



Department of Maryland VFW Auxiliary Veterans & Family Support Program September 2023

VETERANS
&
MILITARY
SUICIDE
PREVENTION

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MENTAL
HEALTH
AWARENESS
SUPPORT
AND
RESOURCES

Hello Officers, Veterans & Family Support Chairman and Members,

I would like to thank you for the valuable reports that I have received showing how you love and care for our veterans and their families.

The month of September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. This is our chance to become more thoughtful about our veterans who might be suffering from suicidal thoughts. During this month we should make the veterans and their families aware that there is a program they can refer to if they need assistance. They can contact the Veterans Crisis Center by dialing 988 and then pressing 1. The information they speak to the Crisis Center about will be confidential.



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VETERAN & MILITARY SUICIDE PREVENTION

There are signs that Auxiliary members may be able to pick up on to ensure we do not lose a veteran to suicide.

- **Appearing sad or depressed most of the time**
- **Hopelessness**
- **Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, or mood swings**
- **Feeling as if there is no reason to live**
- **Feeling excessive guilt, shame, or sense of failure**
- **Rage or anger**
- **Engaging in risky activities without thinking**
- **Increasing alcohol or drug misuse**
- **Losing interest in hobbies, work, or school**
- **Neglecting personal welfare and appearance**
- **Withdrawing from family and friends**
- **Showing violent behavior, like punching a hole in the wall or getting into fights**
- **Giving away prized possessions**
- **Getting affairs in order, tying up loose ends, or writing a will**

Educate yourself and others about the warning signs of suicide.

I have included a printable teardrop sticker template. This will make people aware that the Auxiliary is concerned about our veterans when they see you wearing the teardrop.



know the five signs.

Nearly one in every five people, 42.5 million Americans, have a diagnosable mental health condition. Our friends, neighbors, co-workers, and family members may be suffering emotionally. They may not recognize the symptoms or ask for help.



Not feeling like yourself?



Are you feeling agitated?



Are you feeling withdrawn?



Taking care of yourself?



Are you feeling hopeless?

MENTAL WELLNESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

The VFW Auxiliary is concerned about the mental health of our veterans and military service members.

What can you do to change the stigma and improve research?
Support your community and explore treatment options.

VFW Mental Wellness Campaign
vfw.org/assistance/mental-wellness



The Campaign to Change Direction
changedirection.org

Give An Hour
Giveanhour.org



One Mind
onemind.org

The Elizabeth Dale Foundation
elizabethdolefoundation.org



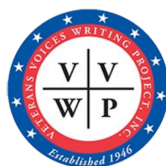
Elizabeth Dole Foundation
CARING FOR MILITARY FAMILIES



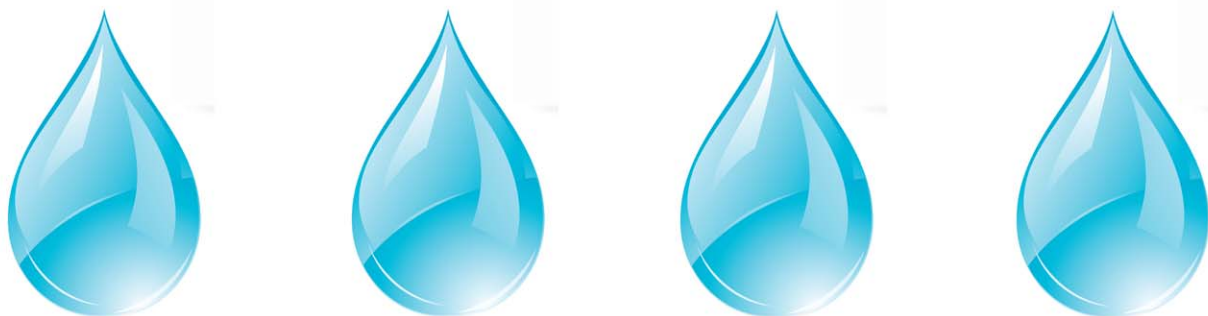
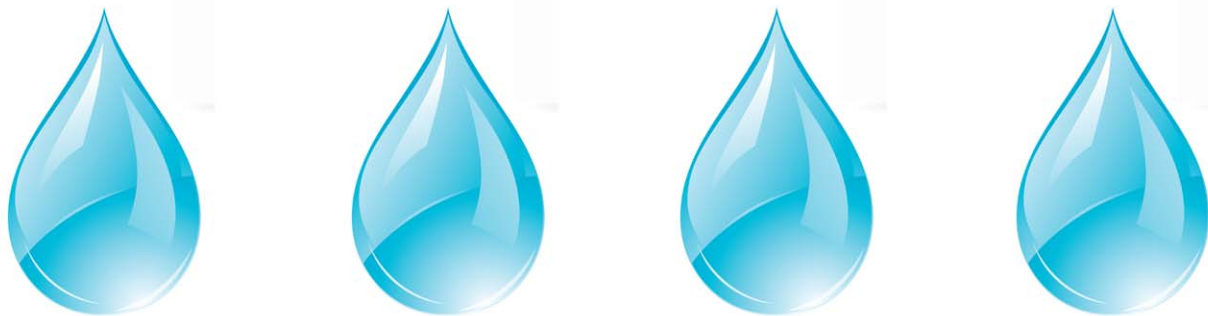
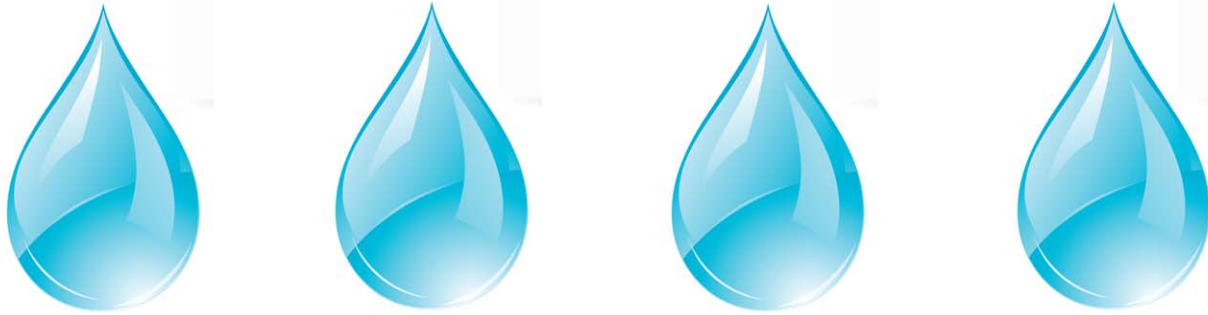
Help Heal Veterans
Therapeutic Craft Kits

Help Heal Veterans (Therapeutic Craft Kits)
healvets.org

Veterans Voices Writing Project
Veteransvoice.org



Veteran & Military Suicide Awareness Teardrop Sticker



Instructions: Print this document on 8.5 x 11 sticker paper and cut out the teardrops to use them as stickers. (Try Avery 8165 for inkjet printers. When someone asks you about your sticker, tell them that the VFW Auxiliary is concerned about the rates of suicides among veterans and military personnel; we want everyone to be aware of the unique stresses that face them.

Share the Veterans Crisis Line with them: 1.800.273.8255, Press 1 or www.veteranscrisisline.net.