

RESOURCE INFORMATION PACKAGE



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Defense Suicide Prevention Office serves as the government oversight authority for the strategic development, implementation, centralization, standardization, communication and evaluation of Defense Department suicide and risk reduction programs, policies and surveillance activities to reduce the impact of suicide on service members and their families.

Everyone can help prevent suicide. Know how to recognize common risk factors including chronic pain; feelings of guilt, anger, or shame; exposure to trauma; a sense of hopelessness; relationship problems; and posttraumatic stress disorder. If you are experiencing any of these behaviors or notice them in friends and family who have served in the military, encourage them to seek help right away.

The diagram features an iceberg floating in the ocean. The top portion, which is above the water line, is labeled 'TIP OF THE ICEBERG' on the left. The bottom, much larger portion, which is submerged, is labeled 'BELOW THE SURFACE' on the left. The visible part lists several behavioral signs, while the submerged part lists underlying psychological and situational factors. Two callout boxes on the right provide explanatory text for each section.

TIP OF THE ICEBERG

- Dramatic Mood Changes
- Reckless Behavior
- Withdrawing from Friends and Family
- Giving Away Prized Possessions
- Losing Interest in Their Appearance
- Talking About Death or Self-harm
- Losing Interest in Previously Enjoyable Things
- Loss of Appetite

A service member who is thinking of suicide due to being overwhelmed by their problems may take foolish risks, withdraw from the world, give away possessions and not take care of themselves. Many of these happen because the service member isn't actually worried about the future because they don't intend to be around. A good leader will know to look "below the surface" and find out the reasons for the service member's behavior change.

BELOW THE SURFACE

- Relationship Problems
- Clinical Depression
- Feelings of Hopelessness
- Severe Anxiety/Distress
- Financial Problems or Legal Troubles
- Drug Abuse or Abusing Alcohol
- Prior Suicide Attempts

When someone's problems have piled up or seem so large that they consider suicide, they need help from peers and leaders. Due to the stigma associated with seeking psychological help or having suicidal thoughts, many service members will hide any signs of problems from others and delay or completely avoid seeking help. Your role is to recognize the things above the surface and know to ask about other problems that may be driving these changes. Engaged unit leaders are the front line in preventing suicide.

Service members in crisis should seek help immediately by contacting the Military Crisis Line. Dial 800-273-8255 (press 1 for military) for 24/7 crisis support. The crisis line, found at <http://militarycrisisline.net>, also provides a chat and text service.

Help-Seeking

- Seeking help is a sign of strength.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suicide ideation or a suicide attempt is a medical emergency and care should be sought immediately 	call 911
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoD has launched a joint campaign with the Department of Veterans Affairs 	“Power of 1;” 1 Act, 1 question, 1 call, can save a life.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service members or their families in crisis should seek help immediately by contacting the Military Crisis Line. 	Dial 800-273-8255 (press 1 for military) for 24/7 crisis support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The crisis line also provides an online chat and text service 	www.militarycrisisline.net text: (838255)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service members or their families who would just like to talk to someone who has shared similar experiences should: 	contact Vets4Warriors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will be linked to a peer who is trained to assist them in overcoming their obstacles. 	Call 855-838-8255; email info@vets4warriors.com Chat online at www.vets4warriors.com .

What can you do to help your service members?

- ✓ Know your service members so that you recognize when their behavior, mood or job performance change
- ✓ Learn what symptoms to observe for and do not be afraid to ask if a person is thinking about suicide
- ✓ Take any discussion of suicidal feelings seriously, despite how casually they may be expressed
- ✓ Know where to seek professional help and ensure that a person in need seeks out the appropriate resources
- ✓ Express concern and emphasize that seeking care is a sign of strength

Things to avoid when it comes to helping

- 👉 Don't ignore the problem — assuming the person will never follow through with suicide is not acceptable
- 👉 Do not try to act as a counselor or therapist — if the service member needs help, encourage them to see a professional
- 👉 Don't act shocked or engage in moral discussions that may produce feelings of guilt or shame
- 👉 DO NOT leave a service member who is suicidal alone — immediately get them to a professional qualified to do a medical evaluation

Suicide Prevention



You are not alone. There is support.

Suicide:

What is Suicide?

Suicide is the deliberate act of ending one's life. It is a serious concern for the nation as well as the Defense Department. Although suicide in the services is rare, combat exposure and other job related stressors on relationships are thought to contribute to a rise in suicide rates over the past few years.

Facts about Suicide:

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States

The Defense Department takes the issue of suicide very seriously and is actively working to reduce the number of suicides.

Several conditions resulting from exposure to combat, such as traumatic brain injury, posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, chronic pain and substance abuse can increase an individual's risk for suicide

If you suspect someone may be feeling suicidal, talk to them —it could help save their life.

Resources for Psychological Health Care

Many service members want information about psychological health conditions but aren't sure what resources are available or how confidential they are.

The following tables highlight resources and compare certain factors.

Resource	Description
inTransition health.mil/intransition	DCoE manages the inTransition program to ensure that service members who receive psychological health care do not “fall through the cracks” when moving from one duty station to another, deploying or transitioning from Defense Department to Veterans Affairs (VA) care. InTransition coaches enhance the continuity of care and help service members maintain their treatment gains while they transition.
Afterdeployment.org	Afterdeployment.org is a website that provides assistance for common post-deployment issues to all military personnel and their dependents. The site offers excellent information on common military-related psychological health disorders and allows users to take self-assessments, enroll in workshops to gain education about a disorder, and read personal stories from other service members who have experienced similar challenges.
Military Crisis Line 800-273-TALK (8255)	VA operates a hotline to connect veterans in crisis to trained counselors 24/7. Call 800-273-TALK (8255), and press “1” to be routed to the Military Crisis Line. Or visit militarycrisisline.net for chat and text services.
DCoE Outreach Center 866-966-1020 dcoe.health.mil/24-7help.aspx	The DCoE Outreach Center is staffed by health resource consultants who can answer questions about psychological health issues. They provide assistance and resources for service members, veterans and their families. The center provides free, anonymous assistance by phone, online chat or email 24 hours a day.
Military Pathways mentalhealthscreening.org	Military Pathways is a voluntary, anonymous mental health and alcohol education screening program offered to military personnel and their families in all branches, including the National Guard and reserves. The program educates, raises awareness and offers screenings for mental health and substance abuse. Military Pathways program materials are provided free to installations, units and groups.
Military OneSource militaryonesource.mil 800-342-9647	Military OneSource provides support to all branches of the military — offering direct access to medical professionals through face-to-face, online, email and phone sessions to help address the challenges and concerns of service members and families. Online resources include webinars, newsletters, CDs, booklets and DVDs. The services are private and confidential, with a few exceptions.

Resource	Description
Service Community Centers	Many bases have support centers staffed by trained professionals and volunteers which offer many services free of charge including counseling. These counselors can provide confidential short-term counseling, information and referrals if needed. Classes and groups are also generally available. Centers include Army Community Services, Fleet and Family Service
Military Chaplains	For service members who are not ready or are unsure if they need to see a medical professional regarding behavioral health concerns, the chaplain is a good “first-stop” to talk about their concerns. Conversations held with a chaplain are confidential, and they can provide sound advice about seeking other professional help. Many chaplains will provide counseling for certain psychological health or adjustment issues, such as marital counseling.
Primary Care Manager	The same primary care manager who sees you for routine medical issues can also diagnose and treat many psychological health conditions, such as PTSD and depression. The Defense Department in partnership with the VA developed guidance on the effective management of common psychological health disorders in primary care.
Behavioral Health Clinics, Military Treatment Facilities	Although there are several names for behavioral health clinics across the services (psychology, psychiatry, mental health, life skills, etc.), these types of clinics offer specialized services for psychological health conditions in a confidential environment. Depending on the location, a service member can receive individual or group counseling, medications, and other services to help with psychological health conditions.

dcoe.health.mil | 24/7 Outreach Center 866-966-1020
 2345 Crystal Drive, Suite 120 | Arlington, Virginia 22202 | 800-510-7897
1335 East West Highway, 9th Floor | Silver Spring, Maryland 20910 | 301-295-3257

Resource	Identification Required	On Base	Referral Required	Confidential	Information and Assessments	Provides Treatment	Entered in Military Health Record
inTransition	Yes	No	No	Yes*	Yes	No	No
Afterdeployment.org	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Military Crisis Line	No	No	No	Yes	Info only	No	No
DCoE Outreach Center	No	No	No	Yes	Info only	No	No
Military Pathways	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Military OneSource	Yes	No	No	Yes*	Yes	Yes	No
Service Community Centers	Yes	No	No	Yes*	Yes	Yes	No
Military Chaplains	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Primary Care Manager	Yes	Yes	No	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes
Behavioral Health Clinics, Military Treatment Facilities	Yes	Yes	Depends* *	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes

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