

GARDENING
WITH
GRACE

September



GROWING
STRONGER
FOR OUR
VETERANS

Veteran & Military
Suicide



Suicide touches about five family members a day and 135 friends and family a day. On a national level Veterans commit suicide on average 17 to 18 deaths a day. That is down from "22 a day" in 2022. While suicide is down, one suicide is one too many.

But did you know that 1 family member of a Veteran also commits suicide every 3 days.?

What makes Veterans commit suicide? Pain, financial problems, depression and anxiety, the lack of VA care, health problems, the shock of losing a community that they have worked with for years. Moral wounds that happened during combat are also a factor. PTSD and Moral Wounds go hand and hand. Moral injuries happen when a veteran has seen an act that deeply affects their moral values. It could be if a veteran kills a civilian during combat in a split-second decision. It could be when a soldier watches leadership betrays their fellow service members.

Veterans die by suicide at a higher rate than non-veterans. Why does it matter because even the VA says that the veterans were not getting the health care they needed in the year before the veteran's death.

Mental Health and chronic pain effects a veteran in the most devastating way. Nine percent of deaths are caused by the pain that a veteran feels every day. Veterans feel a loss of purpose or reduced quality of life due to the inability to do their favorite things or even to care for themselves. They do not want to be a burden on others. They may feel isolated due not being able to be around others.

I am a veteran of a Veteran. I see the struggle that my veteran lives in every day. It does affect me. It affects families, friends, and our community. With the suicide death rate being so high **DID YOU KNOW** that a military spouse dies by suicide every 8 days.

How can I promote Suicide Awareness?

Volunteering and donating to programs that help support suicide awareness. Fundraisers in the month of September is a suitable time to start. To raise awareness.

Host a Gala— on every place setting put a tear drop.

Light the night— Have an event and for a donation sell candles to light or use battery operated candles and place them around your VFW to raise money and awareness for suicide prevention.

Concert—Organize a concert, sell tickets, and take donations.

BBQ— Organize a community barbeque to help raise awareness.

Please make sure to have information about what your event is for and where the money will be going.

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Remember

If you or someone you know is thinking about committing suicide, there is help. Please pick up the phone and dial 988 or call 911. There is someone out there to listen to and help.

"MY LIFE IS BETTER WITH YOU IN IT"

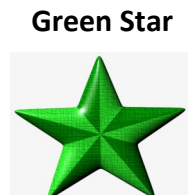
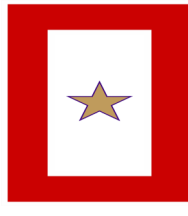
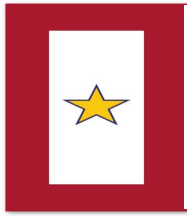
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Veterans and Families Support

September



White Star

Green Star

Honoring our Veterans after Disability or Death

There are many star families some are official meaning they have been passed by legislative some are symbols are how the families are recognized because of the soldier sacrifice and or connection to the military.



Gold Star Families— is the tradition of the US military to recognize the families loved one lost in combat. Gold Star families have a foundation that you can donate to by going to <https://americangoldstarfamilies.org>. This Foundation provides Hope Honor and healing for grieving families.



Purple Star families are closely tied to the Gold Star family and while there is no exact banner for this they do fall under the Gold Star families.



Blue Star Families is for families who have an immediate family member currently on active duty, Reservist or National Guard. This is a tradition that has been in affect since WWI. The blue star symbolizes hope and service. To make a donation go to <https://bluestaram.org>. This foundation helps families thrive.

Silver Star Families are families of a injured or ill veteran. Silver Star families are recognized by the US Military. The Silver star honors the on going challenges that a family faces day to day. The sacrifices that of those who serve with challenges and health conditions. I looked for a Pin recognizing the families and could find none. I did find a organization that is dedicated to helping these veterans at <https://silverstarfamilies.org> you can make a donation at their website.

Bronze Star Families are families of disabled or veterans who died prematurely from military disabilities. The bronze star represents the lasting impact from services related illness and injuries and death that have impacted the service members family. The Bronze Star family were officially recognized by executive order in 1944 across all branches of the service. To make a donation go to <https://valorinstitute.org>.

White Star Families is unofficial organization for families that have lost families members to suicide. Since this is not officially recognized by the military of federally, I would recommend making a donation to one of the organization list above.

Green Star Families was brought before the House of Representative 04/24/2025 under bill H.R. 3027. This act will bring no cost counseling to the next of kin and caregivers of a veteran who have died by suicide. Please call you Representative ti get this act passed. I would recommend if you are going to donate go to <https://greenstarfamilies.org>

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