



DEFENSE SUICIDE PREVENTION OFFICE

QUARTERLY CONNECTION



News and Announcements

New Annual Suicide Prevention Campaign, *Joining Your Fight: Connect to Protect*, Highlights DOD's Commitment to Fighting Suicide for Service Members and their Families

DSPO's new 2024 campaign emphasizes the Department's dedication to preventing suicide. Creating resources that promote protective factors and decrease risk is the cornerstone of our mission. We join your fight by educating on secure storage, by promoting access to mental health resources, by encouraging supportive environments, by reducing stigma around mental health and suicide, and by modernizing suicide prevention training. Learn more by watching our [We Defend Our Own](#) video.

April is Military Spouse Appreciation Month and Month of the Military Child

Military families meet the challenges and make the sacrifices that come with military life all year long. April is a time to honor them and say thank you for your support. [DSPO.mil](#) has resources to assist families with developing proactive stress management and risk reduction strategies.

VA/DOD Suicide Prevention Conference

The VA/DOD Suicide Prevention Conference will be held July 16 – 18, 2024, in Portland, Oregon. The theme, "Evolving and Innovating to Meet Diverse Needs," highlights VA and DOD's commitment to meeting the needs of the military community, including Service members, veterans, and their families, by ensuring and reinforcing suicide prevention programs and resources are impactful, inclusive, and accessible. Everyone has a role to play in the health and well-being of our military community, so keep an eye out for more details on registration and how you can get involved. See you in Portland!

Spring Begins Permanent Change of Station (PCS) Season

While Summer is the height of "PCS Season," sometimes moves occur earlier. When the move is out of cycle or unexpected, families can face even greater challenges. Many policies support the military community



Spring 2024

Director's Corner



Dr. Liz Clark, Director

In April we celebrate Military Spouse Appreciation Month and Month of the Military Child. I want to take a moment to recognize and honor the incredible strength, resilience, and sacrifice made by military families. I encourage those with a child in their lives to read our [A.C.T. fact sheet series](#) which helps families build protective factors.

DSPO aims to raise awareness, foster understanding, and provide valuable suicide prevention resources to the military community and beyond. We released a Fireside Chat highlighting Guam National Guard's ongoing commitment to suicide prevention. The Guam team creatively promoted hope and help through a Virtual Chalk the Walk, a holiday recipe e-book, and a Self-Care Challenge. Learn about these resources, activities, and more at [DSPO.mil](#). This spring, and always, we are Joining Your Fight!





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during this exciting and sometimes scary season. The [weight of gun safes](#) no longer counts towards your household goods allowance, the [School Liaison Officer \(SLO\) Program](#) helps children overcome obstacles to education, and [pet travel expenses](#) are reimbursable! Visit [Military OneSource](#) and [DSPO.mil](#) for other important resources to support an easier transition.

Resource Spotlight

A New Look At DSPO.mil

We are excited to announce the launch of our new website! The updated, modernized design enhances user experience and aligns with DSPO’s evolving brand identity. The redesigned website features a user-friendly interface that makes it easier for visitors to explore our offerings, find needed resources, and connect with DSPO. Check it out at [DSPO.mil](#).

Black History Month Fireside Chat

If you missed it in February, view the [Black History Month Fireside Chat](#) with Sergeant Major Yvette Edmonds, Chief Religious Affairs Senior Enlisted Leader / Theater Sustainment Command in Kaiserslautern, Germany. She discusses her outstanding career in the military as an African American female Service member and leader. SGM Edmonds provides advice based on her personal experiences with anxiety and suicidal ideation and how she manages PTSD to be a successful and fulfilled person.

Happening Soon

May 23 – 25, 2024 Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) 30th Annual National Military Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp	The 30 th Annual National Military Survivors Seminar and Good Grief Camp is about being there for those in crisis through peer-to-peer support and education. DSPO will have a table with promotional items and resources. We will also educate and engage with military families, loved ones, and friends of those we have lost.
Arlington, Virginia	
June 9, 2024 Capital Pride Festival	Join us at the Capital Action Alliance Pride Festival. DSPO will have a table of promotional items and resources for our LGBTQ+ military community.
Washington D.C.	
July 16 - 18, 2024 Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense Suicide Prevention Conference	The conference will feature presentations around the theme “Evolving and Innovating to Meet Diverse Needs.” The VA, DOD, and partnering community organizations will share information, resources, and the latest studies on suicide prevention.
Portland, Oregon	

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