



HEADQUARTERS BATTALION COMMANDING OFFICER'S SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY



Our Marines and Sailors are our most precious resources, and protecting them is one of our top priorities as leaders. The loss of a Marine or Sailor to suicide is painful, senseless, and avoidable. It is my goal, with your help, to prevent suicides before they occur. Prevention starts with recognizing the warning signs and having a disposition to take action immediately. This command will provide every Marine and Sailor with the tools and resources needed to prevent suicide and become resilient.

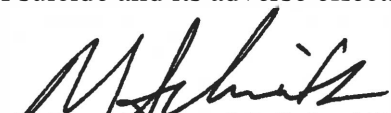
The loss of a Marine or Sailor to suicide is unacceptable, which is why every member of this command will complete Unit Marine Awareness and Prevention Integrated Training and Operational Stress Control and Readiness teams will be operationalized. Everyone must be trained to recognize when a fellow Marine or Sailor who may be experiencing a life altering event or suffering. They must know to ask if he or she intend to harm themselves, and to be empathetic enough to care for, engage, and escort that individual to receive help. Suicide prevention is not a single activity or training, but continuous. Everyone should understand that recognizing and getting help for Marines and Sailors in crisis is our duty!

With involved leadership and informed Marines and Sailors, we can recognize the signs which could trigger an irreversible act in a timely manner. Encourage all of your Marines and Sailors to be vigilant, to seek help when needed, and to actively work to remove the stigma that comes with asking for help. Promote the voluntary use of gun locks and other safe storage methods of privately owned firearms.

Ensure all service members returning to the unit following a suicide related event are referred to the Marine Intercept Program and provided access to required care. Coordination with services such as the Marine Intervention Program, Behavior Health, Psychological Health Outreach Program, DStress line, Military OneSource, and Chaplain will be used for early intervention and referral for at-risk personnel. Leaders will develop and implement an integration plan after a Marine or Sailor has sought help. A safety plan and incident confidentiality will be maintained, and thoughtful assignment to appropriate duties will be part of an ongoing needs assessment.

Headquarters Battalion recognizes that families may be the first to notice their loved one is at a crisis point, which could push them to suicide. If your loved one should ever need help, they will not be judged so do not hesitate to talk to someone; we will take care of them. Families of Marines and Sailors will be afforded the opportunity to participate in suicide prevention training and activities during welcome aboard and other command sponsored events.

Every Marine and Sailor is valuable, and suicide is never the solution. Be engaged, be vigilant, be proactive, and help us reduce the risk of suicide and its adverse effects on families and our Corps.


Colonel Richard J. Schmidt
Commanding Officer