

Newsletter Template

Use the newsletter template to share information within your community about Suicide Prevention Month and how individuals can **#ConnectToProtect** to **#BeThere** for Service members and their family members.

SUICIDE PREVENTION NEWSLETTER

Newsletter Headline: [REDACTED]
By: [REDACTED] on [REDACTED]



[REDACTED] is committed to preventing suicide among Service members and families. Suicide prevention is a Department of Defense (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 supports that are available. This year, the DoD's Suicide Prevention Month slogan, Connect to Protect, highlights the important role that connections to family, friends, the community, and resources can play in preventing suicide. Research indicates that connectedness is a factor that can reduce the likelihood that someone will consider or attempt suicide. Having social connections, you can count on and a sense that you belong can be protective against suicide, while loneliness and feeling like a burden can increase the risk for suicide for some individuals.

As we head into September, it is important for each of us to focus on how we can connect to protect the Service members and military families in our lives. We have a moral duty to protect each other—now more than ever.

How can you support suicide prevention during Suicide Prevention Month—and throughout the year?

- 1. Connect with Self.** It is important to focus on your own good health and wellness.
 - Participate in spiritual or community activities and groups.
 - Volunteer for causes or organizations that you care about.
 - Spend time with friends and family members—whether in person or virtually depending on what is best.
 - Seek support from peers, family or health professionals.
 - Reach out to others.
- 2. Connect with Others.** Strategies to prevent suicide are not limited to when someone is at risk. There are lots of ways to #BeThere for members of your community and strengthen connections. Show your support:
 - Check in with friends and family. Let them know you care.
 - Plan activities that you can enjoy together.
 - Listen when they want to talk.
 - Accept what he or she has experienced without judgement.
 - Resist the temptation to problem solve.
 - Reassure them.
 - Express care and concern.
 - Encourage them to get help and stay in touch with friends and family.
 - Get to know your military and community resources.
- 3. Learn How to Help.** Warning signs can include:
 - Expressing suicidal thoughts or making a plan for suicide
 - Withdrawing from family, friends, or unit
 - Expressing feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, or worthlessness
 - Talking about suicide or wanting to die
 - Sudden changes in mood or personality
 - **Speak Up.** If you are concerned about your Service member, ask if they are thinking about suicide, have a plan and have the means, such as a firearm, medication, or other methods of self-harm.
 - **Listen and Offer Support.** Be calm and express concern. Take what they say seriously and ask how you can help.
 - **Take Action.** If you are concerned they are an imminent risk for suicide, do not leave them alone.
 - Seek help immediately. Contact a crisis line, chaplain, health provider, emergency room, or 911. The Veterans/Military Crisis line is available 24/7 at 1-800-273-8255 (press 1).
 - Remove any weapons, drugs, or other means of self-injury from the area if possible.
 - If you are on the phone with an individual who you believe is in immediate danger, try to keep him or her on the line while you or someone else calls 911.
 - Ask if there is someone nearby who could offer support, and keep talking to the Service member until help arrives.

We encourage you to take steps in September and year-round to Connect to Protect with individuals and military families. We cannot do it alone. Please join us during September by participating in suicide prevention activities and programs we have scheduled.

Resources:

- If you, or someone you know is in a crisis there is help—call the Veterans/Military Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255, press 1, or visit 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, National Guard, and Reserve Service members 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.

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

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Suggested tags: #ConnectToProtect, #BeThere, #SPM2020