



Why Does Connection Matter?

Meaningful connection contributes to overall well being and allows us to live life to the fullest.

The Department of Defense is committed to creating an environment of social support and connectedness for Service members and their families. Social isolation and loneliness are risk factors for depression, anxiety, suicidality, and self-harm behavior. Connection and belonging buffer that risk and remind us that life is worth living.



Factors That Might Increase Risk of Social Isolation and Loneliness

- Feeling stress due to a lack of resources or help with financial, relationship, or mental health issues
- Being discriminated against
- Experiencing violence or abuse
- Going through life transitions like getting divorced, losing a job, or loss of a loved one

Keys to Building a Strong Connection in Your Community

- Take time to build strong relationships.
- Communicate openly and honestly.
- Build trust and respect by using inclusive language when talking to a loved one.

ABOUT THE CONNECT TO PROTECT: SUPPORT IS WITHIN REACH CAMPAIGN

Connect to Protect: Support is Within Reach was launched in support of the Department's observance of Suicide Prevention Awareness Month and the kick-off to its annual communications campaign. It encourages leaders to help community members to recognize support is available. Data shows that leaders' messages can positively impact suicide risk. With that in mind, the Department is educating leaders on creating a supportive, inclusive, and healthy environment that encourages help-seeking.

WHAT DO I DO IF I KNOW SOMEONE IS IN CRISIS?

The Military Crisis Line (MCL) is a toll-free, confidential, 24/7 resource, that connects Service members, including members of the National Guard and Reserve, and their family members with qualified, caring responders. The MCL is staffed by responders who understand the challenges of military life. The MCL is staffed by responders who understand the challenges of military life.



- Call: Dial 988 then Press 1
- Chat: www.MilitaryCrisisLine.net
- Text: 838255

The following overseas locations have direct crisis line numbers for active duty Service members:



- In Europe: Call 00800 1273 8255 or DSN 118
- In Korea: Call 0808 555 118 or DSN 118
- Crisis chat support is available elsewhere and internationally at www.MilitaryCrisisLine.net
- In an emergency, dial 911 or your local emergency number immediately.