

Suicide Prevention Month

September 2017



What You Need to Know to
Get Help and Give Help



Prevention Works



September is Suicide Prevention Month, which focuses on:

- Raising awareness of suicide risk among service members, veterans and family members
- Educating service members and veterans about suicide prevention and mental health resources
- Showing how individuals, friends and families can work together to support service members and veterans in times of crisis



Recognize the Warning Signs of Suicide



- Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness or mood swings
- Feeling no sense of purpose, no reason for living
- Rage or anger
- Reckless or risky behavior
- Increasing alcohol or drug abuse
- Withdrawing from family and friends

Source: [Defense Suicide Prevention Office](#)

Identify Signs of Crisis



- The following signs require immediate attention:
 - Thinking about hurting or killing yourself
 - Looking for ways to kill yourself
 - Talking about death, dying or suicide
 - Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse, weapons etc.

Seek Help for Your Mental Health



- Mental health is just as important as your physical health.
- Stigma concerning mental health can cause a person to deny symptoms and delay treatment.
- TRICARE supports your body and mind with expanded [mental health services](#), including outpatient and inpatient care.
- You don't need a referral or prior authorization for most outpatient mental health and substance use disorder care. This includes therapy and counseling.
- You never need prior authorization to seek emergency help. Call **911** or go to the nearest emergency room.



Develop Coping Strategies



- Service members can [build resiliency](#) and develop coping techniques to help them through challenging circumstances.
- Manage mental health symptoms with these [mind and body practices](#) that help to reduce stress and anxiety:
 - Meditation
 - Yoga
 - Breathing exercises



Help Children Adjust, Too



- Military children and teens face unique challenges and stressors that may increase their risk for mental health conditions.¹
- Adolescents from military families are more likely to report suicidal ideation than those not from military families.^{2, 3}
- Children whose parent(s) deploy show increased anxiety, misconduct and depressive symptoms.⁴
- Signs that children are under stress vary by age⁵:
 - Young children may exhibit anger or inability to pay attention.
 - School-age children may exhibit higher levels of fear and anxiety. School performance may be negatively affected.

Resources for Children



- Visit [Military OneSource](#) for resources to help [youth and teens](#) through moves, deployments, new schools and more.
- If your child needs medical help, you don't need a referral to seek [TRICARE mental health services](#).



Help is Available



- If you or someone you know may be considering suicide, seek immediate help.
 - Call **911** or go to the emergency room
- Free, confidential help is available 24/7 through the Military Crisis Line (also known as Veterans Crisis Line and National Suicide Prevention Lifeline)
 - Dial **1-800-273-8255** and **Press 1** to talk to someone
 - Chat [online](#) or send a text to **838255**
 - Visit www.militarycrisisline.net



#BeThere for Yourself and Others



- **#BeThere** is a new Department of Defense campaign with a peer support call and outreach center for service members and families.
 - Call **1-844-357-7337** or text **1-480-360-6188**
 - Visit and chat at www.betherepeersupport.org
- Everyone has a role to play in suicide prevention.
- Everyday connections make a big difference in preventing suicide.
- You don't need special training to talk to someone in crisis.



Find Suicide Prevention Resources



- Additional suicide prevention resources and programs:
 - [Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)
 - [Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury](#)
 - [Give an Hour](#)
 - [Make the Connection](#)
 - [Military OneSource](#)
 - [National Center for PTSD](#)
 - [National Resource Directory](#)

Citations



1. Aranda, M.C., Middleton, L., Flake, E., & Davis, B.E. (2011). Psychosocial Screening in Children With Wartime-Deployed Parents. *Military Medicine*, 402-407.
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3. Gilreath, T. D., Wrabel, S. L., Sullivan, K. S. Capp, G. P., Roziner, I., Benbenishty, R., Astor, R. A. (2016). Suicidality Among Military-Connected Adolescents in California Schools. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*. 25 (1), 61–66.
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5. Department of Defense. Report to Congress on the Impact of Deployment of Members of the Armed Forces on Their Dependent Children. (October 2010).