

Magellan  
FEDERAL



Webinar Series **Presents:**

**SUICIDE PREVENTION**  
**STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES**  
**FOR MILITARY FAMILIES**



NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION  
& AWARENESS MONTH

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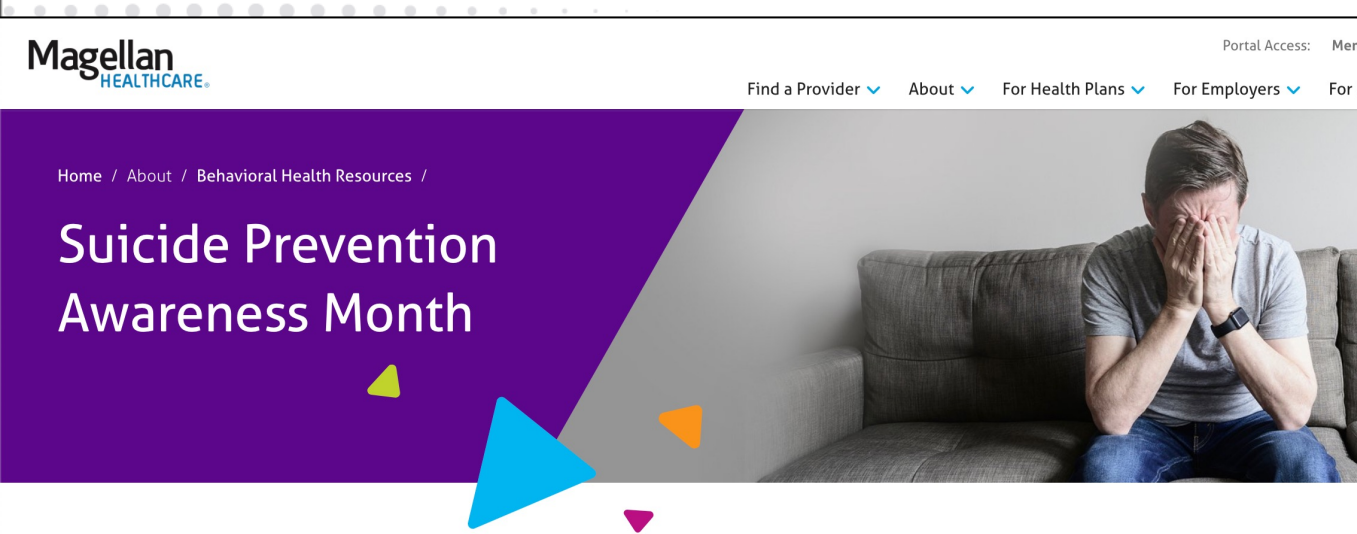
# Magellan FEDERAL

- We inspire healthier, more productive communities by delivering innovative, total well-being solutions to the Federal Government, military personnel, government employees, and their families.




# Suicide Prevention Awareness Month Resources

<https://www.magellanhealthcare.com/about/bh-resources/prevent-2/>




### Resources and Information




**Suicide prevention awareness campaign toolkit →**

Materials you can easily share to spread awareness, reduce stigma and save lives



**Suicide prevention tip sheets →**

Support addressing how to identify warning signs and take action to help yourself or someone else



**Suicide prevention national resources →**

Downloadable directory of support organizations across the United States with a similar goal to prevent suicide

For September Suicide Prevention Awareness Month and throughout the year, Magellan Healthcare is committed to addressing the public health crisis of suicide through awareness, empowerment and action. We encourage you to use the information and resources on this site and share.

You can learn more about the ecosystem of care we have developed to address suicide, including solutions for commercial health plans, employers, state and local governments, and the Federal government, in our [Taking action to prevent suicide](#) information sheet.

## Magellan's 2023 resources for Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

[Download the flyer](#)

### 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

If you are or someone you know is experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress, call or text 988, or chat (988lifeline.org), 24/7 for free and confidential support.

 English >



## Our Speakers



JASON KUTTNER

*ASACS  
Supervisor*



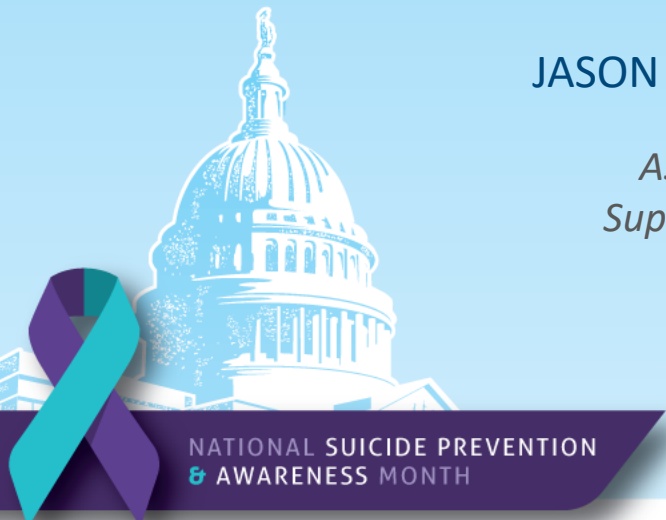
SCOTT HARRIS

*MFLC  
Supervisor*



DIONA EMMANUEL

*EAP  
Consultant*



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## Agenda

- ✓ SCOPE AND PREVENTION: MILITARY AND ADOLESCENTS
- ✓ INTERVENTION
- ✓ POSTVENTION
- ✓ RESOURCES
- ✓ Q&A



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# Scope and Prevention: Military and Adolescents

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JASON KUTTNER  
SUPERVISOR, ASACS



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## Understanding the Problem

- In 2019 There were 6,261 veteran suicide deaths, 580 active-duty deaths, and 202 family member deaths. <sup>1</sup>
- In 2020, the rate for Veterans was 57.3% higher than that of non-Veteran adults.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2020, suicide was the 13th leading cause of death among Veterans overall, and it was the second leading cause of death among Veterans under age 45. <sup>2</sup>
- Among U.S. adults who died from suicide in 2020, firearms were more commonly involved among Veterans (71.0%) than non-Veterans (50.3%). <sup>2</sup>
- **Reasons:** High exposure to trauma, stress and burnout, isolation and loneliness, difficulty reintegrating into civilian life, and easy access to and familiarity with firearms

<sup>1</sup> "White House: Reducing Military And Veteran Suicide 2021" Report

<sup>2</sup> National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, September 2022



## TIME + DISTANCE

Putting time and distance between a suicidal person and a lethal means of suicide may save a life. The odds of survival go up for **three** reasons:

- 1 A personal crisis is often brief.
- 2 Lethality of an attempt often depends in part on the method (e.g., firearms, drugs/medications, etc.).
- 3 90% of those who attempt suicide and survive, do not attempt suicide again.

If someone you know is at risk, help reduce access to lethal means until they are no longer in distress.



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## Military and Veteran Suicide Prevention Approaches

- Clinical interventions, important on an individual level, are not enough to address these problems.
- **Community-based prevention:** Including opportunities for involvement and belonging, increasing wellbeing, and personal and financial advancement, rather than merely education about risk factors and warning signs.
- A range of ‘upstream’ approaches are being funded, giving options for healthy living
- Rural veterans are at higher risk- due to isolation and access to firearms
- Community building approach, supplying free gun locks, regional outings
- Evidence-based suicide prevention protocols — ASIST, Safe Talk
- VA working with community engagement and partnership coordinators



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# Scope and Prevention: Adolescents

JASON KUTTNER  
SUPERVISOR, ASACS



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## Adolescent Suicide

- Teens report high levels of hopelessness, sadness, loneliness, and suicidal ideation
  - **2021:** Persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness in 57% of girls (36% in 2011), 29% of boys, 69% LGBTQ+
- Teen suicide rates are rising: LGBTQ+ and youth of color have the highest increases
- From 2011–2021 youth (10-24) suicide rate rose from 6.8/100K to 10.7/100K
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2021: 10% of HS age students attempted suicide, 22% seriously considered it
- 20% of LGBTQ+ teens attempted, 45% seriously considered it



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## Why are Youth Struggling?

- Increased rates of depression and anxiety, before COVID and exacerbated by it
- Lack of connection and community
  - Social media paradox
- Social justice, iniquity, and fear of oppression
- Bullying, blackmail, social exclusion
- Stressors
  - Academic
  - Family
  - Relationships
  - Worry about the Future: financial, environment, relationships



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## Intervention Tips for Schools and Youth Organizations

- **Broadcast available resources.** Youth should be aware of the helping resources in their school and community.
- **Train staff.** All staff and faculty in a school should be annually trained in ASK, CARE, ESCORT as well as mandatory reporting.
- **Emphasize peer-to-peer support.** To enhance social connectedness, youth engagement, and a positive climate. Youth leadership programs.
- **Integrate mental health providers.** Work on integrating school based behavioral health providers to provide services where and when they are needed.
- **Enable a suicide risk assessment protocol.** Designated behavioral health staff can assess for risk and make recommendations to the school. Conducting a strengths based suicide risk assessment involves safety planning and almost always results in a reduction of risk.



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# Intervention

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## Intervention Tips for Individuals

**Ask:** Calmly question and if necessary, ask directly, "Are you thinking about killing yourself?" Research demonstrates that asking about suicide does not increase suicide risk.

**Care:** Don't judge, control the situation peacefully and keep everyone safe.

**Escort:** Stay with your buddy and escort to chain of command chaplain, medical, or behavioral health professional.



## Reducing Stigma to Access Care



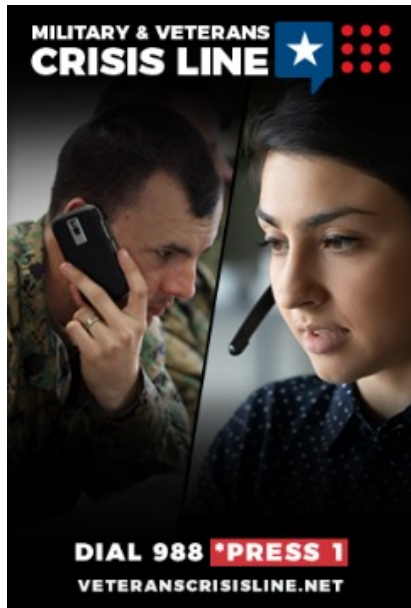
- Suicide prevention should focus on discussion and reduction of stigma
- Brandon Act was implemented in May 2023.
  - **New law:** This bill will allow service members to seek mental health treatment and require a mental health evaluation as soon as a service member self-reports. It will also allow Americans serving in uniform to seek help confidentially and, if necessary, outside of the chain of command
- Named after Petty Officer Third Class Brandon Caserta who died by suicide in 2018



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## Reducing Stigma to Access Care



- 988 press 1for Veterans Crisis Line
  - Rolled out last year.
  - 5 million total contacts so far and approximately 1 million of those contacts were linked to the Veterans Crisis Line. Unfortunately, according to a poll by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 82% of Americans are either unfamiliar or have never heard of the 988 crisis line.
  - Can access overseas as well
- Chaplain services and MFLC can both be accessed without command involvement
- Lethal means restricted access
- Intervention care in the MFLC program



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# Postvention

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## Helping Yourself Through Grief and Living with Suicide Loss

- Acknowledge the loss and accompanying grief
- Recognize that there is no clear timeline for the grieving process
- Allow your feelings to be expressed appropriately
- Sit with your feelings
- Be mindful that feelings may ebb and flow and can pop up for you at inopportune times
- Find ways to honor/remember the deceased



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## Helping Yourself Through Grief and Living with Suicide Loss

- Actively take care of yourself
- Be sensitive to your needs, take time for yourself, practice self-compassion, and engage in self-care
- **Types of self-care:**
  - Physical self-care
  - Emotional self-care
  - Spiritual self-care
  - Social self-care



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## Helping Yourself Through Grief and Living with Suicide Loss

- Connect with others
- Reach out (DO NOT isolate)
  - Use informal supports (family, friends, etc.)
  - Using formal supports such as EAP or other types of support for grief such as support groups
  - **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention:** <https://afsp.org/find-a-support-group/>
  - **Friends for Survival:** <https://friendsforsurvival.org/>



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## Helping Yourself Through Grief and Living with Suicide Loss

### Connect with others using hotlines

- [988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#): Call 988 and press 1 if you're a veteran
- Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741741
- The Trevor Project
  - Call: 1-866-488-7386
  - Text: 678-678
  - Chat: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>
- [Trans Lifeline](#): Call (877) 565-8860
- International hotlines: [International Association for Suicide Prevention](#)



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## Additional Considerations for Helping Others

- Be present, honest, and patient
- Consider type of help/support you can provide
- Share about support groups/resources
- Advocacy



## Helping Children/Adolescents with Suicide Loss

- Tell the truth (short and simple explanations)
  - [Be aware of developmental responses to grief](#)
- Recognize that this conversation can be revisited
- Be prepared for a variety of emotional reactions
- Listen compassionately
- Answer questions and listen without judgment
- Recognize that grieving can occur in cycles
- Respect differences in grieving styles
- Provide opportunity to say goodbye and make choices about funeral/memorial/celebration of life
- Talk about and remember the person who died
- Reach out for additional support for self and child/teen



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# Resources



**988** SUICIDE & CRISIS  
LIFELINE



## Bibliotherapy Resources

- *But I Didn't Say Goodbye: Helping Families After a Suicide* by Barbara Rubel
- *I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye: Surviving, Coping, and Healing After the Sudden Death of a Loved One* by Brook Noel and Pamela D Blair
- *It's OK that You're Not OK* by Megan Devine, <https://refugeingrief.com/suicide/>
- *Loving Someone with Suicidal Thoughts: What Family, Friends, and Partners Can Say and Do* by Stacey Freedenthal, <https://www.speakingofsuicide.com/>
- Bolton, I. (2023). 25 suggestions for survivors. Retrieved from <https://allianceofhope.org/find-support/25-suggestions-for-survivors/>
- Kim A. Ruocco , Carla Stumpf Patton , Kim Burditt , Bonnie Carroll & Matt Mabe (2021): TAPS Suicide Postvention Model™: A comprehensive framework of healing and growth, *Death Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/07481187.2020.1866241

## Bibliotherapy Resources for Children and Adolescents

- *After a Suicide: An Activity Book for Grieving Kids* by The Dougy Center
- *Lost in the Clouds* by Tom Tinn-Disbury
- *Luna's Red Hat: An Illustrated Storybook to Help Children Cope with Loss and Suicide* by Emmi Smid
- *The Memory Box: A Book About Grief* by Joanna Rowland
- *My Grief is Like the Ocean: A Story for Children who Lost a Parent to Suicide* by Jillian Kelly-Wavering
- *The Invisible String* by Patrice Karst



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## Bibliotherapy Resources for Children and Adolescents

- *The Sad Dragon: A Dragon Book About Grief and Loss* by Steve Herman
- *When Someone You Love Has Died* by Stephanie Seidler
- *Why?: A Story for Kids Who Have Lost a Parent to Suicide* by Melissa Allen Heath (to be released 9/5/2023)
- Suicide Awareness Month: Young Adult Books Dealing with Suicide: <https://jocolibrary.bibliocommons.com/list/share/186066773/1258843367>
- AFSP created the booklet “Children, Teens, and Suicide Loss”: <https://aws-fetch.s3.amazonaws.com/flipbooks/childrenteenssuicideloss/index.html?page=1>



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## Resources for Suicide Loss Survivors

- **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention:** <https://afsp.org/ive-lost-someone/>
- **American Association of Suicidology:** <https://suicidology.org/resources/suicide-loss-survivors/>
- **Alliance of Hope for Suicide Survivors:** <https://allianceofhope.org/>
- **Defense Suicide Prevention Office:** <https://www.dspo.mil/>
- **Friends for Survival:** <https://friendsforsurvival.org/>
- **Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (military loss):** <https://www.taps.org/suicide>
- **Suicide Prevention Resource Center:** [sprc.org](https://sprc.org)



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## Additional Resources

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): [cdc.gov/vitalsigns/suicide](https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/suicide)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988>
- Speaking of Suicide: [speakingofsuicide.com](https://speakingofsuicide.com)
- Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE): [save.org](https://save.org)



## Additional Resources for Veterans

- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Mental Health: [mentalhealth.va.gov](https://mentalhealth.va.gov)
- National Center for PTSD: [ptsd.va.gov](https://ptsd.va.gov)
- Veterans Crisis Line: [veteranscrisisline.net](https://veteranscrisisline.net)
- Make the Connection: [maketheconnection.net](https://maketheconnection.net)
- [Psychological Health Resource](#)



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## Resources for Children and Adolescent Loss Survivors

- **The Dougy Center-The National Center for Grieving Children & Families:** <https://www.dougy.org/>
- **National Alliance for Children's Grief:** <https://nacg.org/>
- **Sesame Street and Grief:** <https://sesameworkshop.org/topics/grief/>
- **Sesame Street for Military Families and Grief:** <https://sesamestreetformilitaryfamilies.org/topic/grief/?ytid=3ihSoLsakiE>



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## References

- [SPRIRC Final Report\\_VFinal \(defense.gov\)](https://defense.gov)
- [Defense Suicide Prevention Office \(dspomil\)](https://dspomil.mil)
- [VA releases 2022 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report - VA News](#)
- [2022 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, VA Suicide Prevention, Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, September 2022](#)



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# Q&A

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