

The TAPS Model of Bereavement Care for military and veteran survivors is grounded in best practices and research, acknowledging grief as the natural and universal response to the death of a loved one. TAPS provides the peer connections, coping strategies, robust resources and essential tools for a healthy grief journey.



**SAFETY &
STABILIZATION**



**HEALTHY
GRIEF JOURNEY**



**MEANING
AND
PURPOSE**

TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS

TAPS

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TAPS HISTORY

Founded by Bonnie Carroll after the death of her husband in a 1992 Army plane crash, the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) is a vital lifeline for all living with grief and trauma following a death in the military or veteran community. TAPS is dedicated to providing lifelong compassionate care and comprehensive resources with an emphasis on peer-to-peer support for all grieving the death of a military or veteran loved one.

The government provides exemplary service to honor those who have served and died by rendering final honors, providing burial services, and administering benefits to the eligible next of kin. Since 1994, TAPS has come alongside the military to provide complementary lifelong grief and trauma support across all manners of death, for all duty statuses at the time of death, and all relationships to the deceased. With a nurturing community available 24/7, survivors receive expert and customized support, forge meaningful connections with peers, and access a wealth of resources tailored to their unique journey of remembrance and growth. TAPS stands as a sanctuary, celebrating the legacy of all those who have served and died while providing their loved ones with a place of understanding, comfort, honor, remembrance, and shared healing.



TAPS MISSION

TAPS is the national nonprofit organization providing compassionate care and comprehensive resources for all those grieving the death of a military or veteran loved one.

TAPS VISION

We honor our military and veteran service members by caring for all those they loved and left behind.

**TRAGEDY
ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM FOR
SURVIVORS**

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MILITARY AND VETERAN MODEL OF **BEREAVEMENT CARE**

Survivors Helping Survivors Heal



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TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS



MILITARY AND VETERAN MODEL OF BEREAVEMENT CARE

SAFETY & STABILIZATION

TAPS is ready 24/7 to welcome bereaved survivors with immediate programs and services to provide a sense of safety and stabilization.

GOAL

Provide immediate care, comfort, and practical support to survivors.

Safety and Stabilization is aided through:

- ★ TAPS 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline
- ★ TAPS Peer Support Professionals
- ★ TAPS Peer Mentor Program
- ★ TAPS Community-Based Care
- ★ TAPS Casework

Military and veteran survivors first connect with TAPS through our 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline, connections from our partners in military casualty, funeral homes, and opportunities to honor their loved one through one of our many engagements.

TAPS warmly connects survivors to additional programs and services within our organization and partnerships based on their unique needs. TAPS maintains close partnerships with vetted local grief support groups and mental health professionals to connect survivors based on their needs.

TAPS Peer Support Professionals connect with all survivors to provide them a safe space to focus on their grief and trauma needs. With a national network of military and veteran survivors, TAPS builds connections for survivors to meet others with a similar grief experience based on their relationship to the deceased, the manner of death, and other unique needs.

The TAPS Casework team provides emergency financial assistance for survivors when they experience hardships, such as gaps in insurance coverages, emergency housing, utility bills, and burial costs. These services provide survivors with a sense of safety and stability, freeing them to address their grief and trauma needs.

HEALTHY GRIEF JOURNEY

As the initial shock of the loss begins to fade and the grief and trauma emotions arise, TAPS programs are designed to help survivors across all demographics process their grief. TAPS programs for a healthy grief journey are in alignment with Worden's¹⁶ period of experiencing the pain of grief and Rando's¹⁷ stage wherein the survivor experiences the intense emotions of grief.

GOAL

Guide survivors to process their grief and trauma needs, address emotions of grief, and move forward with a sense of hope for the future.

Healthy Grief Journey is aided through:

- ★ TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing[®]
- ★ TAPS Seminars
- ★ TAPS Adult Programs
- ★ TAPS Youth Programs
- ★ TAPS Young Adult Programs
- ★ TAPS Community Events

Through active engagement with experts in grief, trauma, and thanatology across generations and demographics, the TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing[®] provides all those living with grief, and all who support

the bereavement community, with free and unlimited courses to improve the quality of care for the bereaved.

TAPS Programs are designed to bring small groups of survivors together to intentionally acknowledge and process their grief needs. Each program includes physical activities, reserved time for conversation and reflection, opportunities to learn new strategies for coping with grief, and honoring the life and service of our fallen.

Specialized grief seminars are held in locations across the country throughout the year. Survivors across generations connect with other TAPS survivors and receive information on grief, bereavement, coping skills, peer-based emotional support, and other resources.

TAPS Youth Programs are for children under the age of 18 to connect and grow with grief with age-appropriate activities and engagements. Bereaved children are connected with a member of the military who volunteers to serve as a Military Mentor and remind their mentee they are not alone in their grief.

Attending children build their own community of care, elevate their awareness that the military will always honor the life and legacy of their loved one, and learn new coping skills to process their grief at an age-appropriate level to improve their communication with grief emotions.

MEANING AND PURPOSE

As survivors grow with their grief, they move toward identifying meaning and purpose from their loss. In this phase, survivors are integrating their loss into their “new normal” and looking ahead toward a positive future. This phase is aligned with Worden's¹⁴ task of adjusting to a new world without the deceased and Rando's¹⁵ accommodation phase of reintegrating into the world without the deceased.

GOAL

Help survivors derive a sense of meaning from the loss, and integrate positive life patterns while looking ahead to their future.

Meaning and Purpose is aided through:

- ★ TAPS National Seminars
- ★ teams4taps
- ★ Stars4TAPS
- ★ TAPS Peer Mentor
- ★ TAPS Legacy Mentor

The TAPS National Military Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp is hosted annually over Memorial Day weekend in Arlington, VA. At this gathering, thousands of survivors across all manners of death and all relationships to the

deceased receive comfort and knowledge from experts in grief and trauma support to grow with grief. The TAPS National Military Suicide Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp is open to all military and veteran suicide-loss survivors. There they learn how to cope with the challenges connected to grieving the death of their loved one who died by suicide.

Becoming a TAPS Mentor means survivors have grown with their grief, are at a healthy place in their grief journey, are ready to serve as a source of support to a newly bereaved survivor. Peer Mentors are surviving adults and are matched with other newly bereaved adult survivors. Legacy Mentors are adults who were bereaved as a child and now return to mentor a newly bereaved child.

TAPS Sports & Entertainment events provide opportunities to create meaningful moments to honor the life and celebrate the service of their fallen military loved ones. Survivors connect with their favorite sports teams or entertainers to share stories while remembering their heroes. Working with partners, we create these special events for children and adults and encourage grieving survivors to share their memories. This provides a supportive space for survivors to connect and build new memories of joy in honor of the life and legacy of their fallen loved one.

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