

DEFENSE SUICIDE PREVENTION OFFICE

Department of Defense Recognized World Suicide Prevention Day and Encouraged the Total Force to Join the Fight to Prevent Suicide

On September 10, the Department of Defense (DoD) recognized World Suicide Prevention Day to honor worldwide efforts to prevent suicide and promote seeking help.

Created in 2003 by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) alongside the World Health Organization (WHO), this awareness day promotes proactive measures to help reduce suicide worldwide. This global campaign brings together various organizations, governments, and advocates to address this critical public health crisis.

The theme for World Suicide Prevention Day 2024 was *Creating Hope Through Action*. This theme emphasizes the importance of taking tangible steps to prevent suicide. It calls on individuals, communities, and organizations to actively engage in practices that foster hope and resilience. Even small actions like checking in with loved ones and colleagues can make a significant difference. Learning more about suicide prevention helps change the dialogue and allows others to be catalysts for change to beat the stigma of seeking help.

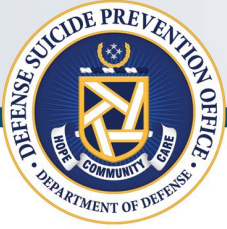
Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin recognizes the concerning rates of suicide across the military and emphasizes the importance of fostering partnerships within the military community to tackle this complex issue. As he has said many times before, mental health is health, and we must actively work towards a future where the Total Force has the needed resources and support to thrive.

This year's DoD suicide prevention campaign is a call to action to Service members and their families to focus on collaboration, reducing the stigma surrounding mental health, and to do their part to help save the lives of others through awareness, education, and proactive measures.

“Taking small steps to engage with those around you can be the difference between life and death. On World Suicide Prevention Day, take time to check in with your colleagues, friends, and family, and know that seeking help is a sign of strength,” says Dr. Liz Clark, the Director for the Defense Suicide Prevention Office.

In honor of World Suicide Prevention Day, Defense Suicide Prevention Office (DSPO), along with other organizations, hosted a resource and tabling event at the Pentagon on September 10 to share important suicide prevention resources and information. DSPO also has an entire resource library that can help grow your understanding of suicide prevention and available resources and policies.





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If you or any fellow Service member is in crisis, 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support via phone or chat for people in distress, resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. For the Military/Veterans Crisis Line, dial 988 and press 1 or text 838255.

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