

Resources

When Talking with a Veteran at Risk for Suicide

- Remain calm.
- Listen more than you speak.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Act with confidence.
- Do not argue.
- Use open body language.
- Limit questions — let the Veteran do the talking.
- Use supportive, encouraging comments.
- Be honest — let the Veteran know that there are no quick solutions, but help is available.

What to Do if a Veteran Expresses Suicidal Ideation During a Phone Call

- Keep the caller on the line (do not hang up or transfer).
- Remain calm.
- Obtain identifying information on the caller (name, phone number, and current location).
- Conference call to VCL (don't hang up until VCL responder has the call).
- Enlist co-workers for assistance via Instant Messaging in Teams.
- If caller disconnects, call back immediately.
If no answer, dial 911 and VCL **#988**

Tip: Practice conferencing in calls at your desk with coworkers.

Remember

VA S.A.V.E.

S

Signs of suicidal thinking should be recognized.

A

Ask the most important question of all.

V

Validate the Veteran's experience.

E

Encourage treatment and Expedite getting help.

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



What is 988?

The Veterans Crisis Line's new, easy-to-remember number—**Dial 988 then Press 1**—will help Veterans and their loved ones reach crisis support quickly and efficiently.

Signed into law in 2020, the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act authorized 988 as the new three-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

All telephone service providers in the U.S. must have activated the number **no later than July 16, 2022**; however, many providers had chosen to implement the service sooner.

After activation, the 10-digit number will still be available for Veterans and their supporters to use.

Free, Confidential Support 24/7/365

Be prepared.
Save the number.
Dial 988 then Press 1



- Veterans
- Family members
- Service members
- Friends



 **Call then Press 1**

 **Chat**

or Text 838255

[How We Help](#) ▾ [Signs of Crisis](#) [Resources and Support](#) ▾ [About](#) ▾

[Home](#) > [Local Resources](#)

Local Resources

Are you looking for clinical care or counseling? Assistance with benefits? No matter what you're experiencing, we're here to connect you with resources and support systems to help.

[Local Resources \(veteranscrisisline.net\)](https://veteranscrisisline.net)

Don't Wait. Reach out. (va.gov) #VetsReachOut

**No mission
should be fought
alone.**

Life has its challenges. You don't have to solve them alone. That's true whether it's an everyday struggle, or something more complicated.

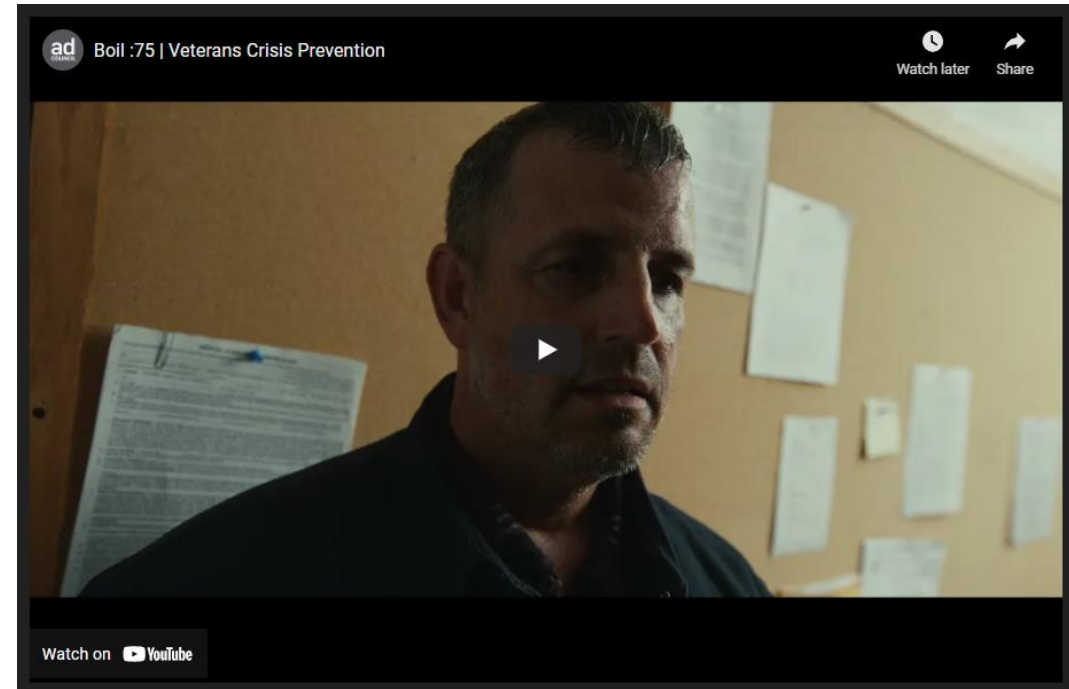
This site was designed for Veterans to proactively seek support and resources.

You're not alone. You've got this. Don't wait. Reach out.

Brought to you by:



&

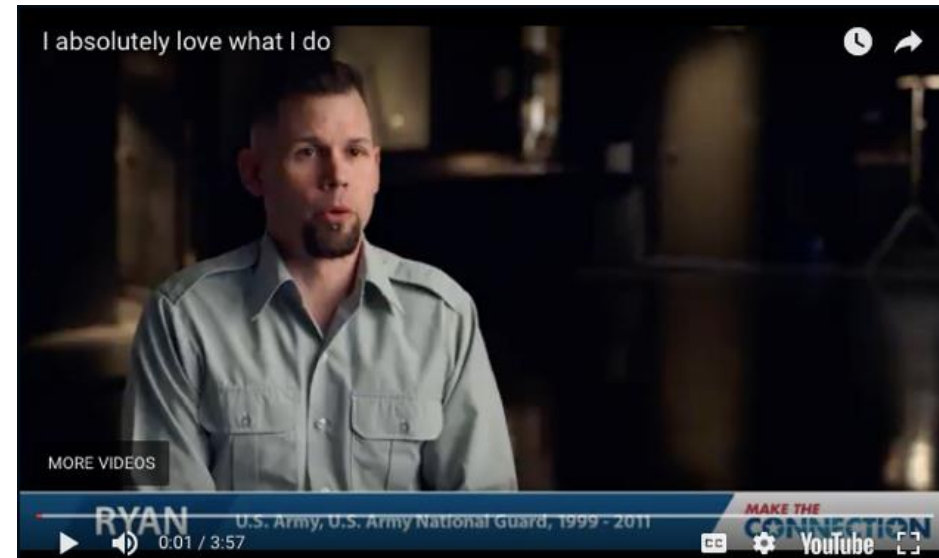


[Watch: Boil :60 | Veterans Crisis Prevention - YouTube](#)

Make the Connection

- Online resource featuring hundreds of Veterans telling their stories about overcoming mental health challenges.

**MAKE THE
CONNECTION**
www.MakeTheConnection.net



<https://maketheconnection.net/conditions/suicide>

Practice safe storage of firearms, medications and other lethal means

- Visit www.KeepItSecure.net to learn more about the importance of firearm and other lethal means safety.
- Nearly half of all Veterans own a firearm, and most Veteran firearm owners are dedicated to firearm safety.
- Firearm injuries in the home can be prevented by making sure firearms are **unloaded**, **locked**, and **secured** when not in use, with ammunition stored in a separate location
- There are several effective ways to safely secure firearms. Learn more and find the option that works best for you and your family from the National Shooting Sports Foundation at www.nssf.org/safety

VA » Health Care » REACH » Firearm Suicide Prevention & Lethal Means Safety

REACH

► Mental Health
► More Health Care

QUICK LINKS

Hospital Locator
Zip Code Go

Health Programs

Protect Your Health

A-Z Health Topics

Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

My healthvet
My Health, My Care: 24/7 Access to VA

FIREARM SUICIDE PREVENTION & LETHAL MEANS SAFETY

KeepItSecure.net

PRACTICE SAFE STORAGE OF FIREARMS, MEDICATION & OTHER LETHAL MEANS

Lethal means are objects like guns, medications, alcohol, opioids or other substances, ropes, cords, or sharp objects that can be used during a suicidal crisis. If a Veteran is in crisis or having suicidal thoughts, these items can become deadly when they are easily accessible. For example, nearly 7 out of every 10 Veteran deaths by suicide are the result of firearm injuries (Dept. of Veteran Affairs, 2018).

Increasing the time and distance between someone in a suicidal crisis and access to lethal means can reduce suicide risk and save lives. There are simple steps you can take to protect yourself and your family. On this page, you'll find:

- How to identify and handle a suicidal crisis
- Helpful tips for storing guns, medications, and other lethal means
- Additional resources about safe storage

New Lethal Means Safety Resources



Reducing Firearm & Other Household Safety Risks Brochure

provides best practices for safely storing firearms and medications along with advice for loved ones on how to talk to the Veteran in their life about safe storage.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

Reducing Firearm & Other Household Safety Risks for Veterans and Their Families



Firearm safety is an important public health issue that can affect your health and your family's well-being.

If you own a firearm, or live in a household where there are firearms, the following information can help keep you and those around you safe. Similarly, reducing access to other household risks, like medications, can help ensure your family's safety.



Coaching into Care

Program for families and loved ones of Veterans, helping them encourage the Veteran in their lives to seek support.



CALL 888-823-7458



VA S.A.V.E. Training

This free suicide prevention training video is less than 25 minutes long and available to everyone, 24/7. It's offered in collaboration with the PsychArmor Institute.



Available online for free: <https://psycharmor.org/courses/s-a-v-e/>

