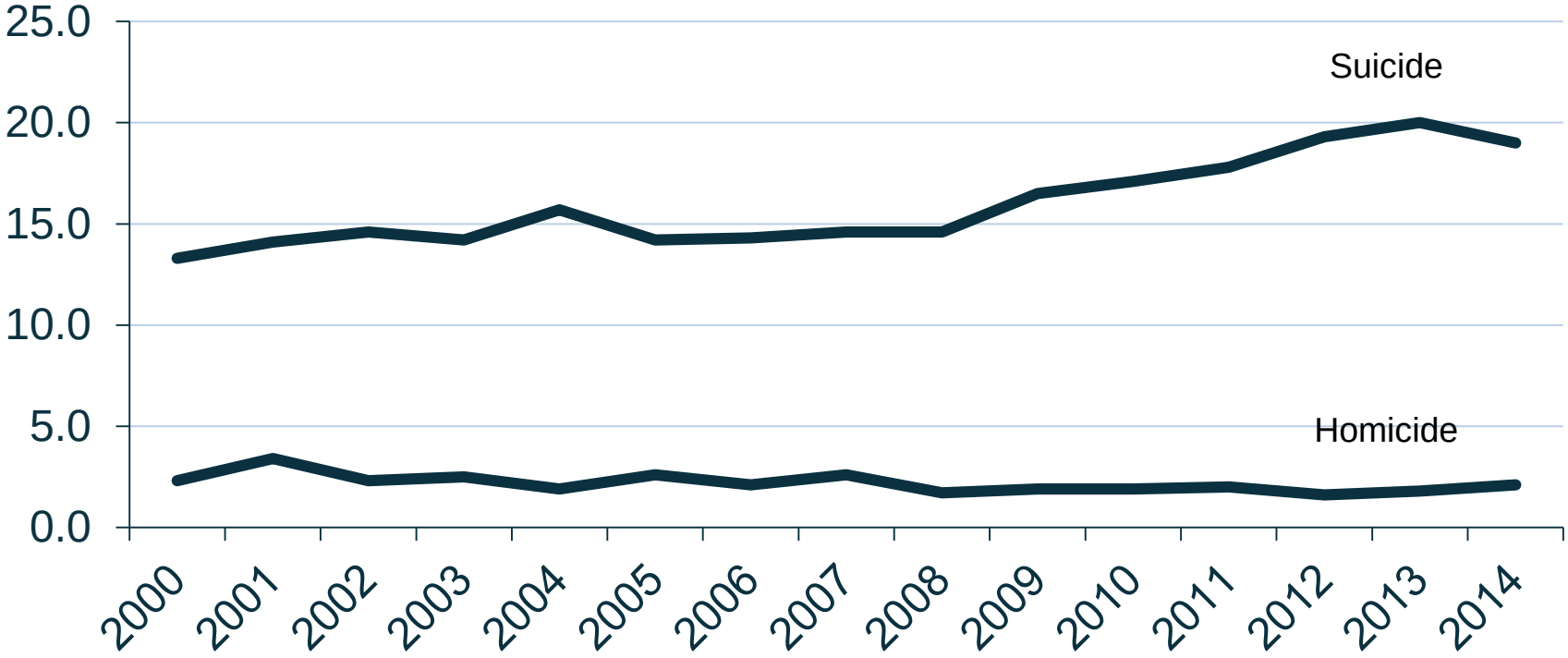
IS YOUR SAFETY ON?

Firearm Suicide Prevention

A brief module for Utah concealed carry classes.

Protecting your family involves more than keeping them safe from accident or attack.

Utah Suicide & Homicide Rates



Rates are the number of deaths for every 100,000 people in Utah. The graph includes suicides and homicides by all methods. In 2014, 50% of suicides and 59% of homicides in UT were by firearms.

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Utah Firearm Deaths, 2010-2014

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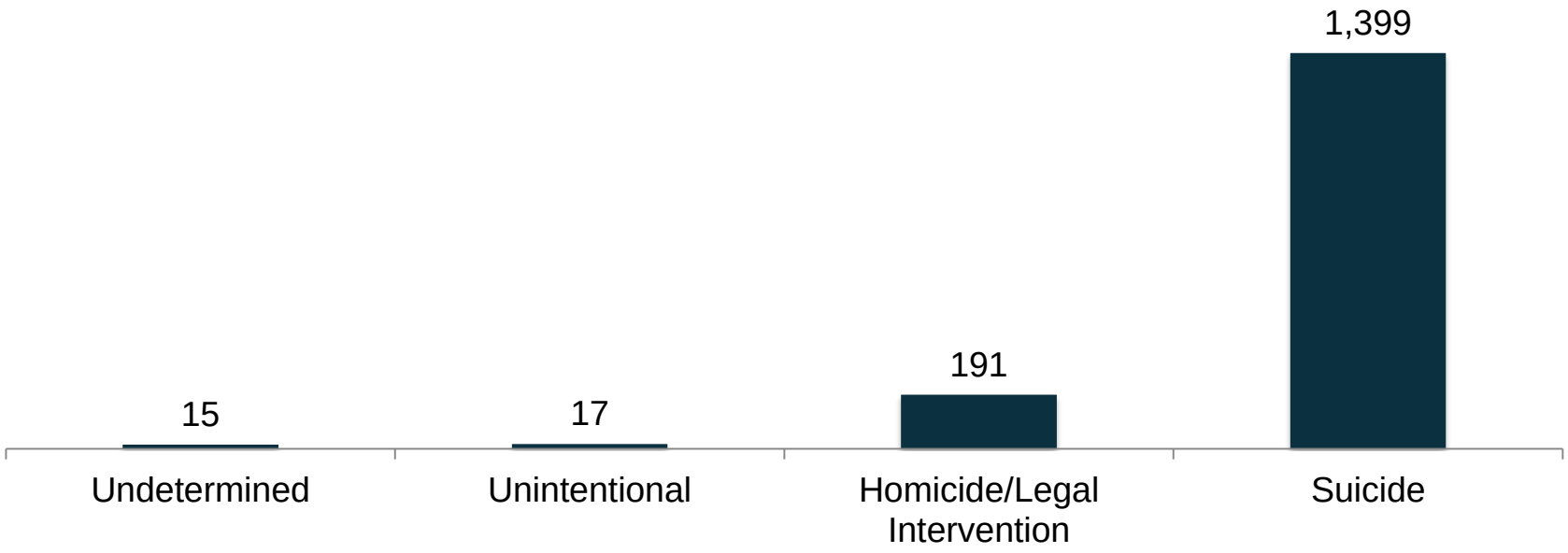
86% of firearm deaths in Utah are suicides.



Source: CDC WONDER website (official mortality data)

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Time & Distance

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Putting time & distance between a suicidal person and a gun may save a life.

- But won’t they just substitute another method?
- Some may, but nearly anything else is less likely to kill.
- Others may delay their attempt.
- Either way, the odds of survival go up, for three reasons…

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Why means matter

IS YOUR SAFETY ON?

1. Suicidal crises are often brief.
2. The deadliness of an attempt depends in part on the method used.
3. 90% of those who attempt suicide and survive don’t go on to kill themselves.

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Suicidal Crises

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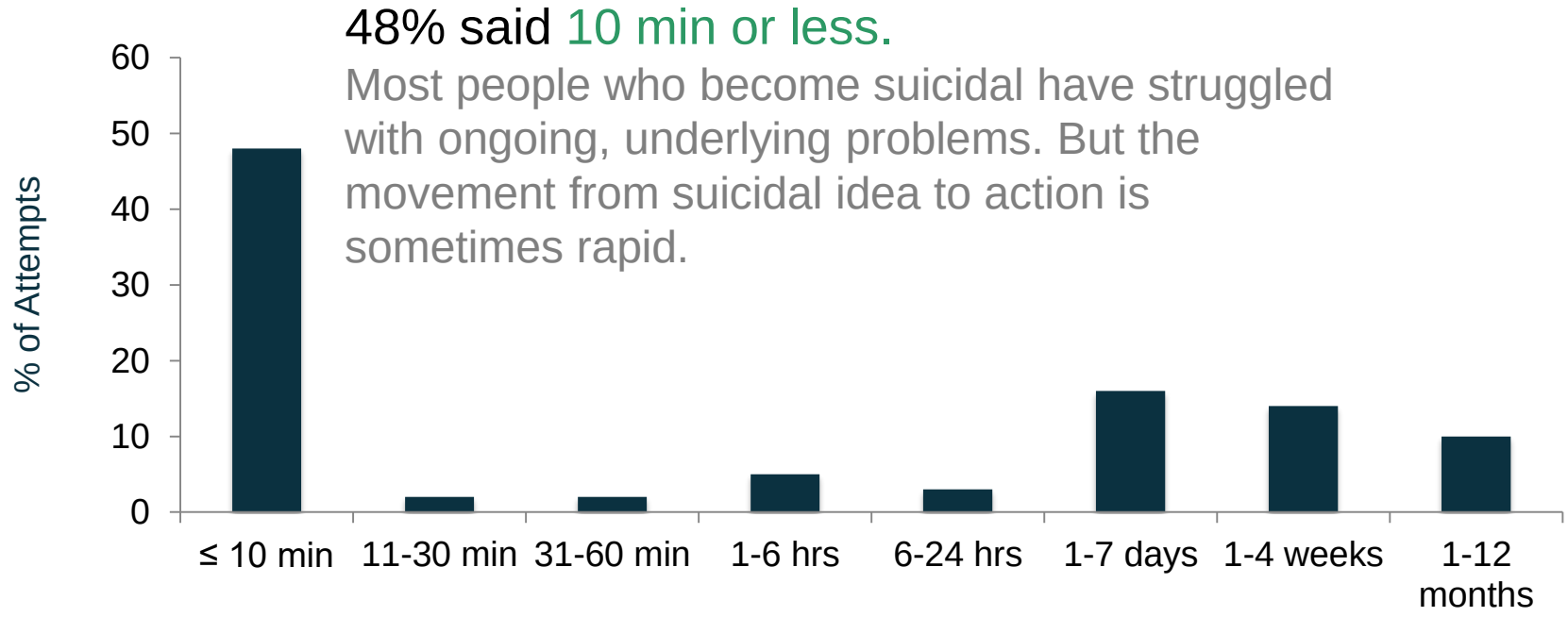
People admitted to a hospital after an attempt were asked how long they'd been thinking about suicide before the attempt.



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Protecting One Another

- **Having access to a firearm during a suicidal crisis increases the odds that an attempter will die.**
- **We can protect one another. Be alert to signs of suicide in friends and family.**
- **If someone is at risk, help keep guns from them until they recover.**
- **It’s like holding on to a friend’s keys when they’re drunk.**

Who’s at Risk of Suicide?

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- People who struggle with depression, substance abuse, or other mental health problems, especially if they’re also facing a painful crisis like a relationship break-up, arrest, trouble at work, or financial crises – problems that make you feel hopeless and trapped.
- Teens at Home? Teens who die by suicide may show few or not warning signs. A wise precaution: store all guns locked if you have children at home- especially teenagers.

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Storage Options

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- If a household member is at risk of suicide, you could store guns away from home until they've recovered (e.g., with a relative you trust, at a self-storage unit)
- Or change the locks and make sure they can't find the keys/combination.
- Another option: don't keep ammunition at home until they've recovered.
- Hiding guns isn't recommended. Family members often know one another's hiding places.
- If it's a friend at risk, offer to hold onto their guns.***

* This is allowable under Utah law but may not be under other state laws.

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What if it's You at Risk?

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- If you feel yourself spiraling down, take precautions before things get to a crisis point.
- Any strategy that builds some time between you and a gun in a suicidal crisis will keep you safer.
- Store your guns off-site temporarily, or ask someone you trust to hold onto the keys, or store keys somewhere they're not available in a crisis like a bank safe deposit box, or disassemble guns.
- These are temporary measures until you've recovered.

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IS YOUR SAFETY ON?

Under Utah's Safe Harbor law (53-5c-201), a gun owner or spouse can store their firearms free of charge with law enforcement if they believe someone at home is a danger to self or others.

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Getting Help

IS YOUR SAFETY ON?

- Utah Statewide Crisis Line: 1-801-587-3000
- National Suicide Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- In an emergency, call 911 and ask for a CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) officer
- To learn more about suicide prevention, visit utahsuicideprevention.org

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Protecting our Freedom

- Gun-owning families can bring down the number of firearm suicides.
- We can do it without government mandates.
- Together, we can protect our family, our friends, and our freedom.