

The Healthy Development of U.S. Military Service Members: The Warrior Mind Assessment for Military Suicide Prevention

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Description:

Behavioral health problems significantly impact mortality rates, morbidity, and economic independence of adolescents and young adults (Grand Challenge of Social Work, 2018). One specific population that is vulnerable to behavioral health problems is the military. The occupation exposes service members to life-threatening situations. In the post-deployment period, returnees from deployment can face significant challenges, including high rates of physical injuries, mental health disorders, interpersonal issues, substance abuse, and suicide (McCormack & Ell, 2017). In the past twenty years, prolonged wars have produced high rates of mental health conditions among service members (Liu et al., 2018). U.S. military service members' mental health conditions result from interactions between predispositional, neurobiological, and environmental factors, with a third of U.S. military reporting mental health or cognitive problems (Liu et al., 2018).

The WMA proposes changes to confronting negative attitudes towards help-seeking behaviors contributing to the military's high rate of suicide. Incorporating the WMA prevention and evidence-based intervention upon entry into the military will be a step to changing the attitudes towards behavioral health and help-seeking behavior for new recruits. The Military Health System's top priority for suicide prevention promotes programs that teach skills needed to manage life's challenges and encourage help-seeking (Suicide prevention, n.d.). This presentation will illustrate that the holistic wellness of military service members is essential to maintaining force strength. Stakeholder engagement is key to launching the WMA as a course of action in reducing the military suicide rate.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the prevalence of behavioral health problems and suicide in the military population.
- Identify factors in the military that has contributed to behavioral health challenges and suicide.
- Identify a conceptual framework and logic model to target factors that have contributed to behavioral health challenges and suicide.
- Identify strategies for screening and assessing military service members for depression, PTSD, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicide risk. Identify proposed program and therapies for prevention and inoculation against behavioral health challenges and suicide in the military.

Duration: 1:30