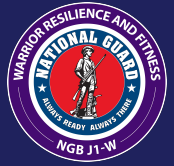


# PROJECT SAFE GUARD (PSG): Secure firearm storage training to decrease harmful behaviors in the National Guard (NG)



## CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF TRAUMATIC STRESS (CSTS)

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY | UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY (USU) | [WWW.CSTSONLINE.ORG](http://WWW.CSTSONLINE.ORG)

The Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress (CSTS) established a National Guard Program (NGP) to collaborate with the National Guard (NG) to reduce risk and increase protective factors for all National Guard members and families. CSTS's NGP efforts include strategic planning, health data trends surveillance, training and education, knowledge product creation and dissemination, and consultation with the 54 States, Territories, and District of Columbia (S/T/DC).

Project Safe Guard (PSG) Generation III is an exciting initiative within the NG that features a continuously evaluated curriculum and train-the-trainer model (T4T) available to all S/T/DC. Participation is voluntary. PSG training is funded by the National Guard Bureau (NGB).

### Background

Secure firearm storage reduces the risk of harmful behaviors, accidental injury, and death for Service members and their families by increasing environmental safety.<sup>1</sup>

- **PSG Generation I and II** aimed to prevent firearm-related suicides by teaching secure storage practices and promoting open conversations on firearm security:
  - » Generation I (2018 - 2020): Increased firearm secure storage behavior by 40%.<sup>2</sup>
  - » Generation II (2022 - 2023): Increased participant confidence in discussing secure firearm storage, altered beliefs about the relation between access to firearms and risk of harm, and dispelled misbelief of means substitution.<sup>3</sup>
- **PSG Generation III** (2025 - 2027) expands the curriculum to address multiple harmful behaviors: splits training into a universal training (delivered to all Guard personnel) to change social norms about secure storage of firearms and a targeted training for NG leaders (training to discuss secure firearm storage with subordinates). Generation III funding includes firearm lock boxes for participants.<sup>4</sup>

### PSG Partners

National Guard Bureau, CSTS, Rutgers University's *New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center*, and Anduril LLC have partnered to implement and evaluate the expansion of PSG (Generation III).

### Implementation

PSG Generation III consists of two in-person integrated training sessions delivered by subject matter experts.

- **Universal Training (UT):** 90 minute training for all Guardsman that focuses on suicide prevention facts, the impact of secure firearm storage on harmful behaviors, common misperceptions of firearm security, and methods of secure storage.
- **Train-The-Trainer:** UT will grow into a train-the-trainer model.
- **Lead Supervisor Training:** 4-hour training for supervisors that focuses on the UT with additional lessons on discussing secure storage with subordinates using motivational interviewing skills and techniques.

Note: Training is continuously evaluated for fidelity and efficacy. Firearm lock boxes will be provided for participants.<sup>4</sup> S/T/DC may be responsible for distributing lock boxes after the training session if they are not available prior to training.

### S/T/DC Responsibilities

Successful implementation of PSG includes:

- S/T/DC-level buy-in and leadership letters of support.
- Service member participant selection and ability to cover expenses for their participation.
- Suitable training locations and availability in schedule to accommodate the on-site training.
- Participation in pre and post evaluation efforts.

**For more information, please contact:**  
[csts-ng-psg-team-ggg@usuhs.edu](mailto:csts-ng-psg-team-ggg@usuhs.edu)

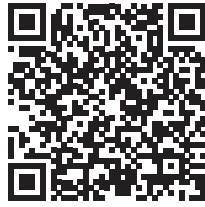
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## Publications

Use the QR codes below for methods and findings:

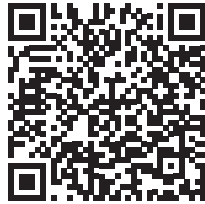
### PSG Generation I<sup>2</sup>

Lethal Means Counseling, Distribution of Cable Locks, and Safe Firearm Storage Practices Among the Mississippi National Guard: A Factorial Randomized Controlled Trial, 2018–2020



### PSG Generation II<sup>3</sup>

Project Safe Guard: Evaluating a Lethal Means Safety Intervention to Reduce Firearm Suicide in the National Guard



## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Department of Defense. (2022). Annual report on suicide in the military. [https://www.dspo.mil/Portals/113/Documents/ARSM\\_CY22.pdf](https://www.dspo.mil/Portals/113/Documents/ARSM_CY22.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup> Anestis, M. D., Bryan, C. J., Capron, D. W., & Bryan, A. O. (2021). Lethal means counseling, distribution of cable locks, and safe firearm storage practices among the mississippi national guard: A factorial randomized controlled trial, 2018-2020. *American Journal of Public Health* (1971), 111(2), 309–317. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2020.306019>
- <sup>3</sup> Walsh, A. K, Friedman, K., Heintz Morrissey, B. A., Godin, S., Morganstein, J. C., Bryan, C. J., Anestis, M. D., Foley, S. K., Johnson, R. L., Baker, J. C., Bryan, A., Betz, M. E., & Wright-Kelly, E. (2024). Project safe guard: Evaluating a lethal means safety intervention to reduce firearm suicide in the national guard. *Military Medicine*, 189(3), 510–516. <https://doi.org/10.1093/milmed/usae172>
- <sup>4</sup> Gifts, as defined in 5CFR 2635 are items from 1) outside sources or 2) between employees. For Project Safe Guard, lock boxes are purchased with official government funds to support a Commander-led program. Therefore, they are not considered a gift.