



# 2020 Suicide Prevention Month Campaign Planning Guide

A How-To Guide for Suicide Prevention Month



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# Let's Come Together to Prevent Suicide



The Department of Defense (DoD) is committed to preventing suicide among Service members and their families. 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 supports. This year, the DoD's Suicide Prevention Month theme, **Connectedness**, 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 someone will consider or attempt suicide. Having social connections you can count on and a sense you belong can be a protective factor against suicide, while loneliness and feeling like a burden can increase the risk for suicide for some individuals. In support of this theme, the Suicide Prevention Month 2020 slogan is *Connect to Protect*. The *Connect to Protect* slogan emphasizes connecting with others and the community, as well as with suicide prevention resources.

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.

The 2020 Suicide Prevention Month Campaign Planning Guide outlines ways you and your installation can execute your 2020 Suicide Prevention Month campaign.

Let's get started!

# 2020 Suicide Prevention Month Campaign Planning Guide

In support of the Department's Suicide Prevention Month observance, the Defense Suicide Prevention Office (DSPO) created the 2020 Suicide Prevention Month Planning Guide that offers materials and suggestions to assist you in executing your outreach initiatives during Suicide Prevention Month.

## *Who Should Use This Guide?*

Anyone planning their installation, unit, or other community Suicide Prevention Month observance can use these guidelines when designing or producing their campaign and activities.

## *How Should This Guide Be Used?*

This guide provides recommendations on how to plan a successful Suicide Prevention Month campaign for your community. A community can be Service members and their families, as well as, installations, ships, squadrons, etc. Its goal is not to limit creativity, but to provide direction that reinforces the *Connectedness* theme and the *Connect to Protect* slogan. Using this guide will contribute to a more visible and cohesive Suicide Prevention Month, which will benefit the Department and military community as a whole. For any questions, contact Katherine Warrick, Director of Outreach and Engagement for the Defense Suicide Prevention Office: [osd.dspo.outreach@mail.mil](mailto:osd.dspo.outreach@mail.mil).

## *Spread the Word*

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

There are dozens of ways to spread suicide prevention messages during September and beyond.

# 20 Ways to Take Part in Suicide Prevention Month



Each September, the Department of Defense observes Suicide Prevention Month by raising awareness about suicide prevention and urging Service members and their families to #BeThere for themselves and others. Below are suggestions on how you can participate and raise awareness about suicide prevention in your community.



## Take Part in Suicide Prevention Month

Check out these ideas to help promote Suicide Prevention Month.

- 1 Download and display the 2020 Suicide Prevention Month poster. You can download the print-ready file to print multiple copies and display at your installation.
- 2 Download and use the Suicide Prevention Month 2020 logo banner to display on your website, social media cover photos, etc.
- 3 Take the Suicide Prevention Month #ConnectToProtect Pledge and encourage your friends and family to do so, as well.
- 4 Hold a contest between members or groups within your community to see who gets the most #ConnectToProtect pledges.
- 5 Be social. Use #ConnectToProtect on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram materials to promote Suicide Prevention Month to your community.
- 6 Take a selfie! Use the #ConnectToProtect Selfie Sign template to write in how you are connecting to protect with friends or family. Then take a selfie with it and post it to social media using #BeThere #ConnectToProtect.
- 7 Wear yellow on World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10, 2020, to raise awareness about suicide prevention and encourage others to do the same. Use the social media materials to help spread the word.
- 8 Share outreach materials at resource fairs, electronically, and at other community events.
- 9 Create and/or share Public Service Announcements through social media and other channels to encourage your community to #ConnectToProtect.
- 10 Organize a Resource Fair in your community (live or virtual, depending on what's best.) Invite organizations that share the same mission; distribute Suicide Prevention Month materials to attendees.



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[www.DSPD.mil](http://www.DSPD.mil)

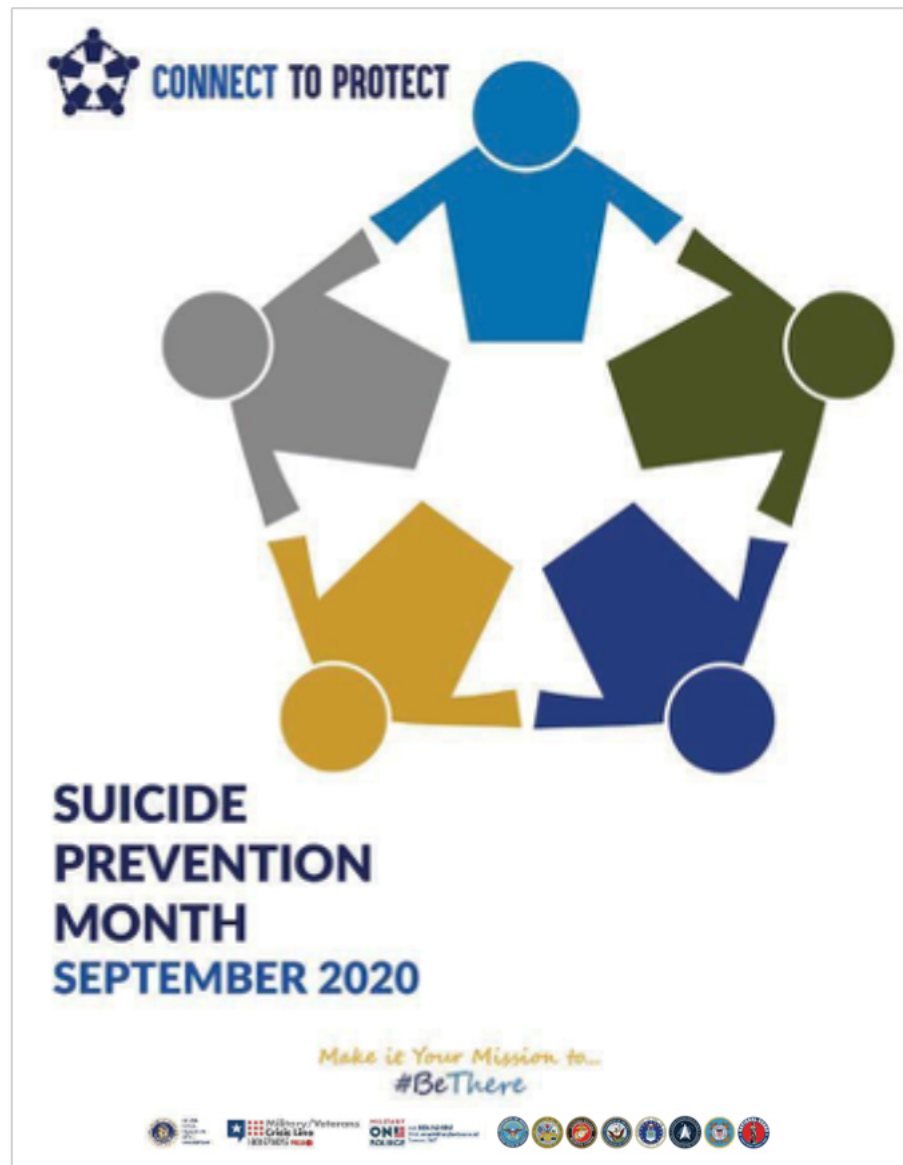
- 11 Blog about it. Use the blog template provided in this guide to share about Suicide Prevention Month and the *Connect to Protect* campaign.
- 12 Write an article for your community's newsletter or the local newspaper about Suicide Prevention Month. Don't have time? Use the pre-written template provided in this guide.
- 13 Send a press release to your community's newspaper to promote local Suicide Prevention Month activities within your community and pitch them stories of how your community is taking steps to prevent suicide. Use the press release template provided or write your own.
- 14 Ask if you can insert a flyer with suicide prevention resources in grocery bags at the Commissary or prescription bags at the pharmacy.
- 15 Share Suicide Prevention Month graphics with health care providers at the installation hospital and clinic to showcase on information screens such as those in the cafeteria, local clinic, or anywhere there are screens to share information.
- 16 Update your Facebook profile picture with the official Suicide Prevention Month 2020 Facebook frame. Invite your community to do the same. Search Facebook for SPM2020 Frame and update your profile picture.
- 17 Ask mental health care providers to speak to your community about ways to help prevent suicide.
- 18 Host a community event – live or virtual, depending on what's best – where families can be active while also learning about local suicide prevention and mental health resources pending current COVID pandemic guidelines.
- 19 Work with your local recreation and fitness center to spread the word about the importance of physical activity to prevent suicide.
- 20 Print and distribute "Conversation Starter Cards." Cards can be left on tables at community spaces like the food court for people to use to CONNECT.



# Shareable Graphics & Tools

## Poster

Download and print the campaign poster to share throughout your community or share electronically with others.



## Banner

Download and use the Suicide Prevention Month 2020 logo banner to display on your website, social media cover photos, etc.



## #BeThereLogo


Use the **#BeThere** logo when posting to your Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram as a graphic, or add to your communications products.

#BeThere



# Pledge

Take the Suicide Prevention Month **#ConnectToProtect** Pledge and encourage your friends and family to do so, as well.



The pledge card features a header with two circular logos: the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline on the left and the Department of Defense Seal on the right. The title "SUICIDE PREVENTION OFFICE" is centered in bold blue text. Below the title, the heading "SUICIDE PREVENTION PLEDGE" is in bold. The main text describes the duty to protect one another and the #BeThere pledge. A list of nine actions follows, each preceded by a house icon. At the bottom, a line for a signature is provided, followed by the text "Make it Your Mission to... #BeThere" in orange and blue script, set against a background of blue and grey wavy lines.

**SUICIDE PREVENTION PLEDGE**

Each one of us has a duty to protect one another – now more than ever. Make a promise today to #BeThere.

- ✧ Connect to Protect. Make connections with friends and family a priority.
- ✧ Set an example by creating an environment where asking for help and reaching out to others are signs of strength.
- ✧ #BeThere for yourself! Taking care of yourself is as important as taking care of others.
- ✧ Develop healthy habits and ways to cope with stress to keep you strong and resilient.
- ✧ Check in with friends and family. Let them know you care.
- ✧ Know the resources that are available to you and others.
- ✧ Volunteer or join a group are great ways to care for yourself and others.
- ✧ Be the one who reaches out. Ask, "How can I help?"
- ✧ Consult with a mental health professional if you need assistance.



I pledge to make it my mission to #BeThere for myself and others to prevent suicide.

\_\_\_\_\_

Make it Your Mission to...  
#BeThere





# Social Media Posts and Graphics

Use the social media editorial calendar to share images and messages on suicide prevention across your social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The posts highlight how to **#ConnectToProtect** and **#BeThere** for the loved ones in your life.

Date to Post	POST	GRAPHIC
9/1	<p>Today is the start of Suicide Prevention Month. The slogan for the month is “Connect To Protect,” which emphasizes connections — to family, friends, the community, and the unit. Visit DSPO’s Suicide Prevention Month page to download resources you can share on your social channels, including a tip sheet for how to use Suicide Prevention Month materials, graphics, blogs, and more. #SPM20 #ConnectToProtect #BeThere <a href="http://www.dspo.mil/spm">www.dspo.mil/spm</a>.</p>	
9/2	<p>Update your Facebook profile picture with the official Suicide Prevention Month 2020 Facebook frame. Encourage others in your social networks to do the same. To add a frame from your mobile device, click on your profile picture to edit, then click “ADD A FRAME” in the search field, enter “DSPO” or #BeThere, click on the SPM2020 frame. #SPM20 #ConnectToProtect #BeThere</p>	

Date to Post	POST	GRAPHIC
9/7	<p>Today is the start of National Suicide Prevention Week. What are you doing to #ConnectToProtect within our military community? <a href="http://www.dspo.mil">www.dspo.mil</a> #SPM20 #suicidepreventionweek #BeThere</p>	 <p>A red rectangular graphic with the text "NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK" in yellow, stacked vertically. Below it, the dates "September 6-12, 2020" are written in white. At the bottom, there are four colored circles (green, blue, yellow, pink) and a row of logos including the Department of Defense, DOD Suicide Prevention, and the #BeThere campaign.</p>
9/10	<p>Wear yellow to support #WorldSuicidePreventionDay. Please share! <a href="http://www.dspo.mil/spm">www.dspo.mil/spm</a> #SPM20 #ConnectToProtect #BeThere #suicidepreventionweek</p>	 <p>A yellow rectangular graphic with the text "WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY" in black, stacked vertically. Below it, the date "September 10, 2020" is written in black. At the bottom, there are four colored circles (pink, green, purple, blue) and a row of logos including the Department of Defense, DOD Suicide Prevention, and the #BeThere campaign.</p>
9/11	<p>#ConnectToProtect means staying close and connected to family members, friends, colleagues, and anyone else who makes you feel happy about being alive. #SPM20 #BeThere #suicidepreventionweek</p>	 <p>A landscape photograph of a lake and mountains. Overlaid on the image is the quote "Stay close to anything that makes you glad you are alive." in white text, followed by "- Hafez" in a smaller font. At the bottom, there are logos for the Department of Defense, DOD Suicide Prevention, and the #BeThere campaign.</p>
9/14	<p>Print and distribute "Conversation Starter Cards." The cards can be left on tables at community spaces like the food court for people to use to CONNECT. <a href="http://www.dspo.mil/spm">www.dspo.mil/spm</a>. #SPM20 #ConnectToProtect #BeThere</p>	 <p>A graphic showing a set of "Conversation Starter Cards" for Suicide Prevention Month 2020. It features a circular logo with five people icons in different colors (blue, green, yellow, orange, red) and the text "CONNECT TO PROTECT Conversation Starter Cards Suicide Prevention Month 2020".</p>

Date to Post	POST	GRAPHIC
9/16	<p>Service members and family members can sometimes feel stressed out. Know that having effective coping, problem-solving, and communications skills can make a big difference and help you to #ConnectToProtect. Download DSPO's 8 Positive Coping Strategies to Combat Tough Situations flashcard to learn more. <a href="http://www.dspo.mil/download">www.dspo.mil/download</a> #SPM20 #BeThere</p>	
9/18	<p>Service members and their families can connect with their installation's chaplain for non-medical counseling services and more. To find the contact information for your installation chaplain, visit your installation website or go to <a href="http://installations.militaryonesource.mil">installations.militaryonesource.mil</a> and select "Chapels" in the program or service section. #SPM20 #ConnectToProtect #BeThere</p>	
9/21	<p>Download the #ConnectToProtect Selfie Sign template to write in how you are Connecting to Protect with friends or family. Then take a selfie with it and post it to social media using the hashtags #BeThere and #ConnectToProtect <a href="http://www.dspo.mil/spm">www.dspo.mil/spm</a>. #SPM20</p>	
9/23	<p>We all could use an ear from time to time. Call a friend and ask them how they are doing. #SPM20 #ConnectToProtect #BeThere</p>	

Date to Post	POST	GRAPHIC
9/25	Download and print the #ConnectToProtect sticker to show your support for Suicide Prevention Month! <a href="http://www.dsps.mil/spm">www.dsps.mil/spm</a> #SPM20 #BeThere	
9/28	It is okay to sometimes feel sad, frustrated, or angry. We all have days when we are not feeling like ourselves. How you navigate those feelings is important. If you need someone to talk to, help is available. Call Military OneSource at 800-342-9647 or visit <a href="http://www.militaryonesource.mil">www.militaryonesource.mil</a> . #SPM20 #ConnectToProtect #BeThere	
9/29	If you know of someone in a crisis, the Military/Veterans Crisis Line is confidential and free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and available to all Service members, Veterans, and their families, including members of the National Guard and Reserve. Seek help immediately by contacting 800-273-8255 (press 1), online chat ( <a href="http://www.militarycrisisline.net">www.militarycrisisline.net</a> ), or text (838255). #SPM20 #ConnectToProtect #BeThere	
9/30	Today and throughout the year, know that it is ok to ask for help. Military OneSource is there for your everyday challenges, such as relationship or parenting challenges. <a href="http://www.militaryonesource.mil">www.militaryonesource.mil</a> #SPM20 #ConnectToProtect #BeThere	

# Selfie Sign

Take a selfie! Use the **#ConnectToProtect** Selfie Sign template to write in how you are Connecting to Protect with friends or family. Then take a selfie with it and post it to social media using **#BeThere #ConnectToProtect**. Share the instructional graphic on social media inviting others to take a selfie, as well!





- 1 Print out the **#ConnectToProtect** selfie sign and fill in the blank with how you Connect to Protect with family and friends.
- 2 Take a photo with it of you and your friends and family staying "connected."
- 3 Share it on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter with the hashtags **#ConnectToProtect** & **#BeThere**.
- 4 Challenge others to share their **#ConnectToProtect** photos with the hashtags.

**CONNECT TO PROTECT**



# Facebook Frame

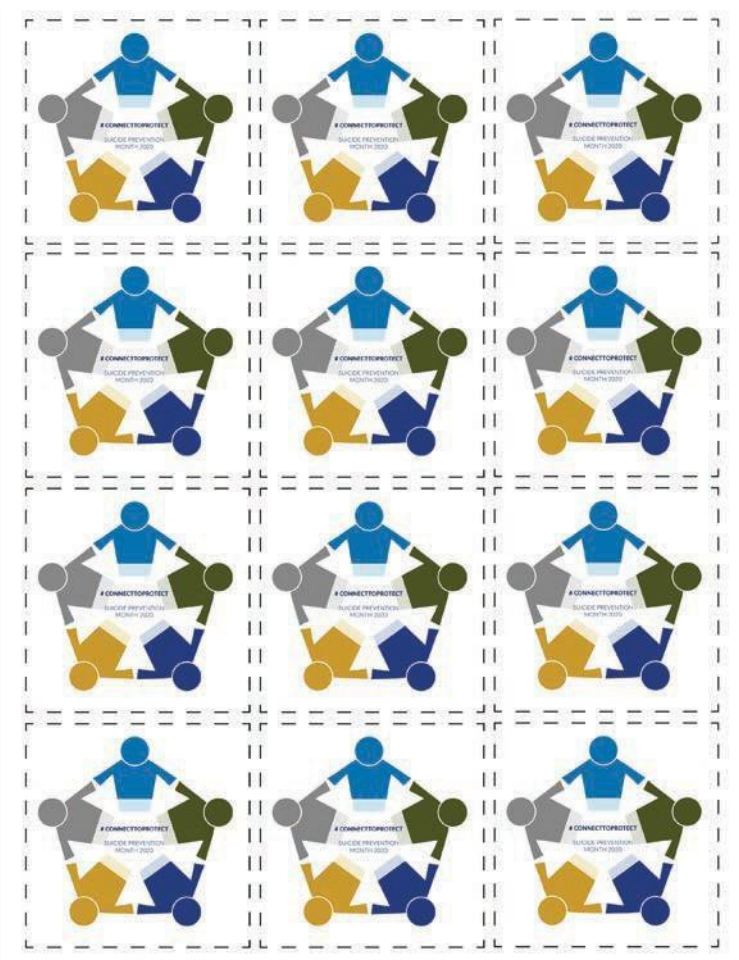
A Facebook frame is a way that you can show support for a cause on your Facebook profile. Search Facebook for SPM2020 Frame and update your profile picture to show your support for suicide prevention.





# Sticker

Download and print the Suicide Prevention Month stickers to show your support!



# Outreach Materials

## Outreach 5x7 Handouts

Outreach materials are available in various formats on a number of suicide prevention topics. Download to share electronically, or print them to share at resource fairs and other community events.

**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: ADP 1520 Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policies, Programs, and Practices

**Resources**

Make Us Your Ally. Join **#BeThere**

**CRISIS:**

Veterans Military CrisisLine CrisisLine 1-800-273-8255

Defense Suicide Prevention Office | [www.dsppo.mil](http://www.dsppo.mil) | [f](https://www.facebook.com/dsppo) [i](https://www.instagram.com/dsppo) [t](https://twitter.com/dsppo) @dsppo

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**Risks & Warning Signs  
How to Help**

**TOP RISK FACTORS FOR SUICIDES**

- 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.

Defense Suicide Prevention Office | [www.dsppo.mil](http://www.dsppo.mil) | [f](https://www.facebook.com/dsppo) [i](https://www.instagram.com/dsppo) [t](https://twitter.com/dsppo) @dsppo

**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.
2. Stay connected. Support from friends and family can improve well-being when facing stress.
3. Practice relaxation methods: Muscle relaxation, breathing exercises, meditation, stretching, yoga, prayer, listening to quiet music, or time in nature.
4. Get good sleep. Poor or insufficient sleep has a significant negative impact on your health.
5. Exercise regularly. Cardio and strength training can reduce stress levels and keep you mission ready.
6. Get involved in passions, hobbies, or activities that you enjoy—for example art can be a positive, creative way to express feelings.
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.
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.dsppo.mil](http://www.dsppo.mil).

**#BeThere** **MILITARY CRISISLINE** **1-800-273-8255**

For military life challenges: **Veterans Military CrisisLine** **1-800-273-8255**

Source: 2018-19

**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.springspringmood.org](http://www.springspringmood.org)

Defense Suicide Prevention Office | [www.dsppo.mil](http://www.dsppo.mil) | [f](https://www.facebook.com/dsppo) [i](https://www.instagram.com/dsppo) [t](https://twitter.com/dsppo) @dsppo

**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.

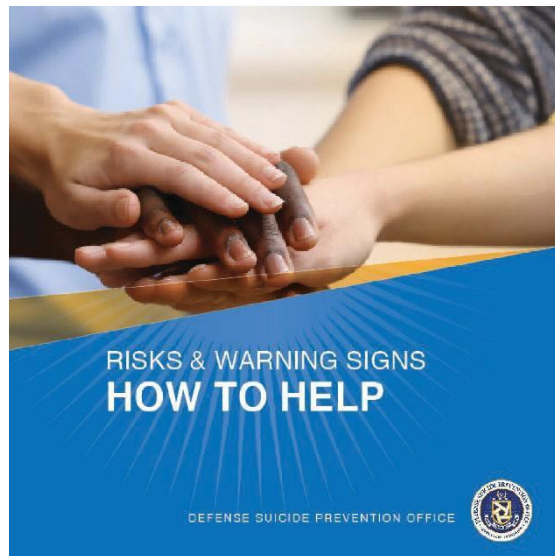
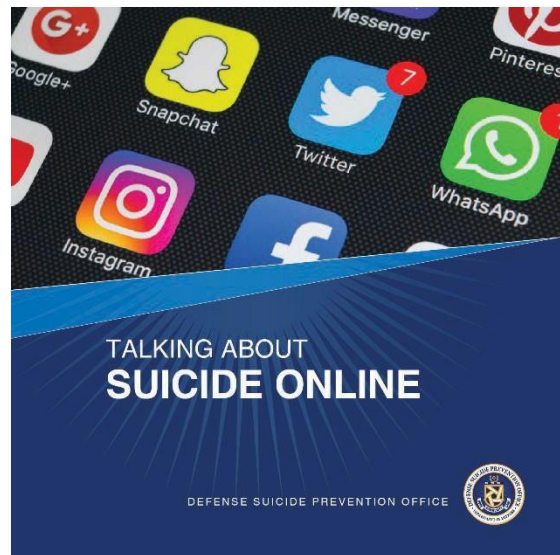
There are a number of tips for storing firearms and medications safely that can be easily implemented and will create a safer home—for all members of the family.

**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.


Defense Suicide Prevention Office | [www.dsppo.mil](http://www.dsppo.mil) | [f](https://www.facebook.com/dsppo) [i](https://www.instagram.com/dsppo) [t](https://twitter.com/dsppo) @dsppo

# Outreach Trifolds



# Blog – Director’s Message

Use the blog template to share information on your website about Suicide Prevention Month and how individuals can **#ConnectToProtect** to **#BeThere** for Service members and family members in your lives.



**CONNECT TO PROTECT**  
*Make it Your Mission to*  
**#BeThere**

SPM 2020

Director’s Message

Dear Suicide Prevention Allies,

The Department of Defense (DoD) is committed to preventing suicide among our military community. While suicide prevention is a DoD priority throughout the year, during September— Suicide Prevention Month — the Department brings added attention to the complex issue of suicide and emphasizes the resources and support available. I encourage everyone to get involved and to **#BeThere**, not just for others, but for yourself, as well.

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. As important partners and allies in our suicide prevention efforts, I ask you to join me in the 2020 Suicide Prevention Month campaign.

Here are some ways you can support this critical mission:

- Download and use the 2020 DoD Suicide Prevention Month Campaign Guide.
- Download and display the 2020 Suicide Prevention Month poster.
- Use the Suicide Prevention Month 2020 **#ConnectToProtectPledge** to share how you will **#BeThere** and help save a life.
- Visit the DSPO Suicide Prevention Month Campaign webpage to download resources and tools.
- Share **#ConnectToProtect** campaign materials via your installation’s social media channels.
- Use the hashtags **#BeThere**, **#SPM20**, and **#ConnectToProtect** when posting on social media.

If you, or someone you know is in a crisis, there is help — call the Veterans/Military Crisis Line at 1-00-273-8255, press 1, or visit [www.militarycrisisline.net](http://www.militarycrisisline.net) and chat online 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Calling from overseas? In Europe: Call 0080012738255 or DSN 118; In Korea: Call 0808555118 or DSN 118; In Afghanistan: Call 0018002738255 or DSN111.

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 Service members, including National Guard and Reserve members, and eligible family members. Arrange a face-to-face, phone, online, or video counseling session by calling 1-800-342-9647.

Thank you for your persistence and dedication to suicide prevention in September and year-round.



# 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: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_ 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](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, 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](http://www.dspo.mil).

###

Suggested tags: #ConnectToProtect, #BeThere, #SPM2020

# Press Release Template

Send a press release to your community's newspaper to promote local Suicide Prevention Month activities within your community and pitch them stories of how your community is taking steps to prevent suicide. Use the press release template provided or write your own.



## 2020 Suicide Prevention Month Press Release Template for Installations

### Department of Defense 2020 Suicide Prevention Month Campaign Kicks Off with an Emphasis on Connectedness

[Insert Installation and date]. [Installation name] is joining the Department of Defense (DOD) in promoting Suicide Prevention Month – in September – to educate about suicide prevention, resources, and steps everyone can take to protect against suicide among Service members and their families. Each year, the DOD executes a Suicide Prevention Month campaign in September and encourages communities across the force and all individuals to get involved, and **#BeThere** for others and yourselves.

This year's campaign slogan, **Connect to Protect**, highlights the important role connections to family friends, the community, and resources can play in preventing suicide. Research indicates connectedness is a protective factor that can reduce the risk of suicide, while loneliness and feeling like a burden can be suicide risk factors for some individuals. The 2020 Suicide Prevention Month tagline, **Make it Your Mission to #BeThere**, reinforces everyone – leaders, Service members, and families – can play an active role in preventing suicide.

Throughout September, [insert installation] is hosting a variety of events and activities to emphasize the importance of suicide prevention and highlight available resources. The Suicide Prevention Month Campaign outreach events during September will include:

[Placeholder for calendar/listing of installation's scheduled events/activities during September]

A downloadable Suicide Prevention Month Planning Guide provides materials and suggestions installations and others can use to design and execute Suicide Prevention Month campaign activities. The planning guide and materials are available on the Defense Suicide Prevention Office website at <https://www.dspo.mil/spm/>.

The DOD will also recognize one exemplary installation from each of the Service components, including from the Reserve and National Guard, for their exceptional suicide prevention efforts in support of the **Connect to Protect** campaign.

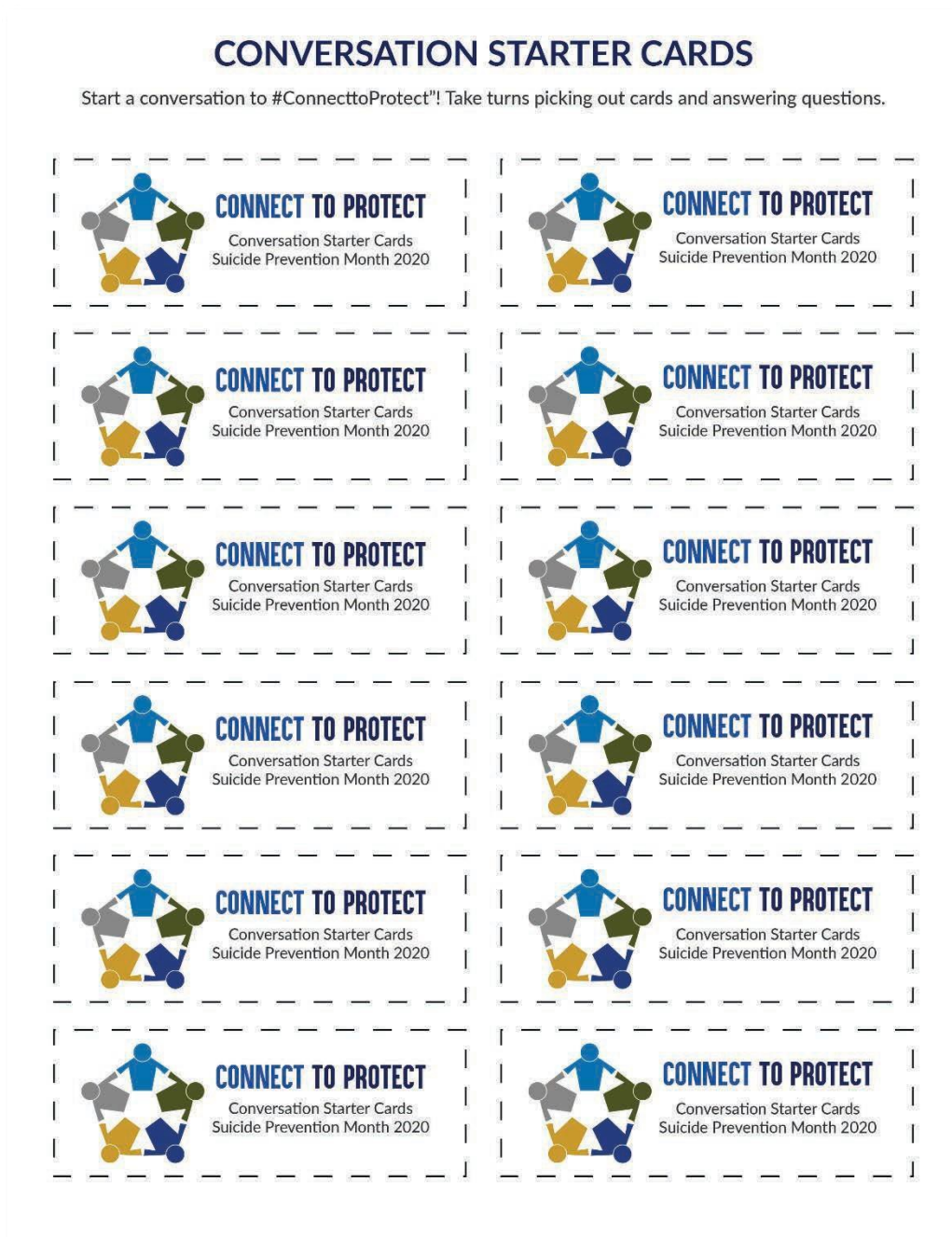
[Insert Installation Name]  
Insert Installations' Boiler Plate Language



# Conversation Starter Cards

Trim along the dotted lines and place on tables in public areas around your community.

## FRONT





## BACK

What do you appreciate most  
about the person sitting to  
your left?

What is new in your world?

When and where are you  
happiest in your life?

What scares you?

Name 3 words that  
describe yourself.

What is something funny that  
happened to you?

What are your talents?

What are you grateful for?

What is something you  
worry about?

What U.S. city would you  
like to visit?

What is something you like to do,  
but might be embarrassed to tell  
your friends?

[WRITE IN YOUR OWN  
QUESTION]

# Resources

## Non-Crisis Resources

### DoD Resources

#### Defense Suicide Prevention Office

Advances 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. Additional materials and resources can be found on the Defense Suicide Prevention Office website.

#### Contact Information

Web: [www.dspo.mil](http://www.dspo.mil)



#### inTransition

A free, confidential program that offers specialized coaching and assistance for active duty Service members, National Guard members, reservists, veterans, and retirees who need access to a new mental health provider or wish to initiate mental health care for the first time. inTransition services are available to ALL military members regardless of length of service or discharge status.

#### Contact Information:

Phone: 800-424-7877.

Outside the United States (international toll-free number): 800-424- 4685.

Outside the United States (collect): 314-387-4700.

All calls are confidential and free.



#### Military OneSource

For non-crisis concerns, such as relationship, family, or financial challenges, Military OneSource provides 24/7 service to all Service members, including National Guard and Reserve members and eligible family members.

Arrange a face-to-face, phone, online, or video counseling session via the contacts below.

#### Contact Information

Phone: 800-342-9647

Chat: [livechat.militaryonesourceconnect.org/chat](https://livechat.militaryonesourceconnect.org/chat)

Web: [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil)



Call. 800-342-9647

Click. [www.MilitaryOneSource.mil](http://www.MilitaryOneSource.mil)

Connect. 24/7

## National Resources

### American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention is the nation's largest non-profit dedicated to saving lives and bringing hope to those affected by suicide.

#### Contact Information

Toll-Free: 888-333-AFSP (2377)

Phone: (212) 363-3500

Fax: (212) 363-6237

General Inquiries: [info@afsp.org](mailto:info@afsp.org)

Web: [afsp.org](http://afsp.org)



### Give An Hour

Give An Hour provides care and support for those who otherwise might not receive it by harnessing the skill, expertise, and generosity of volunteer mental health professionals across the country.

#### Contact Information

Email: [info@giveanhour.org](mailto:info@giveanhour.org)

Web: [giveanhour.org](http://giveanhour.org)



## Crisis Resources

### DoD Resources

#### Veterans/Military Crisis Line (VCL/MCL)

The VCL/MCL is a free, confidential resource that provides Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) support for all Service members, including members of the National Guard and Reserve, all veterans, and their families, even if they are not registered with VA or enrolled in VA health care. The caring, qualified responders at the VCL/MCL are specially trained and experienced in helping Service members and Veterans of all ages and circumstances. If you, or someone you know is in a crisis, there is help – contact the VCL/MCL.

#### Contact Information

Phone: 800-273-8255, press 1

Chat: [www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat)

Web: [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net)

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



## National Resources

### 911

In an emergency, dial 911 or your local emergency number immediately. An emergency is any situation that requires immediate assistance from the police, fire department, or an ambulance.

#### Contact Information

Phone: 911

Web: [www.911.gov](http://www.911.gov)



### National Poison Control

If you suspect a poisoning, contact a Poison Control Center right away, online or by phone. Knowing is safer than guessing, and quick action could save a life. Help is available online, with the web POISONCONTROL tool, or by phone at 800-222-1222. Both options are free, expert, and confidential.

#### Contact Information

Website: [www.poison.org](http://www.poison.org)



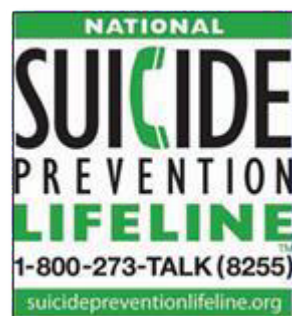
### National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24/7. Your call is routed to the nearest crisis center in the national network of 150+ crisis centers.

#### Contact Information

Phone: 800-273-TALK (8255); TTY: 800-799-4889

Web: [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)



\*THE APPEARANCE OF HYPERLINKS DOES NOT CONSTITUTE ENDORSEMENT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OF NON-U.S. GOVERNMENT SITES OR THE INFORMATION, PRODUCTS, OR SERVICES CONTAINED THEREIN.