HOW YOU CAN BE THE ONE

What: The American Legion's Be the One initiative encourages American Legion Family members, veterans, servicemembers and others to take action when they believe a veteran is at risk of suicide.

Why: To reduce the alarming number of veteran suicides.

How: Our goal is to destigmatize asking for mental health support, provide peer-to-peer support and resources, and educate everyone on how they can Be the One.

Who:

Veterans

- Talk with fellow veterans about how you are feeling.
- Ask for help when you think you need it.
- Know there are millions of people ready to help you.
- Remember your family and friends care.

Non-veterans

- Ask veterans in your life how they are doing.
- Listen when a veteran needs to talk.
- Reach out when a veteran is struggling.

American Legion posts

- Educate members, other veterans and civilians on the campaign.
- Display resources at your post or in your community.
- Share events or success stories at **legiontown.org**.

RESOURCES

American Legion support: Stories, videos and promotional items related to this initiative are available for posts, members and others. Visit **betheone.org**

For urgent help: Veterans experiencing a crisis can call **988** and press **1** for mental health assistance. Counselors are available 24/7. They may also text **838255** or visit the VA crisis line website **veteranscrisisline.net**

AMERICAN LEGION | BE THE ONE

AMERICAN LEGION

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Connect with The American Legion

We can all Be the One

Here's how veterans and civilians can help reduce the rate of veteran suicide.

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OPERATION IRON RUCK

VETS 4 VETERANS

HOW AMERICAN LEGION POSTS ARE LEADING THE WAY

American Legion posts and members are raising awareness about PTSD and veteran suicide by providing resources, hope and camaraderie for those at risk.

VETS 4 VETERANS

Who: American Legion Post 171, Crystal Lake, Ill.

What: The day-long event, which debuted in 2021, connects local veterans to dozens of local service providers that offer different resources related to mental wellness.

Impact: More than 100 veterans turned out for the most recent event. By connecting these veterans directly with service providers, the nonprofits are able to assist more veterans and, in turn, veterans are able to receive the help they need.

2.2 FOR HEROES

Who: American Legion Burrows-Young Post 114, Volga, S.D.

What: A 2.2 for Heroes event was held at the Volga Veterans Memorial where participants walked, ran, biked, roller bladed or even rode a motorized scooter, for 2.2 miles. When participants crossed the finish line, they received a dog tag that featured the American flag, 2.2 for Heroes and the Legion emblem.

Impact: In its inaugural event, the post rallied its community to raise $7,000 toward local programs that assist veterans in crisis.

OPERATION IRON RUCK

Who: American Legion Department of Alabama

What: The department supports student veterans who ruck 151 miles for the Operation Iron Ruck, leading up to the annual Alabama-Auburn football game in November. Each participant carries rucks weighing between 17 and 22 pounds, representing the estimated number of veterans who die by suicide daily.

Impact: In 2021, an American Legion Operation Comfort Warriors grant paid for the items in the rucks. After the march, those items – toiletries, socks and other comfort items – were distributed to homeless veterans.

BIGFOOT SCAVENGER HUNT

Who: American Legion Post 4, Billings, Mont.

What: After a friend's death by suicide, Legionnaire Jim Clark created Post 4's Bigfoot Scavenger Hunt for Halloween. Each of the 12 stops provided community resources for veterans who may not know where to go for help.

Impact: The inaugural event educated about 30 participants. "They all came up to me, gave me hugs and said, 'Jim, we had a blast. We learned a ton about what veteran resources are available in our community. We're going to tell everybody we know about it.'"