



Air National Guard Leadership Talking Points Overview



Overview/Purpose

The Suicide Prevention talking points are designed to supplement Suicide Prevention Annual Training. This toolkit will assist commanders and wing leadership with safe messaging, creating a regular and repeated conversation with Airmen to engage, connect and build resilience and protective factors in suicide prevention. The intent is to spend a few minutes during a regularly scheduled briefing or meeting to discuss the suggested topics.

Guidance:

Commanders and/or wing leadership are highly encouraged to discuss the Leadership Talking Points with their personnel **on a regular basis**. Ideally, the talking points will be delivered at the Squadron or Group level. For 2020, the Leadership Talking Points are highly encouraged and recommended to be completed quarterly, with a completion date of 31 Dec 2020. This recommendation is for the ANG only.

Delivery of this material can be flexible but should be delivered by key leadership within your Squadron or Group. Research has shown that messaging delivered by leadership around connectedness, and communicating that each member of the team is valued- reduces a person's potential for suicide.

Suggested tools are provided in this toolkit to supplement the talking points. Those delivering the message are encouraged to reach out your local Suicide Prevention Program Manager (SPPM)* and/or Director of Psychological Health (DPH)*.

Based on comfort with the topic and level of subject matter expertise, bullet points and specific speaking points are provided for anyone guiding the conversation.

**These points of contact are for your reference but should not deliver the talking points/messages. Based on the research, it is highly encouraged that these messages and talking points be delivered by leadership.*

Sensitivity Notice:

- Leaders should refrain from using certain types of communication (See FOUO//Public Affairs Guidance) that may inadvertently glorify suicide rather than discourage it; thus causing suicide to appear as a more appealing option for vulnerable Airmen in crisis.
- Messages should emphasize early help-seeking, appropriately highlighting stories of individuals who were in crisis, responsibly sought help and recovered in order to dispel perceived stigma of mental health treatment.
- As a minimum, every type of communication (briefings, articles, trainings) should include the Military and Veterans Crisis Line phone number: 1-800-273-8255 (TALK) Option 1.

Support and Resources:

Commanders and leaders are encouraged to use local resources for support and local guidance. Examples of local resources include: SPPM, DPH, Chaplains, Airmen and Family Readiness Program Manager, Vet Centers and other local or military helping professionals. The ANG Suicide Prevention Office is also available as a resource. For additional resources or to access electronic versions of the Leadership Talking Points, please visit the Suicide Prevention Program Page on the ANG Prevention Website: <http://www.ang.af.mil/prevention/>

Schedule:

Talking Point 1: Connect

Talking Point 2: Detect

Talking Point 3: Protect

Talking Point 4: Equip

Talking point topics are focused on key areas of suicide prevention strategy identified by HAF/A1Z.