

# News Release



For Immediate Release

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## **New Video Series Raises Awareness on Veteran Suicide Prevention in Arizona**

### ***No Cost Resources Available Statewide By Calling 866-4AZ-VETS***

**Phoenix, Ariz. (Oct. 28, 2020)** – A new [video series](#) is available to help raise awareness of the no cost support line available right now at 866-4AZ-VETS to any Arizona service member, veteran or family. The videos were created to encourage anyone struggling during this difficult time to reach out and call someone they feel they already know through watching the videos.

Services offered through the support line include connection to resources statewide for employment, housing, finances, health and mental wellness services- among many others. “We are here to provide that extra support we know veterans and their families need right now,” said Chessa Emmons, a military spouse and Be Connected team member. “We know what it can be like experiencing extra stress, unexpected bills and even day-to-day issues around the house during deployments because many of us answering the support line also have a personal connection to military life.”

The support line is a program offered by the [Arizona Coalition for Military Families](#) in partnership with the Governor’s Office of Youth, Faith and Family, the [Arizona Department of Veterans’ Services](#), the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and a statewide coalition of partners.

“Arizona’s Be Connected program is a national leader in providing a unified approach statewide to supporting service members, veterans and their families,” said Thomas Winkel, founder and Director of the Arizona Coalition for Military Families. “Our network of specially trained personnel based across Arizona provide personalized, live consultations to help tackle the challenges that, if left unchecked, may manifest into circumstances that could lead to suicide. More than anything, we want service members, veterans and their families to have their burdens eased far in advance of them feeling desperate and overwhelmed. Thanks to the over 500 Be Connected Partner Organizations united in this mission, we are seeing that happen daily.”

“Working together as a community, we can prevent suicide by working together to identify, address and eliminate stressors early, before someone feels hopeless and may begin to believe suicide is a way to resolve the situation,” says Winkel. “We welcome calls from any Arizonan who wants to help, and especially from our military and veteran community, during this difficult time when so many of our neighbors are understandably under considerably more stress,” Winkel adds.

The video series, dubbed “*We’re Here for You*” features the sincere reflections of the team members behind the [Be Connected program](#). Through this series, viewers will meet the people answering the phones and providing navigation support, as well as learn more about upstream prevention and how to connect to resources.

To view the “*We’re Here for You*” video series, visit: <https://bit.ly/MeetBCinAZ>. To speak to a local, Arizona-based specialist dedicated to finding personalized solutions, call the Be Connected support line at 866-4AZ-VETS (429-8387).

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## **About the Be Connected® Program**

[Be Connected](#) links Arizona service members, veterans, families and community helpers to information, support and resources. Be Connected includes a support line, resource matching website, statewide team of community-based navigators and training for everyone. Launched with the help, support and guidance of the late Senator John McCain, and now operated in partnership by the Arizona Coalition for Military Families, Arizona Office of the Governor, Arizona Department of Veterans' Services and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Be Connected is available to any member of the military, veteran, family member or community helper by [calling](#) 1-866-4AZ-VETS (429-8387) for [help and support](#). Organizations that want to [support](#) and join our efforts should begin by [completing a pre-application](#). For more information, to find support and learn more, visit [www.BeConnectedAZ.org](http://www.BeConnectedAZ.org).