*

Teaching firearm classes is a sideline for many respondents (Fig. 4, previous page). Over half (55%) said they teach between 1-10 classes per year. Only a small proportion (6%) teach 40 or more. The specific classes that they teach are noted below.

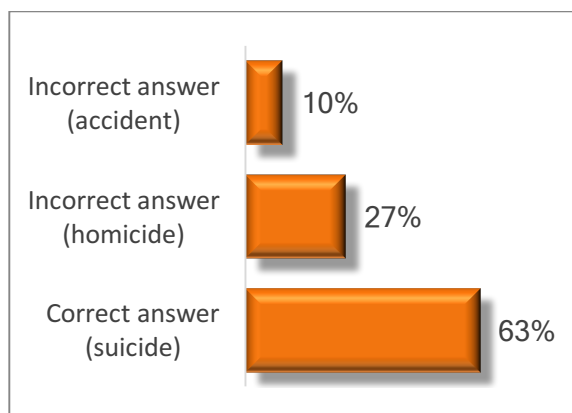
#### **Specific Courses Taught by Respondents** (% do not sum to 100 because instructors can teach multiple classes)

NRA Basic Pistol Course LTC-002	660	57.3%
NRA Home Firearm Safety Course LTC-007	533	46.3%
MA Chiefs of Police Association Basic Handgun Safety Course LTC-001	275	23.9%
Other	162	14.1%
NRA Basic Rifle or Shotgun Courses FID-001	119	10.3%
MCJTC Recruit Firearms Training Course LTC-006	88	7.6%
Massachusetts Certified Basic Pistol Course LTC-017	80	7.0%
MPTC Reserve Officer Firearms Training LTC-022	58	5.0%
Massachusetts Pistol License Course LTC-020	54	4.7%
Basic Firearm Protection Course LTC-025	31	2.7%
Massachusetts Hunter Safety	28	2.4%
B.F.S.I. Handgun Safety Course LTC-010	27	2.3%
Safe Carry Basic Firearms Course LTC-024	19	1.7%
Mass Sheriffs' Association 's Firearms Safety & Handling Course LTC-009	17	1.5%
SIG Arms Academy Handgun Orientation Course LTC-004	12	1.0%
SIG Arms Concealed Carry Pistol Course LTC-012	11	1.0%
Smith & Wesson Academy Massachusetts Carry Permit Course LTC-005	10	0.9%
Massachusetts State Police Recruit Firearms Training Program LTC-011	10	0.9%
The Liberal Gun Club LTC-019	10	0.9%
SIG Arms Academy Course for Shotgun, Carbine or Rifle FID-003	5	0.4%
USPSA Safe Handgun Competitor - MA Edition Firearms Course LTC-013	3	0.3%
Worcester Police Dept Firearms Responsibility & Safety Program LTC-008	2	0.2%
CQB Arms LTC Course LTC-014	2	0.2%
S2Alpha Basic Pistol Safety and Shooting Course LTC-026	2	0.2%
The Andover Police Department's Basic Firearms Safety Course LTC-015	1	0.1%
CCW Point Blank Course LTC-018	1	0.1%
SG Tactical LLC Firearm Safety Course LTC-021	1	0.1%
MAGPRO Home, Personal & Business Firearms Safety Course LTC-023	1	0.1%
Smith & Wesson Academy Massachusetts F.I.D. Safety Course	1	0.1%
The MagPro Basic Firearms Safety Course LTC-016	0	0.0%

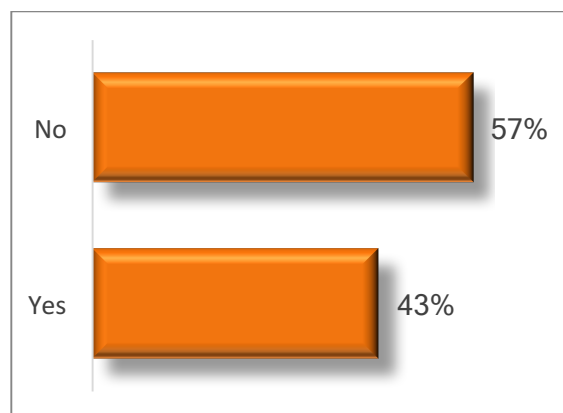
Virtually all respondents said that they cover requirements under state law to store firearms locked (99%) and to keep firearms inaccessible to household members or visitors who have been sectioned or are prohibited possessors (97%).

### *Teaching Suicide Prevention*

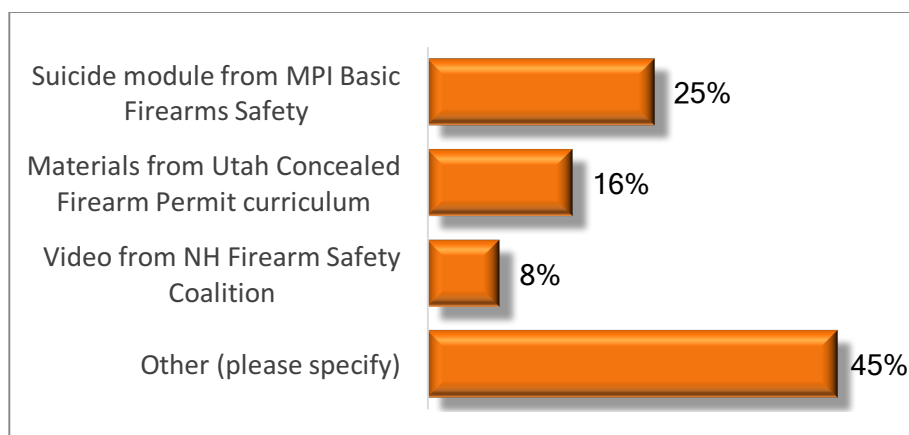
A total of 43% said they currently cover suicide prevention in their classes (Fig 6, next page). Among those, 25% use the suicide content that is part of the Municipal Police Institute's BFS course (Fig. 7), 16% use materials from the Utah Concealed Firearm Permit course, 8% use the New Hampshire Firearm Safety Coalition video, and 45% use other materials, which varied widely. Many drew from their own personal experience or research and a few each used materials from the National Shooting Sports Foundation, MA Gun Owners Action League (GOAL), Walk the Talk America, a Massachusetts state agency, or a suicide prevention group.



**Figure 5.** Which type of firearm death occurs most frequently in Massachusetts? n=1,132



**Figure 6.** Do you currently teach any content regarding suicide prevention in your classes? n=1,125

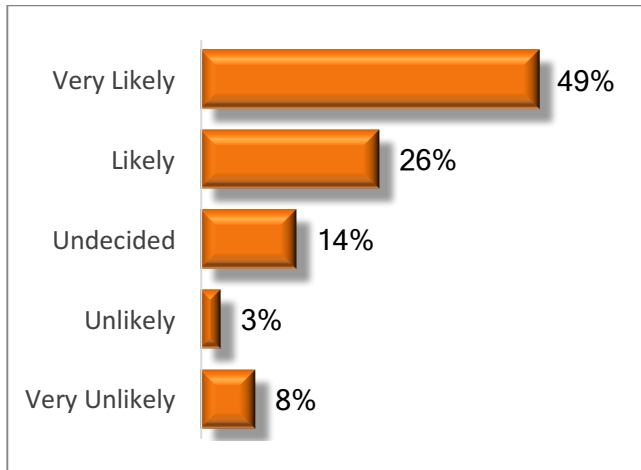


**Figure 7.** What materials do you use to teach suicide content?

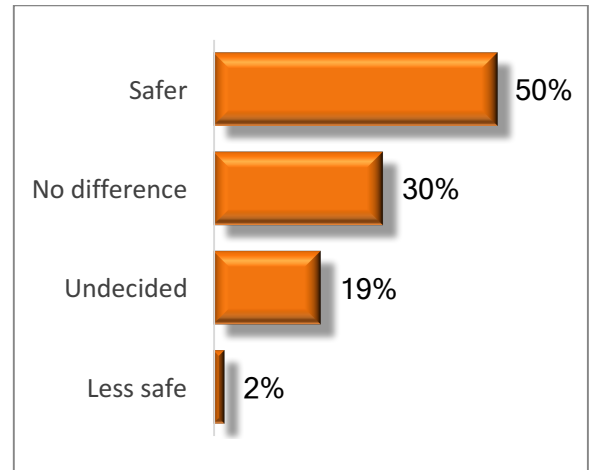
### *Suicide and Firearms: Knowledge, Attitudes & Behavior*

Just under two-thirds of instructors knew that suicide is the leading cause of firearm death in Massachusetts. Instructors were asked to imagine that they were worried that a friend, Jim, may be suicidal. Three-quarters said they would be very likely (49%) or likely (26%) to offer to safeguard Jim's guns (Fig. 8, next page). Only half, though, thought that Jim would actually be safer without his guns if he became suicidal. Even among people who said they would be very likely to safeguard his guns, 57% thought he would be safer, but many were unsure or thought it would make no difference.

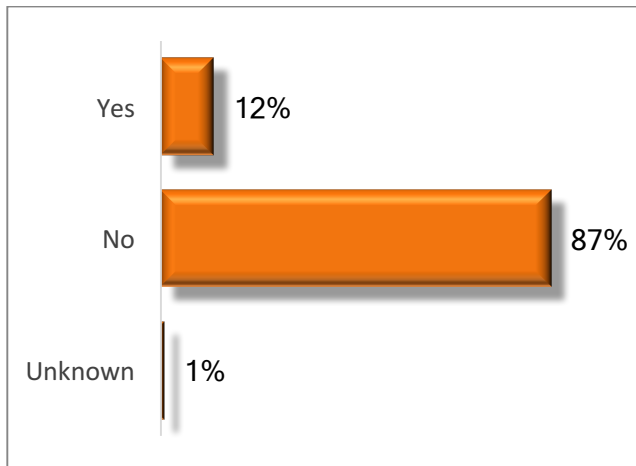
Roughly one-in-ten (11%) instructors said that they had safeguarded another person's guns at some time in the past five years. This proportion was highest (15%) among those who said they would be very likely to offer to hold Jim's guns, lowest (5%) among those who didn't know whether they would, and, counter-intuitively, was 11% among those who said they would be very unlikely to offer.



**Figure 8.** Imagine a friend, Jim, is going through a tough time like a divorce or major depression. You're worried he might become suicidal. How likely would you be to offer to hold his guns (or change the combination on his gun safe or make the guns inaccessible in some other way) until he felt better? n=1,049



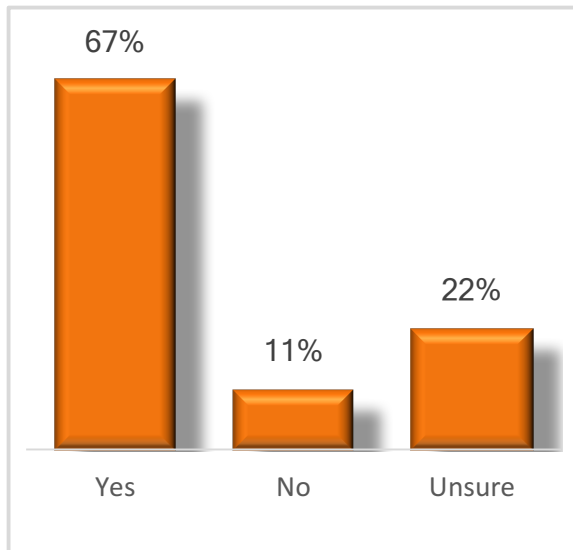
**Figure 9.** If Jim [from Fig. 4] became suicidal, do you think he'd be any safer without access to his guns? n=1,046



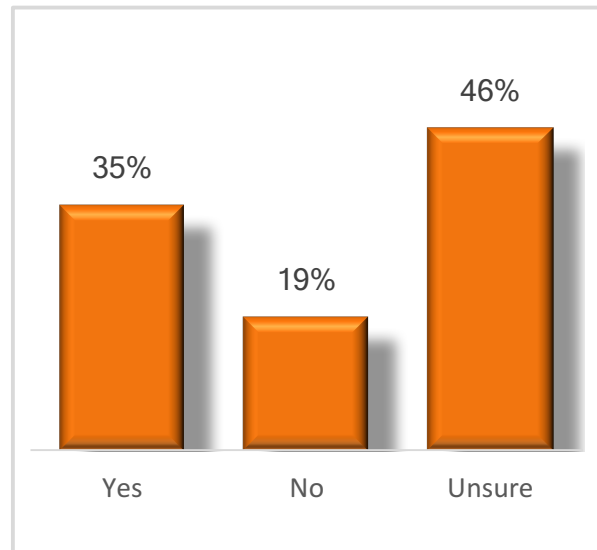
**Figure 10.** Over the past 5 yrs, have you ever held onto someone's firearms (or safeguarded their guns in some other way) because you were worried they might hurt themselves or someone else? n=1,049

### *Interest in Covering Suicide Prevention*

Instructors were shown the suicide prevention slides used in Utah Concealed Firearm Permit classes. Over two-thirds (67%) said that they would be interested in covering similar materials in their classes; 22% were unsure and 11% were not interested. When asked to explain why, frequent comments among those who were interested were that suicide is a major issue, if this can save one life it's worth it, this is a basic part of firearm safety, and knowledge is power. Comments among those who were not interested or unsure were that they were not mental health professionals and therefore unqualified to talk about suicide, liability concerns, the course is already long, people don't need a gun to kill themselves, and mental health concerns might lead to someone losing their gun rights.



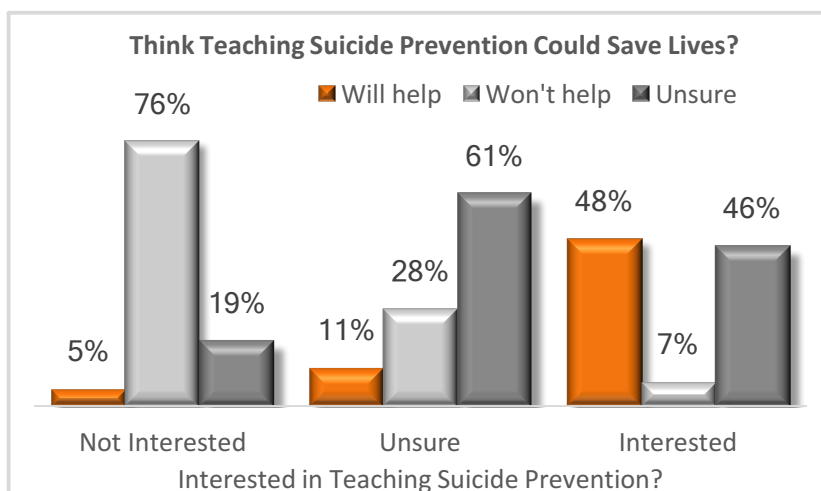
**Figure 11.** Would you be interested in covering similar suicide prevention information designed for Massachusetts in your classes? [Asked after respondents viewed Utah CFP suicide prevention slides.] n=968



**Figure 12.** Do you think covering material like this in firearm classes could help reduce suicides? n=966

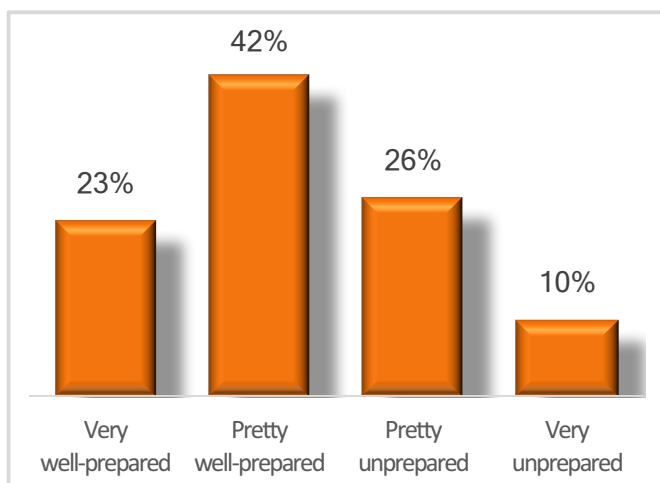
A few comments indicated that the respondent selected “No” or “Not sure” because they were already covering the topic in their classes. (The full list of comments is in the Appendix.)

While most instructors were interested in, or open to, covering suicide prevention, fewer were convinced that it would help save lives. Overall, 35% thought it would, while 46% were unsure and 19% thought it would not. The variables that were most associated with believing it would save lives were the instructor’s interest in covering the material and thinking Jim would be safer without his guns if he became suicidal. Having ever actually safeguarded someone’s guns and the instructor’s age group were not associated.

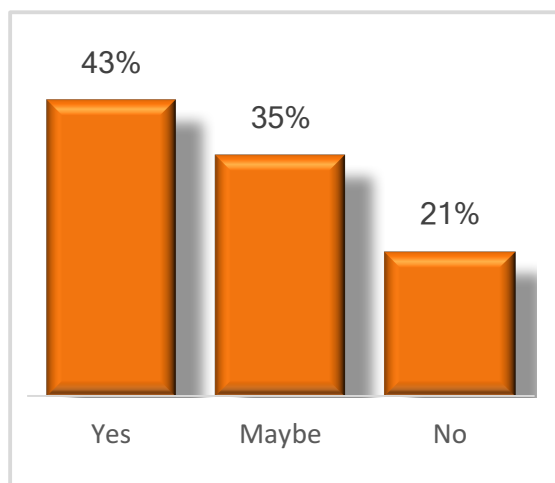


**Figure 13.** Respondent’s opinion about whether teaching suicide prevention in firearm classes could help reduce suicides sorted by whether the respondent was interested in teaching suicide prevention. n=964  
*Preparation for Covering Suicide Prevention*

Instructors were mixed in their assessment of whether they were prepared to cover the topic of suicide prevention in their classes, including among those who said they were already covering the topic.



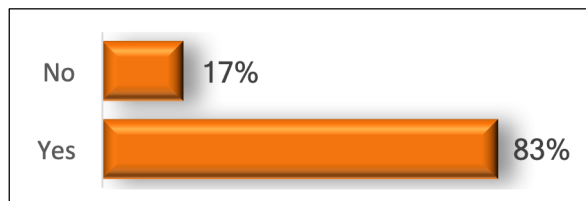
**Figure 14.** How well prepared do you currently feel to teach suicide prevention in your classes? n=966



**Figure 15.** Would you be interested in attending a Zoom session to learn more about suicide and how to cover it in firearm classes? n=961

Many either said they were interested (43%) or may be interested (35%) in attending a Zoom session to learn more about teaching suicide prevention in their classes. Most (82%) of those who were not interested either were already covering the topic (n=65) or were not interested in doing so (n=62).

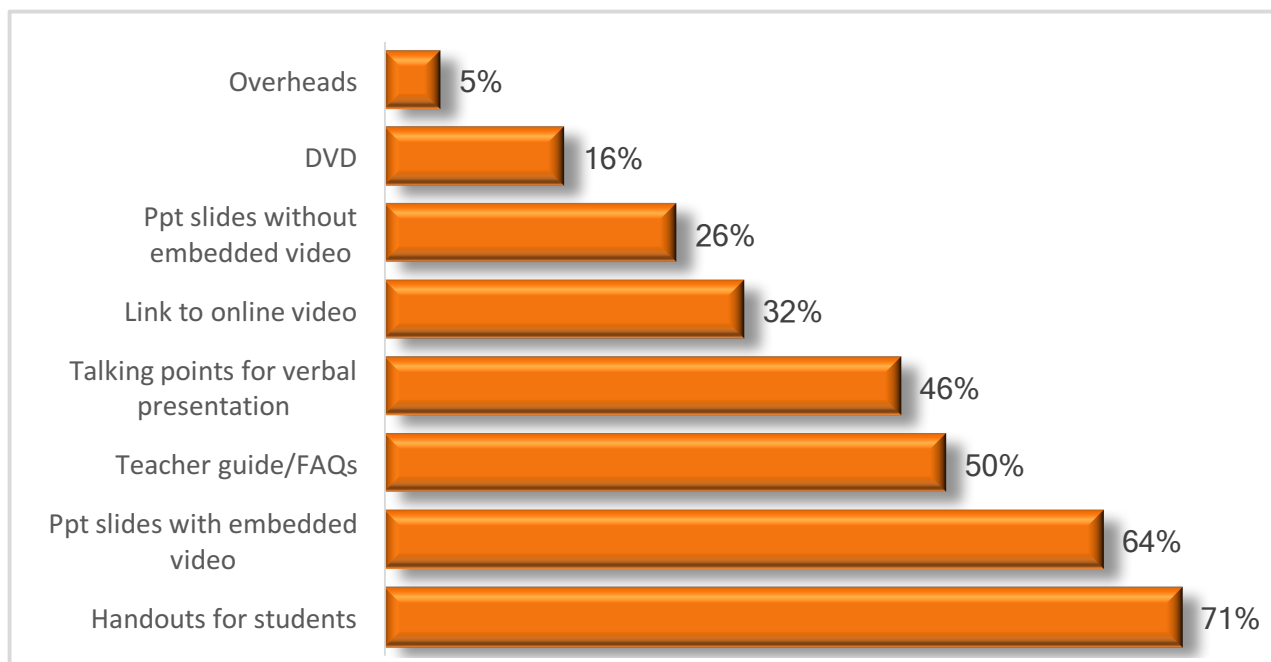
A clear majority (83%) of instructors said that they would be interested in receiving free resources about suicide prevention in firearm safety classes. The only groups for whom a minority wanted the resources were those who did not want to teach the topic and those who felt very unprepared to do so.



**Figure 16.** Would you like to receive free resources to help you cover suicide prevention in your classes? n=958

The type of media format for these resources that instructors thought would be useful varied, as indicated in Fig. 17, next page.





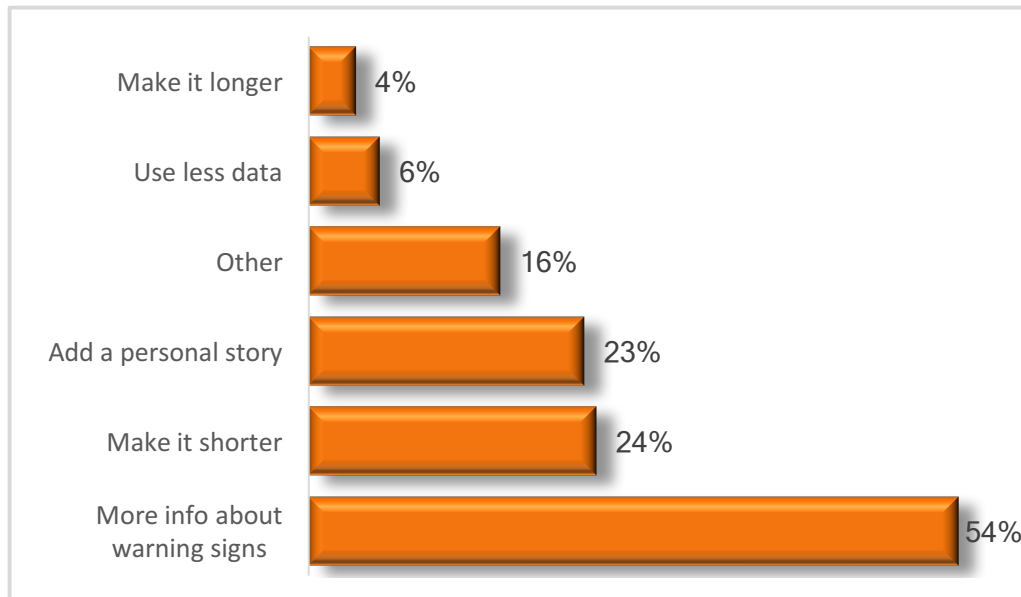
**Figure 17.** Which media would you make use of? (Note: percents sum to greater than 100% because instructors were asked to check all that apply.) n=954

### *Adapting a Suicide Prevention Module for Massachusetts BFS Classes*

After instructors viewed an example of suicide prevention slides used in Utah Concealed Firearm Permit classes, they were asked what changes they would like to see to the slides, beyond customizing them to refer to Massachusetts data, laws, and sources of help. The most frequently (54%) endorsed suggestion was to include more information about warning signs that a person may be suicidal (Fig. 18, next page). About a quarter each suggested adding a personal story and making it shorter. Sixteen percent selected “Other,” and most of these specified that they thought the Utah slides were good as is. A few underscored again that they thought this topic should be left to mental health professionals, some suggested adding specific scenarios and how to handle them, and a few requested specific data points. A handful volunteered that BFS classes should include live fire, which is not currently required. The full list of suggestions is in the Appendix.

### LIMITATIONS

A response rate of 42% is quite good, but it is impossible to know if respondents were similar to non-respondents. The invitational email did not say the survey would address suicide, so respondents could not self-select based on interest in that topic. Still, other factors associated with greater likelihood to respond to a survey might also be related to openness to covering suicide prevention. Also, item-specific response rates were higher during the first half of the survey and dropped off in the second half.



**Figure 18.** What changes would you want to see in materials designed for Massachusetts (beyond updating the information to cover current Massachusetts numbers, sources of help, and laws)? (Note: percents sum to greater than 100% because instructors were asked to check all that apply.) n=857

## CONCLUSIONS

While the majority of firearm instructors do not currently cover suicide prevention in their classes, most were open to doing so and 42% already do to some extent. Their free-text comments were thoughtful; most were supportive and embraced using classes to spread awareness. For those who did not, the most common reason offered in comments was that this was a topic for mental health professionals, not firearm instructors. Most instructors were interested in receiving free materials to help them cover the topic in their classes. Items they considered most useful were student handouts, powerpoint slides with an embedded video, and a teacher's guide.

## APPENDIX | FREE-TEXT COMMENTS

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Suicide prevention materials respondents currently use if they selected something other than materials from MPI, Utah Concealed Firearm Permit curriculum, or New Hampshire Firearm Safety Coalition video .....	28
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## **Respondents' explanation for why they would or would not support covering suicide prevention in their classes (n=583)**

- Suicide is a very real concern and providing information that someone may not otherwise know, or even think about, may make a difference. On the other hand, I do believe that someone who is truly suicidal will find a way to do it regardless of the method. This is a very sensitive area. I have a background in social work and psychotherapy so I am comfortable teaching and discussing the topic of suicide because even if it only saved one life, that is still a success.
- On a limited basis whereas I'm not a mental health professional.
- I would need to know more. I would be happy to pass along phone numbers for crisis intervention, etc that would be no problem at all. BFS Instructors are not mental health professionals. If someone specifically asked me to hold their firearms I would probably be willing to do so. Yet MA is an extremely litigious state. If I misjudge (again, not a mental health professional) that the crisis has passed, return the firearms and the individual subsequently commits suicide...what is my liability in under MGL? Or the risk to my BFS/LTC? Sorry to sound selfish when a human life is at stake, but that is a real concern in this state.
- I truly understand that suicide is the great risk of gun ownership, and I believe it is very preventable. I think a state-sanctioned guide might be very helpful. I have found friends pretty open to suggestions to remove the guns when in tough spaces emotionally.
- class is already 8 hours and adding more would be tough.
- Providing more information would be helpful.
- If I can help prevent the loss of life, I will.
- Seems very important
- On my program cover on gun safety and home safety
- I want to make sure any future students I encounter have the resources they have in order to deal with any on going issues they may have. Incorporating suicide prevention in my class is a start.
- Yes, as a practice of responsible gun ownership, and protecting gun rights. No, if it will place further legislative burden on gun owners. While Utah offers a safe harbor for gun owners, Massachusetts would use such request for confiscation and extensive medical and legal procedures to retrieve the gun owners firearms.
- It is a necessary course to teach, given the statistics
- You can never have too much information...
- I believe it is important for everyone to understand that it's okay to seek help. The gun community is here to help each other and keep our rights protected
- It's up to date, clear, concise and to the point.
- It is a real problem. I live in NH and 75% of gun deaths are suicides
- It looks good, but classtime is limited. We have handed out brochures for many years
- Even just one life saved from an unnecessary death is vital.
- I feel ANY content on safe firearms ownership should be covered.
- Although all suicides are not committed with a firearm, if one is available it is a convenient and final method. It makes unbelievable sadness to family/friends. It is felt for a lifetime.
- This type of information provides options to individuals and families for everyone's health and safety.
- took the Utah course and USCCA courses cover this as well
- suicide is on the rise in the US over the past several years
- I think the more information we offer the better chances we have to save someone
- Educating folks who may not know how to deal in this situation. They may never even thought about helping others or themselves. This is a great idea
- It is not the purpose of a firearms safety course
- Don't like to hear or see people unstable and have a firearm
- Depends on the specific class being presented.

- Would help raise awareness
- I think anyone that has a firearm needs to feel as though that they are able to get help when needed. And not have their firearms taken away completely. If somebody's child dies obviously they're going to go through a funk. It's not fair to red flag them and cause and create chaos when they are going through something. Through something. Here's so many programs out there like hold my gun walk the talk America here in mental health is a huge component of the problem in the United States. This is why I feel it is extremely important to talk about suicide revenge and firearms. There's no reason anybody should suffer in silence.
- I am not a psychologist, psychiatrist or social worker
- its good raise the awareness
- Mental Health issues should always be addressed and the public needs to be educated.
- I think it is a very important subject and needs to be addressed.
- I would be deathly afraid the state would use any sign of instability as an opportunity to enact or enforce red flag laws. Massachusetts has a proven track record of doing whatever they can to take away second amendment rights. I saw Utah has a safe harbor law in the powerpoint. I would be much more comfortable if Massachusetts had a similar law (fat chance).
- I think it is a topic necessary to discuss based on suicide statistics
- I served 6 years in military police to help people and defend their rights, that includes my brothers who have been plagued by depression, and too often take their own life
- A segment on suicidal prevention would certainly fall under a safety instructors umbrella of responsibility.
- although many suicides are committed with a firearm, I'm not sure that I would be able to cover this topic sufficiently as I am not a therapist.
- It's such a tiny percentage. Don't believe the media hype
- I think it should be incorporated into the training in order to help deal with suicide and bring it out in the open for discussion
- The pre-existing mental health crisis coupled with the COVID pandemic has caused a corresponding increase in suicide cases. If even one life can be saved by the inclusion of that material in the curriculum, it is well worth it.
- Needs to be awareness
- Assist if person needs help or if they know someone in crisis
- Good info
- Not my position, I refine, many times, the importance of proper Firearms Storage (legal aspect as well as injury/death) and go over many ways to do so
- All gun owners need to be cognizant of suicide prevention information
- I believe it to be necessary
- I AM NOT QUALIFIED TO DO SO.
- It's a mental health issue and should be dealt with the medical community not the firearms community
- Suicide is a complex issue and should be handled by someone qualified to discuss suicide prevention
- I think that we, as firearms instructors, should teach ALL aspects of the risks of owning firearms.
- Not the responsibility of a firearms safety instructor. Better suited for mental health professionals.
- I would teach the material if it was provided in a similar format to the Power Point so that if somebody tried to file charges against me for not properly teaching the material I had something to stand behind showing exactly what I taught and how.
- It is important to
- Any additional knowledge that can be shared with students may be beneficial, if not for them then perhaps for someone they know or a family member.
- Most students are in the beginning of only wanting firing training so they can protect themselves and their families and be a law abiding citizens.
- I am interested because the Utah presentation specifically mentions voluntary participation without government mandates, and I would want any similar Massachusetts presentation to include language promoting that concept.

- I think awareness can help others be more cognizant of suicidal situations
- No, a death in the family does not make you suicidal. This is a slippery slope.
- If the firearm is properly secured from unauthorized persons, mental health is NOT for a firearms instructor to be involved in. Having extensive experience in this, it is NOT for a firearms instructor to go anywhere near.
- The class is to learn fire arm safety
- It is a necessary part of firearm safety.
- It is a crucial topic that could save a life.
- I think it's one thing to briefly discuss, but I worry that if MA were to add a mandate onto the course it would go too deep for what the class is designed for.
- I am 83 & longer teach except for maybe family & friends. I also was a director for the Samaritan suicide prevention org. I would not feel comfortable bringing up suicide subject in a unknown mixed group who are attending for firearm safety which is already difficult for them to absorb all the rules & regulations. And not also be prepared for someones possible loss of a recent loved one in the class.
- I stick with basic firearms training only. I do not believe that I am equipped to deal with suicide training
- Beyond scope of class
- To inform all students the importance of keeping their firearms locked and secured at all times when not using them.
- New information
- Important topic
- Because I had a friend that was part of a murder suicide
- Very important issue
- I have been walk for AFSP ever year since 2014 because of a family member, but it wasn't firearms related.
- It is a good topic to cover
- If it's deemed effective to help people I will support it
- Suicide prevention doesn't work, just makes people feel good for 'doing something'. It's fiction.
- I am not a licensed mental health professional, so there is a huge liability risk.
- I have taken suicide reduction training, and found it would be helpful, in or outside of a firearms class
- The information should be taught as it pertains to responsible firearm ownership.
- Any opportunity to save a life
- I think it's important to educate firearms owners of the risks unauthorized access, and identify who may be a risk.
- i do beleive we have a mental health issue in thius counrty. One that is not being assresed. As instructors we see a student for 8 hours. Clearly not enough time to truley get to know someone. However if they get enough from our class to help prevent a suicide. Its well worth a slide show.
- More information can't hurt.
- Makes sense
- Due to the fact that a firearm is one of the tools that are used in some suicides so therefore I believe it is good information to be taught
- as we really do not know a person's thoughts or life problems, i have trained security guards for our US government, taught Mass Hunter Ed, and trained so many people in different walks of life. at times we do caught that a person has a problem or drugs or drinking , i will not certify them in any case. i had one women who wanted trained , as i was training her she told me she commented her self once , so i told her she would not be able to g
- Depends
- not able to access the slide show assuming useable material
- I think talking about suicide prevention is a good thing either way
- It is of extreme importance that everyone, firearm owner or not, knows that there is always help and you are never alone.

- I am not a licensed therapist and I am in no way qualified to cover this material. My extent is including a suicide prevention pamphlet printed from the internet, I would NOT wish to provide any more information unsolicited to my students.
- Mental Health is a crisis and many people don't know how to help or what to do. A little bit of knowledge can save a life.
- Good information is always good to present.
- Always better to teach than not teach
- The topic provides another perspective regarding the importance and responsibilities with owning and possessing firearms or any weapon for that matter.
- I am not teaching at this time but after seeing Utah's effort this seems important.
- Interested, the more anyone knows about any help that is available, the better for everyone and it might even save a life.
- Would not like to see recommendation of storing guns with Police/Government or other outside storage options.
- Don't currently have classes
- The more safety the better within reason
- Conveying knowledge and safety are of utmost importance in firearms training.
- I am not qualified to teach that, I would gladly hand out materials or point to on line resources
- A lot of the younger generation can't handle stress very well and a lot are on medication that may or may not work well.
- I had a good friend shoot him self
- **TOO MANY SUICIDES IN COMMONWEALTH.**
- Suicide awareness and teach people the important signs
- I am an MD who has long studied suicide prevention. I therefore know that the studies behind some of the "facts" presented in the Utah course are faulty. We know that a person who is receiving crisis intervention AND has reduced access to lethal means is at less risk. However, a person who has reduced access to SOME forms of lethal means, but is receiving no therapy, may or may not be at lower risk.
- I think it's a good thing for everyone to see and know
- I believe it's a good idea and certainly something that is on folks minds and would help
- The number of 86% is an eye opener.
- not an expert
- If I understood it better, then maybe it would be helpful. It's a fine line the level of involvement
- It's an important issue
- Young target group
- Due to today's legal ways people can sue you I would be hesitant.
- I'm not a medical professional. Just keep it simple and say it's ok to ask for help. Contact family friends. Or even myself.
- I am not an expert in suicide prevention or mental health
- I feel it is very important to cover all safety aspects to owning a firearm. Suicide is real and is still happening today so people should be aware of the assistance that is available.
- I'm a health care provider
- To ensure people understand there is help available and suicide is never the answer
- Any discussion on suicide prevention is important when talking to new/experienced firearm owners, as firearm suicides are roughly 67% of all deaths from firearms (and about 50% of all successful suicides)
- Reasonable topic to include in training
- It stresses the importance of time and means in suicide cases
- With Suicide on the rise makes sense to add to the course.
- Mental health awareness should be incorporated as part of being responsible firearm ownership.
- makes sense, the more info presented to the class the better

- Mandatory modules will lead to resentment among instructors and they will quickly push through the module resulting in poor transmittal of information.
- People who are taking a BFS class are not doing so with the intent to take the class, apply for a license which can take weeks then buy a gun so they can kill themselves. It is an issue that should be dealt with in another venue not a licensing class.
- I would only consider using it as an informational tool, not being a licensed doctor or psychologist could expose me to a potential lawsuit, however, having said professional on hand for that specific segment of the class might be appropriate.
- Time / im not qualified
- do believe addressing suicide prevention is a worthwhile endeavor
- I work in law enforcement. I believe suicide prevention should be taught to everybody
- If it would help save one life it would be worth covering
- Suicide is a mental health issue and I do not have formal mental health training or degree. I wouldn't expect a medical care professional to train someone in firearms use.
- I think it's appropriate to include firearm training
- any proven method or protocol to prevent these sad incidents would be useful
- This is an important aspect of safety that should be covered for read for the mass BFS course
- Given the high rates for suicide via a firearm, it makes sense to teach how to mitigate such events especially since suicide by firearm is usually deadly.
- The class should be limited to safe gun storage
- Cannot open slides
- Time allotment is an issue. Longer classes means it's harder to keep people's attention and the information already being put out, is of paramount importance.
- 2/3 of Homicides where a handgun is used in the US are suicides
- I think the video does a good job. We also discuss the handout we spend about 7-10 minutes about suicide. I take this subject seriously.
- The course goals of the two disciplines that I educate soon to be new shooters are about safe handling and marksmanship of which I consider myself an expert at. Introducing suicide prevention information via a pamphlete and speaking to by referencing the material would be a welcome addition. I'm not so sure about expounding on it in depth as an addtional discipline to these courses.
- May be able to reach someone who is contemplating suicide with a firearm or by other means.
- Utah is not like Massachusetts. The second someone is in crises thier firearms are taken, now Police chief is ever going to give them back or return or renew thier LTC down the road. political sway has made this almost mandatory. I would do this to appease the politicians. But all the people I have instructed are usually in very posite and responsable place in their lives. Mostly im more driven to help them safe guard their new responsibilitys as a gum owner to keep others away from thier firearms.
- Suicide prevention is finally getting attention but, I feel more needs to be done.
- Well I am just not too sure how much one's suicidal thoughts may take part in a class to get a license to carry concealed permit. All the years that I have been teaching this class there has not been one instance where a reason to obtain a permit was for a purpose that may reflect depression etc..
- It's important information to know about. with our training, we aim to prevent accidents/death
- I'm not a doctor
- I don't feel qualified to reasonable present such material. In addition an individual serious about "ending it all" will find a way
- I was instructed on suicide prevention as a LEO and believe it is helpful
- KNowledge is key
- Safety, safety, safety .... that said, we'll add another safety !
- I believe education on this topic is necessary
- I would be more interested do to the fact the more you know the better off you are
- No because I believe that a person bent on suicide will find a way to do it. Of which there are many besides using a firearm.



- I will cover this material whether it is mandated or not
- Suicide is a very real concern for everyone, no one is 100% exempt. Firearms are shown to be more lethal when used in a suicide attempt
- To reduce deaths due to firearms
- I think it most definitely needs to be added in, even if it's a handout.
- We teach suicide prevention in our Utah class. It's an awkward conversation for some, while others tend to shut down since they don't feel it pertains to them. I would be open to adding it to the class as long as it was done in a way that appeared relevant (like having it focus on being concerned for other loved ones). Additionally being able to provide materials would be most beneficial for their own future use.
- I'd be interested if I attended a state sponsored class to give me the proper information to teach.
- Because it's a component that is relevant but yet not covered in this type of training.
- I do not believe that it should be a firearms instructors job to cover suicide. That is a mental health persons job
- Seems a bit out of the realm of a Firearms Instructor and more something for a counselor or other professional in the field.
- I am not a mental health professional, and this subject is not something to be taken lightly. Aside from offering a handout I am not in a position to counsel someone during a firearms safety class.
- Stressing how firearms owners can appropriately approach and help fellow shooters and relatives would be a good training module. And in MA, I'd emphasize compassion and empathy without condescension leaking through.
- To help save a life.
- It's very easy to add slides like the Utah example shown and because we have new firearms people it makes sense to do it.
- If it can help save a life I would definitely cover it.
- It is becoming an increasingly important aspect of safety.
- I suspect the public is generally unaware of the prevalence of suicide. Increasing trainee awareness would start the process of them thinking about the problem and considering ways of addressing it.
- Any information to give to individuals new to carrying firearms would be beneficial
- This is valuable information that could save a life.
- It looks like a better presentation than the one I have right now.
- Raising awareness of firearm suicide and information on the steps that someone can take in trying to prevent firearm suicide may save many lives.
- save. lives
- Suicide is an issue and I think training and awareness is important.
- N/A
- Growing issue and mental health is extremely serious matter
- if it helps then yes
- I think mental health is a major issue in this country and anything we can do to stop a suicide is worth it.
- Over 30,000 people complete suicide every yr. It's a very important subject to talk about.
- It's adding unnecessary content into an already full curriculum
- Part of a gun owners responsibility; keeps government out
- very useful
- It should be mentioned in relation to securing firearms
- Be another good topic to go over
- I don't think it would help
- Anything we can do to bring peoples attention to these alarming numbers. It's our obligation to try and help one another.
- What we teach is how to use a firearm and some basic rules of firearms. I'm not qualified to discuss suicide or the mental aspects of such a complex subject.
- any information we can share to educate future gun owners is important

- I think I am not professionally qualified to make decisions on mental health issues
- The newest LTC-001 course has suicide prevention presentation
- the more information the better
- I already cover this in all my CCDW classes even when not required.
- Firearm safety is very important to me
- I'll like to do something, to help to reduce suicides.
- I marked yes, because the nature of the content is conducive to promoting constructive conversations. However, the instruction would need to be tailored carefully to avoid unwittingly causing a violation of MA transfer laws if an individual was to attempt to support somebody in crisis or seek support. Roll out would be best in conjunction with programming development for law enforcement agencies that encourage individuals to temporarily utilize such supports without a high likelihood of risk of stigmatization or prohibition.
- No reason not to cover it.
- To reduce suicide rates
- A gun is a tool. If someone is suicidal & really means to kill themselves, there are plenty of other ways to achieve their goal. Have you compared the number of handgun suicides to suicide by hanging, pills, exhaust?
- I feel mental health care is lacking and it should be introduced as it is a means to suicide depending on the person and situation
- It would seem prudent and beneficial to the students
- It would be good to raise awareness about this very serious topic while also suggesting options for those who may be affected in the future.
- Information is beneficial and if it even helps once it would be worth it
- Some info just wouldn't work in Mass like storing firearms with law enforcement. It would most likely take a court order to get them back and the person whose firearms they were most likely will lose their LTC and not get it back. I also think there are better things to teach. Maybe Mental Health First Aid. It would help instructors recognize in a class potentially harmful persons.
- Not a mental health practitioner nor do I think that someone intent on suicide would go through the trouble of taking a gun safety class to apply for a LTC.
- It would add time to the class but is worth it.
- 40% of all firearm related fatalities are suicide related, educating new firearm owners could help reduce this number.
- Education is very important. I believe this information would be an asset to my class curriculum.
- If it saves one life it would be worth it.
- not qualified
- Don't want to get that personal with my students. Privacy issues.
- Anything that would make us more aware and have the opportunity to teach others I think would be nothing less than a great opportunity to help people.
- I would like to see the information. It will not open on my phone for me to view and give you an answer. You can email it to me.
- The whole reason for me to be an instructor is to teach the responsibility of having a firearm.
- Valuable information could prevent loss of life
- I already cover in my class along with Mass law using the GOAL slides and provide students with the goal Mass laws handbook
- Denial of gun access for suicide prevention is ineffective and a violation of a basic human right. Person needs psychiatric or religious counseling.
- I don't believe it would make a difference to someone intent on suicide.
- Not sure how much an impact it would have
- It needs to be addressed due to the rise in economic crash
- It's important

- As I understand it, depression and suicide is on the increase. I would feel better just knowing that I did my part to help .
- mental health is a primary issue re: ownership of firearms
- Not my responsibility, Also creates liability as I am not a licensed psychiatrist.
- i believe any aspect of gun safety should be taught
- If it helps people help those who are suicidal the we need to do it.
- It's a lot better than just winging it, but having a printed handout is even better and better protection from lawsuits.
- I would look forward to any new knowledge
- I would be interested. Talking about suicide prevention is very important and as an instructors, we should be doing our due diligence to address topic.
- I believe community awareness and assistance can lead to reduction of suicide attempts without government mandates.
- Anything that increases firearms safety is in play. Suicide by gun does not help lawful gun owners.
- Important
- Gun safety is important and I think it's important to present all options available to students
- I would be interested in presenting practical information to classes, but it can't be from any political perspective. No agenda.
- Seems like the more information I can provide the better
- I believe it should be included as part of any basic firearms safety course. Teach the warning signs of a person in crisis and as responsible person take action to safeguard anybody in your household.
- Im not a counselor nor do I have any real training in the matter, however if presenting this type of information to anyone attending my class, if they may have feeling of this nature, may get them to think about another solution other than suicide may save their life.
- It can only help
- Need more information on legal implications
- I think this would help to reduce suicidal rate
- Any help to the public education would make a great difference
- Suicide is the leading cause of gun deaths,
- If someone wants to kill themselves, whst I tell them in a basic firearm safety course will not stop them. In my personal life, I would certainly talk to someone about their problems/feelings, just not as a BFS instructor.
- I already Discuss this feeling it's very important part of training
- Not sure it should be mandatory. I like to cover it because it is a reality. Not sure a first time student should be overwhelmed with this information. Maybe follow up classes could address it.
- I already cover it. There are too many regulations on gun licensing in Massachusetts already. The state should not be expanding its role in regulating what is already a constitutionally guaranteed right.
- Too many of us Vterans are having mental breakdowns due to ptsd and if I cn help stop even 1 person it would be worth it
- I don't feel qualified (not a therapist or counselor)
- Suicide is a problem and I would welcome gaining the knowledge to better teach. I had a relative who committed suicide by hanging
- Bringing suicide by gun to light with new gun owners will make them more aware of friends and family that may be contemplating suicide.
- Do we cover suicide prevention when we teach driving? Swim lessons? When people give out MBTA Charlie cards? Does Bed Bath and Beyond give a class when people buy kitchen knives?
- I will be retiring and shutting down the end of October.
- Opens the lines of communication between student and instructor
- Suicide is on the rise

- I think this is a great topic, I personally have never covered it, but it is very important. I think its the leading cause of Firearms related deaths in the US.
- Everyone should know the signs and either help the individual or get them help
- You are asking gun safety instructors to be mental health practitioners. Not the appropriate people to task with this duty.
- I believe with proper guidance and training, suicide prevention can be greatly decreased. Knowledge is power. The more people learn and know the better informed they are to make decisions.
- It's a good topic to go over.
- I never thought about it until now. I am glad you brought it up. I will talk about it in my future classes.
- I think it is a very important topic to cover. Many people are so focused on protecting themselves but lack the resources to “protect themselves” during a mental health crisis.
- The more information you give people the better.
- I believe suicide is more than a firearm issue but this would allow a structured way to address the issue
- We have debated this and our current concern is that for most of these students a firearm is an unknown/scary thing. While we want them to be mindful a firearm is a tool, we feel we want to stick to the basics and hopefully they will build up their knowledge over time.
- It it completely relevant to the class.
- I am not qualified, a little knowledge can be a very dangerous thing.
- Prevention is key to Save lives
- I like the idea of trying to help people.
- I am not a licensed/trained psychologist/psychiatrist capable of determining when someone is no longer a threat to themselves or others.
- I already cover suicide prevention.
- Always looking for good information
- I offer my teaching to people I know and always for free. I consider those I give the classes to squared away. Ditto to those in their family. I am not against mentioning it and acting as a resource person. I am also an attorney and a minister.
- I would offer any help I could, to save a life.
- While it is extremely rare that I teach someone I don't already know personally there have been a few exceptions. And anyone can experience hardships in life that may impact their will to thrive, sustain or even survive.
- Regional specific, local law specific, only if local resources as 800 suicide prevention resources and support groups are provided. Info is worthless without local resources to access when time matters.
- It will add time to the large amount of information we now cover, however, it is a subject worth the time.
- I'm a firm believer in providing relevant information with regards to firearm safety and suicide prevention
- Since I have been introducing suicide I have become more comfortable discussing the issue and my class attendees are engaging the topic an using examples they relate and hopefully retain information and are prepared to address the issue in their personal lives.
- fewer deaths
- I am not a mental Health Clinician and I would be concerned about Liability
- More education could further benefit anyone struggling with suicide thoughts.
- The mental health conversation between Gun owners needs to happen without stigma or fear of being “red flagged”. The better educated people are from the jump, the more likely that appropriate action will be taken when the need arises.
- I think it is an important topic considering 57% of gun deaths are suicides.
- its an unfortunate element (suicide), related in many cases to firearms
- As a gun owner, this is a very importance part of the overall safety umbrella. Mental health and firearms safety are integral to each other.
- People are going to commit suicide with or without guns. I'm not against talking about it but it is not just a gun topic. I feel it is a little bit of a stretch for firearms instructor to know about suicide.

- This has nothing to do with firearm safety
- Knowledge is king. You can never train enough
- I like the idea but I'm not sure about how much extra time it will involve.
- Suicide is a serious problem today we need to do everything we can to be sure people are able to get the help they need.
- I think it's important to have something prepared by professionals.
- Always good to share info that could save a life
- It's definitely a topic to be aware of.
- I believe that suicide by firearms needs to be ended and people think firearms are the easy option
- You shouldn't be required to take a class to exercise your second amendment rights.
- I'm not a mental health clinician
- Suicide is so Ubiquitous now and it occurs regardless of socioeconomic status. A true crisis and I would love to begin addressing suicide in classes
- I think it's important in today's day and age to cover this topic as you see it more frequently now
- yes, it raises awareness
- Yes, I would be interested in covering a similar suicide prevention information designed for Massachusetts my classes. Mental health is a very important topic in today's society.
- i already do
- Not qualified to instruct individuals about Possible issues of depression mental illness
- Not something I'm comfortable teaching
- Having consistent and well sourced teaching materials improves the quality of the curriculum.
- Already covered
- Good information, already teaching it in the military, easy for me to include.
- I am not a trained mental health specialist.
- I want students to pay attention to basic firearm safety. Too many concepts dilutes the message
- It's a good topic to educate them on
- I touch on it although I got feedback about the NH video that it diminishes impact of the suicide message by tying back to enhancing freedom for gun owners by preventing suicide
- I think it's good but it's hard to get the severity across by just showing statistics all the time as an instructor we need to show empathy and share our own stories of Assisting someone it is also important to note that if you cannot "save" someone in crisis after you have tried that it is not their fault!!!
- Because I care. I am a safety instructor and take this seriously.
- A slide show of 10-15 slides would be helpful.
- It is very important.
- Maybe offer a separate class
- Knowledge is always good
- I am not a mental health professional and would not be qualified to assess a person's state of mind in the relatively short time of a class
- Me and my partner cover suicide awareness in detail.. she is a US Army suicide counselor.
- To enlighten people that suicide by gun is rampant and to offer the phone numbers and email addresses the slides provide for people that need help with their spouses or themselves.
- The statistics show that too many people commit suicide with a firearm. Even saving one person is worth the additional time in a class
- Already use the New Hampshire material
- It may help someone.
- Something that should be discussed in every class
- It is an ongoing problem and as instructors and shooters we need to do our best to reduce the numbers
- I am teaching safety fundamentals.... the students do not have firearms yet
- Mental Health is real and having a firearm can make it easier for you to commit suicide
- Not interested

- Extremely important in reducing stigma
- Lots of veterans are committing suicide.
- yes, we already do
- Any education will help anyone to see the signs of suicide
- Teaching anything that will hopefully prevent someone from hurting themselves or others is important.
- Anything to help the public understand suicide whether it be from firearm or trash truck is always a win. The more it is talked about the stigma is taken away and the suicidal person may reach out for help.
- Most people don't think of suicide during gun classes
- I had a friend commit suicide via handgun
- The state of Massachusetts has made it abundantly clear they intend to demonize firearms owners and those who seek to exercise their basic, fundamental, and civil rights. Adding modules suggesting someone looking to exercise their rights must have some sort of mental health issue is an insult.
- I'm a combat vet and work with suicide prevention ruins charities
- the concepts are easy, it would not add much time to the class, and might reduce deaths
- It's good content to include as a suggestion, but it should not be required. I think it's not terribly likely to be helpful, though any help is consequential for the person involved.
- I feel suicide prevention may save a life. I did not download the Utah info as I have taken their course.
- I am not a mental health professional
- Already cover it some but having a better program and content would help.
- Very Important topic.
- It is not the purview of the basic firearms instructor. We should continue to focus on instructing how to safely and legally own, handle, and store firearms.
- Like to provide the safest class
- I have been teaching suicide awareness and steps to prevent for 5+ years
- I hesitate because of the liability
- People will always find a way. It's better to teach recognition of behavior for friends, family or suicidal persons to alert to
- I'm doing it now. Assuming Massachusetts content is better
- I taught Suicide Prevention while on active duty in the military. I lost many members of my Squadron over the years due to suicide. Anything I could do to help anyone I would do.
- I don't feel the topic is relevant for a safety course. If someone is feeling suicidal, they will try and obtain a family member's firearm or commit suicide by other means, not take a safety course to legally purchase a firearm and commit suicide that way.
- it could help and one is too much (not to mention it paints firearms in a bad picture and skews statistics)
- I already cover this subject in my classes
- If it is from mass a person could access it easier later if they wanted to.
- If it helps just 1 person, it would be worth it.
- Dependand what instruction would be prescribed and the extent of any such requirement.
- I believe that talking about suicide is important and it's time for all of us to stop running away from talking about it
- I would be interested adding into a class. I have been in a situation of one of my employee came to the office to retrieve a firearm and I didn't notice the call for help and he took his service firearm, went into I believe terminal A Eastern Airlines at Logan went into the parking lot in his car and committed suicide. If I had known I would try to get him help.
- Suicide is one of the largest causes of death in the country. Especially in public safety and military.
- I don't like the idea of guns getting a bad name for someone's poor judgement
- I am the training director of the range I belong to. We hold classes for both firearm and non firearm classes. We are willing to teach any topic that benefits our members, promotes safe and responsible gun ownership
- I cover it in depth in my class.

- After reading the attachment I can see how simple it is to do something to help prevent a suicide. I think it should become mandatory. For an applicant for a firearm permit to take this as part of their requirements.
- There could be Liability issues considering you or I am not a trained or certified Mental health physician.
- I would do anything that could prevent someone from harming themselves.
- A suicidal person intent on carrying the act out does not need a firearm. I get them for one day out of their lives.. two weeks after they leave they have all but forgotten my name. A blurb on suicide is a waste.
- Willing to help, but we also should not be blaming the firearm for the suicide
- Slide show didn't open but I can only imagine it would be good info to include.
- I'm not certified in suicide prevention or psychological
- Help raise awareness of how we can prevent gun-related suicides.
- Good to pass information that may be relevant
- It will reduce suicides
- Suicide is an important issue. It contributes to a large quantity of gun deaths which are then blamed on "bad guns". Reducing suicides by guns would reduce the animosity some may have toward guns.
- Keep it short and concise
- Couple of reasons. For one, "suicide" is an included subset of "homicide." For another, if I detected a whiff of Q5 ideation (or a bunch of other traits), I'd not take the person on as a BFS student. (I have declined a few folks over the recent years, though I suspect they just went elsewhere.) But most of all, suicidal tendencies, their precursors and motivation, and the like require an expertise I do not possess. I have talents as an attorney, firearms instructor, and firearms armorer, but not as a social worker.
- It would be an added safeguard to protect someone who may be going through a tough time
- As a military Veteran, I have lost multiple friends to suicide, most recently last week in North Carolina.
- That is for mental health experts
- This survey took an unexpected left turn. My main concern is that MA has too many different BFS classes and many instructors do not include live fire. We have a mental health crisis in this country and I am not sure that overloading the content of the BFS class is the answer.
- It goes beyond our training objective. We are not medical professionals
- AS a veteran I understand the serious number of suicides and perhaps by covering it and alternatives to suicide it might help.
- Any information to help firearms ownership safer for all is needed to be reviewed
- i would like to have a few slides covering suicide prevention
- It is important to help prevent suicide, and talking about it will help.
- Suicide by firearm is an important topic for all gun owners to understand.
- I feel this (suicide) is an area not addressed within current curriculum
- Like any prevention method there is a place for it in fire arms training
- Anything to prevent a death
- Reduction in firearms suicide is the best step we can take to safeguard firearms ownership for the future.
- I'm not a psychiatrist
- I've had a family member commit suicide.
- It's better to be proactive than reactive
- Nothing to do with civil rights. Not a mental health clinician.
- Formal state sponsored content would be appreciated.
- could only help
- If we could help one person you'd be greatly reduce the number of people who have I have tried suicide!
- It is a real epidemic that plagues the firearms community. Gun-related suicides present a compelling argument to restrict access to firearms.
- I am not qualified, and would want appropriate materials or handouts.
- It could be helpful to some people.
- It seems reasonable but I would worry that I am unqualified by education and training
- I'd rather concentrate on safety

- More comprehensive than Ma.
- Suicide awareness and reducing stigma is crucial
- Suicide deaths are the most common firearms deaths in the US. Would be good to do our part to raise awareness and change the narrative about firearms.
- It's a very important topic.
- More info is always good.
- can't hurt to constantly be aware of this very serious issue
- Not part of safety education or part of MA law. Too many other things to teach
- I include weapons retention tactics in my training as well as disarming tactics so anything that prevents criminal, accidental or preventative safety I am interested in.
- I'm not a mental health professional, firearms safety is what I am teaching.
- It's relevant and ties to the gun safety topic
- Interested. Firearm ownership is growing. We need to emphasize all facets of firearms ownership, and improve all facets of firearm safety.
- parroting back death-by-PowerPoint seems like a race to the bottom on a topic that's way too important for that. Further, if the existing products are any good, there's no need to re-invent the wheel. If they're not good, who is MA to imply they'll do it better?
- I hand out pamphlets from national shooting sports foundation regarding suicide prevention
- Its a reality that needs class discussion
- It has nothing to do with firearms instruction
- I think most people would not admit they are there for that and if depressed this would show what to look out for and hide from their family.
- Public service
- If I felt the materials were adequate, as well as brief, I might use them
- I stress all safety for my class, and if suicide is something that have materials to share, i think we should take the time and opportunity to educate on overall safety. ideally offer resources and open the space to talk through these types of issues.
- We teach gun safety, suicide prevention is not a gun safety issue.
- Had to talk a friend out of a suicide attempt.
- Firearm safety training is about saving lives. I also include NRA Eddie the Eagle into training.
- Good info, important topic.
- For the good of the person
- I've never seen anything more useful than destructive come from a state mandate. Sorry, but the track record is atrocious.
- I would always help some one that is in stressful condition
- I care about people and would hate to see them die knowing I could have helped.
- If I taught, I would think that this information is useful for everyone.
- Not a trained (or insured) mental health care professional and therefore not qualified to answer students mental health care questions. This subject should only be resented by qualified mental health care professionals. Also, asking friends to control firearms is not a proper approach as it leaves out the key need to seek mental health care and in fact may present a false sense of accomplishment and lessen the perceived need for mental health care.
- Its a tough topic that needs to be discussed
- any information that prevents death is vital, helpful, useful, and positive
- Critically important to lessen probability of a suicide
- Suicide prevention information will be great guidance for all. It would save lives.
- information would be good
- I'm presently also a Utah Multi State Instructor and when we recertify there is a certain portion for instructors that we are required to cover suicide so we do cover it presently in our syllabus and I believe it



can't be spoken about enough. New England Firearms Academy, is dedicated to letting our students know that we are here for them at any time and we are also here to support them and help them.

- It's good advice
- Concerned that MA does NOT have Safe Harbor. MA process allows storage company to charge outlandish fee for storage and process is restrictive to gain possession again
- If they are suicidal; then they will find a means: Even if they don't have access to firearms
- People are not taking the course to get a gun to kill themselves. Access to prescription medication is easy and there is no suicide warning label on drugs. This is just another state burden put on anything firearms related.
- To help the officers I work with.
- Its a problem; big problem
- this would be a positive addition to my class
- If I could help save a life, that is a win in my book!
- After taking the mandatory state wide seminar, I've touched on the subject. I have the material given to me, but have not incorporated into the class yet.
- It depends upon the course material and flexibility in presentation.
- I don't believe that covering that during a safety class would help much. Suicidal thoughts would generally be coming to the individual later on and then is when counseling would help.
- The Utah cc suicide module seems like a good idea
- Stop blaming responsible gun owners
- Any usefull information we can provide is worth it if it can help save a life
- I think that touching on the topic/subject would be beneficial.
- I am not a medical professional nor would I ever claim to be. There are lots of other ways someone could go about it other than gun. Also guns are not the problem our broken health care system is.
- I don't believe that anyone currently considering suicide would go to the effort of taking a BFS class and applying for a LTC
- Suicide is a problem & I think it's a good idea to touch on the subject during the mental illness segment of my class subject
- This is an extremely important thing to learn and teach. Owning a fire arm is a responsibility, not a right.
- Thats not our role to teach this. We are firearms instructors not health care workers.
- For new license holders, any info so that they are aware of the issue
- I feel that it is an important topic to cover
- Depending on the content
- It helps people who are in need, and that's what people need more of.
- Better safe than sorry. Information is power, I suppose
- Suicide is a major problem in the US; any education around suicide prevention is likely to be helpful.
- To make all applicants aware of suicide prevention for themselves as well of others
- to help people understand signs/ symptoms
- I would. I teach for my department and MPTC. Just starting civilian BFS courses. I'm glad you're doing this.
- More information is always better, even if they don't need the information now they may be able to pass along to someone else in crisis
- Never hurts to cover things
- Any information on suicide prevention is priceless. My wife is an LMHC in Massachusetts and has her own private practice in Mental Health Counseling. We take this very seriously.
- its not worth taking your own life because that individual might have some great advice for people
- Very important for at the very least to remind people to be aware.
- N/A
- further pussification of america.
- Suicide prevention has a place in a gun safety class

- I have participated in CISM training and feel it is a crucial aspect of law enforcement that has been neglected.
- Save lives
- Suicide prevention is its self a 8+ hour class. I've done them, I've taught them. There is so much to them. Also how in depth would you go? It's a large rabbit hole.
- To help decrease the number of firearm related deaths and potentially save lives.
- It is relevant to firearms safety
- I already talk about in all my classes
- My class is long enough teaching people suicide prevention not everybody thinks about that I've seen people who got divorced I've seen people who had depressed and never use that gun to hurt themselves I know there is some people that can do something like that I think it should be up to the licensee holder to take something like that or you guys for part of the qualification That's up to the state cuz I don't make laws I think I can touch base over the little but can't get too much involved into that That's left up to a psychiatrist or therapist or counseling
- It's always good to cover it
- I think this is an extremely important subject matter and this would enhance the safety of all
- Education is key
- Not a medical professional
- I like the Utah presentation better than the Ma Chief's program that I currently teach.
- always a good thing for operator safety and to point out the everyday effects of being with a firearm nowadays
- Always good to be proactive.
- Yes if I had an outline.
- It helps to be able to give brochures to all just in case
- education is never wrong
- Education on suicide prevention is the best way to stop, detour or prevent suicide.
- Every bit helps the student to understand the risk they now poses having access to a firearm
- Not my lane.
- It's a very prevalent subject and it can't hurt to touch on the subject.
- I thinks it's an extremely important part that is lost in translation and I try spend time on the outcome of suicide
- I have been in LE for 12 years now. I'm a Deputy Sheriff and work in a jail. We've had 7 suicides in 3 1/2 years and we run our place tight. No guns, just the will to die. I've done 8 minutes of CPR on one of them. The liability without the proper legal approved training would be huge.
- I think we should still to what is required under the law as vast majority of LTC not suicidal
- May save a life
- I dont feel firearms instructors are or should be mental health professions. Its a subject matter, like firearms instruction that takes specialized training. Besides there is so much information we already have to cover.
- The answer is simple, We want to make sure everyone who has access to firearms is responsible and safe
- It is valid that access to firearms could lead to usage in a desperate emotional situation.
- That's more of a mental health issue for a clinician trained in such matters.
- I think anything that relates to firearms safety is important.
- I see suicide prevention as more of a mental health care responsibility and NOT necessarily a responsibility for firearms instructors. We teach safe handling and use of firearms not how to deal with mental illness. It goes without saying that if you have a friend going through extremely difficult times you may offer to intervene and secure his guns but I don't see that as an applicable part of a Basic Firearms Safety class.
- another resource is always a good thing

- Due to an increase in today's societal and personal problems and the increase in many flawed characters and inability to cope with rejection
- I cover it enough now.
- Too long
- That's a job for a social worker
- Safety is what it's all about!
- Suicide is at a high rate
- I think it's a great idea to cover this material. First, and most importantly, you may be instrumental in saving someones life and there is nothing not important than that. Secondly even though it is not the guns fault of course, it's another way the media attempts to distort the truth about firearms in order to change people's perception of them in a very untruthful way.
- I feel it's critical to full understanding of possession, responsibility and ownership of a weapon.
- Its already covered extensively in mental health classes
- Always want to update people on safety! For themselves and others!
- Better to cover I know I would not want to loose a loved one.
- I'm a big believer in looking after our own
- Suicide by firearm is very common and it is to common and needs to be talked about.
- always looking for helpful instructional material
- Every gun owner needs to be familiar with some sort of suicide prevention and keep firerams out of the hands of suicidal people. Although, if they real want to commit suicide they will find another way to do.
- As LE I have see first hand suicide and attempts over my 29years and the current mental health crisis due to Covid has not helped
- I WOULD HAVE TO SEE WHAT IT CONSISTS OF.
- If you prevent a suicide by teaching 15 slides then we should do it.
- It depends. MA puts a huge burden on anyone holding guns for another person and PDs are NOT the place to store your guns . . . some "disappear", many will likely be damaged or sent to "bonded warehouses" where the cost of retrieval exceeds the value.
- I would be in fear that what I could teach may be interpreted incorrectly and may make the situation worst. Also, could increase my liability for legal action
- Important
- If someone is truly going to kill themself they'll find a way.
- Needs to be openly talked about
- It's important to be aware of someones state of mind as it relates to suicide and to be able to take away thats persons most obvious means (firearms)of committing suicide.ng sucied
- After becoming a Utah Instructor, I saw their curriculum and liked it. I added suicide prevention to my classes. Also, as a veteran, I am tuned to the fact that we lose 22 veterans per day to suicide.
- It's an important facet of responsible gun ownership
- I teach current and former law enforcement
- it's a sensitive topic that needs to be addressed more aggressively.
- Since it is a leading cause of death it should be addressed
- I was quite surprised to see in the Utah presentation that the decision to commit suicide is most often decided upon in 10 minutes or less
- I can't help but believe that the increase in suicide is related with the removal of the stigma and open discussion.
- I think as gun owners it the responsible thing to do
- I think mental health is an important topic to discuss when t aching forearm safety
- People in mental crisis are 90% successful if they choose firearms.
- This class cover statistics and in no way tries to de stigmatize mental health issues. You need to start there not just badger people for their gun when they are depressed. They will push back.
- offering one less option to use to commit

- I would add some of the slides to my pre-existing BFS101 / Mass Chiefs LTC001 program which covers suicide prevention.
- Suicides are 62% of gun deaths. It's important!
- More knowledge is power. For a few minutes extra to make someone aware and save a life is valuable. HOWEVER, Politicians are looking to take gun rights away! If this addition of knowledge will require certain documentation to reveal the participants name I disagree
- This should be an extension course, or minimally covered in the BFSC.
- It is crucial to educate people about the dangers of gun-related suicide.
- Yes. It's everyone's responsibility to make sure that they know the laws and signs of someone suicidal. Early intervention is key to stopping suicides by firearms.
- Not sure that someone can be deterred from killing themselves, and feel that relatives will report them as suicidal as a way to get back at them or be a nuisance to them
- Important topic to cover
- I think this is a great topic to cover and the material has not been updated in years. Love the idea
- Most civilians don't realize suicide crisis is brief-limiting access to firearms will probably reduce their chances of killing themselves.
- Mental health should be covered to add awareness
- I currently cover suicidal in the MPI module
- Seems logical. It would be best taught by a responder that has had to respond to
- All people go through tough times and the thought crosses many people's mind during these periods.
- One more thing to keep them safe
- Can we just stop piling on the excessive requirements to exercise a right?
- To increase knowledge on resources for mental health all around,
- Beneficial information
- Because situations can happen to anyone, and having an effective way to be able to safeguard your firearms while you are going through the hard time is paramount.
- I am also a Police Officer/Rangemaster and Suicide Prevention would be extremely valuable.
- I've witnessed suicide amongst my peers in the military/LE. We must teach to help.
- it's overlooked and not talked about
- Important topic that is not properly addressed in media and current training materials.
- Not qualified in that area although I've known a few friends who have taken their lives with firearms.
- Being a law enforcement officer suicide happens to often
- To dispel the stigma of not asking for help
- Covering this type of material is good for anyone to know
- Safety for all
- Having had prevention training for over 33 years, just talking about it might help
- HIPAA laws
- For liability reasons I would like the State of MA dictate to us what we should teach.
- It is a good idea
- Just talking about it may make people think twice
- Every day suicide takes 2 veterans per hour
- Important topic
- Not a clinician
- I do think it's important to discuss mental health in general. This isn't just about suicide, it's about preventing active shootings as well.

**Suicide prevention materials instructors currently use if other than materials from MPI, Utah Concealed Firearm Permit curriculum, or New Hampshire Firearm Safety Coalition video**  
(n=203 free-text responses)

- Verbal - statistics and contacts
- Information and awareness.
- General discussion
- Open Discussion
- Local suicide data
- Suicide statistics.
- Materials from S&W from when I worked at the Shooting facility - we were trained to identify potential suicide threats.
- clicked wrong box previous ?? But would use pamphlets and NH FSC
- Suicide Prevention Org info
- NSSF & NHFSC
- discussion
- Walk the talk America and hold my gun
- massachusetts brochure
- Internet various
- General info
- Nra basic pistol class, goal mass laws pamphlets mass suicide prevention secure firearm flyer
- suicide prevention by responsible firearms ownership
- Self developed materials
- My Own PPT that covers all required topics mandated by the the State of MA
- handout w/stats
- MSA Suicide Prevention Instructor course
- Personal experience
- S.P. Handout at recert. Class.
- discussion on issues
- Pamphlet from Mass Suicide prevention is handed out and discussed
- Briefly discuss and provide the phone number
- examples of real life scenarios
- Power point and mgl
- Discussion and my knowledge as a medical provider
- statistics
- US Army suicide prevention
- i discuss suicide prevention. How there is help out ther for people. The phone numbers for help.
- Talk about mental health
- general discussion around safe storage of firearms
- internet printouts
- MPTC
- self developed slides, information sharing
- GOAL PROVIDED
- <https://extranet.ahsnet.ca/teams/policydocuments/1/klink/et-klink-ckv-suicide-risk-assessment-adult-inpatient-non-psychiatric.pdf>

- My own personal slides I've made
- I talk about it. Don't have slides.
- Discussion on the subject, and share people/organizations to talk to if someone is thinking about suicide.
- CDC Suicide Prevention
- NRA slides and personal training materials
- Hand out Suicide pamphlet that dealers hand out when purchasing a firearm
- Handout and statistical data
- Verbal Experience
- DPH Video
- informational only
- Executive Protection Training
- Classroom Discussion
- Walk the Talk America
- I just explain that firearms should be stored unloaded, locked and inaccessible to any unauthorized persons or persons who are depressed or have a history of mental illness.
- Content from Suicide prevention website
- Handout
- Verbally discuss it to class
- NSSF
- I provide links to the "Samaritans" and Veterans agencies.
- Discussed as part of safe storage requirements
- outline
- Discussion regarding topic
- Recent Events and solutions
- Discuss mental health and acting on signs of those you know legally own and or have access to firearms
- Common sense
- NSSF
- Verbally present within context of safe storage.
- national statistics / talk
- Class Discussion, suggest resources.
- I talk about the steps to take if someone is mentally unstable, while having personal access to their firearms.
- Flyers included in every gun sale in MA along with discussing the issue and the link to suicide prevention.
- Personal knowledge
- Verbal discussion
- My own Document
- Just speak from experience, my son took his life, but not by a firearm
- importance of unauthorized persons gaining access to firearm
- Chief RSO Examples
- My own notes/experience
- MA DPH pamphlet
- Handout from National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- None of the above materials are used. It's an open discussion on the relationship between mental health and gun ownership. I have handout from local centers
- Personal experience and available resources
- Verbal instruction.
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- NRA Suicide Video and verbal discussion
- Not to let depressed people handle your guns
- I work in as a pastor and certified addiction recovery coach. I use a blend of materials from seminary and addiction training.
- Handouts
- Info researched
- We talk about Massachusetts as being a red flag state. We speak about mental health issues and drug addiction.
- created separate section using reference material
- Pamphlets
- Video from GOAL packet, Mass ERPO hand out, and a link to NIMH Information Resource Center in the resources slide of presentation.
- Provide hotline number and discuss information available online
- We discuss it
- Nra slides
- Department Peer support material
- mix of content
- Self-organized resources from CDC and HoldMyGuns.org
- Review of MA firearm suicide brochure
- Slides from GOAL BFS Presentation
- An ASIST course from the military (shortened version)
- open discussion
- Discussion
- Information from websites
- US Army
- FED AIR MARSHAL MATERIALS
- MA suicide gun safety fact sheet
- hand outs from Utah with resource links
- Prevention methods and signs of suicidal behavior
- Material from GOAL
- My own slides
- N/A
- Slides I have created
- From USCCA
- SUICIDE AWARENESS
- Share FBI stats
- NSSF Literature
- NSSF Firearms and Suicide Prevention pamphlet
- mental health materials from walkthetalkamerica.org
- Open discussion on suicide, if anyone feels like hurting themselves or others

- Mass DOC suicide prevention material
- Video from goal
- Verbalize safety measures
- Video by NHFSC.ORG
- Fact Sheet Produced at MA.gov [mass.gov/dph/suicideprevention](https://www.mass.gov/dph/suicideprevention) [afsp.org/preventing-suicide](https://afsp.org/preventing-suicide)
- Discussion on Suicide Prevention
- NSSF Pamphlets
- Tell students to lock up to prevent a issue
- handouts
- <https://www.222none.org/>
- Have not taught a class yet
- Discussion in class
- Hand outs
- WTTA
- no materials. just discussion.
- group discussion
- hot lines/ help groups
- conversation about the rise in suicides, military first responder issues
- Tell my students that if they have a person in their home that is showing signs of any type of mental distress or disability to secure their firearms or move them to a safer location. This includes the idea of taking firearms from family members suffering from these condition. Main point being always secure your firearms.
- Pamphlet.
- personally-developed
- American Society for Suicide Prevention
- WTTA content and discussion
- Remnants from my long police career
- Material i used in the military
- don't recall the specific materials (have not taught LTC courses since pre-COVID)
- General talk from the nation prevention of suicide
- additional materials from suicide prevention organizations
- MA Firearms School PP
- <https://afsp.org/an-introduction-to-firearms-and-suicide-prevention>
- We have incorporated into our syllabus from a number of different sources due to the high rate of suicide among returning veterans into Covid related isolation and lockdown
- [Walkthetalkamerica.org](https://www.walkthetalkamerica.org)
- I provide information as part of my lecture and in addition to the basic course requirements
- current statistical data
- Training materials from Sheriff's Department
- Handouts from your instructor update review/class
- VA VFW resources
- Personal experience and knowledge of suicide
- Slide from GOAL
- Just helpline info in presentation.
- Past training as a mental health professional



- None
- youtube videos
- <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention>
- ccg
- discussion
- We discuss access to the hotline number.
- Suicide Prevention youtube videos
- NSSF and Project CHILD SAFW
- just verbal explanation of outreach help
- Boston police best program/ peer support
- Along with safe storage
- Information on back of LTC
- Being alert to possible signs
- Training material received through Air Force
- Handouts from GOAL about firearms safety and suicide prevention
- personal experience as a p.o.
- Add on from MPTC
- Discussion in class, provide hotline info.
- MPTC
- Several other valid sources
- S.P. handout from recert. class.
- Own custom slide
- A combination of MCOPA with our own points added
- Walk the Talk America
- I cover the Suicide hotline and review if you are not in a good mental state to leave firearms alone and call a friend.
- Other info from time as EMT
- Department of Public Health Suicide Prevention Model contained in the BFS101 program / Mass Chiefs LTC001 program. Here at MPI, we co-authored the suicide prevention module, along with The Harvard School of Public Health, Suicide Prevention Department and DPH.
- WTTA flyer and slides
- Verbal (Training and Experience)
- mass media articles
- Mass chiefs powerpoint
- Goal
- I explain how to reach out for help and to remove firearms from the home
- Paper information sheet.
- Military/LE Experience
- Hold my Guns materials
- Discussion
- MPTC material
- Data I have found on the internet.
- VA Shicide prevention
- S2 Alpha developed materials
- MDPH Handout

- NHFS

### **Suggestions for revisions to Utah slides for Massachusetts (n=133)**

- I think making a connection between a slide and real situations is imperative and helps connect the information to something real. I would not remove any of the material because it's 15 slides. I'd say 15 slides can be easily worked into current teaching however more than that would probably be too much considering the number of slides we are already required to cover. Plus there will need to be time for questions, answers and participant engagement. This could easily add another 30min to the overall course, however I believe it's a worthy module to add.
- none
- Make it applicable to people in our state
- I think it was fine
- I believe it covered everything
- make sure it's not a way of their losing their guns or any other stigma
- Get rid of all other classes except NRA classes, as they are the gold standard of safety and the others are trash.
- Unfortunately, In Ma. many licensed gun owners are already leery of government activity regarding firearm possession. .
- Nothing else
- Create a safe harbor law and eliminate red flag laws or no one that I know would ever admit to feeling suicidal in this state.
- Let students know that suicidal people will use any means necessary when they have the urge to kill themselves, guns are only one way they may do that.
- Not part of safe handling course
- couldn't access Utah info
- None
- n/a
- See above answer as to mental health license and liability.
- Good Material
- Not sure
- didn't see slides
- Keep it simple OK look at those look
- nothing further, I am not licensed for such advice.
- Ideas on how to approach an individual
- do not make it longer
- Instructors being able to teach other curriculums than the nra one
- Differentiation between the voluntary and involuntary treatment of depression/mental illnesses and its impact on ones ability to obtain or retain a license.
- not make it mandatory
- Cover the Red Flag law
- Data from Mass, local contact information and available resources.
- Three screening questions. If you (the student) are concerned that someone is at risk for suicide, ask three questions. First, about ideation: "Have you recently thought about killing yourself?" Second, about planning, "Do you have a plan for how you would kill yourself if you decided to do that?" Third, about behavior, "Have you done anything, such as gather items you would need, to get your plan ready to go?" Persons who have already begun acting

on their plans need emergency psychiatric intervention AND reduced access to ALL lethal means, not just firearms.

- Think it looks good as is
- Idk Utah slides
- More information on rules of engagement when it comes to when to use the firearm in different scenarios
- I think it is good as-is. Maybe use national data as well. Or demographics data.
- make known that just because you intervene with a possible suicidal; person, doesn't mean firearms license would be revoked
- none
- Standardized
- keep basically the same
- Slides look good!
- Undecided
- Those of us that take this subject seriously I feel cover it well. But i'm willing to listen
- Add a preventive personal story
- Free storage at local PD
- Expand information regarding the mental health of the state/country, leading causes of suicide NOT the leading tools used
- Unsure. I like to add things as I gain experience and research on my own
- Do not feel it is firearms instructor job. It is a mental health professionals job
- Develop hand outs with contact information for reference later on if need be.
- Mass statutes regarding transfer of firearms from one LTC to another in this scenario
- video presentation
- I believe current MA laws make "safe harbor" difficult.
- I don't think MA should add anything
- See answer above regarding Mental Health First Aid information.
- Don't use
- None
- If this is going to be a requirement in our classes then it needs to be in hand out that we can give the students because there is already a lot they have to demonstrate and remember.
- Provide an understanding of who is responsible for what (Licensed owner) and how they need to also educate their family and friends.
- Local resources for emotional health.
- State supplied psychiatrist
- People who may be in crisis doesn't make them a bad person. They should be afforded professional attention.
- Add info on legal implications
- Prevention tips
- Less regulation
- None
- stat on male vs female, attempts and sadly success stat
- Task mental health professionals not gun safety instructors.
- Important State Laws regarding Firearms
- No changes
- Never saw Utah slides

- Specific info with certified local resources
- The Utah slides seem sufficient in length and scope
- Add new suicide hot line number
- not sure
- Utah is fine
- Keep it the same
- Don't require licensing. It's unconstitutional.
- Links to other available MA resources and pages
- specific steps to take beyond just offering to take keys. Maybe a short discussion about strategy to increase familiarity with uncomfortable situation
- The balance of Utah's information and # of slides seemed good.
- It really needs to be state specific in regards to pressures and issues in MA. it has to address the unique triggers people might miss in MA.
- I would not support any further 'state mandated' training material.
- no changes needed
- The 3rd slide shows a graph of suicide and homicide deaths by all methods. This should be changed to showing only suicide and homicide deaths by firearms to make it more relevant
- N/A
- unsure
- I would not change anything except MA info
- N/A for me at this time
- I would like to see live fire as a requirement! We often get people that have gotten their license and ask us how to use their firearm because they have never shot before ?
- don't know...slide show wouldn't open
- It reads like a scare tactic. As if gun ownership leads to suicide or is a mental illness
- Discuss Red Flag laws and their use and long term effects.
- See above.
- It seems very well presented
- None
- Make it a pamphlet we hand out
- Don't know
- Looks fine as is
- MA stats , Ages of people
- Looks good to me
- Non partisan Facts
- leave unchanged
- how to have a difficult conversation
- Fix typos
- More data
- refer to professional health care providers only.
- Generally very good. More condensed. Hit the major points. Short attention span of students!
- Realizing that is a real issue and they are not alone and there is no shame in acknowledging that this is a serious issue. I believe this is a strong responsibility of us as instructors we are the keepers of the gate if someone doesn't look stable it looks like they may be in need of help it is up to us to stop that in a kind way We have done that in the past.
- make sure it is accurate, not activist gun control

- I'm not sure at this time.
- I'm not sure. Regarding suicide I don't feel that I am a mental health professional and I don't feel I should be covering that topic. This is a basic safety course designed to help people know how to handle guns safely
- None
- I should be required to give information that should be coming from a trained expert, since I am not one and do not want extra liability on my part
- keep as is
- I see too many people who cannot rack a slide and make a gun safe. The instructor needs to be held responsible.
- Unknown
- none
- More hands-on training and to qualify with the firearm as they do in RI.
- The more information is always btr
- Focus on firearms security
- None.....Not relevant
- don't cover
- looks good
- more info on the red flag laws
- If you show video no need to duplicate in slides.
- Responsibility once you determine a person is a risk.
- I would like to see ONLY course with live fire to be required for your LTC. Being issued a LTC after watching a video and/or a 4hr course and having a LTC and the ability to purchase firearms and ammunition without ever firing a single round is in my opinion is irresponsible.
- Provide local (by state) organizations/programs for help
- Nothing
- Needs to focus on destigmatizing mental health issues. People will never reach out or accept help if they feel they will be seen as broken
- unknown
- The topic of suicide prevention is far reaching and important and must be delivered with sincerity and knowledge. Firearms are commonly used in suicide and access is the number one reason. I don't know if it needs to be a longer segment, but it must be inclusive and pertinent.
- No changes.
- It's on point-the data is important
- Currently I use a personal story about suicide.
- It's about right