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## Veterans in the Justice System


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## Branches of the Military


- ARMY
- NAVY
- AIR FORCE
- MARINE CORPS
- COAST GUARD




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## Readjustment and Transition to Civilian Life


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## Understanding Military Culture

- Rarely do Veterans consider their service to be a minor event in their lives
- The Values and identities they acquired on active duty will continue to be important as they move forward.
- Each Veteran will have a unique story about their military service




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Knowledge and understanding of military culture can lead to:

- Increased ability to relate and support Veterans
- Deeper understanding of the context for mental health symptoms and conditions
- Increased appreciation for military service.
- - See more at:  
[http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/military\\_culture.asp#sthash.GCLfdLfp.dpuf](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/military_culture.asp#sthash.GCLfdLfp.dpuf)


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## Stressors of War

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- 90% of Soldiers deployed to Iraq reported that they were attacked or ambushed.
- Over 60% reported that they were in a threatening situation where they were unable to respond due to rules of engagement
- 85% of Soldiers reported that they personally knew someone who was injured or killed
- Nearly three-quarters of deployed Soldiers reported that they had a member of their own team become a casualty.
- One-half of deployed Soldiers reported that they handled or uncovered human remains.

Castro, C.A.; Hoge, C.W.; Cox, A.L. (2006) Battlemind Training: Building Soldier Resiliency. In *Human Dimensions in Military Operations—Military Leaders' Strategies for Addressing Stress and Psychological Support* (pp. 42-1 – 42-6). Meeting Proceedings RTO-MP-HFM-134, Paper 42. Neuilly-sur-Seine, France: RTO.

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### Stress Factors

- Multiple deployments
- Unemployment/Underemployment/Financial Strife
- Had "important" job in the military and was "respected." At home, work may not be as significant- this can be frustrating
- Relationship/Marital conflict
- "Just visiting"/Bubble Effect
- Don't fit in/Nobody understands
- Guilt for returning uninjured/alive/left buddies there

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- FIGHT
- FLIGHT
- FREEZE

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### Signs & Symptoms of PTSD

Hyperarousal	Insomnia
Vigilance	Nightmares
Agitation	Flashbacks
Anger issues	Avoidance
Violence	Numbing
Anxiety	Suicide
Isolation	

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### Triggers

- Sights/Smells/Sounds
  - Car along the roadside-items along the roadside
  - Car on overpass
  - Seeing Middle Eastern people (our country is now more culturally diverse, Veterans may have a strong reaction to people who look/sound like "the enemy.")
  - Fireworks
  - Car backfire-loud noises
  - Crowds of people

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### Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

- A traumatic brain injury is a blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the function of the brain.
- The severity of such an injury may range from mild to severe.
- A TBI can result in short- or long-term problems with independent function.

Source: MIRECC Traumatic Brain Injury and Suicide: Information and resources for clinicians

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## TBI in Veterans

- TBI represents ~ 22% of confirmed injuries in Iraq/Afghanistan War veterans.
- Many veterans have experienced multiple TBI's due to chronic exposure to blasts
- As many as 50% to 60% of veterans with chronic blast exposure have significant hearing loss or tinnitus ("ringing" in the ears) (Lew, et al. 2007)

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## TBI – Common Enduring Symptoms

**Cognition**

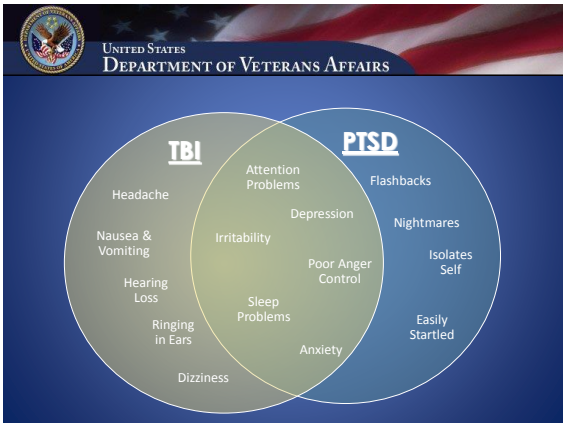
- Motor/sensory disturbances
- Impairments in:
  - Language, communication
  - Attention, concentration, memory
  - Learning new information
  - Speed of information processing
  - Judgment, decision-making, problem-solving, insight

**Mood**

- Apathy/Depression
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Emotional lability
- Insensitivity
- Egocentricity

**Behavior**

- Lack of initiation
- Disinhibition
- Impulsivity
- Restlessness
- Aggression
- Agitation



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*Battlemind is a Soldier's inner strength to face fear and adversity in combat.*

The image shows a soldier in camouflage uniform looking at a screen. On the screen, there is a photo of a soldier with a child and another person. Below the photo, the text reads 'Deployment Preparation'.

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- BATTLEMIND Training**
  - Buddies (cohesion) vs. Withdrawal
  - Accountability vs. Controlling Behavior
  - Targeted vs. Inappropriate Aggression
  - Tactical Awareness vs. Hypervigilance
  - Lethally Armed vs. "Locked and Loaded" at home
  - Emotional Control vs. Detachment
  - Mission and OPSEC vs. Secretiveness
  - Individual Responsibility vs. Guilt
  - Non-Defensive (combat) vs. Aggressive Driving
  - Discipline and Ordering vs. Conflict

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Excerpts from  
"2<sup>nd</sup> Bn, 24<sup>th</sup> Marines:  
Commander's Guidance  
22 Aug. 2004

- Warriors, as has been stressed now for months, you are going to COMBAT!
- You are a trained warrior who understands full well that combat is intense, chaotic and VIOLENT.
- If one of ours falls mourn in private. Take the shock and trauma of combat as part and parcel of your chosen profession.
- Iraq will be significantly different than what most of our Marines are accustomed to. It is an environment of extremes, Extreme heat, extreme cold, extreme boredom, extreme violence. Be mentally prepared for it and do not let it rattle you. We are Marines we thrive in these environments.

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- COMMON CHALLENGES DURING RE-ADJUSTMENT
- Relating to people who do not know or understand what military personnel have experienced
- Reconnecting with family and re-establishing a role in the family
- Families may have created new routines during absences and both the family and the Veteran will have to adjust to changes
- Veterans and their families have to find ways to join or create a social community

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From Combat to:

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Readjustment and Employment:

“Twenty percent of jobs in the military have no civilian counterpart,” he said. “A truck driver is a truck driver, a warehouse manager is a warehouse manager, and a software developer is a software developer. But a sniper...”

“I often found that my peers and above had a hard time dealing with my direct approach and attitude about tackling problems head on, often asking for forgiveness rather than permission,” he said.

<http://www.onlinecollege.org/2013/02/21/the-war-home-the-struggle-veterans-find-jobs/>

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Veteran Death by Suicide

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2012/05/20/anthony-swofford-on-the-epidemic-of-military-suicides.html>

[www.nytimes.com/2012/04/15/us/politics/the-nations-shame.html?pagewanted=all](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/15/us/politics/the-nations-shame.html?pagewanted=all)

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‘Unsuccessful’ ‘Suicide By Cop’

At the scene, in custody after receiving 18 bean bag rounds  
At Emergency Room receiving Care for **NON FATAL** injuries (contact contusions and fractured hand); in manual restraints

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“Suicide By Cop”

Adam Mark Wehinger  
34 years old

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2012/05/20/anthony-swofford-on-the-epidemic-of-military-suicides.html>

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### Setting the Veteran up to Succeed

- \*Listen to the Veteran's account of problem
- \*Reduce stimuli and distraction
- \*Clear, concrete (and 1-step) instructions
- \*The "Good Dentist" Technique
- \*Relaxation
- \*Grounding
- \*Any VA provider that can assist us?

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## Recognition is the 1<sup>st</sup> step



www.military-graphics.com  
**MILITARY-GRAPHICS**  
VINYL DECALS

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### NON-VERBAL AND VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Introductions
- Posture
- Body language
- Facial Cues
- Hand and arm communication
- Listening skills
- Clues in one's speech

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### Communication Cautions


- Overreacting
- Power Struggles
- Threats
- False Promises



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### Communication Aids

- Non-judgement
- Careful listening
- Clarify
- Tactical Transparency
- Grounding technique
- Reduce stimuli and distraction
- Give clear concrete instructions
- LISTEN! LISTEN! LISTEN!



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Operation S.A.V.E. will help you act with care and compassion if you encounter a Veteran who is in suicidal crisis. The acronym "S.A.V.E." helps one remember the important steps involved in suicide prevention:

- Signs of suicidal thinking should be recognized
- Ask the most important question of all
- Validate the Veteran's experience
- Encourage treatment and Expedite getting help

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**Veterans  
Crisis Line**

1-800-273-8255  
PRESS 1

**Confidential help for  
Veterans and their families**

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- Now After Video
- Need for Engagement

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- ✓ Overview VA
- ✓ Justice involved statistics
- ✓ Treatment Options
- ✓ Civilian Readjustment
  - ✓ TBI/PTSD
- ✓ De escalation Techniques

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**Have you ever served in the U.S. Military**

**Eligibility:**  
Active military, naval, or air service .  
Have an Honorable Discharge  
\*Discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable may qualify for VA health care benefits.

**Minimum Duty Requirements:**  
Enlisted after Sept. 7, 1980, or who entered active duty after Oct. 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months

Minimum duty requirement may not apply to Veterans discharged for hardship, early out or a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

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**Returning Service Members  
(OEF/OIF/OND) Clinic**

**5 Years Cost Free Health Care**

OEF/OIF/OND combat Veterans can receive cost free medical care for *any condition related to their service* in the Iraq/Afghanistan theater for five years after the date of their discharge or release

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Department of Veterans Affairs  
Cleveland VA Medical Center

→ Main Entrance  
→ Ambulance Entrance  
→ Reception

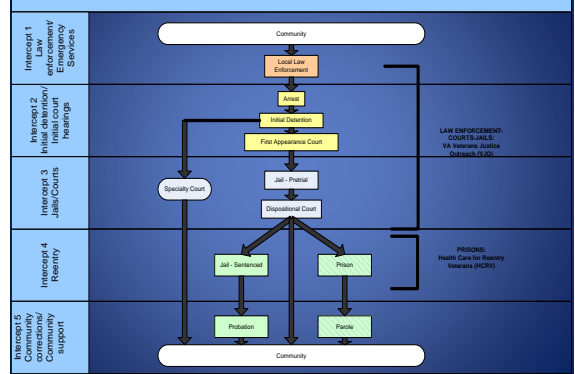
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Luka Brown Center for PTSD  
CAMP TOLSON

## Veterans Justice Outreach

- Jail Outreach
- Veterans Treatment Court
- Law Enforcement/Community training and collaboration
- Legal Clinic



## Overview of VA's Initiatives with the Justice System



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### VETERANS IN JAILS

- United States Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) data, approximately 10% of people incarcerated are Veterans.
- BJS estimates 1,159,500 Veterans are arrested each year
  - 70% non-violent
  - 82% of those released from jails are eligible for VA services
- BJS estimates 72,600 Veterans are in local jails

### State and Federal Prisons Veteran Inmate Characteristics

Current Offense	All Veterans	DEF/OIF/OND
Violent offense	35.1%	37.5%
Property offense	25.2%	25.2%
Drug offense	24.3%	21.7%
Public order	15.5%	17.1%
Probation/Parole violation	23.1%	20.4%
Other	7.6%	11.1%

**49% report alcohol/drugs or both being used at time of their offense (FBI 2012)**

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### VJO Specialists/VA Treatment Programs: CAN...

- Reach out to law enforcement, probation, jails, and courts.
- Provide comprehensive healthcare services.
- With Veteran consent, communicate essentials (attendance, progress, tx testing, d/c plan).
- Serve all Veteran eras.
- Function as court team member and provide EBT for court-monitored Veterans
- Assess Veterans' healthcare needs, identify appropriate VA and non-VA services.
- Refer/link Veterans to services (GPD for VHA ineligible)


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### VJO Specialists/VA Treatment Programs: Limitations:

- Write lengthy court reports, complete Diversion paperwork.
- Provide treatment to incarcerated Veterans.
- Decide criminal justice criteria for Veteran court participation or decide who gains admission to a specialty treatment court.
- Perform forensic psychiatric or psychological evaluation for the court;
- Accept custody.
- Advocate for legislation.
- Determine VA eligibility.
- Offer healthcare to VHA ineligible Veterans.
- Provide legal advice.



## Common VJO referrals

- Transitional housing for eligible Veterans
- Psychiatric treatment: Inpatient & Outpatient
- Substance abuse treatment
- Brief case management services
- Employment training programs
- Assistance in applying for VA benefits
- Permanent supportive housing




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### Community Outreach Division

Help for Homeless Veterans  
**877-4AID-VET**  
va.gov/homeless (877) 424-3838



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Detoxification Service

Substance Abuse Residential Treatment Program

Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment

Opioid Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution


Opiate Substitution Program

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### Opiate Substitution Program OSP

- Methadone
- Suboxone
- Vivitrol




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### Trauma and Recovery



- Outpatient Therapy
- Psychoeducation about PTSD
- Group Therapy (Anger, Coping Skills)
- Family Therapy
- Intensive Individual Therapy
- Medication Management
- Residential treatment



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### Domiciliary care for Homeless Veterans

- Average stay 6 months
- Employment and Disability track
- Compensated Work Program and Vocational Rehab



