



LIFELINK NEWSLETTER

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This is a Human Business

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On his last official trip as Chief of Naval Operations, now retired Adm. John Richardson delivered opening remarks at the Navy Primary Prevention and Human Factors Advanced Professional Development Training Summit in Daytona Beach, Fla., Aug. 19. The five-day training summit served as a train-the-trainer session to equip command climate specialists, sexual assault prevention and response officers, inclusion and diversity officers, alcohol and drug control officers and other key Navy personnel with the skillset to identify vulnerabilities within a system.

“Our mission is evolving to meet the needs of our Navy, and it’s up to us to bring the most value to our customers – Sailors, civilians and families,” said Behavior Development and Performance Branch Head Capt. T.J. Dixon. “We will emphasize a higher standard of excellence as a developmental organization focused on prevention, as we continue to mature our critical response capabilities.”

This advanced training provides baseline information for participants to take back to their commands and communities to prepare for future culture of excellence efforts. Participants are trained on foundational primary prevention and human factors process information that will be delivered with the supporting tools and resources for sustainment at the unit level.

“The Navy has developed this foundational training through a collaboration with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), other federal organizations, academia



On his last official trip as CNO, Adm. John Richardson posed with attendees of the Navy Primary Prevention and Human Factors Advanced Professional Development Training in Daytona Beach, Fla., Aug 19. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Devin Bowser)

and industry to ensure that our Navy team is building prevention capacity to implement comprehensive, research informed strategies that drive healthy Sailor choices, increase signature behaviors and promote positive cultural norms overall,” said Dr. Monique Clinton-Sherrod, the Navy’s expert for primary prevention.

“This is a human business,” said Richardson. “Don’t pass up an opportunity to come together as a team. Don’t pass up leadership opportunities, and don’t outsource them to a PowerPoint. If you have an opportunity to come together as a team, to increase belonging, do it.”

Adm. Mike Gilday relieved Richardson as the Chief of Naval Operations in a ceremony, Aug. 22, at the Washington Navy Yard.



Lifelink Spotlight

Tragedy Inspires Former Sailor

Many members of the Navy family have experienced the loss of friends and loved ones to suicide. For some, this loss can be a catalyst to get involved and make a difference in preventing suicide. That was the case for Katherine Martinez, a former active duty Sailor who has become a leader in the suicide prevention community through her work with the **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)**.

Martinez's personal story of advocacy began as a junior enlisted sonar technician. New to the Navy and her job, she met a senior chief sonar technician. Although they only spoke by telephone a few times, Martinez said it meant a lot to have this senior leader encourage her.

"She was a very happy person, and she told me, 'I love your passion. You're going to make a difference in the Navy one day,'" Martinez said. Then, in January 2017, Martinez learned the senior chief had died by suicide.

"I couldn't understand it. I was mad, which is a typical reaction," Martinez said. "I needed help, so I began researching what was out there. That's how I came across the AFSP. The AFSP is a national organization that raises awareness, funds scientific research and provides resources and aid to those affected by suicide. Martinez got involved by participating in an "Out of the Darkness" walk – one of AFSP's signature events.

"It was helpful to see other people who had been impacted by suicide," Martinez said. "I wore silver to represent the loss of service members and first responders."

From that first walk, Martinez became an active advocate, going to suicide prevention trainings offered at her home station of Norfolk, including Safe Talk/ASIST trainings. Local AFSP officials noticed her commitment and asked her to be the chairperson for the 2018 Virginia Beach Out of the Darkness walk. The walk, held in October 2018, raised more than \$58,000.

Although Martinez is currently finishing her enlistment in the Navy, she is continuing to work for the Navy in her job as a contractor and as a volunteer advocate for mental health and suicide prevention.

"Someone could be happy and put on a front, so just noticing and really asking how they are doing can make a difference. They may have never been asked 'how are you?' in a way that really cares," she said. "I want people to know, 'You aren't alone.; Reaching out is a sign of strength, and it helps break the stigma."



**American
Foundation
for Suicide
Prevention**

Plan of the Week Notes

Below are sample Plan of the Week notes aligning with topics covered by the Every Sailor, Every Day campaign during the month of December:

1. As exciting as the winter holidays are, keep in mind that decorating and entertaining can increase the risk for home fires and personal injuries. If going out to enjoy the outdoors, dress properly to avoid frostbite and hypothermia. Keep a winter driving kit in your car with gloves, hat and a blanket. Use a ladder and safety harness when decorating the roof or second story of your house. The Naval Safety Center has more resources, including a downloadable holiday safety tip fact sheet at <https://go.usa.gov/xpYWz>.
2. Holiday celebrations are times to relax and enjoy, but if alcohol is part of the party, have a plan to drink responsibly. The Department of Defense's (DoD) Own Your Limits campaign offers tips on how to hit the town the right way this holiday season. They also have resources to check our own alcohol use and information on where to get help if you are concerned about your drinking at <https://www.ownyourlimits.org/responsible-drinking/how/plan-your-night-out/>.
3. According to the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, it is a commonly-held misconception that suicides increase over the holidays. This is not the case. However, the holidays are an ideal time to strengthen your connections with shipmates and loved ones – a protective factor against suicide. While the holiday season may be a busy time, remember that 1 Small ACT can make a difference. Learn more at <https://navstress.wordpress.com/2018/11/29/the-holidays-and-suicide-prevention/>.
4. Expenses can be overwhelming at this time of year, but the Navy's Personal Financial Management (PFM) program can help. Information on resources including access to a Command Financial Specialist, financial literacy training and the Financial Literacy mobile app is available at <https://go.usa.gov/xpYZm>. Visit www.applocker.navy.mil for the Financial Literacy mobile app.
5. Planning a New Year's fitness resolution? The Physical Readiness Program website can help. Get information on nutrition resources, check out a video library of Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) exercises and learn more at <https://go.usa.gov/xpYZz>.

News and Resources

Controlling Your Finances
Without Letting Them Control
You
[NavyNavStress](#)

Spousal Attitudes and Suicidal
Thoughts
[Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#)

Question and Verify: Tricare
Authorized Civilian Mental
Health Referrals
[Psychological Health Center of
Excellence](#)

Cyber Fitness, Awareness Key
During 'Season of Shopping'
[Health.mil](#)

PTSD Symptoms and Suicide
Attempts Among Military
Personnel
[Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#)

Managing Your Holiday Stress
[Health.mil](#)

Depression in Pregnant Service
Members: Three Things to
Help
[Psychological Health Center of
Excellence](#)

10 Tips for Managing Your
Weight During the Holidays
[Human Performance Resources by
Champ](#)

Support and Resources for
Single Service Members
[Real Warriors](#)

'Tis the Season: Connect with
Family Members
[Human Performance Resources by
Champ](#)

Flu Vaccine: An Important
Holiday Gift for the Whole
Family
[Navy.mil](#)

Current and Upcoming Events

SPC Training Webinars

December 5, 10AM CDT
January 9, 2020, 8AM CDT
[Register here](#)

#BeThere for the Holidays:

Early Intervention Through Strong Connections

According to the **Suicide Prevention Resource Center**, it is a commonly-held misconception that suicides increase over the holidays. This is not the case. However, the holidays are an ideal time to strengthen your connections with shipmates and loved ones – a protective factor against suicide. Relationships are one of the **principles of resilience**, and relationships with friends, family members and professional connections can all have significant positive effects on well-being.

Whether catching up via phone, social media or at a holiday gathering, pay attention to the subtle signs that may indicate someone is having difficulty navigating stress. Those signs may include expressing feelings of hopelessness or burdensomeness, increased substance use, withdrawal from usual activities and sudden mood changes. Even if it seems like they're joking or being casual, if something seems out of the norm trust your gut and ACT (Ask Care Treat).

ACT is Navy's call-to-action to encourage early intervention when a Sailor is experiencing difficulty navigating stress or may be at risk for suicide. All Sailors and members of the Navy community should be able to recognize the risk factors and warning signs that indicate a potential suicidal crisis, and should feel confident in their ability to ACT:

Ask - Ask directly: are you thinking of killing yourself?

Care - Listen without judgment. Show that you care.

Treat - Get the Sailor immediate assistance. Escort him or her to the nearest chaplain, trusted leader or medical professional for treatment.

Annual case reviews consistently reveal missed opportunities to "connect the dots" when a Sailor is experiencing the negative effects of stress, psychological health concerns or exhibiting uncharacteristic behavior. Active communication and ongoing dialogue about stress, psychological health and suicide can motivate positive action and open the door for help.

While the holiday season may be a busy time, remember that 1 Small ACT can make a difference. In addition to knowing the signs and when to intervene, encourage Sailors to get ahead of stress by practicing self-care this season, like eating a balanced diet, making time for exercise and getting adequate sleep. Like **U.S. Navy Operational Stress Control** on Facebook or follow **@navstress** on Twitter for healthy holiday tips from the Every Sailor, Every Day campaign. The downloadable **FY-20 1 Small ACT Toolkit** contains facts about suicide prevention, social media content, engagement and event ideas, information on resources and other content to promote a culture supportive of psychological health, emotional wellness, protective factors and connectedness.

