

Our Mission



One life lost to suicide is too many. The Department of Defense is strongly committed to preventing suicides among our Service members and their families. Our mission at the Defense Suicide Prevention Office is to advance holistic, data-driven suicide prevention in our military community through policy, oversight, and engagement to positively impact individual beliefs and behaviors, as well as instill systemic culture change.

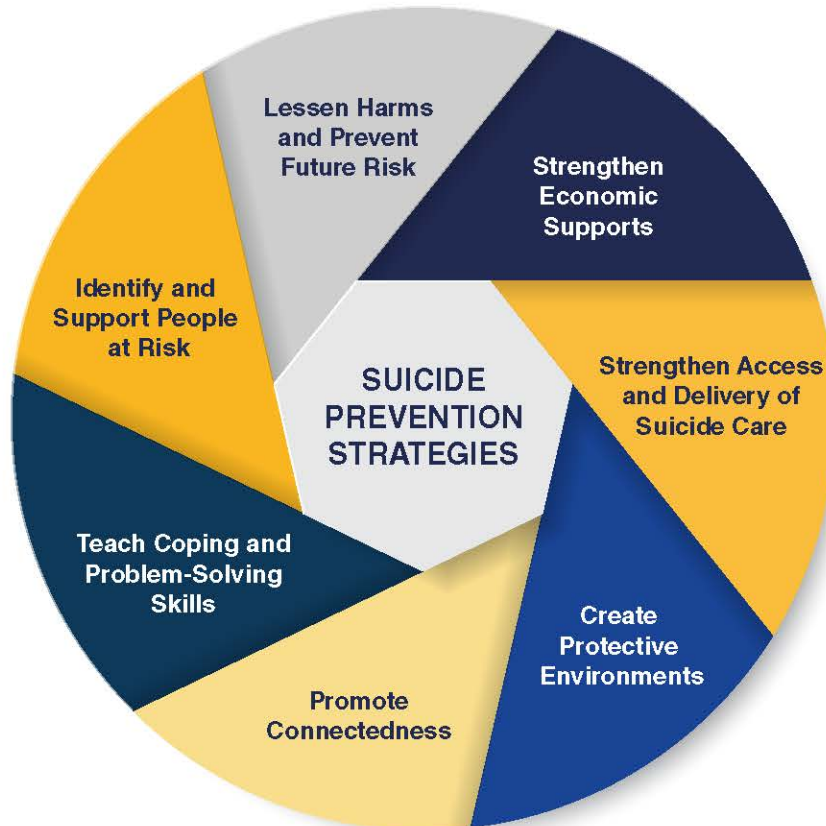
Our approach is rooted in public health. We are committed to implementing a multi-faceted public health approach to suicide prevention, aligned with the Defense Strategy for Suicide Prevention, as well as the seven broad suicide prevention strategies outlined by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention. We believe, and research supports, that in order to prevent suicide, our community must be unified in its commitment to prevention across these seven critical strategies.



Our Mission

One life lost to suicide is too many. The Department of Defense is strongly committed to preventing suicides among our Service members and their families. Our mission at the Defense Suicide Prevention Office is to advance holistic, data-driven suicide prevention in our military community through policy, oversight, and engagement to positively impact individual beliefs and behaviors, as well as instill systemic culture change.

Our approach is rooted in public health. We are committed to implementing a multi-faceted public health approach to suicide prevention, aligned with the Defense Strategy for Suicide Prevention, as well as the seven broad suicide prevention strategies outlined by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention. We believe, and research supports, that in order to prevent suicide, our community must be unified in its commitment to prevention across these seven critical strategies.



Source: 2017 CDC's Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policies, Programs, and Practices

Resources

Make it Your Mission to...
#BeThere

CRISIS:

 **Veterans Crisis Line** | **Military Crisis Line** 
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1** **Dial 911**

Risks & Warning Signs

How to Help



TOP RISK FACTORS FOR SUICIDES

65%

Access to Lethal Means

More than 65% of military suicide deaths involve the use of a firearm.



Relationship Challenges

Approximately 40% of active duty Service members experienced a failed or failing relationship 90 days prior to suicide death.



Fall from Glory

Approximately 30% of active duty Service members experienced administrative or legal problems in the 90 days prior to suicide death.



Perceived Stigma

Hesitancy to access mental health or other support services due to perceived stigma associated with help-seeking.

8 Positive Coping Strategies to Combat Tough Situations

When we are stressed, it may feel like nothing helps. Having effective coping, problem-solving, and communications skills can make a big difference.



1. Seek support from a health care provider, counselor or chaplain.



5. Exercise regularly. Cardio and strength training can reduce stress levels and keep you mission ready.



2. Stay connected. Support from friends and family can improve well-being when facing stress.



6. Get involved in passions, hobbies, or activities that you enjoy—for example art can be a positive, creative way to express feelings.



3. Practice relaxation methods: Muscle relaxation, breathing exercises, meditation, stretching, yoga, prayer, listening to quiet music, or time in nature.



7. Avoid drinking too much or mixing alcohol and medications. It may seem like an easy way to decrease stress, but may create additional problems and actually increase stress.



4. Get good sleep. Poor or insufficient sleep has a significant negative impact on your health.



8. Take a break from the news or social media if those activities cause you stress.

Learn how to **#BeThere** for yourself and others at www.dspo.mil.



www.DSPO.mil

#BeThere

For everyday life challenges

MILITARY
ONESOURCE
800-342-9647
www.MilitaryOneSource.mil



Veterans | **Military**
Crisis Line | **Crisis Line**

1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

Version: 2019_v1

Talking About Suicide Online



IMPORTANT POINTS FOR COVERING SUICIDE



Risk of additional suicides increases when the story explicitly describes the suicide method, uses dramatic/graphic headlines or images, and repeated/extensive coverage sensationalizes or glamorizes a death.



The magnitude of the increase is related to the amount, duration, and prominence of coverage.



Covering suicide carefully, even briefly, can change public misperceptions and correct myths, which can encourage those who are vulnerable or at risk to seek help.

More Information and Resources at: www.reportingonsuicide.org

Small Steps Save Lives

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.

There are a number of tips for storing firearms and medications safely that can be easily implemented and will create a safer home - for all members of the family.



Firearm Safe Storage Tips:



Cable Locks:

Prevents a firearm from being loaded and fired.



Ammunition Storage:

Store firearms and ammunition separately.



Case:

Provides a storage solution that secures, conceals, protects, and legally transports a firearm.



Lock Box:

Provides reliable security for firearms. Ensure firearms are stored unloaded.



Full Size Safe:

Allows you to store multiple firearms in one place.



MISSION AND VISION

Mission:
Advance holistic, data-driven suicide prevention in our military community through policy, oversight, and engagement to positively impact individual beliefs and behaviors, as well as instill systemic culture change.

Vision:
Unwavering pursuit of a mission-ready, suicide-free military community.

VISIT US AT
www.dspo.mil

★ SMALL STEPS
SAVE LIVES ★

RESOURCES



Make it Your Mission to...
#BeThere



SMALL STEPS
SAVE LIVES

DEFENSE SUICIDE PREVENTION OFFICE

facebook.com/DSPOMil twitter.com/DSPOMil

instagram.com/DSPOMil

Version: 2019_v1

DEFENSE SUICIDE PREVENTION OFFICE



THINGS TO KNOW

65%

More than 65% of military suicide deaths involve the use of a firearm.



Having access to a firearm during a suicidal crisis increases the lethality of an attempt.



If someone is at risk, encourage safe storage of firearms until the crisis has passed. It's like holding on to a friend's keys when they have had too much to drink.

4x

Unsafe storage of firearms can increase risk of suicide up to four times.



People rarely substitute one method of suicide for another. In the moment of crisis, if a firearm is safely secured, it's unlikely the person will look for another method.

TIME & DISTANCE

Putting time and distance between a person going through a stressful time and a firearm may save a life for three reasons:

1. A suicidal crisis is often brief.
2. 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.
3. 90% of those who attempt suicide and survive don't attempt suicide again. If someone you know is at risk, help keep firearms away from them. They are unlikely to walk away from an attempt when using a firearm.

Be there and be alert to signs of suicide in family and friends including:

- Changes in usual patterns of behavior
- Self-isolation
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Expression of feelings of hopelessness

HOW TO HELP

Safe Storage Options

- ✓ Cable Lock: Prevents a firearm from being loaded and fired.
- ✓ Gun Case: Provides a storage solution that secures, conceals, protects, and legally transports a firearm.
- ✓ Lock Box: Provides reliable security for firearms.
- ✓ Full Size Safe: Allows you to store multiple firearms in one place.

Safe Storage Tips

- ✓ Ensure firearms are stored unloaded.
- ✓ Secure the firearm outside the home with a trusted friend or relative or use storage facilities.
- ✓ Use a gunlock or safe if you must secure a firearm inside the home.
- ✓ Store firearms and ammunition separately.
- ✓ Keeping your firearm locking keys secure by using a combo lock box or in a separate safe.

Small Steps Save Lives – safely store firearms at all times to protect yourself, your family, and your friends.



MISSION AND VISION

Mission:

Advance holistic, data-driven suicide prevention in our military community through policy, oversight, and engagement to positively impact individual beliefs and behaviors, as well as instill systemic culture change.

Vision:

Unwavering pursuit of a mission-ready, suicide-free military community.



VISIT US AT
www.dspo.mil

RESOURCES



Make it Your Mission to...
#BeThere



TALKING ABOUT SUICIDE ONLINE

DEFENSE SUICIDE PREVENTION OFFICE

[facebook.com/DSPOMil](https://www.facebook.com/DSPOMil) twitter.com/DSPOMil
[instagram.com/DSPOMil](https://www.instagram.com/DSPOMil)

Version: 2019_v1

DEFENSE SUICIDE PREVENTION OFFICE



IMPORTANT POINTS FOR COVERING SUICIDE



Risk of additional suicides increases when the story explicitly describes the suicide method, uses dramatic/graphic headlines or images, and repeated/extensive coverage sensationalizes or glamorizes a death.



The magnitude of the increase is related to the amount, duration, and prominence of coverage.



Covering suicide carefully, even briefly, can change public misperceptions and correct myths, which can encourage those who are vulnerable or at risk to seek help.

More Information and Resources at: www.reportingonsuicide.org



SUICIDE IS A PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE

The Defense Strategy for Suicide Prevention, aligned with the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, advocates a public health approach to suicide prevention. Public health is the science and art of promoting health, preventing disease, and prolonging life through the strength of a connected and educated community.

The public health approach is widely regarded as the approach that is mostly likely to produce significant and sustained reductions in suicide.

Source:

Suicide Prevention Resource Center, Suicide Prevention: The Public Health Approach

SUGGESTIONS FOR ONLINE MEDIA, MESSAGE BOARDS, BLOGGERS & CITIZEN JOURNALISTS

- ✓ Bloggers, citizen journalists and public commentators can help prevent suicide by using positive language about help-seeking and not sensationalizing or glorifying suicide. Do not report on specific methods and storylines regarding the suicide.
- ✓ Include stories of hope and recovery, and information on how to overcome suicidal thinking, increase coping skills, and increase help-seeking.
- ✓ The potential for online reports, social media posts, photos/videos, and stories to go viral makes it vital that online coverage of suicide follows site or industry safety recommendations.

More Information and Resources at: www.reportingonsuicide.org

MYTH

People who talk about suicide aren't serious; they won't actually attempt suicide

FACT

Studies show that about half of those who die by suicide gave some warning about what they had planned

MYTH

Once people decide to die by suicide, there is nothing you can do to stop them

FACT

Suicide can be prevented and most people who are suicidal don't want to die, they want to stop their pain

MISSION AND VISION

Mission: Advance holistic, data-driven suicide prevention in our military community through policy, oversight, and engagement to positively impact individual beliefs and behaviors, as well as instill systemic culture change.

Vision: Unwavering pursuit of a mission-ready, suicide-free military community.

VISIT US AT www.dspo.mil

RESOURCES

FOR EVERYDAY LIFE CHALLENGES

**MILITARY
ONE SOURCE**

800-342-9647
www.MilitaryOneSource.mil

 **Veterans
Crisis Line** | **Military
Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

911
Dial 911

Make it Your Mission to...
#BeThere

DEFENSE SUICIDE PREVENTION OFFICE

 facebook.com/DSPOMil  twitter.com/DSPOMil

 instagram.com/DSPOMil

Version: 2019_v1



RISKS & WARNING SIGNS HOW TO HELP

DEFENSE SUICIDE PREVENTION OFFICE



TOP RISK FACTORS FOR SUICIDES

65%

Access to Lethal Means

More than 65% of military suicide deaths involve the use of a firearm

Relationship Challenges

Approximately 40% of active duty Service members experienced a failed or failing relationship 90 days prior to suicide death

Fall from Glory

Approximately 30% of active duty Service members experienced administrative or legal problems in the 90 days prior to suicide death

Perceived Stigma

Hesitancy to access mental health or other support services due to perceived stigma associated with help-seeking

RISK FACTORS



Lack of belonging and sense of being a burden



Emotional and psychological pain



Inability to deal with stress



Access to lethal means



Mental health problems

PROTECTIVE FACTORS



Feeling a sense of belongingness and connectedness (e.g., family, friends, trusted peer/adult, community support, or spiritual) and having a purpose



Being able to express feelings and having access to care/support



Having effective coping, problem-solving and communication skills, and positive thinking



Willingness to use a variety of support and care



Means reduction and safety planning

HOW TO HELP SOMEONE IN SUICIDAL CRISIS

- ✓ Be direct. Talk openly and matter-of-factly about suicide.
- ✓ Be willing to listen. Allow expression of feelings. Accept the feelings.
- ✓ Be non-judgmental. Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or whether feelings are good or bad. Don't lecture about the value of life.
- ✓ Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
- ✓ Offer hope that alternatives are available, but do not offer general reassurance such as "It will get better," or "It could be worse."
- ✓ Get help from persons or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.
- ⊘ Don't dare him/her to do it.
- ⊘ Don't act shocked. This will put distance between the two of you.
- ⊘ Don't be sworn to secrecy. Seek help.

Call the Veterans/Military Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 (press 1).