



Marine Corps Base Hawai'i Commanding Officer's Policy Suicide Prevention Month

September is **SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH**, and I want to take the opportunity to raise awareness about the enemy that is robbing us of our teammates and family members at a significant rate. Then I will highlight the excellent support Marine Corps Base Hawai'i offers servicemembers, dependents, and Department of War civilians.

First, - **ASKING FOR HELP IS NOT WEAKNESS**. Most of your senior leaders have, or know someone that has, sought help. This job and lifestyle are challenging, and there are times in each of our lives where we need assistance to cope with the challenges associated with this life of service.

The **Enemy - SUICIDE** - is now the leading cause of death in our Corps and Marines die by it at higher rates than the other branches of service. We owe better. We need to check our lines and improve our defensive posture. To do this, we **ALL** need to step up, help our teammates, and deliver effective, quality support to them in their time of need. **THERE ARE NO REPERCUSSIONS** for seeking assistance or ensuring a teammate is well defended.

This enemy attacks families too. The support below is available to them as well. Living in "paradise" comes with unique challenges that amplify the already difficult job families have supporting their service member spouse or parent. High op tempo, isolation from family and friends, expenses, uncertainty, and other stressors exist and compound. **DO NOT SUFFER IN SILENCE**.

Our team of well-trained, highly capable professionals are here to help you improve your defense and build the resilience necessary to repel suicide. Knowledge of available resources is the second step to healing. The first is **ASKING FOR HELP OR AIDING TEAMMATES** in need. Our Chaplains, Community Counseling Program and Behavioral Health specialists, Marine Family Life Counselors, and unit leaders are here for you.

A simple practical suicide prevention framework is **ACT: Ask, Convince, Take Action**.

- **Ask** the right questions with compassion and confidence.
- **Convince** them to stay by offering hope and truth.
- **Take Action** by connecting them to professional help and ongoing support.

Suicide prevention is more than a month, a ribbon, or 22 push-ups. It is a lifestyle and a requirement that comes from who we are as Marines, Sailors, and people. It is a biproduct of how we account for and care for each other. So, during this **Suicide Prevention Month** get familiar with the situation and available resources, understand the signs, and develop the standard operating procedures to take care of ourselves and be there for teammates in need.

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