



Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors

1777 F Street, NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20006
800-959-TAPS ★ 202-588-TAPS (8277) ★ www.taps.org

Fact Sheet

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)

TAPS: Our Mission & What We Do

Our mission is to provide ongoing peer-based emotional support to anyone who is grieving the death of a loved one who served in the Armed Forces. We bring survivors together with other survivors for comfort, healing, and hope through our grief seminars for adults and Good Grief Camps for children. We find there is strength in bringing together the bereaved, and sharing our journeys with each other.

Our services are structured around four core areas:

- peer-based emotional support
- grief and trauma resources
- case work assistance
- 24/7 crisis intervention care

TAPS is committed to providing compassionate care to anyone who is grieving the death of someone serving in the military, regardless of circumstance of death, relationship to the deceased, or geography. Services are provided free-of-charge. TAPS has worked with more than 25,000 surviving family members, casualty assistance officers, chaplains, and others supporting bereaved military families.

How many U.S. military service members die? Don't soldiers only die in wartime?

Many people think that military service members only die in wartime. But there has always been loss in the military – through plane crashes, training accidents, and engagement with hostile forces. For more statistics related to death in the military, please see the [American War and Military Operations Casualties: Lists and Statistics \(May 14, 2008\)](#) prepared by the Congressional Research Service. Additional information issued by the military lists casualties by service branch and type of loss: <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/castop.htm>

How many U.S. military personnel have died in Afghanistan and Iraq since the War on Terror began in 2001?

These figures are current as of July 24, 2010

Casualties in Operation Iraqi Freedom	4,413
Casualties in Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan)	1,206
Total Casualties	5,619

Caring for the families of America's fallen heroes since 1994.



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How many families are impacted by military losses in Iraq and Afghanistan? Bereavement experts tell us that for each active duty military loss, there are six people, on average, significantly impacted by the death. They are mothers and fathers, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, fiancés, grandparents, cousins, and other family friends and relatives.

Family members left behind who are significantly impacted:	33,714 people
Number of adults losing a spouse (estimate)	3,090 widows/widowers
Number of children losing a parent (estimate)	3,933 children
Number of parents impacted	11,238 losing a child
Number of grandparents losing a grandchild	16,857 losing a grandchild
Number of people losing a brother or sister	4,439 losing brother or sister

Estimates are based on research done by Scripps-Howard News Service in 2005 about war casualty impacts on families, US Census Bureau data and the TAPS database of surviving family members.

When was TAPS founded and what is the basis for your approach to peer-based emotional support? TAPS was founded in the wake of a military tragedy, after eight soldiers were killed in a C-12 plane crash in Alaska in November 1992. Among the surviving family members was Bonnie Carroll, who lost her husband, Brigadier General Tom Carroll. The families found comfort in offering support and sharing experiences. Carroll founded TAPS in 1994, after conducting two years of research examining the resources available to support bereaved military families and benchmarking best practices at other peer-based support organizations.

TAPS is structured to help those grieving the death of someone who served in the Armed Forces and was designed to not replicate services offered by other organizations, the military, or the government. The heart of our organization's work is peer-based emotional support. We pair up survivors with other survivors in similar circumstances. Among psychologists and counselors, there is growing evidence in support of the value of "companionship" as a strategy to help those who are bereaved and coping with traumatic grief.

How is TAPS funded? TAPS is funded by the generosity of the American public, which provides donations to support the organization's work with grieving families. TAPS receives no financial support from the government or the military.

How can people contact TAPS for more information or to support the organization? Call us at 202.588.TAPS (8277) or go to www.taps.org

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