



DEFENSE SUICIDE PREVENTION OFFICE

QUARTERLY CONNECTION



JOINING YOUR FIGHT | CONNECT TO PROTECT

News and Announcements

May Commemorates DSPO's 12th Anniversary

Established in May 2012 with the [clear mission](#) of ending suicide in the military community, DSPO engages the community by advancing policy, oversight, program evaluation, and engagement to save lives of Service members, their families, and the military community. Our unwavering pursuit of a mission-ready, suicide-free military community remains our focus. From 2012 to today we strive to be of service to all Service members, their families, and the DOD community and to continue the fight to save lives across the military community.

2024 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention Released

Dr. Clark proudly represented DSPO at the White House for the April 2024 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (NSSP) release event. [Click here](#) to watch the hour-long event which features the U. S. Surgeon General facilitating a Lived Experience Panel. The 2024 NSSP is a bold new 10-year whole-of-society approach that provides concrete recommendations for addressing gaps in the suicide prevention field. It promotes a coordinated and comprehensive approach to suicide prevention in communities across the country. The strategy is organized around four strategic directions: 1. Community-Based Suicide Prevention; 2. Treatment and Crisis Services; 3. Surveillance, Quality Improvement, and Research; and 4. Health Equity in Suicide Prevention. DSPO represented the DoD throughout the development of the NSSP and will track DoD action items. For more information on the NSSP or to download a copy of the report, please visit www.hhs.gov/nssp.



Summer 2024

Director's Corner



Dr. Liz Clark, Director

May marks 12 years since DSPO was established by the Department of Defense to prevent military suicide. As we reflect on the past, we reaffirm the path forward. We began 2024 with a new campaign slogan, *Joining Your Fight: Connect to Protect*, which is a call to action to reduce the stigma of help-seeking, foster a supportive environment, increase awareness of support resources, and promote a culture of lethal means safety.

Summer is a season of celebration when we commemorate America's birthday, Juneteenth, Pride Month, and Women's Equality Day. We are grateful for our diverse military community and express our heartfelt appreciation for your unwavering service to acknowledge each other, include each other, and join the fight to connect to protect!

PCS Season is here! During this exciting and sometimes stressful season, know that [Military OneSource](#) and [DSPO.mil](#) have many resources to support a smooth transition.





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VA/DOD Suicide Prevention Conference Updates



The [VA/DOD Suicide Prevention Conference](#) will be held July 16 – 18, 2024, in Portland, Oregon. This year’s theme, “Evolving and Innovating to Meet Diverse Needs,” highlights the VA and DOD commitments to meeting the needs of our diverse military community, including Service members, veterans, and their families.

Conference [registration](#) is now live! Confirm your attendance through our Oxford platform, registration closes June 14. This event is invitation only and based on our registration guidelines, only specific individuals are eligible to register. Due to these guidelines, we will remove and notify any unapproved attendees from the registration list.

Receiving approval for abstracts or as an exhibitor does not automatically register you to attend the event. All attendees must register for the conference through the Oxford portal, including approved presenters, hosts, and exhibitors.

Frequently asked questions, including topics such as funding, safety, and travel guidance, will be available on this page in the coming weeks. We recommend checking back regularly for all conference updates. For any immediate questions, feel free to contact us at VADoDSuicidePreventionConf@va.gov.

June is Men’s Health Month

Wear a blue ribbon in June to support Men’s Health Month. [Men’s health](#) not only includes the tenets of physical health, nutrition, exercise, annual physicals, and sleep but also [mental health](#). During the week of June 10 – 16, schedule a mental health screening with your primary care provider. Anxiety, depression, and sleep issues are common and can be treated. Through the [Brandon Act](#), any Service member who requests a mental health screening will receive one and it is confidential. Mental health is health!

Happening Soon

June 9, 2024 Capital Pride Festival Washington D.C.	Join us at the Capital Action Alliance Pride Festival. DSPO will have a table of promotional items and resources for our LGBTQ+ military community.
July 16 - 18, 2024 Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense Suicide Prevention Conference Portland, Oregon	The conference will feature presentations on “Evolving and Innovating to Meet Diverse Needs.” The VA, DOD, and partnering community organizations will share information, resources, and the latest studies on suicide prevention.

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