

Partnering with Firearm Retailers
to Promote Secure Firearm
Storage:
Sustainment and Expansion of
The Armory Project

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Medicine



Conflict of Interests

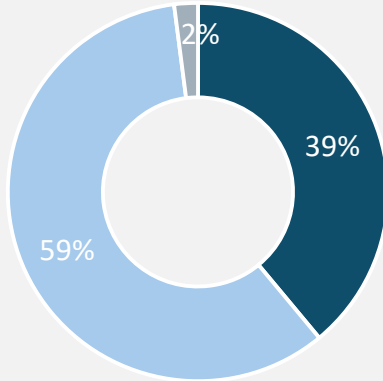
This material is the result of work supported with resources and the use of facilities at the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System in New Orleans, LA. Funding for this research was provided by U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (Health Services Research and Development Service) **INV 19-294, Office of Suicide Prevention FY22 and FY24-25 Demonstration Projects.** The contents of this presentation do not represent the views of the Department of Veterans Affairs or the U.S. Government.



Firearm Suicide is a Problem in Louisiana

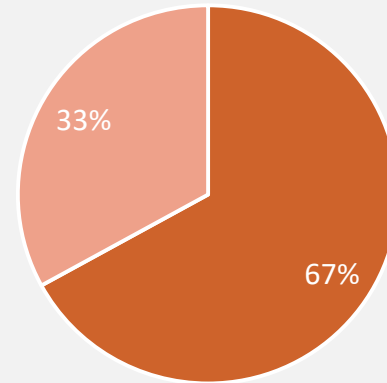
Firearm Deaths by Method

■ Suicide ■ Homicide ■ Other



Suicides by Method

■ Firearms ■ Other Methods



Firearm suicide rate for LA Veterans is **> 2x** higher than the general population

We are not the first (or only) ones in this space:

- Gun Shop Project (Means Matter & NH Firearm Safety Coalition)
- State Storage Maps (firearm retailers & law enforcement)
 - Live Today, Put It Away (Wisconsin)
 - Gun Storage Map (Colorado Firearm Safety Coalition)
 - Washington (State) Firearm Storage Map
- Pause to Protect (U of Colorado & DSPO)
 - Pierce's Pledge (non-profit with related mission)
- Hold My Guns (2A non-profit, proprietary process)



TAP Pilot 2019-2022

- Based on feedback, we decided to take a participatory action research approach
- Partnered with 3 firearm retailers (FFLs) to create a process
- Developed a Toolkit to host all the relevant SOPs, templates, and FAQs



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The armory project: Partnering with firearm retailers to promote and provide voluntary out-of-home firearm storage

Joseph I. Constans PhD^{1,2,3}  | Claire Houtsma PhD^{3,4,5,6}  | Matthew Bailey JD⁴ | Gala True PhD^{4,5,6}

Obviously, a gun store is not traditionally thought of as a place where you go to talk about mental health. But you have this brochure in front of you, and that opens [things] up ... we've had multiple conversations that are beneficial for all.

2022 Legislation addressed retailers' concerns about potential liability

- Bi-partisan legislation [HB260 \(la.gov\)](#)
- Veterans and retailer testified in support
- Passed unanimously in LA State House and Senate, signed by Governor Aug 2022
- First legislation to define FFL (Federal Firearm Licensee) and temporary hold

Key language

"Firearm hold agreement"--private transaction between a FFL and an individual firearm owner where the licensee takes physical possession of the owner's lawfully possessed firearm at the owner's request, holds the firearm for an agreed period of time, and returns the firearm to the owner according to the terms of the transaction.

Immunity from civil liability

- (except in case of unlawful conduct by FFL)

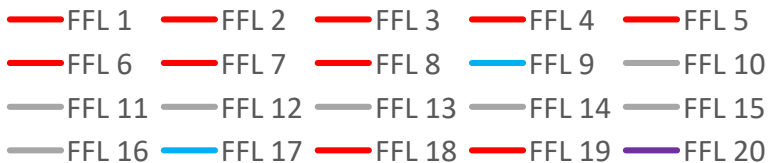
TAP Expansion and Sustainment 2023-Present:

- Expanding TAP
 - Identify FFLs in local catchment area
 - Cold calls & in person visits to build relationships
 - Onboard FFLs by training them in suicide prevention and providing resources.
 - Nurture the ongoing relationship through monthly check-ins
- Spreading the Word = Sharing TAP as a Resource with VA and Community Coalitions
 - Inform other community partners about TAP so the services can be used by those in need



We Recruited 12 New FFLs + 1 Base

Time and Effort to Recruit FFLs



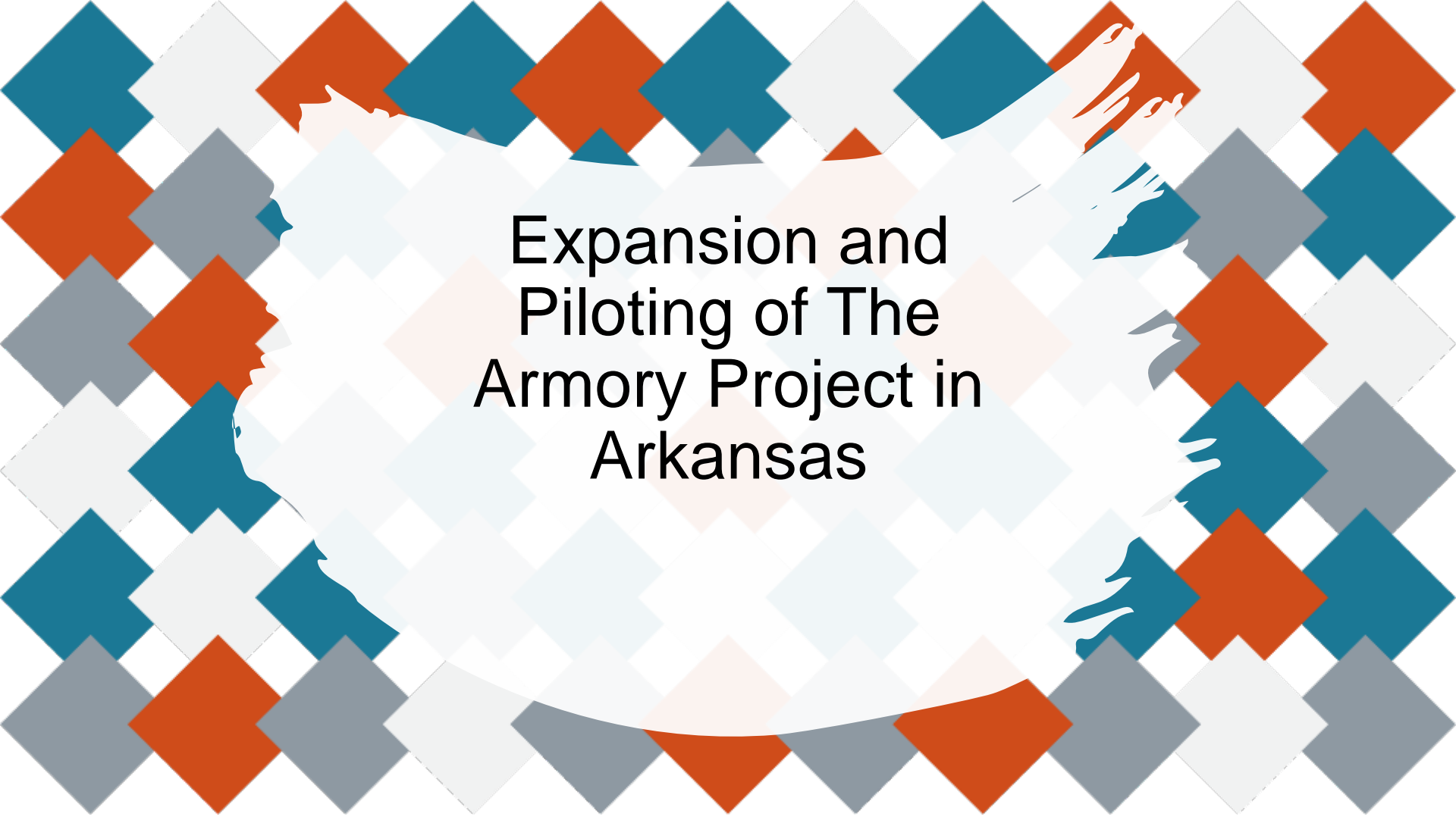
- Average Time: 100 minutes
- Average # of Contacts: 2.75
- Primary reason for refusing: storing firearms was outside the scope of their business OR failure to respond to outreach

Our FFLs:

- 10 Typical Gun Shops
- 2 Marketing Partners
- 1 military base

Components of Being a TAP Storage Partner



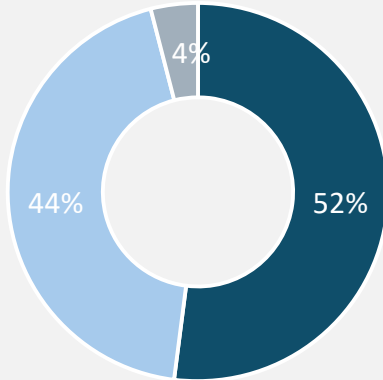


Expansion and
Piloting of The
Armory Project in
Arkansas

Firearm Suicide is a Problem in Arkansas

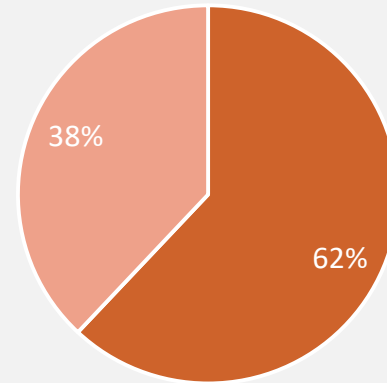
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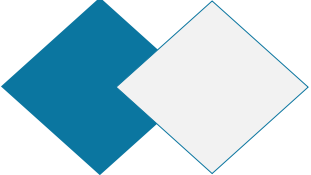


Suicides by Method

■ Firearms ■ Other Methods



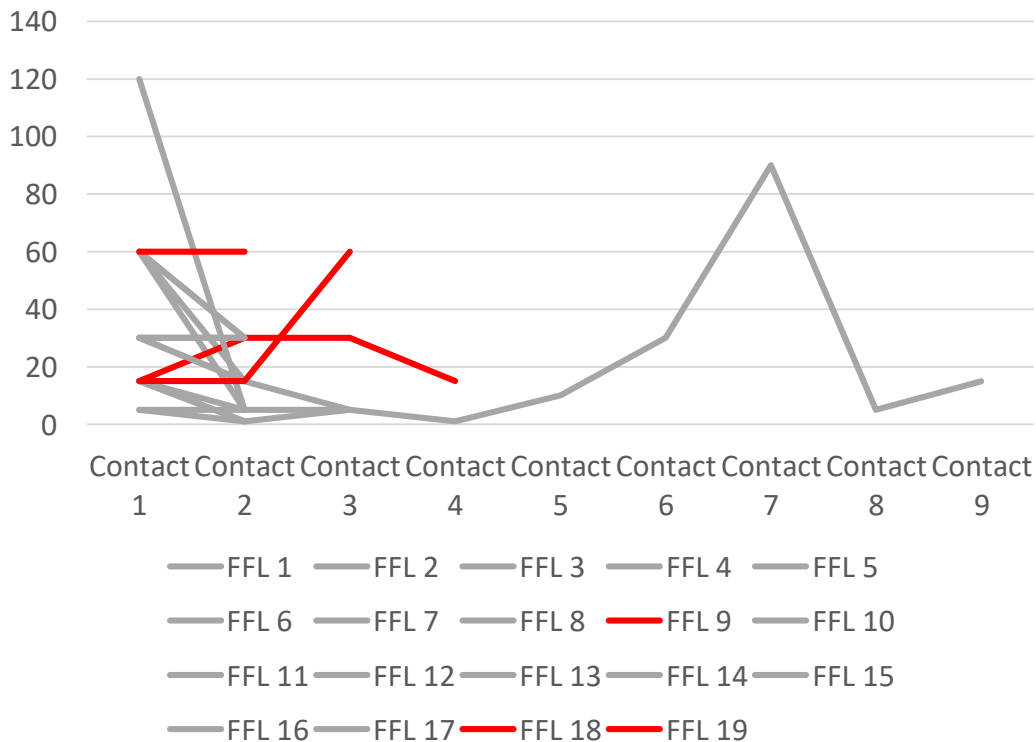
Firearm suicide rate for AR Veterans is **> 3x** higher than the general population



We Recruited Three FFLs



Time and Effort to Recruit FFLs



- Average Time: 66 minutes
- Average # of Contacts: 2.6
- Primary reason for refusing: civil liability

Our FFLs:

- Typical Gun Shop
- Combination Pharmacy/Gun Shop
- Home-based FFL



We Worked Through Specific Concerns

Challenges

- Questions about types of firearm holds and compliance with local and federal laws
- Civil liability

Solutions

- Met with local AR ATF field officers and brought answers back to FFLs
- Invited LA FFLs to an AR Community of Practice meeting
- Connected AR FFLs, local legislators, and AFSP to continue a conversation about legislation

Preparing for the Pilot

Material Review

- Edits to temporary storage template, marketing materials, and training

Addressing Major Concerns

- Connected FFLs with others to address legislation

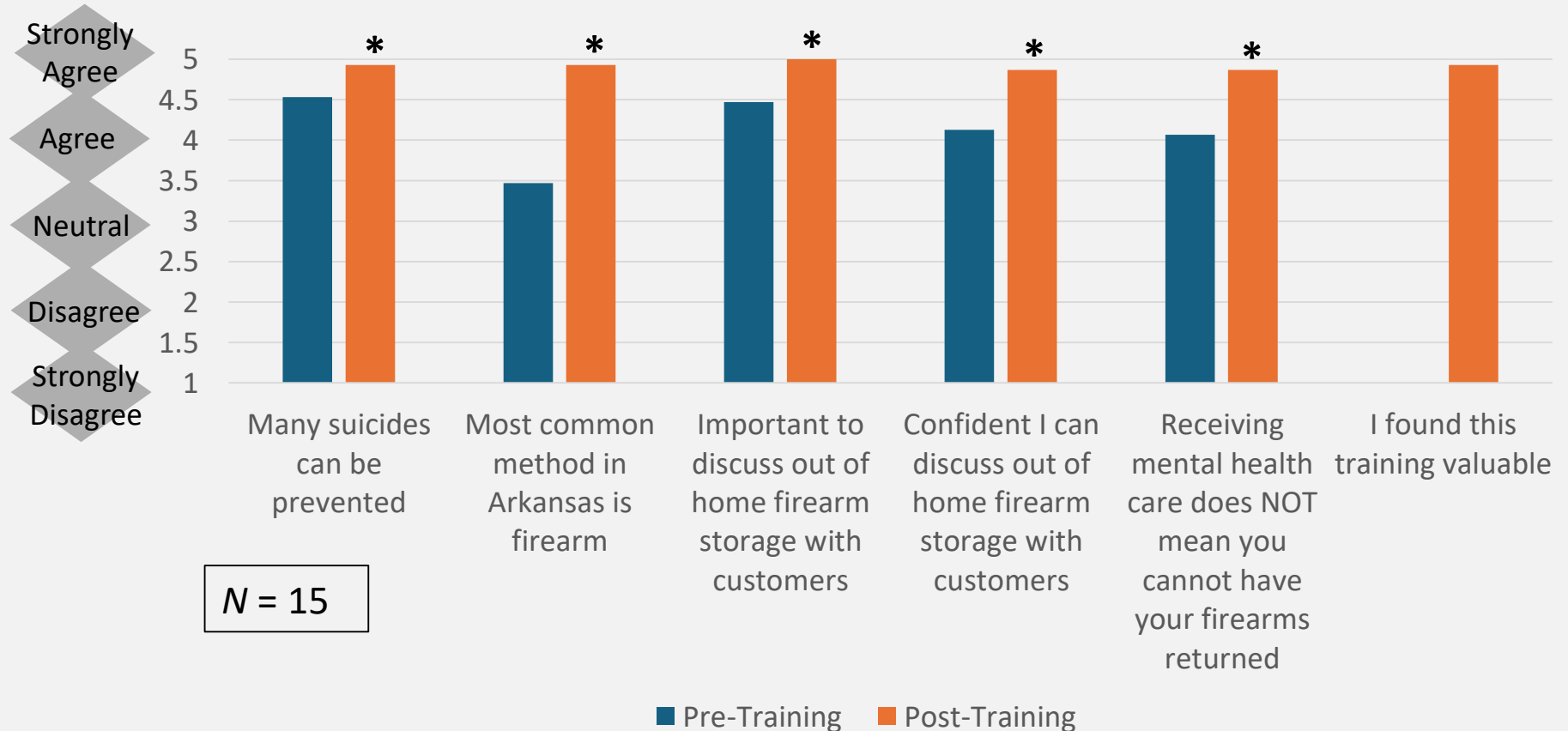
Community of Practice Calls

- Set-up monthly call with all FFLs

Training

- 60-90 Minutes
- Pre-Post Evaluation

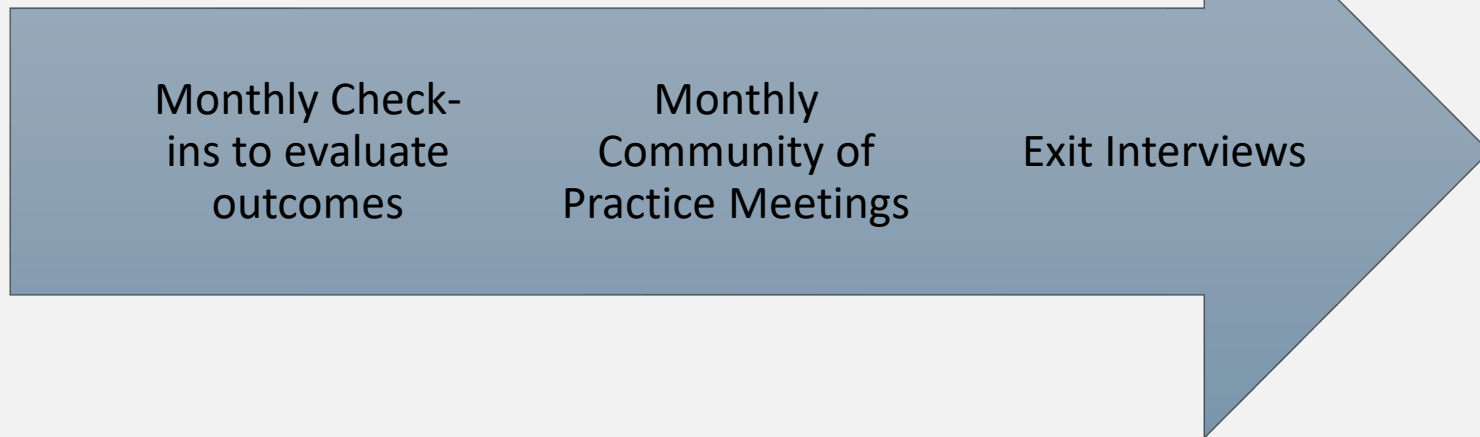
Training Outcomes





Pilot Process

4-month pilot period



Pilot Results

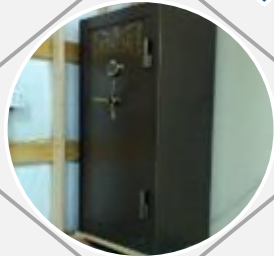


140
Conversations
with customers
about TAP

67
TAP materials
distributed



9
Firearms Stored



AR FFLs were extremely passionate and proactive

- American Legion events
- Tabled at community event
- Contacted local faith communities
- Contacted local military base



Lessons Learned

Remained the same across states

- Outreach process
- Training
- Temporary storage agreement template
- Evaluation process

Needed to be adapted for Arkansas

- Type of FFL
- Marketing materials
- Connecting different groups regarding legislation
- Working with local ATF

2024/2025 Legislation passed in Arkansas

- 16 FFLs (out of 19) said 'no' when approached; 1 expressed interest in helping pass legislation similar to Louisiana law
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Area Director, Jacqueline Sharp, took the lead
- Identified legislators willing to sponsor a bill
- TAP team provided scientific expertise and technical assistance
- FFLs and individuals impacted by firearm suicide testified

[HB1067 Bill Information - Arkansas State Legislature](#)

Signed into law as AR ACT 106 effective 2.18.2025

TAP Outcomes Between October 2021 and January 2025



Partners

30



Staff Trained

90+



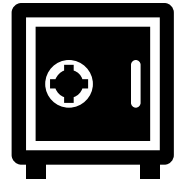
Materials
Distributed

10,000+




Individuals Helped

80+



Firearms Stored

850+

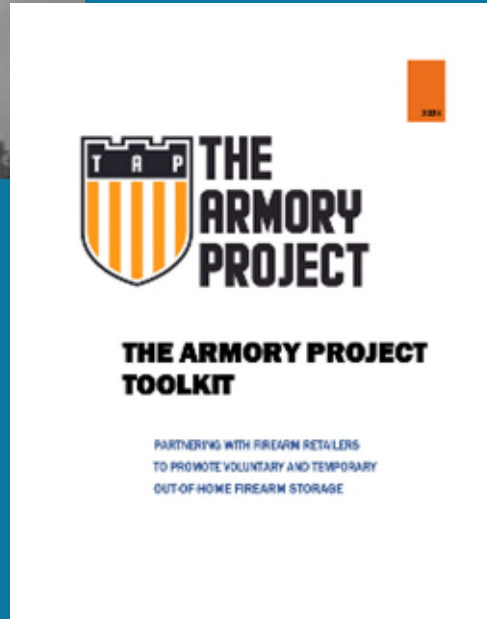


Consultation Service and
Technical Support for
The Armory Project and
Related Projects Across
the United States

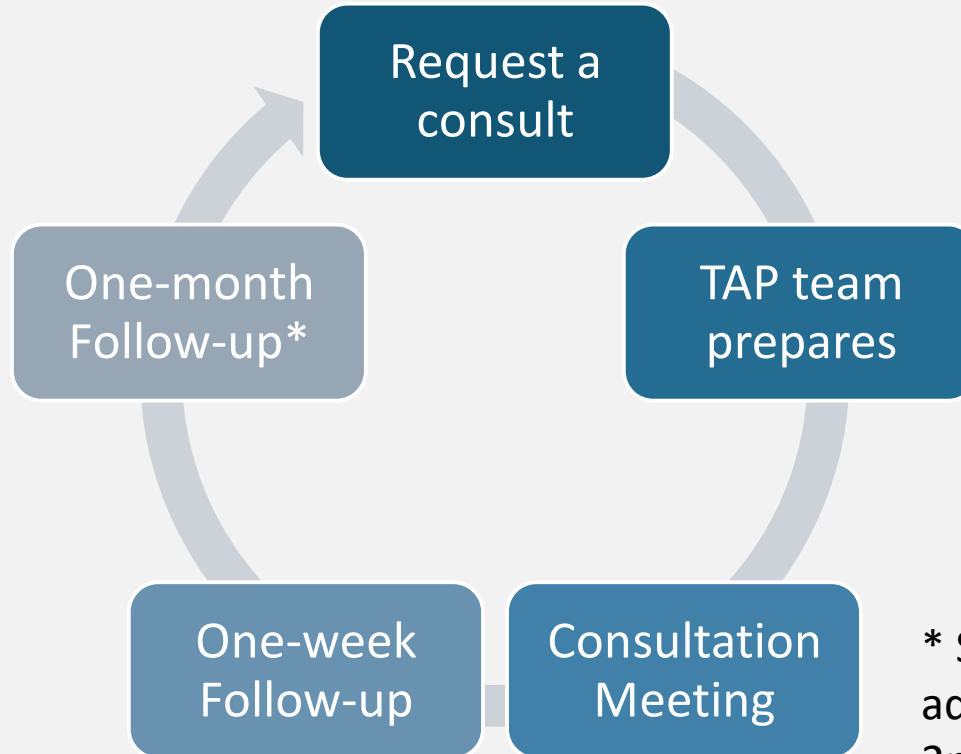
We aren't the only ones – how can we support each other?



Armoryproject.org



Consultation Service

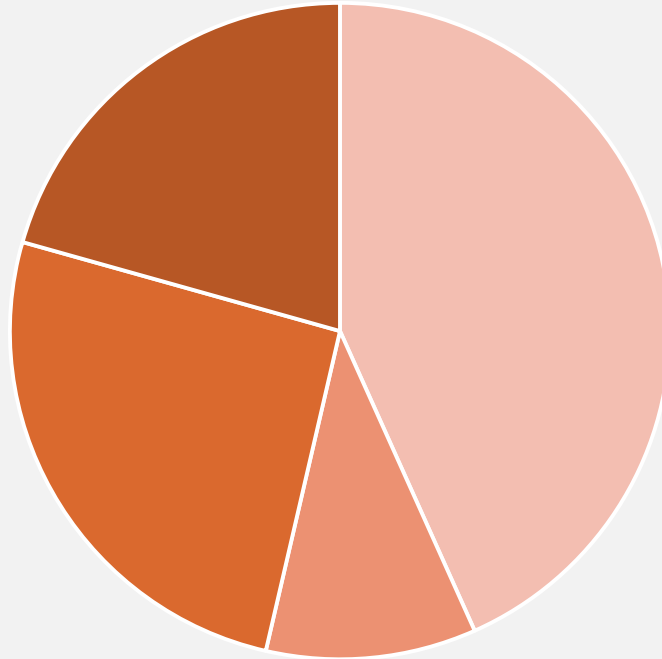


* Some groups request additional info via email or 2nd consult

What is being discussed?

- Who needs to be involved to develop a successful coalition?
- What money might be needed and how to pay for this?
- How do you find partners, including firearm retailers?
- How do you train and bring on firearm retailer partners?
- How do you evaluate the program?
- How do you address barriers and concerns from firearm retailer partners?
- How do you support partners and sustain the program?
- How do you pass legislation to remove barriers to participation and support initiatives?

Who is Using the Consultation Service?



Established coalitions Independent FFLs New coalitions CEPCs

Following CBS Story

TAP Research Team: 30+ inquiries

FFL: hundreds of inquiries

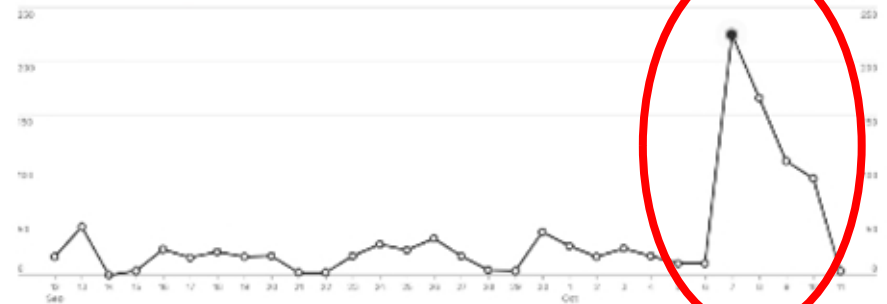
Traffic

Last 30 Days \$US0

Traffic Traffic Sources Search Keywords Geography

Visits

Sep 12 - Oct 11, 2020 • 1,036 Total • 89% increase





Questions &
Discussion