



Department of Veterans Affairs – Indian Health Service Suicide Prevention Collaboration

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VA Defining
HEALTH CARE **EXCELLENCE**
in the 21st Century

House Keeping

- Please be sure to sign in and out on the Sign In Sheets located near the entrance to this room.
- Please complete the evaluation at the end of this presentation.
- For more information on Continuing Education Units (CEUs), please visit the Registration Desk

Comfort Room

- To promote wellness and self-care, a Comfort Room is available in Atrium Room 8 for your use.
- If you need further assistance, please visit the Indian Health Service Division of Behavioral Health booth.

Objectives

- At the conclusion of this workshop, the participant should be able to:
 - Discuss the prevalence and scope of suicide and suicidal behavior among the American Indian and Alaskan Native (AI/AN) Population
 - Discuss ways the VA and IHS are collaborating to improve the delivery of care as it relates to suicide prevention

American Indian/Alaska Native Demographics

- As of 2008, there were an estimated 4.9 million people who were classified as AI/AN alone or AI/AN in combination with one or more other races
- This racial group comprises 1.6 percent of the total U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau)

Indian Health Service

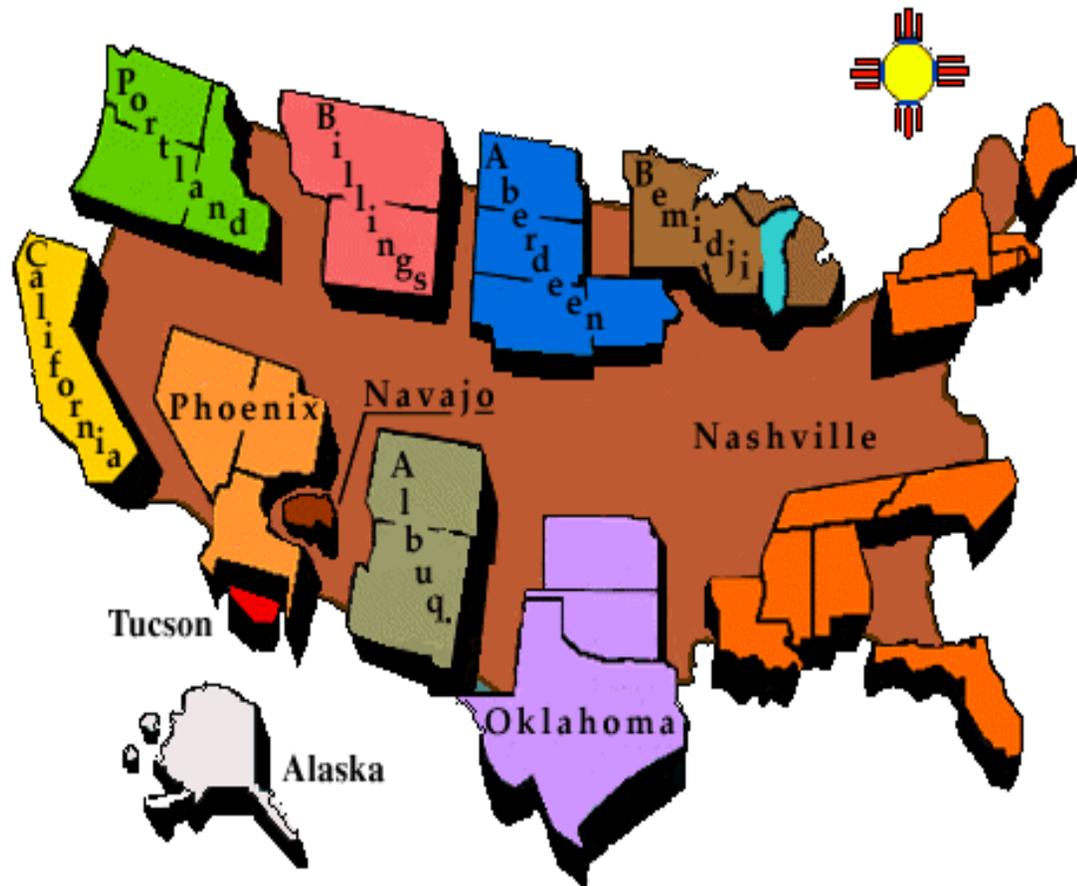
- Quick look
 - Serves members of 566 federally recognized Tribes
 - FY 2011 appropriation was approximately \$4.07 billion
 - Indian Health Service total staff consists of about 15,920 employees, which includes approximately 2,590 nurses, 860 physicians, 660 pharmacists, 640 engineers/sanitaricians, 340 physician assistants/nurse practitioners, and 310 dentists
 - Approximately 70% of IHS staff are American Indians and Alaska Natives

Indian Health Service

157 Service Units in 12 Areas
Located in 36 States

IHS
Area Offices

- Aberdeen Area ●
- Alaska Area ●
- Albuquerque Area ●
- Bemidji Area ●
- Billings Area ●
- California Area ●
- Nashville Area ●
- Navajo Area ●
- Oklahoma Area ●
- Phoenix Area ●
- Portland Area ●
- Tucson Area ●



Indian Health Care Systems



	Hospitals	Health Centers	Alaska Village Clinics	Health Stations
IHS	29	68	N/A	41
Tribal	16	258	166	74

The IHS also supports 33 Urban Clinics across the nation.

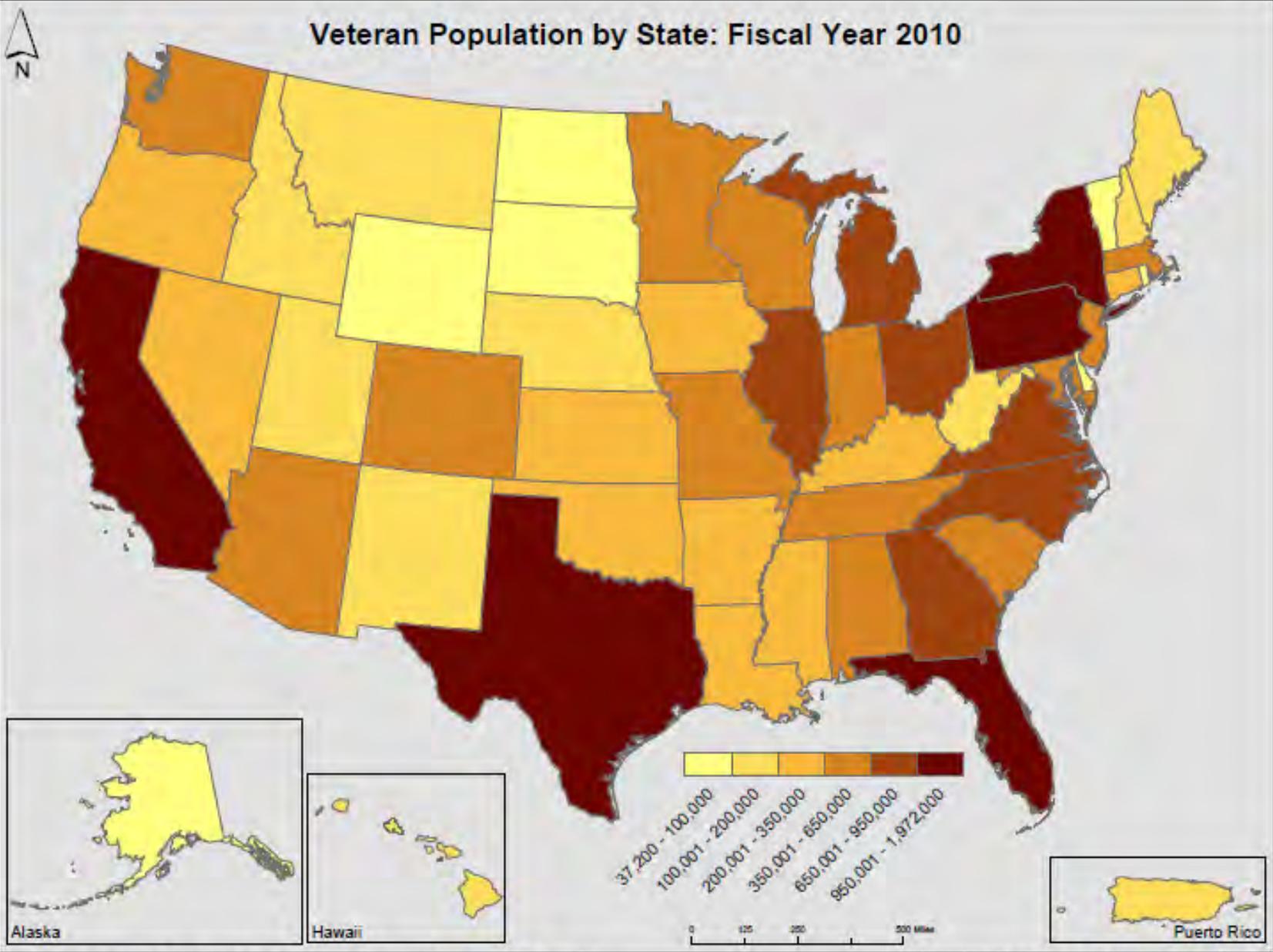
Veterans Demographics

- Projected U.S. Veterans Population (FY 11)
 - 22,234,000
- Number of Total Enrollees in VA Health Care System (FY 11)
 - 8,575,000
- Veteran Population by Race

White	78.7%
Black	11.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.5%
Hispanic	6.0%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.9%
Other	1.3%

National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics (2/03/12)

Veteran Population by State: Fiscal Year 2010



Source: Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of the Actuary, Veteran Population Projection Model (VetPop), 2007

Prepared by the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics

Estimate of the number of Veterans within Tribal Areas

Census Area	Total Estimate	Veteran Estimate	%
Navajo Nation Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land, AZ--NM--UT	120,075	5,601	5%
Cherokee OTSA, OK	375,828	45,258	12%
Cheyenne-Arapaho OTSA, OK	129,771	14,114	11%
Chickasaw OTSA, OK	226,978	27,662	12%
Choctaw OTSA, OK	178,876	21,433	12%
Citizen Potawatomi Nation-Absentee Shawnee OTSA, OK	86,721	13,521	16%
Creek OTSA, OK	571,339	58,370	10%
Kiowa-Comanche-Apache-Fort Sill Apache OTSA, OK	139,795	23,145	17%
Knik ANVSA, AK	45,496	6,895	15%
Cher-O-Creek (state) SDTSA, AL	63,334	7,964	13%
Lumbee (state) SDTSA, NC	340,281	52,024	15%
United Houma Nation (state) SDTSA, LA	146,627	9,754	7%

Source: ACS, 2010

Suicide in the United States

- **36,035** U.S. deaths from suicide per year among the population overall
- Suicide is the **10th** leading cause of death in the U.S.
- **17,826** U.S. deaths from homicide per year
 - Approximately 1/2 the number of annual suicides
- Homicide is the **15th** leading cause of death in the U.S

Suicide in the United States

- Gender disparities
 - Women attempt suicide **TWO to THREE times** more than men
 - Men complete suicide at a rate of almost **FOUR times** that of women
 - For men over 65, the rate is almost **EIGHT times** greater than for women
- Every **14.6 minutes** someone dies by suicide
- It is estimated that close to **one million people** make a suicide attempt each year
 - One attempt every 35 seconds

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008)

Suicide in the United States

- Are Some Ethnic Groups or Races at Higher Risk?
 - Of every 100,000 people in each of the following ethnic/racial groups below, the following number died by suicide in 2008 (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008*)
 - Highest rates:
 - White Male — 21.2 per 100,000
 - Native Americans — 11.9 per 100,000
 - Non-White Males — 9.3 per 100,000
 - Black Males — 9.1 per 100,00
 - Lowest rates:
 - Hispanics — 5.0 per 100,000
 - Non-Hispanic Blacks — 5.1 per 100,000
 - Asian and Pacific Islanders — 5.8 per 100,000

Facts about American Indian/Alaska Native suicide

- Suicide ranked as the 8th cause of death for AI/AN of all ages
 - much higher than the overall U.S. rate
- Males aged 20–24 had the highest rate of suicide in the AI/AN population
 - 47.47 per 100,000
 - This is the highest rate of all racial/ethnic/age groups in the U.S.
- Suicide was the second leading cause of death for both males and females between the ages of 10 and 34 with rates of 33.50 and 9.70 per 100,000 respectively
- Suicide rates vary among tribes
 - For example, the rate found when one tribe mandated comprehensive data collection was much higher (45.4 per 100,000) than among all AI/AN in the same time period (14.09)

(CDC, 2011)

Facts about Veteran suicide

- 20 percent of U.S. deaths from suicide are Veterans (*National Violent Death Reporting System*)
- Veterans are more likely than the general population to use firearms as a means for suicide (*National Violent Death Reporting System*)
- 950 suicide attempts per month among Veterans receiving VA health care services (*VA National Suicide Prevention Coordinator reports, October 1, 2008 – December 31, 2010*)
- Decreased suicide rates in Veterans aged 18-29 who use VA health care services (*National Violent Death Reporting System and VA Serious Mental Illness Treatment Resource and Evaluation Center*)
- 33 percent of recent Veteran suicides have a history of previous attempts (*VA National Suicide Prevention Coordinator reports, October 1, 2008 – December 31, 2010*)

VA Basic Strategy for Suicide Prevention

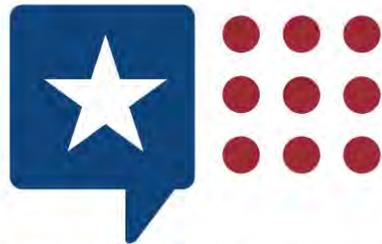
- **Suicide prevention requires ready access to high quality mental health (and other health care) services**
 - **Supplemented by programs designed to:**
 - **help individuals & families engage in care**
 - **address suicide prevention in high risk patients.**

VA Specific Initiatives Established for Suicide Prevention

- Hubs of expertise
 - Center of Excellence (CoE)
 - Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC)
- National programs for education and awareness
 - Operation S.A.V.E (Know the Signs, Ask the question, Validate the feelings, Expedite help)
 - Suicide Risk Management Training for Clinicians
 - Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Suicide
 - Women Veterans and Suicide
 - Older Veterans and Suicide
 - Primary Care Provider
- Veterans Crisis Line **1-800-273-TALK (8255) Press “1” for Veterans**
 - **Veterans Chat** www.veteranscrisisline.net
 - **Veterans Text** **838255**
- Suicide Prevention Coordinators (SPC)
- Enhanced care package
- Federal partnerships

Campaign Messaging

Veterans Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

IT'S YOUR CALL

Confidential help for Veterans and their families

1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

Veterans Crisis Line

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**Veterans
Crisis Line**

1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

"I AM A VETERAN.

Calling the confidential Veterans
Crisis Line can help. I know."



WWW.VETERANSCRISISLINE.NET

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Veterans Crisis Line website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for "Get Help", "Materials", "Get Involved", "Crisis Centers", "Newsroom", and "About". Below this is a secondary navigation bar with buttons for "I am Veteran", "I am Active Duty/Reserve and Guard", and "I am Family/Friend". The main content area features a testimonial from Tremeshia Ellis, a U.S. Army veteran from 2003-2007, with the quote: "I AM A VETERAN. Get the help you need to get your life back on track. It starts with a phone call." To the right of the testimonial is a welcome message: "Welcome to the Veterans Crisis Line Website. The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, chat online, or send a text message to 838255 to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. More about the Veterans Crisis Line". Below the testimonial is a section titled "Are You a Veteran or Concerned About One?" which contains two columns of information. The left column, titled "Act Now", includes a button for "Confidential Veterans Chat" and a link for "Text to 838255 to Get Help NOW". The right column, titled "Learn Now", includes links for "Identify the Warning Signs", "Concerned About a Veteran? You Can Help", and "Suicide and Crisis Resources".

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Veterans Crisis Line | Hotline & Onli...

SuicidePreventionLifeline.org Get Help Materials Get Involved Crisis Centers Newsroom About

Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

Dial 1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1 Text to 838255 Confidential Veterans Chat

I am Veteran I am Active Duty/Reserve and Guard I am Family/Friend

Confidential Help for Veterans and Their Families Signs of Crisis Resources Get Help About

"I AM A VETERAN.
Get the help you need to get your life back on track. It starts with a phone call."
Tremeshia Ellis,
U.S. Army, 2003-2007

Welcome to the Veterans Crisis Line Website
The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can call **1-800-273-8255** and **Press 1**, chat online, or send a text message to **838255** to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
[More about the Veterans Crisis Line](#)

Are You a Veteran or Concerned About One?

Act Now Dial 1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1 to talk to someone NOW

Confidential Veterans Chat

Text to 838255 to Get Help NOW

Take a Self-Check Quiz

Learn Now

Identify the Warning Signs

Concerned About a Veteran? You Can Help

Suicide and Crisis Resources

Department of Veterans Affairs – Indian Health Service Collaboration

- Prior to the formal MOU between the VA and IHS, The VA Office of Suicide Prevention and IHS Division of Behavioral Health joined forces in an effort to reduce suicide among the AI/AN Veteran population.
- A work group was formed consisting of members from the VA and IHS
- The group has worked, and continues to work collaboratively on developing shared goals and outcome measures

Department of Veterans Affairs – Indian Health Service Memorandum of Understanding

- Purpose:
 - To establish coordination, collaboration, and resource-sharing between the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Indian Health Service (IHS) to improve the health status of American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans.

Department of Veterans Affairs – Indian Health Service Memorandum of Understanding

- Background:
 - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between VA and IHS on October 1, 2010
 - Builds upon decades of successful collaboration and achievements from the 2003 MOU
 - Main differences between 2010 MOU and 2003 MOU
 - Includes more areas of focus
 - MOU mutual goals include an emphasis on promoting patient-centered collaborations and consulting tribes at the regional and local levels

Veterans Affairs – Indian Health Service Memorandum of Understanding

- Goals:
 - Increase access to services and benefits
 - Improve coordination of care
 - Improve care
 - Enhance access
 - Improve efficiency and effectiveness
 - Increase availability of services, in accordance with law
 - Improve delivery of care
 - Increase cultural awareness and culturally competent care
 - Increase capability and improve quality
 - Increase access to care
 - Address emergency, disaster, and pandemic preparedness and response

Veterans Affairs – Indian Health Service Workgroups

- Services and benefits
- Coordinator of care
- Health information technology
- Implementation of new technologies
- System level agreements
- Payment and reimbursement
- Sharing of process, programs, and services
 - PTSD, pharmacy, long term services and supports, suicide prevention,
- Cultural competency and awareness
- Training and workforce development
- Recruitment and retention
- Emergency and disaster preparedness

WG: Sharing of process, programs, and services

- Suicide Prevention
 - VA Suicide Prevention Office and IHS will:
 - Maintain liaison with other Federal agencies to coordinate suicide prevention activities
 - Have quarterly meetings/conference calls to develop and implement plans to address AI/AN Veterans and their families
 - Promote regional and local collaboration. VA suicide prevention coordinators will increase outreach activities to tribal areas
 - Have a presence at regional, and local suicide prevention related conferences

WG: Sharing of process, programs, and services (cont)

- Develop a series of webinar trainings for VA suicide prevention coordinators and IHS behavioral health consultants
 - Provide information to VA suicide prevention coordinators
 - Provide information to IHS behavioral health consultants
- Develop and disseminate public health messages targeting AI/AN Veterans
- Develop an AI/AN version of Operation SAVE (gatekeeper training program developed VA)
 - Cultural adaptation model
 - Focus groups

Corporal Ira Hamilton Hayes, USMCR



Ira Hayes was a Pima Indian who enlisted in the United States Marine Corps early in World War II. He gained fame in the Pacific campaign when he, along with four fellow Marines and one Sailor, raised the US flag over Iwo Jima while the battle still raged for that island fortress.

Joe Morris, Sr USMC



Born on the Navajo reservation in Indian Wells, Ariz., Joe Morris was one of about 400 Navajo code talkers who underwent extensive training at a communications school at Camp Pendleton to memorize the undecipherable code based on their complex, unwritten language.

SPC Lori Ann Piestewa, US Army



A U.S. Army soldier killed during the same Iraqi Army attack in which fellow soldiers Shoshana Johnson and Jessica Lynch sustained injuries. A member of the Hopi tribe, Piestewa was the first Native American woman in history to die in combat while serving with the U.S. military and the first woman in the U.S. armed forces killed in the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

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QUESTIONS?

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(301) 443-1870

Crisis Hotline Numbers

Suicide Prevention Lifeline Number:

- 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Veterans Crisis Line:

- 1-800-273-TALK (8255) Press 1

National Domestic Violence Hotline:

- 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or TTY 1-800-787-3224

National Child Abuse Hotline:

- 1-800-4-A-CHILD

Sexual Assault Hotline:

- 1-800-262-9800