

September 2015

**National Suicide Awareness & Prevention Month
Media Kit**

**“Suicide Prevention:
You Matter”**

Sponsored by



Military Spouses of Strength

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Everyone can participate in National Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month?

Suicide awareness and prevention is the responsibility of everyone. Everyone is encouraged to participate in bringing awareness and prevention during September's National Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month. Most of us know someone who is dealing with a mental health issue, making the individual more susceptible to suicide and suicidal ideations; naturally, knowing someone that has dealt directly with mental health related issues increases one's likelihood in becoming involved in the National Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month.

Suicide is a National Problem

Suicide is a national problem. Official data states that in 2011 there were 108 deaths to suicide per day, and suicide is the TENTH leading cause of death in the United States. Conversely, our nation's service members make up only **one percent** of the population, yet **twenty-two veterans commit suicide each day**.

Currently, the number of military family members that commit or attempt suicide is unknown, as was documented through the CNN article "The UnCounted." However, we know that military family member suicides exist, and persons within the military family member community have ascertained that there is an impending theoretical storm that we will face as our troops continue returning home from war.

The family members of service members have responsibilities and burdens that coincide with deployment. These responsibilities leave the family member feeling a sense of self-worth and purpose. However, as the service member comes home and the family again becomes whole often the family member loses that sense of self. This is the storm that we face - ensuring that the service family members understand that they still **MATTER**.

Risk factors for suicide are: mental illness, substance abuse, previous suicidal attempts, **feelings of hopelessness**, access to lethal ability, recent grief, and unemployment.

Factors that decrease suicidal ideations in a person are: being socially connected, high self-esteem, good problem solving skills, and supportive people within their network.



Who can get involved?

Any individual, organization, or business can get involved in bringing awareness to Suicide Prevention. You don't have to be a member of the military community to care about those within it, and certainly you don't have to be afflicted with mental health related issues in order to care about those that are.

How can you help?

If you are interested in assisting with National Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month, Military Spouses of Strength encourages you to get involved and do one or more of the following:

- Tweet using the hashtag #YouMatter
- Take a picture of yourself with a sign that says #You Matter
- Print Out a #YouMatter postcard and give it to someone to show your appreciation for them
- Share the MSoS E-book with someone
- Join our #YouMattertome movement...show those around you how they matter to you
- Tag and like Military Spouses of Strength on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and other forms of Social Media
- Join us for a Twitter Party on September 23 to bring awareness to Suicide Prevention
- Volunteer with MSoS
- Follow Military Spouses of Strength's blog
- Request a Proclamation be made in honor of the "You Matter" campaign in your city
- Wear Purple - when people ask why you are wearing purple all week/month tell them you support #YouMatter
- Host a #YouMatter event
- Raise money in honor of Suicide Prevention and #YouMatter
- Tell your story about Mental Illness and how it has affected you and your military family via the MSoS Blog
- Get **CREATIVE**

If you have further ideas and/or need additional suggestions send them to:

info@milspousesofstrength.org



Military Spouses of Strength

National Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month

September 2015

Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Your Contact Person's Name)
(Your Organization's Name)
(Your Organization's Address)
(Your Telephone Number)

Notification to the Press

WHAT: Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month is the month of September 2015

According to recent statistics 22 veterans commit suicide each day, while that number is unknown amongst military family members. Military Spouses of Strength is supporting Suicide Prevention Awareness by creating the #YouMatter campaign, and (your organization) is an ally.

Together our organizations are committed to ensuring that those within the military community know that their purpose doesn't end when the fourteen years of wars do. We are unified in delivering the message that now is our time to serve those that have served us.

WHO: Your organization's contact person, their title and information

WHEN: National Suicide Prevention Week, September 8-14. This year's theme is "Suicide Prevention: You Matter"

HOW: To arrange an interview or for additional information, please contact (your organizations contact) at (the organization number)

