



NAVY MEDICINE'S SUPPORT TO SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

"We must continue to place suicide prevention high on our list of priorities. We must maintain a focus on identifying and addressing areas of concern and develop proactive approaches to engaging our service members in need of mental health services to prevent suicides and foster a broader cultural acceptance of mental health concerns."

*Vice Admiral Adam M. Robinson Jr., MC
Surgeon General of the Navy*

BACKGROUND:

Each year, we lose too many Sailors and Marines to an enemy called suicide. Suicides occur when an individual experiences severe psychological pain. They believe that they cannot relieve that pain, that they cannot be effective in life and that they are a burden to others. Individuals contemplating suicide see themselves and their situation very differently from their friends and loved ones. Their thinking is distorted and they often feel disconnected and hopeless. But there is hope and these tragedies can be prevented through engaged and educated leadership.

Suicidal behavior is an extreme stress reaction, a manifestation of red zone stress. As part of its mission to improve psychological health and mitigate the impact of stress on Sailors, Marines and their families, the Naval Center for Combat & Operational Stress Control (NCCOSC) has developed a unique peer-to-peer training module and facilitators guide for command suicide prevention coordinators. The program, developed in support of the OPNAV Behavioral Health Program, guides students through a series of exercises to help Sailors better recognize and respond to signs of a shipmates in distress.

The suicidal state of mind is often temporary and reversible with timely assistance. Suicide can be prevented when we take the time to look out for our shipmates, recognize the signs and make sure our people get the help they need.

KEY TALKING POINTS:

- Navy Medicine is doing everything we can to ensure a continuum of psychological healthcare is available to service members throughout the deployment cycle – pre-deployment, during deployment, and post-deployment.
- Effective leader education can improve the ability to respond to personal problems of subordinates.
- Sailors must be able to identify shipmates in distress and help them to access care.

The Navy Suicide Prevention Program consists of four elements:

- **Training** – to increase awareness of suicide concerns, improve wellness, and know how to intervene when someone needs help
- **Intervention** – insuring timely access to needed services and having a plan of action for crisis response
- **Response** – assisting families, units, and Sailors affected by suicide behaviors
- **Reporting** – reporting and learning from incidents of suicide and suicide related behaviors.

ASK - CARE - TREAT

ASK ~Don't be afraid to ask

CARE ~Listen, offer hope, don't judge

TREAT ~Take action, get assistance, follow up!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

suicide.navy.mil or nccosc.navy.mil or militaryonesource.com