

EVERY TWELVE MINUTES...

That's how frequently someone in the United States makes the decision to end their life. Every twelve minutes. One in five of those suicides will be a veteran. Despite veterans constituting only 9% of the population overall, they make up nearly 20% of all recorded suicides year to year. There is no uniform cause of suicide, individuals having different experiences and influences, but suicide *is* preventable.

During the month of September, we observe Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Whether you or someone you know is struggling—be it a veteran, colleague, neighbor, or friend—please take the time to familiarize yourself with resources that can help save lives.

“IT’S SO MUCH DARKER WHEN A LIGHT GOES OUT THAN IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IF IT HAD NEVER SHONE.” -John Steinbeck

Sometimes it can be difficult to detect when someone around you is in immediate danger until it is too late. The [Veterans Crisis Line](#) details these red flags for when a person may be considering self harm:

- A sense of hopelessness or a despairing attitude
- Frequent mood swings, periods of restlessness, or agitation
- Generalized anxiety or panic attacks
- Impulsive behavior or engaging in high-risk activities with little forethought
- Increased abuse of alcohol or prescription and non-prescription drugs
- Withdrawal from family and friends

Veterans Affairs offers training for communication with veterans in distress through their VA S.A.V.E. program, which breaks down the steps for confronting these difficult topics into five steps. Though the focus of the VA is veterans, this approach is effective for all individuals experiencing moments of crisis and distress.

S

Know the Signs that indicate a Veteran might be thinking about suicide

A

Ask the most important question of all — “Are you thinking of killing yourself?”

V

Validate the Veteran’s experience

E

Encourage treatment and Expedite getting help



To learn more about the VA S.A.V.E. program please visit this [link](#) or scan the QR to the left. If you are interested in taking a free thirty-minute training course to get your VA S.A.V.E. certificate, please visit: <https://learn.psycharmor.org/courses/va-save>

SEPTEMBER
**SUICIDE
PREVENTION**
AWARENESS MONTH



SUPPORT AT ANYTIME

If you are suffering a crisis the Veterans Crisis Line is open 24/7. Enrollment in VA benefits or healthcare is not required. This is a free option to get in contact with qualified experts and responders.

DIAL 988 THEN PRESS 1 OR TEXT 838255

You can also chat to a professional online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat

VETERANS RESOURCES LOCALLY

Are you familiar with your local Veterans Resource and/or Health Center? Visit the Veterans Crisis Line [Resource Locator](#) and type in your zip code to find real-life help nearby

CONNECT WITH OTHERS

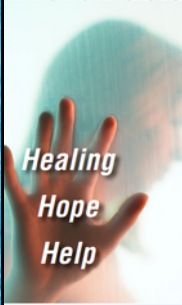
Make the Connection (maketheconnection.net) is a resource that provides direct access to veterans who are navigating mental health challenges relating to transition from active duty, substance dependency, suicidal thoughts, and more. Created by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, users can filter content based on certain signifiers such as specific mental health symptoms and life and combat experiences through a full range of media options; including video interviews, articles, and podcasts.



UPWARD ESTIMATES FOR VETERANS WITH PTSD IS 32%

PTSD, or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder effects how a person thinks or behaves. Typical symptoms are frightening thoughts, nightmares, situation specific triggers, and a heightened fight or flight response. PTSD is often the result of a significant trauma experience and can affect a person’s life greatly. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has developed a new free app called PTSD Coach to help our veterans. Click the image to learn more!

**Suicide
Is
Preventable**



SUICIDE RISK ISN'T EXCLUSIVE TO VETERANS

Suicide can affect anyone at any stage of life. The NJ Department of Human Services Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services has created this resource and strategy booklet for those who are struggling or know someone who is struggling. Click the image to learn more!

NJ Suicide
Prevention Hotline:
855-654-6735

