



Walk the Talk America Toolkit

 @walkthetalkUS  @walkthetalkUS  @walkthetalkUS  @WalkTheTalkAmerica



Foreword

Walk the Talk America is a non-profit 501(c)(3) dedicated to bridging the gap between mental health and responsible gun ownership. Our mission is to enhance the perception of mental health among gun owners while elevating the standard of mental health care within this community. Walk the Talk America is uniquely positioned as an organization that integrates the wisdom of gun-owning mental health professionals, offering innovative solutions derived from real-world experiences.

We have a lot of work to do, as currently, many gun owners feel like they have to choose between getting professional tending to their mental health and being a gun owner. We've heard many stories of gun owners seeking out mental health support and having their Second Amendment rights compromised. Walk the Talk America (WTTA) believes in a world with guns AND mental health, not guns OR mental health.

We hope you join us in breaking the stigmas about mental health and guns by sharing some of our content in this toolkit and spreading the word about Walk the Talk America.



Mike Sodini
CEO of Walk the Talk America

Introduction

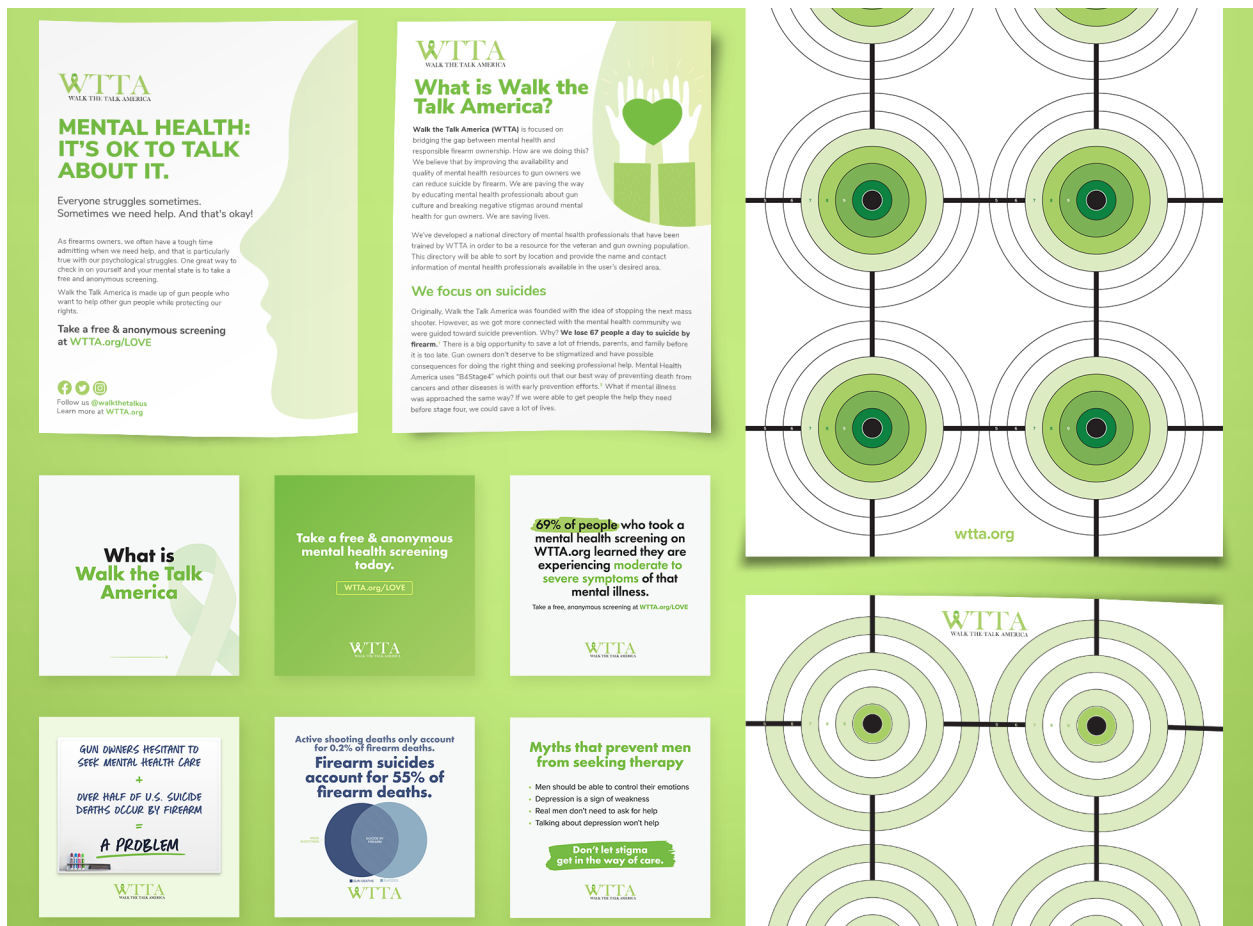
Thank you for downloading Walk the Talk America's toolkit! This toolkit gives you access to our most popular flyers, social media posts, key statistics, and more!

IN THIS DOCUMENT

- Key Statistics 3
- What is Responsible Storage? 4
- How To Help 5
- Social Media Posts 6
- Additional Resources 9

IN THE .ZIP TOOLKIT

- "What is WTTA?" Flyer
- Mental Health Flyer (English & Spanish)
- Responsible Storage Flyer
- Mental Health Plan
- Shooting Targets
- Social Media Images



Key Statistics

Walk the Talk America was originally founded to stop the next mass shooter. However, as we got more connected with the mental health community, we were guided toward suicide prevention. Why? We lose approximately 74 people a day to suicide by firearm. There is a big opportunity to save a lot of friends, parents, and family before it is too late. Gun owners don't deserve to be stigmatized and have possible consequences for doing the right thing and seeking professional help.

HOW PREVALENT ARE GUNS IN THE UNITED STATES?

According to Pew Research, 42% of adults in the U.S. own a gun or live with someone who does.

2022 SUICIDE STATISTICS (CDC.GOV)

Total number of suicides: 49,476
Total number of suicides with a firearm: 27,032
In other words, approximately 55% of all suicides are suicide by firearm.

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE KILLED IN MASS SHOOTINGS IN THE U.S. EVERY YEAR?

According to Pew Research:

"This is a difficult question to answer because there is no single, agreed-upon definition of the term "mass shooting." Definitions can vary depending on factors, including the number of victims and the circumstances of the shooting.

...

The Gun Violence Archive, an online database of gun violence incidents in the U.S., defines mass shootings as incidents in which four or more people are shot, even if no one was killed (again excluding the shooters)."

Using this definition, 655 people died in these incidents in 2023.

Pew Research continues, "Regardless of the definition being used, fatalities in mass shooting incidents in the U.S. account for a small fraction of all gun murders that occur nationwide each year."

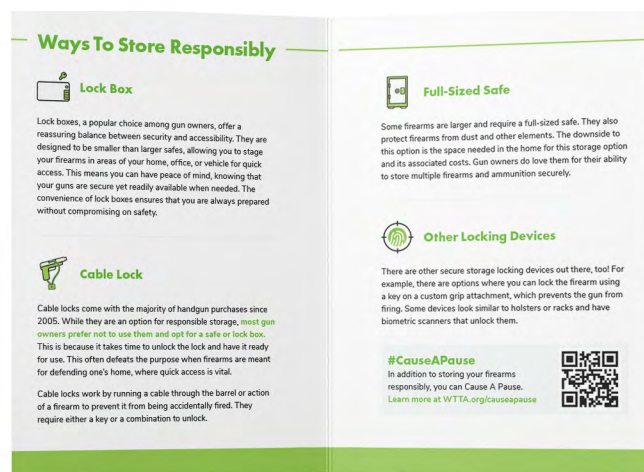
What is Responsible Storage?

Many people assume that Walk the Talk America supports restriction. That couldn't be further from the truth. We believe in education, responsible storage, and improving the quality of mental healthcare for gun owners. What is responsible storage?

Responsible storage prevents unauthorized access. Each gun owner defines who is unauthorized for their home. It can mean preventing access to young children, guests, and potential thieves. It can also mean preventing access from themselves in a crisis by asking a loved one to change the safe code or by other means. Responsible storage is often carried out best by storing or staging your firearms in a safe or other locking device. Responsible storage is a big one because we know access matters. Storing firearms responsibly can prevent negative outcomes with firearms like suicide.

Throughout our history working with healthcare organizations, we felt that some of these groups didn't have realistic options for storing responsibly. For example, storing firearms and ammunition separately and using cable locks are not options for many gun owners. We want gun owners to pick the responsible storage option that makes sense for them and their homes while also seeing the importance of storing responsibly. Most importantly, however you decide to store your firearm, practice accessing it as often as you train with it.

Going hand in hand with responsible storage is our Cause A Pause initiative. This effort encourages gun owners to put a photo or symbol that would cause them to pause during an impulsive act and is a tool in suicide prevention.



How To Help

For Everyone

- Share our information with other gun owners and mental health professionals
- Talk to your local gun shops and gun ranges about including our flyer at their location
- Share our content on social media this month and every month
- Be there for friends and family who may need support
- Store your firearms responsibly
- [Donate](#) to our cause

For Gun Ranges and Shops

- Include our [shooting targets](#) in your store and donate \$1 for every one sold to WTTA
- Include our flyer with our free and anonymous mental health screening information on your counters
- Promote responsible storage, which prevents unauthorized access by storing or staging your firearms responsibly

For Mental Health Professionals

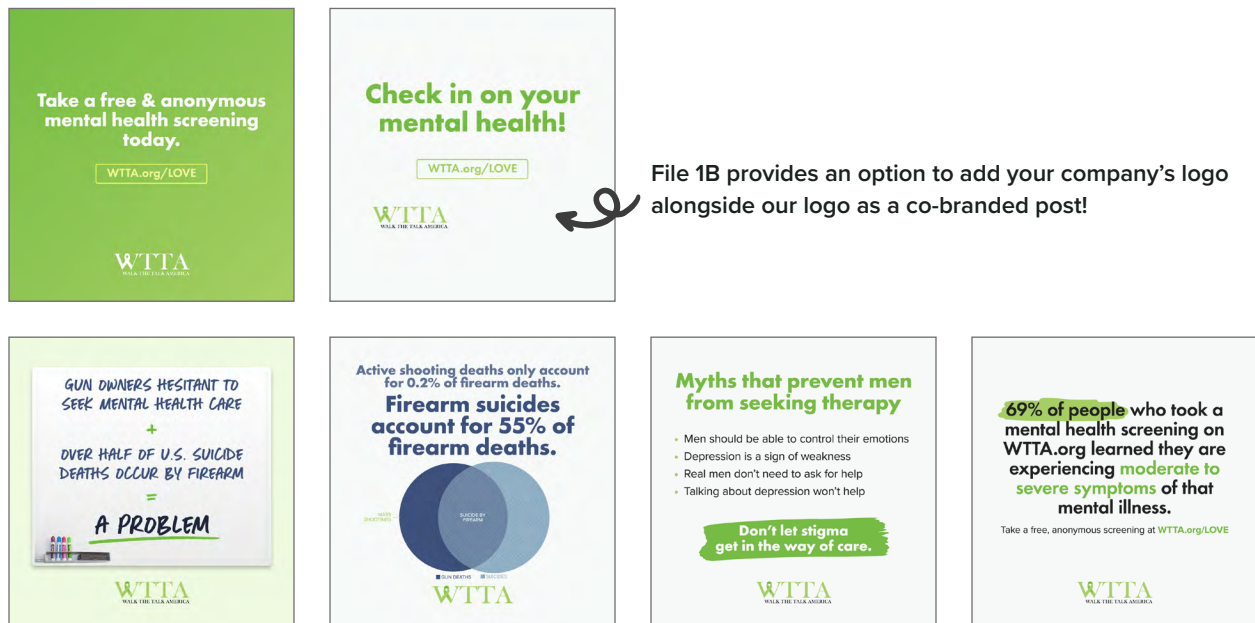
- Take our [cultural competence course](#) either through our partner CASAT which provides accreditation, or free on our website and apply for credits yourself
- Spread the news about our cultural competence courses to your colleagues
- [Join our directory](#) for mental health providers that took at least the first level of our course and is wanting to be a resource for gun owners

Social Media Posts

Below is a preview of the social media content available in our toolkit ZIP file. Please refer to that for all full-sized images. We have also provided caption options on the following page if you need them. If you want to put something instead, go for it! We know these posts are tough on sensitive topics, so feel free to post the ones you are comfortable with.

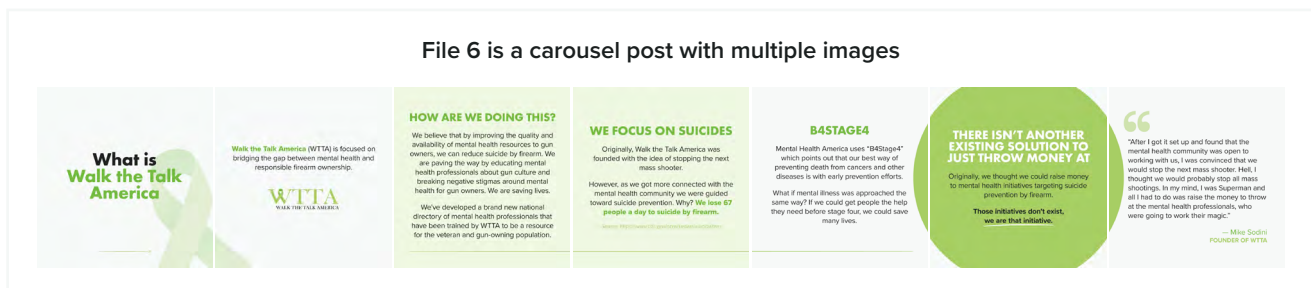
Shareable Post Images

For all social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram



File 1B provides an option to add your company's logo alongside our logo as a co-branded post!

File 6 is a carousel post with multiple images



Suggested Post Captions

1. **Note: File 1B provides an option to add your company's logo alongside our logo as a co-branded post.**

When did you last check in on your mental health? On average, 3 people a day take a free and anonymous mental health screening on Walk the Talk America's website.

2. Many gun owners feel they can't seek professional mental health help because their Second Amendment rights might be compromised. Walk the Talk America is bringing awareness to this issue and looking to improve mental health services for gun owners further.

3. Mass shootings are awful events that everyone wants to prevent. Originally, Walk the Talk America chose that as the primary goal. However, WTTA learned that there wasn't a simple solution to prevent these horrific events and was pushed by people, including mental health experts, to focus on suicide. Why?

According to the 2022 CDC data, 48,204 people were killed by firearms. We lost 27,032 to suicide by firearm in 2022. According to the FBI, there were 100 individuals killed in an active shooter incident in the same time period. Active shooting deaths account for .207% of the deaths by firearm in 2022. If we focused on improving mental health care for gun owners and suicide prevention, who knows, we just might prevent a future mass shooting.

#GunsAndMentalHealth

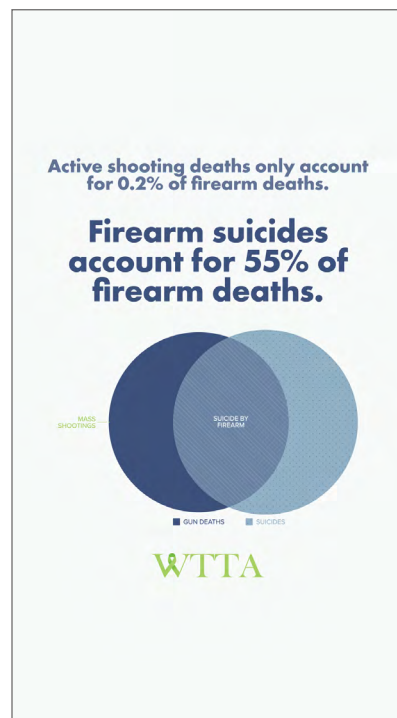
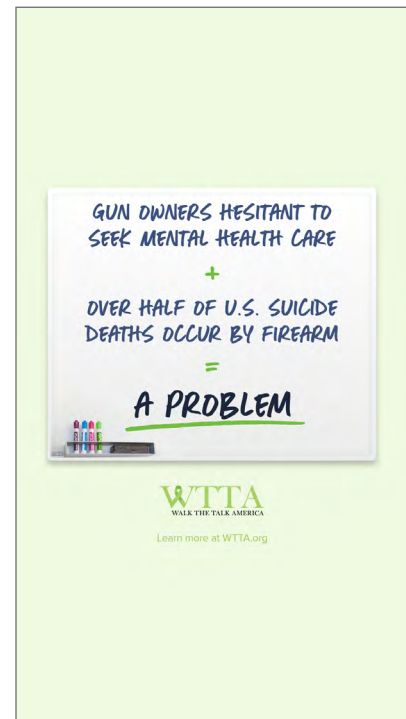
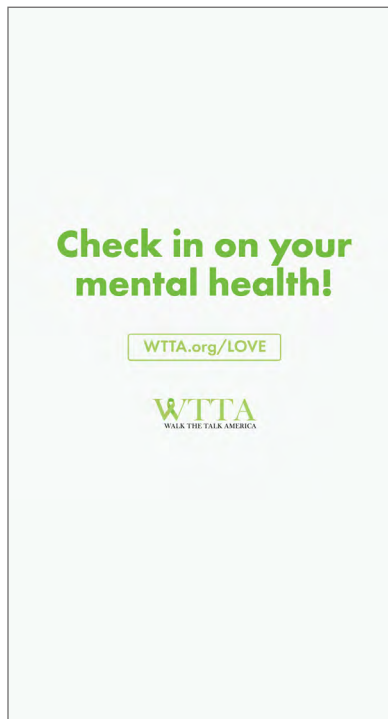
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Active shooting data from 'Active Shooter Incidents in the United States in 2022' FBI. [fbi.gov/file-repository/active-shooter-incidents-in-the-us-2022-042623.pdf/view](https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/active-shooter-incidents-in-the-us-2022-042623.pdf/view).

Firearm suicide and firearm mortality data from National Vital Statistics System – Mortality Data (2022) CDC. [cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/suicide.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/suicide.htm)

4. Men have negative stigmas around mental health, and Walk the Talk America wants to bring awareness to these myths to let men know it is ok not to be ok.
5. Walk the Talk America only gets a summary of the data for all screenings taken on our site. The data shows that if you think it might be a good idea to check in on your mental health, you're often right! Spread this link to help someone check in on their mental health. wttta.org/love
6. Often, people don't fully understand what Walk the Talk America does, so we made this carousel of images to help explain! #GunsAndMentalHealth

Instagram and Facebook Story Images



Additional Resources

24/7 Resources

[MHA Screening](#): Online screening is one of the quickest and easiest ways to determine if you're experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition. Our screens are free, confidential, and scientifically validated.

[988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#): The 988 Lifeline provides 24/7, free, and confidential support to people in distress – you don't need to be suicidal to reach out. Call 1-800-273-8255 to be connected with a crisis counselor. Crisis counselors who speak Spanish are available at 1-888-628-9454.

[988 Textline](#): When you text 988, you will complete a short survey letting the crisis counselor know a little about your situation. You will be connected with a trained crisis counselor in a crisis center who will answer the text, provide support, and share resources if needed.

[Crisis Text Line](#): If you prefer texting to talking on the phone, text MHA to 741-741 to be connected with a crisis counselor who will help you get through your emotions.

[Warmlines](#): Warmlines are staffed by trained peers who have been through their own mental health struggles and know what it's like to need someone to talk to. [Visit here](#) for more information on warmlines.

WTTA's Other Resources

[National Healthcare Provider Directory](#): This resource is for all gun owners, including law enforcement and veterans. Browse our catalog of 2A-friendly mental health providers. Every provider listed has taken and completed at least one level of WTTA's firearms cultural competence course.

[Firearms Cultural Competence Classes](#): Mental health clinicians can improve their understanding of firearms culture with At the Intersection of Guns and Mental Health, a three-part course. The first two parts are available on our website for free. You can also take part one via [CASAT Learning](#) to earn continuing education credits.