



Resources for Organizations Serving Veterans

The suicide rate among veterans is a concern, with recent estimates indicating that it is approximately two times higher than comparative rates in the general population.¹ However, with appropriate support and services for those at risk, suicide can be prevented.

Protective Factors

The factors that protect military service members and veterans from suicide include the following:²

- Effective mental health care
- Social connectedness
- Problem-solving skills
- Contact with caregivers
- Unit cohesion
- Post-deployment social support
- Post-deployment sense of purpose and control

Suicide Prevention Resources

The following list of online resources includes programs, trainings, and information relevant to staff at organizations that provide support and services to veterans and their families.

Best Practices Registry for Suicide Prevention

http://www.sprc.org/search/bpr/military?filters=sm_resource_type%3Abpr_listing

This registry includes programs addressing military issues from the Best Practices Registry for Suicide Prevention on the Suicide Prevention Resource Center website. Click on any of the programs for a description and link to additional information.

Center for Deployment Psychology (CDP)

<http://www.deploymentpsych.org/content/online-courses>

The CDP provides a variety of short online trainings for professionals working with service members and their families that are free or cost a nominal CE credit fee. Topics include identification and treatment of suicidal behavior, depression in service members and veterans, Cognitive Processing Therapy for PTSD, the impact of combat stress on families, military cultural competence, and provider resilience.

From the War Zone to the Home Front: Supporting the Mental Health of Veterans and Families

http://mghcme.org/courses/course-detail/from_the_war_zone_to_the_home_front_supporting_the_mental_health_of_veteran

These free online CME-certified training sessions for mental health and health care professionals to assist in the diagnosis and treatment of returning veterans and their families were developed in collaboration with the Massachusetts General Hospital Home Base Program and the Department of Veterans Affairs National Center for PTSD.

¹ Kemp, J. (2013, July 30). 2009 rates per 100,000 [of suicide of veterans receiving care in the Veterans Health Administration versus general population]. In *Suicide prevention strategies and resources to improve services for service members, veterans, and their families*. Retrieved from <http://youtu.be/8ZyHpSt79FE>

² Suicide Prevention Resource Center, & Rodgers, P. (2011). Understanding risk and protective factors for suicide: A primer for preventing suicide. Newton, MA: Education Development Center, Inc. Mitchell, M. M., Gallaway, M. S., Millikan, A. M., & Bell, M. (2012). Interaction of combat exposure and unit cohesion in predicting suicide-related ideation among post-deployment soldiers. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, ePub(ePub), ePub-ePub. doi:10.1111/j.1943-278X.2012.00106.x. Pietrzak, R. H., Goldstein, M. B., Malley, J. C., Rivers, A. J., Johnson, D. C., & Southwick, S. M. (2010). Risk and protective factors associated with suicidal ideation in veterans of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 123(1-3), 102-107.



Coming Home: Supporting Military Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families

<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/SMA12-4677DVD>

This webinar describes the challenges facing military personnel, veterans, and their families; the mental health and substance abuse support available from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and civilian health systems; and the need to expand family-centered services.

Community Provider Toolkit

<http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/>

This site is for clinicians and features key tools to support them in providing mental health services to veterans. It features information on connecting with the VA and understanding military culture and experience, as well as tools for working with a variety of mental health conditions.

Safety Plan Treatment Manual to Reduce Suicide Risk: Veteran Version

http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/VA_Safety_planning_manual.pdf

This manual describes safety planning, which is a brief clinical intervention that can serve as a valuable adjunct to risk assessment and may be used with veterans who have made a suicide attempt, have suicidal ideations, have psychiatric disorders that increase suicide risk, or are otherwise assessed to be at high risk for suicide.

The War Within: Preventing Suicides in the Military

<http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG953.html>

This 2011 report, developed by Rand National Defense Resource Institute under contract with the Department of Defense (DoD), reviews the current evidence detailing suicide epidemiology in the military, identifies best-practice suicide-prevention programs, describes and catalogs suicide prevention activities in DoD and across each service, and recommends ways to ensure that the activities in DoD and across each service reflect best practices. Related products on this topic are also available.

Military One Source

<http://www.militaryonesource.mil>

This website provides comprehensive information on every aspect of military life at no cost to active duty, National Guard, and reserve members and their families.

National Resource Directory

<https://m.nrd.gov>

This is a searchable directory of national resources connecting wounded warriors, service members, veterans and their families and caregivers with those who support them.



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