It surprises many to find out that a firearm is more likely to be used to complete a suicide than a homicide. Suicide is a significant public health problem in Shasta County, annually causing an average of 34 deaths and 108 hospitalizations.

Consistently, Shasta County has a suicide death rate that is more than twice the rate of California. Suicide is the seventh leading cause of death in Shasta County.

The Relationship between Firearms and the Risk for Suicide

- Research indicates that there is a direct correlation between firearm availability and the risk for suicide.
- Firearms have a high degree of lethality. Over 90% of suicide attempts with guns result in death, where less than 5% of attempts with poisoning result in death.
- In the first year after purchase of a handgun, suicide is the leading cause of death among handgun purchasers.
- Households where a gun is present are five times more likely to experience a suicide than homes where a gun is not present.
- From 2002 to 2006, 79% of all gun deaths in the Shasta County resulted from suicide, followed by homicide (14%), legal intervention (4%) and unintentional deaths (3%).

Suicide Fast Facts

- 59% of Shasta County suicides were completed with firearms.
- Three quarters of the firearm related deaths in Shasta County were suicides.
- According to the 2001 California Health Interview Survey, 49% of Shasta County adult respondents reported having firearms in or around the home.
- A gun kept in the home is 11 times more likely to be used to attempt suicide than to be used in self defense.
SUICIDE Prevention
Quick Facts

Keep your Firearm Safe
Keeping your gun locked and unloaded, and storing ammunition in a locked box and separate from your guns can help protect you, your family, and especially children from an unintentional firearm injury and suicide attempts.

Unwanted Firearms
If you or a loved one possesses firearms which you no longer wish to be responsible for, or you want more information about gun safety, please call one of the law enforcement agencies listed below. They can offer instructions or advice on free disposal of unwanted guns.

- Shasta County Sheriff’s Office: 245-6164
- Redding Police Department: 225-4200
- Anderson Police Department: 378-6600

Resources
Suicide Help Lines
- Shasta County Helpline: 225-5252
- Eastern Shasta County: 1-800-852-5252
- National Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK

Suicide Help Lines
- Shasta County Public Health
  2660 Breslauer Way, Redding CA 96001
- For more information, call 229-8426
  www.shastapublichealth.net

Recognize the Signs of Depression and Possible Suicide Risk

Talking about Dying: mention of dying, disappearing, jumping, shooting oneself, or other types of self-harm.

Recent Loss: death of a loved one; divorce, separation or broken relationship; loss of job, money, status, self-esteem or self-confidence; loss of religious faith, legal problems.

Change in Personality: sad, withdrawn, irritable, anxious, tired, indecisive, apathetic or loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed.

Change in Behavior: can’t concentrate on school, work, routine tasks.

Low Self-Esteem: feeling worthless, shame, self-hatred or overwhelming guilt, “everyone would be better off without me.”

No Hope for the Future: believing that things will never get better; that nothing will ever change.