



BE THE ONE

The program will destigmatize asking for mental health support, provide peer-to-peer support and resources, and educate everyone on how they can Be the One.

Why is this a priority right now?

Today, the No. 1 issue facing the veteran community is suicide, according to the National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report. It is estimated that between 17 and 22 veterans or servicemembers take their lives each day. That's more than 6,000 annually. The rate of suicide for veterans is more than 50% higher than that of non-veteran adults. As the Global War on Terrorism continues, there will be more veterans facing mental-health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

What will Be the One achieve?

At its core, The American Legion is activating a national platform to reduce the rate of veteran suicide. The Be the One campaign will:

Destigmatize asking for mental health support, creating opportunity for those with mental health issues to speak freely and get the support they need.

Provide peer-to-peer support and resources in local communities.

Deploy FDA-approved therapeutics for veterans to identify issues and find resources for support.

I'm a veteran. What can I do to support this initiative?

While this program is designed to help all veterans, we know that everyone responds differently to stresses, have different life experiences and have varying results in types of treatment. However, the following are guidelines intended to provide help before a crisis develops. The American Legion encourages you to Be the One to:

Talk with others about how you are feeling.

Ask for help when you know you need it.

Know there are millions of people ready to help you.

Remember your family and friends care.

I'm a spouse, partner, family member, caregiver, friend of a veteran, or interested civilian. What can I do to support this initiative?

The stigma associated with mental health issues is a barrier to veterans seeking assistance. They fear loss of their job, think they can handle their situation themselves, or don't believe others can understand their situation. Family members may be the first to recognize the signs that their loved one needs help, but they may lack the knowledge of how to approach the situation. If you have a family member, friend, business associate or have another connection with someone who is a veteran, The American Legion encourages you to Be the One to:

Ask veterans in your life how they are doing.

Listen when a veteran needs to talk.

Reach out when a veteran is struggling

What can my American Legion post do to help?

American Legion posts will be instrumental in the success of this campaign. They have the power to foster unity and camaraderie, and get support quickly to veterans in crisis. In non-emergency situations, posts can also:

Educate members, other veterans and civilians about the campaign.

Display resources at your post or in your community.

Share events or success stories on the legiontown.org platform.

My post is conducting an event to raise awareness about PTSD and/or suicide prevention. What resources are available to promote the event in my community?

There is a strong collection of resources materials available here. They include videos, print materials, pop-up banners, posters, wallet cards and more. Please note that there are two trifold brochures. One is intended to educate potential community partners about the Be the One program. The other one, which has one side intentionally left blank, allows for Legion members to customize it with locally available resources for veterans. Once local information is added, the brochure can be distributed to veterans to connect them with nearby resources that can assist them.

Keep checking back on the resources page for more promotional materials as they become available.

Where can I get more information?

Keep checking in for new resources, stories and other information at legion.org/betheone. You can also sign up to receive email about new announcements.

What's the quickest way to get help in an emergency?

If you are a veteran in crisis, resources are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week:

Call 988 and press 1

Text 838255

Visit the VA Crisis Line website