

## Veteran College Students and their Families

### **Risk Factors**

- Previous suicide attempt(s)<sup>1</sup>
- Stigma regarding treatment of mental health issues<sup>2</sup>
- Symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)<sup>2</sup>
  - re-experiencing of combat related trauma
  - avoidance and emotional numbing
  - hypervigilance or increased arousal
- Substance abuse<sup>2</sup>
- Traumatic brain injury (TBI)<sup>2, 3</sup>
- Access to firearms<sup>3</sup>
- Multiple deployments<sup>3</sup>
- Significant physical injuries<sup>3</sup>
- Sleep disturbances<sup>4</sup>
- Difficulty with intimate relationships<sup>4</sup>
- Survivor guilt<sup>4</sup>
- Alienation and/or isolation<sup>4</sup>
- Academic difficulties
- A recent loss

### **Warning Signs**

- Focused on death, dying, and suicide
- Talking, writing, or hinting about suicide
- Giving away possessions
- Withdrawal from usual activities<sup>1</sup>
- Dramatic mood changes<sup>1</sup>
- Anxiety<sup>1</sup>
- Perceived burdensomeness<sup>1</sup>
- Hopelessness and/or feeling trapped<sup>1</sup>
- Exhibiting changes in behavior, such as:
  - school performance
  - eating
  - appearance
  - sleeping patterns
- Excessive/increased use of substances (e.g., alcohol and/or drugs)<sup>1</sup>
- Recklessness/excessive risk-taking behavior<sup>1</sup>
- Perfectionism (e.g., excessive concern about mistakes and/or actions, harshly self-critical)<sup>5</sup>



## Resources

### Henderson Student Counseling

Student Counseling helps students:

- make sense of what is going on
- make meaningful changes
- find ways to better handle stress
- identify sources of support
- discover solutions
- if necessary, see the psychiatrist and (if needed) obtain a prescription for medication

**Phone: (954) 424-6911** Available 24 hours per day for consultation

**Location:** University Park Plaza (east of the bookstore)

**Website:** <http://www.hendersonmhc.org/studentcounseling>

### Veterans Crisis Line

“The Veterans Crisis Line is a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) resource that connects Veterans in crisis or their families and friends with qualified, caring VA professionals. Assistance is available through a confidential, toll-free hotline or via online chat <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/Veterans/Default.aspx>.”

Retrieved from <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/Veterans/Default.aspx>

**Toll-Free: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)** Available 24 hours per day

### VA’s Caregiver Support Line

Provides support and resources for veterans and their families.

Specifically, “they can:

- tell you about the assistance available from VA
- help you access services and benefits
- connect you with your local family Caregiver Support Coordinator at a VA medical center near you
- just listen, if that’s what you need right now”

Retrieved from [http://www.caregiver.va.gov/help\\_landing.asp](http://www.caregiver.va.gov/help_landing.asp)

**Toll-Free: 1-855-260-3274**

*Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 11 p.m. EST*

*Saturday 10:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. EST*

**Website:** <http://www.caregiver.va.gov/>

### Half of Us

In partnership with mtvU and The Jed Foundation, Half of Us is committed to raising awareness about mental health issues for college students, specifically veteran college students.

**Website:** <http://www.halfofus.com/veterans/>



## **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Provides mental health resources for veteran college students and their families.

**Website:** <http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/College/veteranfamilies.asp>

## **References**

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3. California Office of Suicide Prevention (2010). Fact Sheet Suicide Prevention among Veterans and Servicemembers. Retrieved from [http://www.dmh.ca.gov/peistatewideprojects/docs/SuicidePrevention/Vet\\_SP\\_FactSheet\\_Sept\\_2010\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.dmh.ca.gov/peistatewideprojects/docs/SuicidePrevention/Vet_SP_FactSheet_Sept_2010_FINAL.pdf)
4. Student Veterans of America (2011). Combat to College: A Guide for the Transitioning Student Veteran. Retrieved from [http://www.studentveterans.org/resource/library/documents/CombattoCollege\\_AGuidefortheTransitioningStudentVeteran.pdf](http://www.studentveterans.org/resource/library/documents/CombattoCollege_AGuidefortheTransitioningStudentVeteran.pdf)
5. O'Connor, R. C. (2007). The relations between perfectionism and suicidality: A systematic review. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 37, 698-714.