

September 17, 2021

The Honorable Lauren Underwood

U.S. House of Representatives

1130 Longworth House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Underwood:

The undersigned organizations are writing to express our strong support for the *Child Suicide Prevention and Lethal Means Safety Act* (H.R.5035), to support training and resources for youth suicide prevention and lethal means safety.

Suicide is a major public health issue. A leading cause of death for the entire population, suicide is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for individuals aged 10-34.<sup>1</sup> Recent reporting from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention found that emergency department visits for suicide attempts among adolescents aged 12-17 increased significantly during the pandemic, including a spike of more than 50 percent among adolescent girls.<sup>2</sup>

Lethal means safety is crucial for suicide prevention – individuals who reduce their access to lethal means during times of heightened risk reduce their risk of dying by suicide. Over 51% of all suicides are by firearm and 90% of firearm suicide attempts are fatal.<sup>3</sup> By providing important resources for youth suicide prevention and lethal means safety education training for healthcare providers, the *Child Suicide Prevention and Lethal Means Safety Act* will provide much needed support for youth in need and help mitigate incidences of lethal means injury and death.

We applaud your commitment to supporting youth suicide prevention, to ensure that healthcare professionals are adequately equipped to best respond to the needs of young patients. We pledge our support to help you move this important legislation through Congress.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Association for Psychoanalysis in  
Clinical Social Work

American Association of Child and Adolescent  
Psychiatry

American Dance Therapy Association

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

American Mental Health Counselors  
Association

American Psychiatric Association

American Psychological Association

Anxiety and Depression Association of America

Association for Ambulatory Behavioral  
Healthcare

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<sup>1</sup> American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: [Suicide Data – National Fact Sheet](#)

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Emergency Department Visits for Suspected Suicide Attempts Among Persons Aged 12–25 Years Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, January 2019–May 2021](#)

<sup>3</sup> American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: [An Introduction to Firearms and Suicide Prevention](#)

Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness

Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Children's Hospital Association

Confederation of Independent Psychoanalytic Societies

Education Development Center

Families USA

Girls Inc.

Jed Foundation, The

Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance

Mental Health America

National Association of County Behavioral Health & Developmental Disability Directors (NACBHDD)

National Association for Rural Mental Health (NARMH)

National Alliance on Mental Illness

National Association For Behavioral Healthcare

National Association for Children's Behavioral Health

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of Social Workers

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

National Health Law Program

National League for Nursing

Postpartum Support International

Sandy Hook Promise

SMART Recovery

The Kennedy Forum

The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health

The Trevor Project

Well Being Trust