



## SUICIDE PREVENTION NEWSLETTER

Newsletter Headline: [Fill in]

By: [Author Name] on [Date]

[Installation Name] is committed to preventing suicide among Service members, their families, DoD civilians, and Veterans. Suicide prevention is a DoD priority throughout the year, but during September—Suicide Prevention Month—the Department brings added attention to the complex issue of suicide and emphasizes the resources and support available. This year's Suicide Prevention Month theme, *Small Steps Save Lives*, focuses on safety precautions that Service members and their families can put in place to reduce the risk for suicide. The majority of military suicide deaths involve a firearm. In addition, medications are the most common method of non-fatal suicide attempts. The act of suicide can be impulsive. The time a person goes from thinking about suicide to acting on it can be less than 10 minutes. Storing medications and firearms safely every day is an effective way to help prevent suicide.

There are a number of tips for storing firearms and medications safely that can be easily implemented and will improve safety for ALL members of the family.

*Safe firearms storage ideas include:*

- Securing firearms outside the home with a trusted friend, relative, or a storage facility.
- Using a gunlock or safe if you chose to secure a firearm inside the home.
- Storing firearms and ammunition separately.
- Keeping your firearm locking keys secure by using a combo lock box or in a separate safe.

*Safe medication storage ideas include:*

- Storing all medications under lock and key in a medications storage container.
- Discarding outdated or no longer needed medications.
- Keeping only small quantities of alcohol in the home.
- Not keeping lethal doses of medication on hand.

As we head into September, we encourage you to think about how you can *#BeThere* for our military community who may be at risk for suicide.

- Safely store medications and firearms.
- Participate in suicide prevention activities and programs during September. [insert link to local calendar or list of activities]
- Add the Veterans/Military Crisis Line (VCL/MCL) number to your contact list so it's handy if you ever need it: 1-800-273-8255, press 1.

*#BeThere*



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Additional materials and resources can be found on the DoD's Defense Suicide Prevention Office (DSPO) website [www.dspo.mil](http://www.dspo.mil).

If you, or someone you know is in **a crisis** there is help—call the VCL/MCL at 1-800-273-8255, press 1, or visit [www.militarycrisisline.net](http://www.militarycrisisline.net) and chat online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Calling from overseas? In Europe: Call 00800 1273 8255 or DSN 118; In Korea: Call 0808 555 118 or DSN 118; In Afghanistan: Call 00 1 800 273 8255 or DSN 111.

For **non-crisis** concerns, such as relationship, family, or financial challenges, you can get help from Military OneSource which provides 24/7 service to all active-duty Service members, National Guard and Reserves and eligible family members. Counselors offer information and make referrals on a wide range of issues including grief and bereavement. Arrange a face-to-face, phone, online, or video counseling session by calling 800-342-9647.

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Suggested tags: #SmallStepsSaveLives, #BeThere, #SPM19

*#BeThere*