

Veterans & Family Support

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September is Suicide Prevention Month

Data has shown that on average 20 veterans a day commit suicide. This is a national crisis and so much more needs to be done to fight this. Research points to military and veteran suicide rates are 50 percent higher than rates of civilians. This is an alarming statistic but there is something we can do to help save the lives of these veterans.

- **Identifying signs of a crisis:** Sometimes, a crisis may involve thoughts of suicide. The following five signs require immediate attention:

1. Depressed mood.
2. Lack of interest.
- 3 feelings of worthlessness.
4. Poor concentration.
5. Thoughts of death or suicide.



If you notice any of these in a veteran or service member you know, connect them with the Veterans Crisis Line.

- **Important resources for anyone experiencing invisible wounds or depression:**
 - **The Veterans Crisis Line** is a free, confidential crisis resource that veterans, their families & friends can access 24-7 / 365 days a year. Trained responders, (some who are veterans themselves) who are ready to listen. **Call 1-800-273-8255, Text 838255** or start an online confidential chat session at: www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/chat
 - **The Give an Hour Campaign to Change Direction** encourages everyone to pay attention to emotional wellbeing and reminds us of the importance of mental health. www.giveanhour.org/changedirection
 - **The Elizabeth Dole Foundation's Hidden Heros** brings attention to the untold stories of military caregivers and seeks solutions for the challenges and long-term needs they will face. www.hiddenheroes.org
 - **PTSD Coach:** The Department of Veterans Affairs has a website and app called **PTSD Coach** that aims to help troops & veterans manage issues like anger, sleep, and trauma triggers.
 - **The VA:** The Department of Veteran Affairs' Mental Health page is filled with resources to address a variety of mental health concerns. The VA counts on organizations like ours to spread the word that help is only a call, click or text away. Remember we are all in this together, and one small act shows you care.
 - **Raise Awareness** in your Post & Community by downloading a teardrop from: www.vfwauxiliary.org/resources Hold a fund raiser for donations where members can donate for a teardrop to be dedicated & displayed.



Roger Ingall Veterans & Family Support Chairman

Shanily.04@gmail.com