

# Troops First Announces Major Suicide Prevention Effort for Service members, Veterans

*Warrior Call seeks to generate thousands of calls between battle buddies*

RIVERDALE, MD, UNITED STATES, November 9, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Troops First Foundation today announced a national push to create greater connection among military

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*Frank Larkin*

personnel in an effort to stem a troubling rise in suicides. By asking service members and veterans to reach out and connect with former comrades the message from Troops First is clear – make a call, take a call – it could help save a life.

Research shows that active duty service members and vets in need of support often don't seek help on their own. The Foundation's effort, known as “Warrior Call,” is calling on those who are wearing or who have worn the uniform to share a sense of responsibility for those with whom they

have served. The Foundation's goal is to have at least 50,000 current service members and vets make a phone call and connect with another by the end of the year.

“Our message to current service members and vets is simple: Connect with your battle buddies. Be honest with them. Let them know that you care about their wellbeing,” said Frank Larkin, co-chair of Warrior Call, who has experienced firsthand the indescribable loss and anguish of losing a service member son to suicide.

Worsening trends in suicides is driving the action by Troops First and a host of partners.

The suicide rate among active-duty troops is on the rise, according to the Pentagon's latest figures. In 2019, [the rate of suicide](#) among active-duty troops was 25.9 per 100,000 troops. That represents an increase from 2018, when the rate was 24.9 per 100,000 and 21.9 per 100,000 in 2017. The rates have been since 2014.

At the same time, the Army has seen [a 30 percent increase](#) in 2020 in deaths by suicide, from 88

deaths by suicide in 2019 to 114 this year, the Associated Press has reported.

The story among veterans is similarly troubling. The suicide rate among vets is now approximately [double the rate](#) of the general population.

Another reason for the big national push now by Troops First is the impact of the pandemic and its heightened stressors. The Army's leadership issued a statement recently underscoring concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of soldiers. "At this time of additional stress, we want to make certain that the nation's warriors, whether retired or active duty, connect and check in with one another. All it takes is a simple call," said Leroy Petry, a 2011 recipient of the Medal of Honor and co-chair of Warrior Call.



"Warrior Call" is calling on those wearing the uniform -- or who have worn it -- to share a sense of responsibility for those with whom they have served.

Service members and veterans are encouraged to go to <https://warriorcall.org/> for more information on how they can participate and for resources on suicide prevention.

Founded in 2008, the Troops First Foundation implements initiatives that foster connectivity, build trust and address reintegration in post-9/11 warrior care.

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Laurie Baker  
Warrior Call  
+1 917-855-0970  
lauriebb@gmail.com

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