

VAU.S. Department
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News Release

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‘Reach Out’ campaign highlights programs and assistance for Veterans during Suicide Prevention Month

WASHINGTON — In conjunction with Suicide Prevention Month this September, the Department of Veterans Affairs is launching [Reach Out](#), a new campaign that raises awareness of its mental health resources available for Veterans.

Timely evidence-based [suicide prevention public service announcements on firearm safe storage](#) have been released as the 20th anniversary of 9/11 approaches and the recent events in Afghanistan spark an array of emotions along with other stressors.

Reach Out emphasizes the importance of not waiting for a crisis to happen by acting now to help prevent Veteran suicide later. In addition to reaching out other critical actions that can save a life are hearing a Veteran’s story, being prepared, finding resources and spreading the word.

The messaging ensures Veterans, their families, friends and caregivers know they are not alone, and it only takes a moment to reach out and ask for help. VA’s Suicide Prevention Month campaign encourages Veterans who might be going through a challenging time in their lives to reach out for support.

“Transitioning from military service, changing jobs, ending a relationship, and even raising kids can be overwhelming at times, and while everyone goes through ups and downs, sometimes Veterans’ experiences can intensify these situations,” said VA Acting Under Secretary for Health, Steven L. Lieberman, M.D. “Veterans don’t have to go through the challenges of life alone; VA and community organizations can help by providing resources before a crisis develops and assistance for Veterans in crisis.”

There are many ways to reach out to friends, family and VA:

- Calling or texting a friend or fellow Veteran to talk about what they’re going through.
- Tapping into VA tools to get help when going through life’s challenges.
- [Make the Connection](#), where more than 600 Veterans and family members share their stories of strength and recovery.
- [MyVA411](#), where Veterans, their families and caregivers can call 1-800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411) to easily access information on VA benefits and services.
- [VA Resource Locator](#), where Veteran and families can find VA resources at the national and local level.

VA also has resources to help Veterans transitioning from the military or going through a difficult time in life. [VA Solid Start](#) connects Veterans with qualified representatives who call three times during a Veteran’s first year of separation to walk through benefits available. The [Self-Check Assessment](#) is a confidential anonymous risk assessment Veterans can use to help them understand if and how stress and depression are affecting them.

Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness can get free confidential support through the [National Call Center for Homeless Veterans](#), where trained counselors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Veterans do not have to be registered with VA or enrolled in VA health care to contact the center.

Veterans and loved ones can also find additional external resources on the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s Behavioral Health Treatment Services](#) tool. It is confidential and anonymous and allows users to search by ZIP code for local treatment facilities that focus on substance use/addiction and/or mental health issues.

For more information and resources, visit REACH.gov/SPM.

*If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, contact the [Veterans Crisis Line](#) to receive free confidential support and crisis intervention available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Call? **1-800-273-8255?and Press 1**, text to **838255**, or chat online at? [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](#)??*

Reporters covering this issue can download? [VA’s Safe Messaging Best Practices?fact sheet](#) or visit? www.ReportingOnSuicide.org for guidance on how to communicate about suicide.

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