

# Connect Share Grow



Summer is often filled with activity and as a family we have had a full summer so far — gathering with one another, finding strength and hope. While we have continued to follow social distancing mandates, we have connected virtually at seminars, family camp, chats and retreats.

We have resources and programming designed especially for you and I encourage you to learn all the ways you can stay connected, share your journey and find the comfort and encouragement you need. We are here for you.

Sending love from your TAPS family,

Bonnie Carroll  
TAPS President and Founder



FINDING AND SHARING HOPE

### New to Grief Seminar

In this new virtual event, September 3-24, we will work towards deeper understandings to deconstruct myths about grief, explore the impacts of grief, and seek to establish a helpful language around our experiences. This seminar is for those whose loss occurred less than three years ago or for those searching for foundational tools as they face their grief for the first time. [Visit us online for the event overview, schedule and other details.](#)



WHAT'S NEW

### Care Package for College Freshmen

Incoming and current college freshmen who are surviving children and siblings can still apply for the [Education Care Package](#). Each package includes items for young adults, such as a personalized TAPS Education Resource Report, information about on-campus support and items to help students begin their college career. For survivors looking to go to school, our [Education Benefits and Scholarship Portal](#) can help identify resources to fund post-secondary education goals.



RESOURCES

### Resources for Families with Children

Youth Programs is hosting [TAPS Good Grief and Family Camp at Home](#) through August 28. Each week, there are activities and challenges you can complete individually and as a family. If you've missed a week, [all activities and challenges](#) from previous weeks are available online. Join us for opportunities for you and the kids to connect to mentors and other families through Zoom sessions, and for a chance to earn prizes. [Register today!](#)



ADVOCACY

### Improved Casualty Help for Survivors

TAPS is grateful to Representatives Dean Phillips and Dr. Phil Roe for introducing the [Cheryl Lankford Memorial Act](#) as an amendment to the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act. The proposed law would ensure that Casualty Assistance Officers are assigned to dependent children when a surviving spouse also passes. The amendment is named for military survivor and our dear friend Cheryl Lankford, who died in May. This important bill in Cheryl's honor is a tribute to her years of advocacy on behalf of our nation's surviving families. Learn more about how [TAPS advocates on Capitol Hill](#) on behalf of military families.

### Women's Virtual Retreat

If you're looking to connect with other surviving women and you are more than three years out from your loss, join us at ["The Love Work" virtual Women's Empowerment Retreat](#). This is a structured, online gathering from August 11 to September 12, 2020. We'll meet once a week as a group to explore self-worth, intimacy, expectations, boundaries, fear, and relationships. Fill out a [statement of intent](#) today!

### Explore In-Law Dynamics

The [TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing](#) offers a place for online learning, support and resources from expert presenters. On August 6, author Rachel Kodanaz will lead the webinar ["Creating a New Future with Your In-Laws After Loss."](#) After 25 years of juggling in-laws, Rachel will share practical approaches for handling a wide variety of complicated family situations.

### Join Us for a Virtual Seminar

We have prepared two special days of TAPS resources and programming for you on August 21-22, at our [Virtual Military Survivor Seminar](#). Our event features new, dynamic sessions presented by leading experts in the field of grief and loss. We'll also have Sharing Groups, our facilitated support groups where you can meet other survivors with similar loss experience. We encourage you to [register today!](#)

### Take Illness Loss Survey

If you are grieving the loss of a military loved one, please take our new [TAPS Illness Loss Survivor Survey](#) so TAPS can honor your loved one through our advocacy efforts. If you took the survey last year, we ask you to retake it as we've made important updates. Your response could help shape policy, and direct future TAPS programs and services. Email [illnessloss@taps.org](mailto:illnessloss@taps.org) to learn more.

### Mentors for Children

Parents can request mentors for surviving children and teenagers who are eligible to receive TAPS services and support. At this time, all connections with their mentors will be strictly virtual, making this a great way for kids to experience support, encouragement, and a positive role model until we can meet again. Make the request for your child to be matched with a mentor by emailing [mentors@taps.org](mailto:mentors@taps.org).

### Tell Us How You're Doing

Have you lost your job or have reduced household income as a result of COVID-19? How has the pandemic made an impact on your life? If you are grieving the death of a loved one, and their life included military service, we'd like to hear from you. Your feedback will be used to improve TAPS programs and to communicate survivor needs to donors and stakeholders. Please tell us how COVID-19 has impacted you and your family by [taking our survey](#).

### Cruise with Us in January

As we look toward 2021, with hopes of coming together in person again, we're making plans for a TAPS Cruise in January. This self-funded cruise has always been a chance to relax, heal and create lasting friendships with fellow survivors. Our [Eastern Caribbean Cruise](#) will set sail, roundtrip from Miami, January 3-9. It is our hope the world will be coming together physically at that time and with Royal Caribbean's Cruise With Confidence program, you can cancel for any reason up to 48 hours prior to the sailing without risk. This program will assist you in making your tentative plans with confidence. Register by cabin at the discounted group rate. For more information and to register, visit our website for [cruise overview, schedule, and other details](#).

### Suicide Awareness Month

September is National Suicide Awareness Month, a time each year when TAPS [joins other organizations](#) to raise awareness of this devastating kind of loss. TAPS is on the frontlines of the battle against suicide, not just in September, but every month, every day, every hour. In anticipation and recognition of this time of year, we invite you to learn about [our postvention work](#) with suicide loss survivors by [reading their stories](#).

### COVID-19 Resources

TAPS offers valuable information on [how to cope with grief and loss](#); health and wellness tips; and advice on parenting during COVID-19. This resource is available to everyone affected by isolation, fear and loss associated with the pandemic. Please share this resource with family, friends and colleagues.

### TAPS on Capitol Hill

TAPS thanks Senators Jerry Moran and Jon Tester and Representatives Mark Takano and Dr. Phil Roe for introducing the [COVID-19 Benefits for Active Duty Servicemembers, the Reserve Components, and their Survivors Act of 2020](#). This legislation would expand survivor benefits for National Guard members activated under federal orders in response to COVID-19. It also creates an avenue for Guard members and reservists to apply for compensation if they develop a disability or illness as a result of exposure to COVID-19.

Senators Kyrsten Sinema and Thom Tillis have introduced legislation to ensure the VA grants benefits to survivors of veterans who die of COVID-19 with an underlying, service-connected, health issue that may have contributed to their death. The [Ensuring Survivors Benefits during COVID-19 Act of 2020](#) ensures those service-connected conditions are taken into account, so family members have access to the survivor benefits they have earned. [Read more.](#)



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## TAPS IS HERE FOR YOU

[Get Help with Benefits](#) | [Connect to Peer Support](#)  
[Find a Grief Counselor](#) | [Join our Online Community](#)

Support and care are available to you 24/7/365.  
Call our Helpline at 800.959.TAPS (8277) and visit us at [TAPS.org](https://TAPS.org)