

## A Mother's Story

My son, Cody Alan Hietpas, was born June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1994. He was an avid hunter, outdoorsman, and captain of his hockey team. He had a 3.5 GPA and already had plans to go on to trade school to work



on small engines and play hockey. Most of all he was my baby boy, my best friend. He had his whole life ahead of him... So why did HE choose to end his life? That is the question our family asks every day.

At 16, Cody had numerous concussions from sports and his adolescent brain made his ability to cope with teen relationship stress too much for him to deal with.

Sadly, Cody did reach out, but no one believed the boy with the infectious smile and "can do" attitude would ever hurt himself. The night of April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011, Cody took the gun he used for hunting from our unlocked safe and took his own life.

**That is not where Cody's story ends.** Since his death, Cody's friends have shared how Cody helped them through his life and his death. Please be kind, seek help for others and keep your home safe.

### **FIREARM STORAGE OPTIONS** *(if offsite storage is not possible)*

- Store firearms in a locked gun safe.
- Keep ammunition locked in a separate place. Place keys in a different location or outside of the home.
- Use trigger locks. Locks with a combination are recommended over key locks. Keep combination number/key in a private, secure spot.
- Make sure homes your child visits do not have unlocked guns.

### **MEDICATION DISPOSAL**

- When disposing medication: put all pills together in a sealable plastic bag, recycle bottles, put caps in garbage.
- Dispose of unused medication as soon as possible at one of the following medication drop off sites:  
**Police Departments:** Appleton, Brillion, Calumet Co. Sheriff, Menasha, Neenah, Seymour, New London, New Holstein, Oshkosh, Fox Crossing

### **SUPPORT RESOURCES**

- [www.centerforsuicideawareness.org](http://www.centerforsuicideawareness.org)
- [www.youthsuicidewarningsigns.org](http://www.youthsuicidewarningsigns.org)
- [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org) (search "teen communication")
- [www.211now.org](http://www.211now.org) counseling services
- Free emotional support text-line for you or your child: text **HOPELINE** to 741741

Credits: Adapted by the Winnebago County Health Department from The Center to Prevent Youth Violence, Harvard Injury Control Research Center, CALM Project, The Program for Injury Prevention, Education & Research (PIPER) at the Colorado School of Public Health, Children's Hospital Colorado, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment's Office of Suicide Prevention, and the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Colorado School of Medicine.

*Simple steps can help protect your child.*

# Safe-Guard Your Home

## A Guide to Youth Suicide Prevention at Home



[centerforsuicideawareness.org](http://centerforsuicideawareness.org)

## How to Safe-Guard Your Home

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

### STORE FIREARMS AWAY FROM HOME

- Ask a trusted family member/friend to keep them temporarily until YOU (not your child) ask for them back.
- Call your local police department to see if they offer temporary storage.
- If you cannot store out of the home, store safely and securely. (see storage options)

### LOCK MEDICATIONS

- Store **all** medications in the home, including over the counter medicine like Tylenol and Aspirin, in a lock box in a private place.
- Directly watch your child take any medicine.
- Dispose of unused medications. (see disposal options)

### PROVIDE SUPPORT

- Learn about mental health in youth.
- Pay attention to your child's moods and behaviors. Listen without interrupting.
- If you notice changes, ask them if they're thinking about suicide. **Asking will NOT put the thought in their head.**
- If you think your child is in danger, call 911 or take them to the nearest emergency room. For a non-urgent consultation, work with your primary care doctor to make a referral for mental health help.

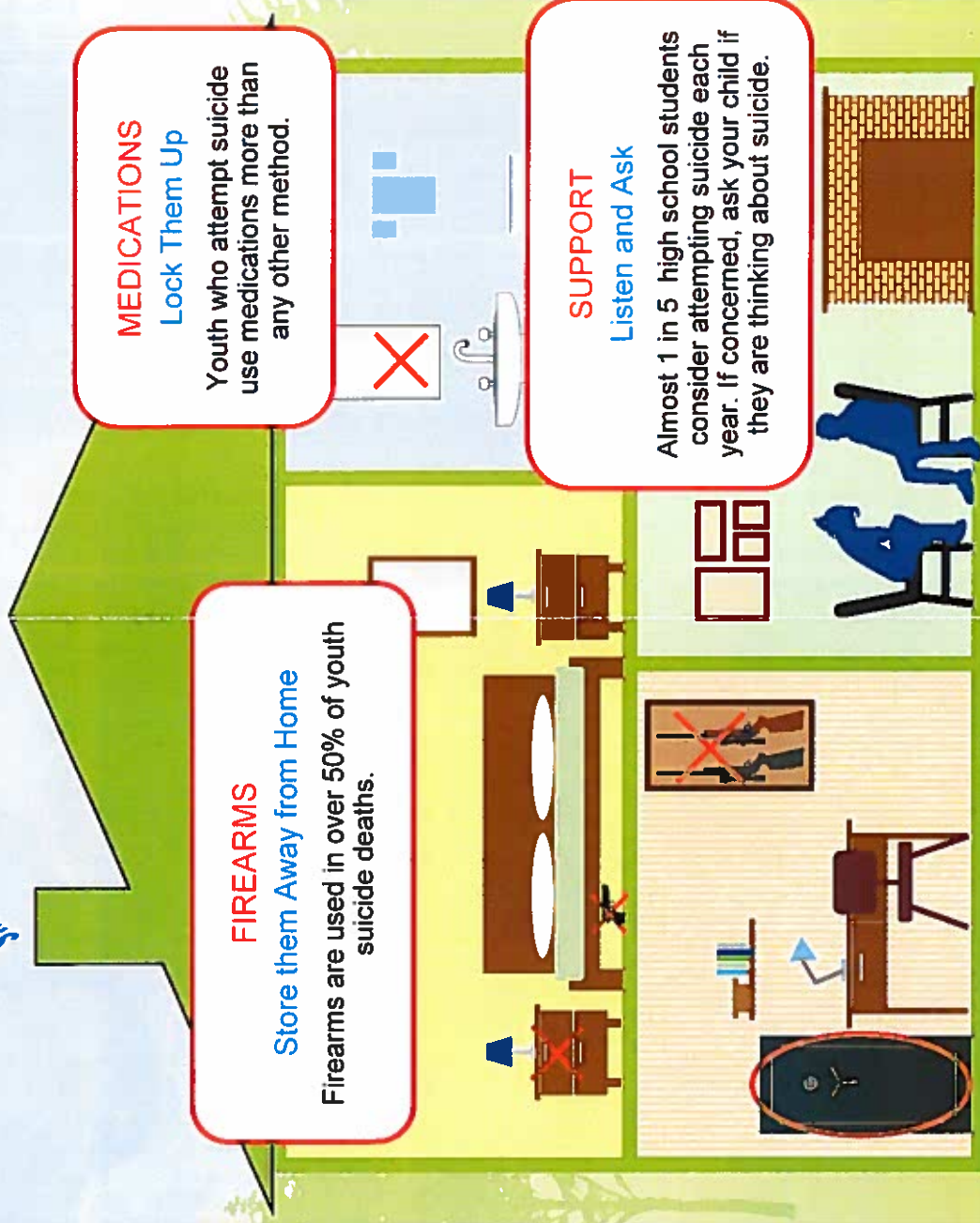
### LOCAL CRISIS HELPLINES: 24/7 Support

Winnebago Co. 920-233-7707 or 920-722-7707

Outagamie Co. 920-832-4646 or 800-719-4418

Calumet Co. 920-849-9317

Simple steps can help protect your child.



### FIREARMS

Store them Away from Home

Firearms are used in over 50% of youth suicide deaths.

### MEDICATIONS

Lock Them Up

Youth who attempt suicide use medications more than any other method.

### SUPPORT

Listen and Ask

Almost 1 in 5 high school students consider attempting suicide each year. If concerned, ask your child if they are thinking about suicide.

HELP IS AVAILABLE.....➔

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

24/7 free & confidential

1-800-273-TALK (8255)