



Marine Wing Support Squadron 172 Marine Aircraft Group 36

COMMANDING OFFICER'S SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM POLICY



As United States Marines, Sailors, and civilians, we have chosen to pursue a challenging, exciting, and dynamic way of life. Along with the choice to serve comes acceptance of challenges unique to this lifestyle. These challenges include occasional separation from loved ones, stress on personal relationships, demanding work, and high professional standards.

Although we normally face these challenges with the indomitable spirit characteristics of professional warfighters, occasionally the challenges, stress, or grief may feel overwhelming and can result in suicidal thoughts. We must teach our personnel to engage help-seeking services early. Life can be hard, but there are no challenges we cannot overcome with help from our fellow service members and from the many dedicated professionals who support us.

As the Commanding Officer of Marine Wing Support Squadron 172, I take personal responsibility for establishing an environment where every individual knows his or her leaders are eager to help solve problems. We will take care of each other. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness, but a trait of a strong individual who seeks self-improvement. Similarly, engaged leaders know their Marines and Sailors and step in to render assistance, so that the team grows in faith, strength, and knowledge across all aspects of their lives; physical, mental and moral. Leaders can adhere to the acronym S.M.I.T.R. (Strengthen your sections in promotes mental health and dealing with life stressors in a positive manner, Mitigate your Marines stressors with support and resources, Identify possible stressors in your Marines or Sailors lives and monitor those that are at risk, Treat your Marines and Sailors with the correct resources, Re-integrate your Marines and Sailors appropriately back into the section setting them up for long-term success).

If you suspect one of our own needs help, asking them if they need assistance and alerting the chain of command is your responsibility. We use the "R.A.C.E" (Recognize warning signs, Ask one another about suicide, Care for one another through listening and support, Escort the individual to help) method to help encourage engagement with one another.

Suicide prevention is a responsibility we all share. Every person in this command should know the four leading causes of suicide: relationship issues, work-related difficulties, financial issues, and legal problems. Learn to identify suicide warning signs, such as withdrawing from family and friends, experiencing dramatic mood changes, abusing alcohol or drugs, feeling excessive guilt, and declining work and/or school performance. All Marines and Sailors will attend suicide awareness training. We will reduce the stigma associated with reaching out for help and reduce the risk of access to lethal means (firearms, poisons, medication) for the members of our Squadron deemed at risk of harming themselves or others.

All Marines, Sailors, and civilians should be familiar with the below resources available to assist with battling distress, depression, or thoughts of suicide.

- The Chain of Command
- The Suicide Prevention Program Officer; 1stLt Lisignoli
- The Chaplain, LT Eldredge, +1 352-328-2132
- Emergency Chaplain, 090-6861-4730
- Community Counseling Program
- D-Stress Line 098-970-7734, www.dstressline.com
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK
- MFLAC, Shiela, 080-6485-8433

Semper Fidelis.

A. T. Moyer

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