

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Military and Family Life Counselors (MFLC) are key components in the fight to prevent suicide in service members and their families. With clinical expertise, collaborating with helping agencies, and connecting participants to appropriate resources, MFLCs embody the 2024 Suicide Prevention Awareness Month theme: “Joining Your Fight: Connect to Protect” ([Defense.gov](https://www.defense.gov)).

Trends of Military Suicide

There has been an increase in suicides for active-duty service members from 2011 to 2022, with 492 suicides in 2022. This was slightly more than in 2021, but less than in 2020. In addition, the rate is similar to the civilian population after accounting for population differences. Suicide data was not available for family members in 2022 however, data from 2021 showed a slight decrease from previous years ([Defense Suicide Prevention Office](#)).

Risk & Protective Factors

While the rate of suicide is similar between service members and the civilian population, there are factors unique to the military community that increase the risk of suicide. It is important to not only understand these factors, but also know the protective factors that can decrease these risks.



Suicide Prevention Resources

If you are a service member or military family, connect with a MFLC for local suicide prevention resources. Additionally, here are options for further information and support:

- [988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#): The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, created in 2022, connects individuals to trained crisis counselors for confidential support in managing mental health related crises, including suicidal thoughts.
- [Magellan Healthcare resources](#): toolkit, tip sheets, national resources
- Publication: [Military Child Suicide: Prevention Techniques and Best Practices](#)
- Publication: [Suicide in the Military: Misconceptions, Risk Factors, and How You Can Help](#)