

# Aid Life!

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The fiscal year 2001 Navy suicide rate was the lowest in a decade! Nonetheless, the Naval Safety Center received 42 messages about people attached to afloat commands who attempted or contemplated suicide. These messages chronicled the events of the 30 attempts or suicide thoughts, and—unfortunately—also included the 12 who died from suicide. The history of previous years' messages indicates other shipmates will attempt to take their own lives.

The most effective way to prevent suicide is to take suicide-prevention programs seriously, educate Sailors, and offer assistance to those who may be at risk for considering taking their own lives. Leaders must know suicide-risk factors and recognize warning signs from potentially suicidal crew members. Following are some suicide facts.

- ☛ The most common cause for suicide among military members is having problems with an intimate relationship.

- ☛ The second most common cause is difficulty with a job or with military service itself.

- ☛ Among military members, alcohol use and abuse is often a factor in suicides; one-fourth of all Sailors committing suicide consumed alcohol just before the event.

- ☛ Approximately 80 percent of all suicide victims show warning signs.

We all must participate in suicide prevention if we're to save the lives of our shipmates. Knowledge is nothing without action. What can you do to help? You can "AID LIFE."

**A** - Ask people if they're contemplating suicide.

**I** - Intervene immediately.

**D** - Don't keep it a secret.



**L** - Locate help.

**I** - Inform your chain of command.

**F** - Find someone; don't leave the person alone.

**E** - Expedite; get help right away.

For more suicide-prevention and stress management information, contact LCdr. Kevin Kennedy in the Behavioral Health Branch at the Navy Personnel Command (PERS-601) at DSN 882-4256, or via e-mail at [p601b@persnet.navy.mil](mailto:p601b@persnet.navy.mil). To get free copies of the suicide-prevention facilitators' kit and video, log onto the defense visual information website at <http://dodimagery.afis.osd.mil>. You can order kits from that site through the DAVIS/DITIS search option—then choose the PIN/ICH search option and enter PIN 806377. 