

# TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS



# IMPACT

2018 YEAR IN REVIEW



# A Letter from TAPS Founder and President

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TAPS is a family, America's home for all those grieving the death of a military loved one. Over the past 25 years, we have elevated care for the traumatically bereaved to a higher level because we are an organization dedicated to providing care peer to peer and heart to heart through a carefully developed model to bring comfort and healing.

TAPS has become an institution in America, a legacy born out of love, built with care, and recognized today as one of the leading military charities. It is our honor to share with you the insights we have gained, the lessons we have learned and the impact we have seen.

At TAPS, we measure each service and program not only in numbers but in the number of lives touched and hearts healed. We see those who avail themselves of our programs through the love they have for those they have lost. Far more than their pain, we see their pride in the lives their loved ones lived.

We honor America's fallen by caring for all whom they loved, as part of our family and now entrusted in our care. The mission of TAPS is sacred. Our nation reveres military sacrifice and refers to our heroes' deaths as the "last full measure of devotion." We cherish that sacred trust and elevate our mission to meet that higher standard.

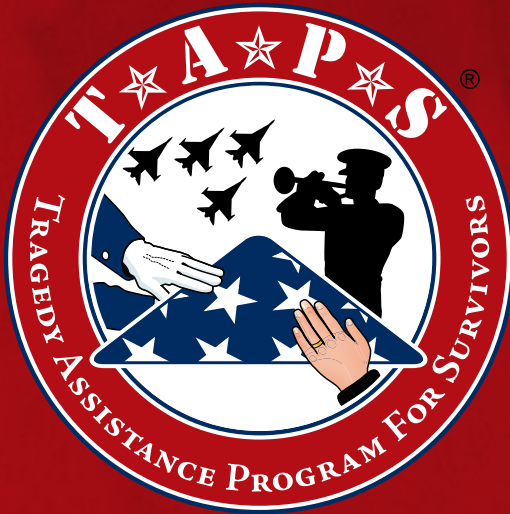
On these pages, you will feel the impact of our programs and services, and you will meet our precious families. You will learn of their struggles and you will witness their survival. We share the 2018 TAPS Impact Report with you with great pride, and we hope you will feel the dedication of each staff, board member, volunteer, survivor and mentor.



With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bonnie Carroll". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bonnie Carroll  
*TAPS Founder and President*



# CARING FOR THE FAMILIES OF AMERICA'S FALLEN HEROES

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"It can only be done by people who have walked this very difficult road before you, and who are now willing to devote their energies and their caring and their heart to take your hand and say, walk with me."

~ General John Shalikashvili, USA  
*13<sup>th</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*

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## RECAPPING A YEAR OF REMEMBERING THE LOVE, CELEBRATING THE LIFE, AND SHARING THE JOURNEY

**85,000** SURVIVORS IN OUR CARE



**21,000** FALLEN MILITARY HEROES HONORED BY OUR TAPS FAMILIES



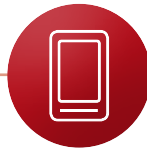
**6,000+** NEW SURVIVORS IN 2018



**17** NEW SURVIVORS CONNECT WITH TAPS EACH DAY



**19,012** CALLS TO THE 24/7 NATIONAL MILITARY SURVIVOR HELPLINE



**\$4.3 MILLION** WORTH OF BENEFITS TAPS SECURED FOR SURVIVORS BY CONNECTING THEM WITH BENEFITS



**\$104 MILLION** WORTH OF EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS TAPS IDENTIFIED FOR SURVIVORS BY CONNECTING THEM WITH SOURCES FOR EDUCATIONAL FUNDING



**63,433** TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS - A VALUE OF OVER \$1.5 MILLION



**45,000** MILITARY MENTOR VOLUNTEER HOURS SPENT CONNECTING WITH GRIEVING CHILDREN AT TAPS YOUTH PROGRAMS



**2,767** CAREFULLY HAND-PACKED RESOURCE KITS SENT TO NEWLY BEREAVED FAMILIES



**62,823** FAMILIES RECEIVED REMEMBRANCE CARDS AND NOTES ON THEIR FALLEN HEROES ANNIVERSARY AND BIRTHDAY



**7,130** SURVIVORS CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER AND TAPS PEER PROFESSIONALS ONLINE EACH MONTH



**200,000** NEW CONNECTIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA



**28,515** OUTREACH CALLS MADE BY PROFESSIONALLY TRAINED TAPS PEER SUPPORT BEREAVEMENT SPECIALISTS



**14,000** SURVIVORS ATTENDED TAPS PROGRAMS ACROSS THE WORLD

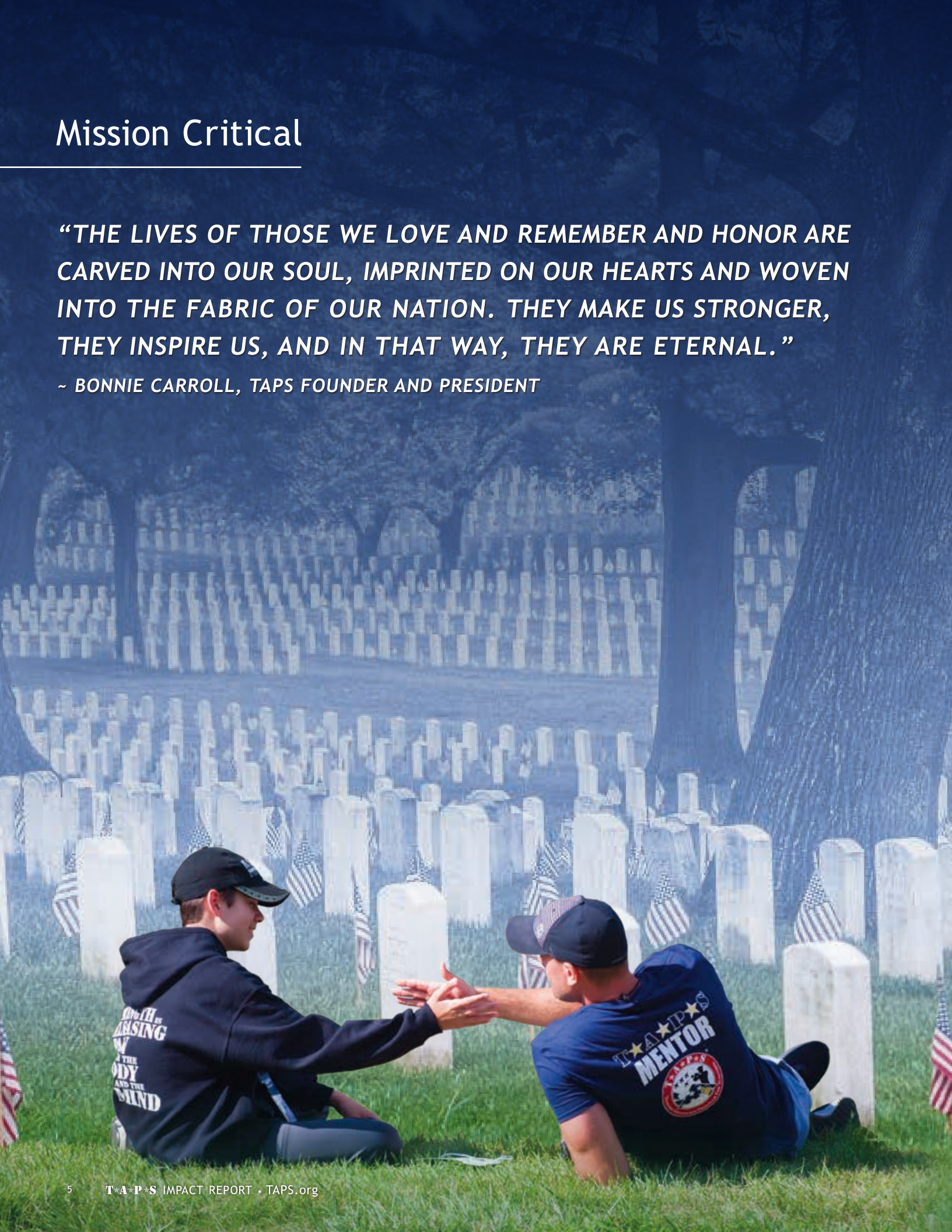


# Mission Critical

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**“THE LIVES OF THOSE WE LOVE AND REMEMBER AND HONOR ARE CARVED INTO OUR SOUL, IMPRINTED ON OUR HEARTS AND WOVEN INTO THE FABRIC OF OUR NATION. THEY MAKE US STRONGER, THEY INSPIRE US, AND IN THAT WAY, THEY ARE ETERNAL.”**

**~ BONNIE CARROLL, TAPS FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT**



**TAPS HONORS ALL OUR FALLEN WHOSE LIVES INCLUDED  
SELFLESS SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY**



# Survivor Services

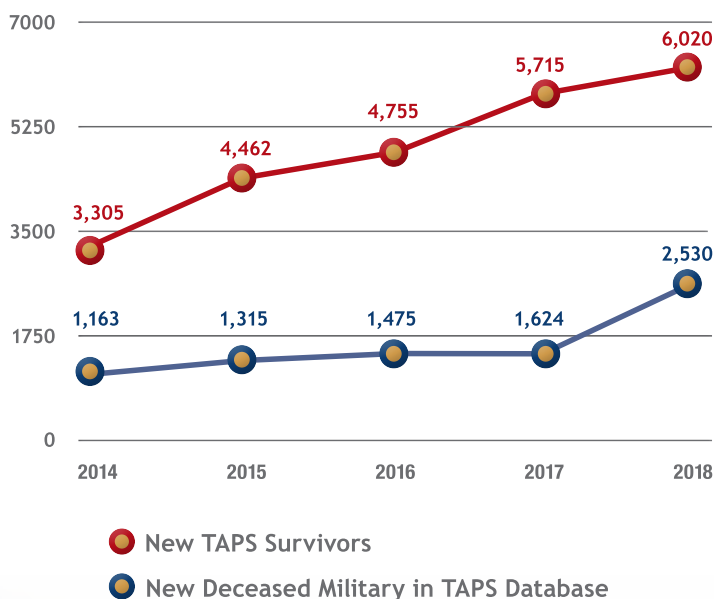
Beyond the emotional exhaustion of grief, there's also the element of having life upended. Survivors face sudden employment decisions, financial planning choices, the grinding stresses of burial and benefit questions, and the paperwork that piles up while they struggle through the darkest days of their lives.

At TAPS, we offer survivors the absolute best in support, advocacy and casework assistance. As part of the TAPS family, our survivors are connected to peer professionals who make up the

Survivor Care Team and connect survivors to all of the other resources TAPS provides to ease the grieving process.

TAPS guides survivors through the challenges associated with the paperwork that comes along with a death in the military. Whether it's pacing the halls of their home as they talk with a member of the Survivor Care Team by phone, or down the corridors of Congress advocating for policy and budget changes, our team is always standing alongside all who grieve the loss of their military loved one.

## 2018 NEW SURVIVORS CONNECTING WITH TAPS



**61%** 0-1 YEAR POST-LOSS

**19%** 2-5 YEARS POST-LOSS

**17%** 6+ YEARS POST-LOSS

**3%** UNKNOWN DATE OF DEATH

**82.14%** INCREASE FROM 2014 IN THE NUMBER OF SURVIVORS

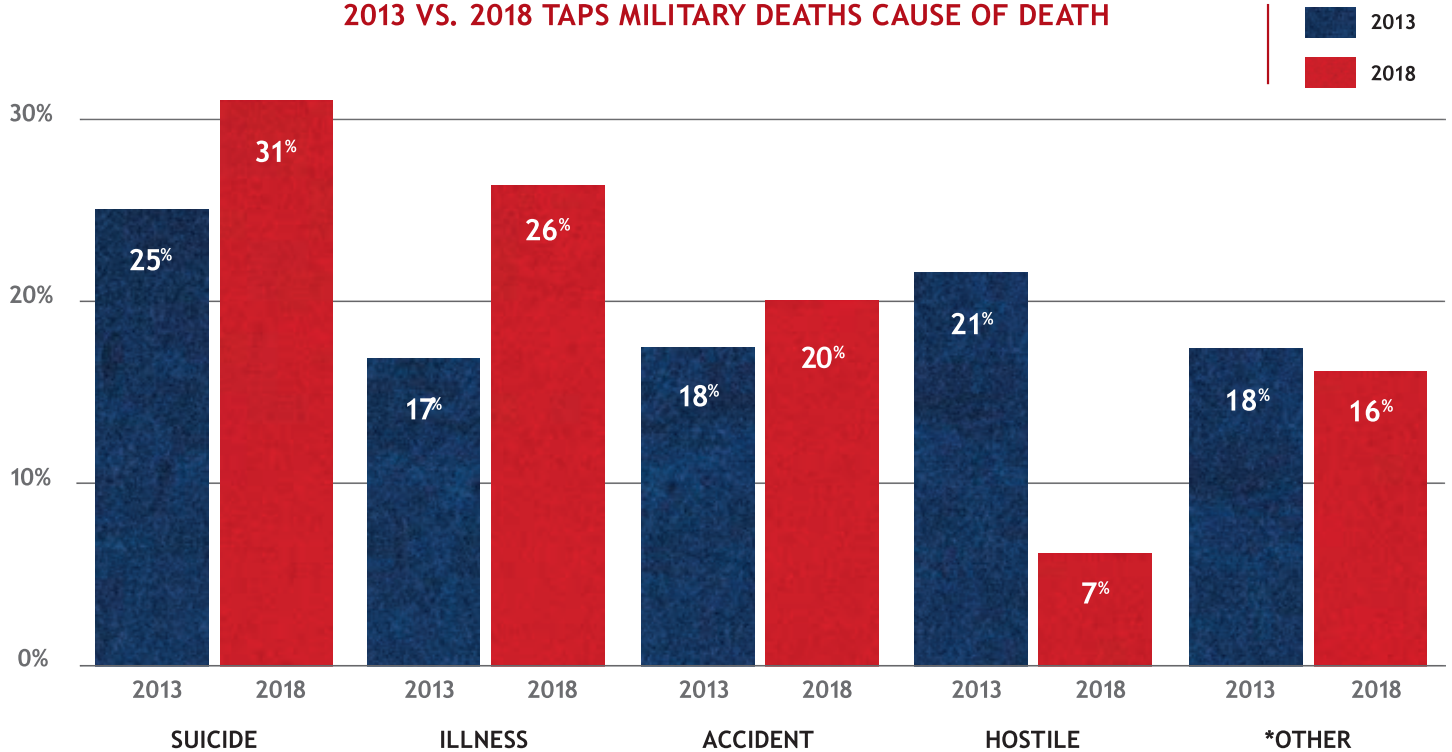
**117.5%** INCREASE FROM 2014 IN THE NUMBER OF MILITARY DEATHS  
TAPS MILITARY DEATHS INCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO WERE ON A DUTY STATUS, RETIRED, RESERVES, OR DISCHARGED FROM THE MILITARY





# Survivor Services

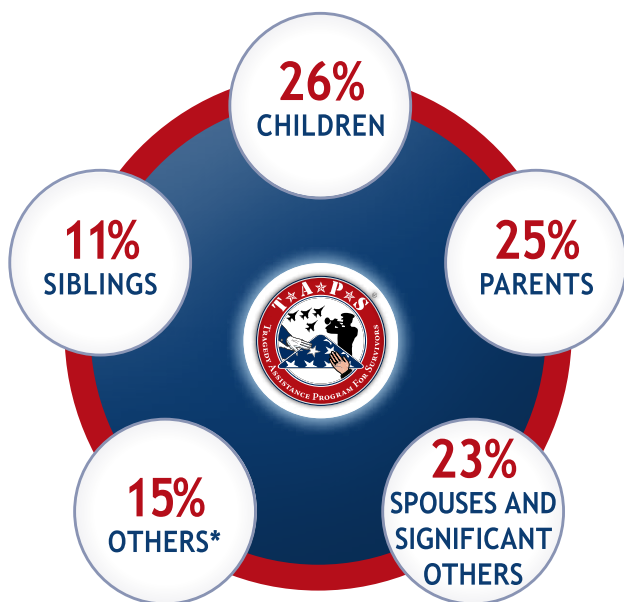
2013 VS. 2018 TAPS MILITARY DEATHS CAUSE OF DEATH



\*Other includes friendly fire, non-combat related, non-hostile, homicide, and unknown at time of intake

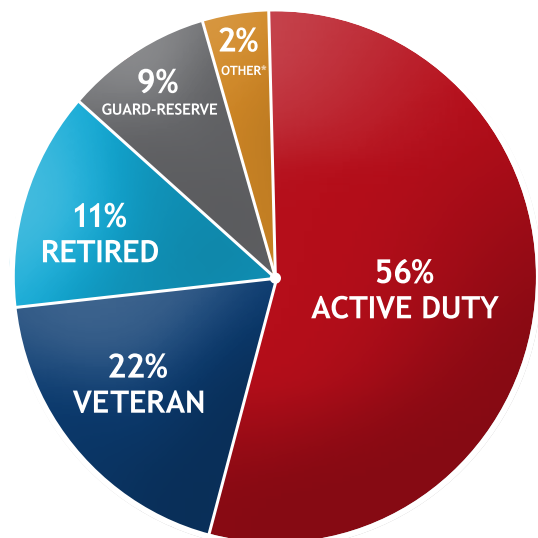
WITHIN THE LAST 5 YEARS,  
SURVIVORS OF A MILITARY DEATH DUE TO ILLNESS HAVE INCREASED BY **51.37%**  
SURVIVORS OF A MILITARY DEATH BY SUICIDE HAVE INCREASED BY **20%**

## RELATIONSHIPS TAPS SERVES



\*Other includes Battle Buddies, Cousins, Friends, Grandchildren, Grandparents, Nephews, Nieces, Aunts and Uncles

## TAPS HONORS ALL MILITARY STATUS



\*Other includes non-military, US government civilians, foreign military, contractors

# Survivor Care Team

## HOW SURVIVORS CONNECT WITH TAPS

**48%** DIRECT REFERRAL

**25%** HELPLINE

**14%** WEBSITE/EMAIL

**13%** TAPS PROGRAMS

At the heart of our survivor support outreach program is the TAPS Survivor Care Team. The team is expertly trained to listen to our survivors and connect with them through phone calls, text messaging, emails, and online message boards.

Members of our Survivor Care Team have lived through similar grief experiences. They have extensive professional training on research-informed best practices on emotional peer-based support, grief, trauma, and companionship. Members of the Survivor Care Team are proud to serve as advocates, attentive listeners, and companions for our survivors.

The goal of the Survivor Care Team is to provide inclusive care to embrace, engage, and empower survivors throughout the entire grief journey. Inclusive care increases the capacity and competency of the entire care team to deliver appropriate, efficient, effective, and high-value services. It improves health outcomes, relationships, quality of life, and system of performance.

**6,020** NEW SURVIVORS CONNECTED WITH TAPS IN 2018, UP BY **5.3%** FROM 2017

**28,515** OUTREACH CALLS MADE BY PROFESSIONALLY TRAINED TAPS PEER SUPPORT BEREAVEMENT SPECIALISTS, UP BY **16%** FROM 2017

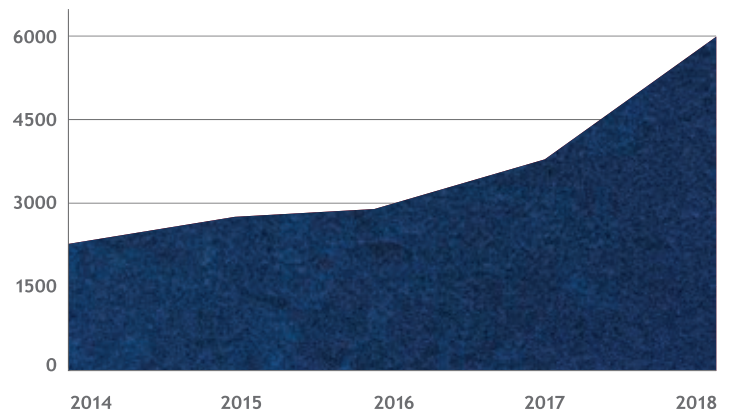
**207,154** HOURS OF TALK TIME WITH SURVIVORS, UP BY **27%** FROM 2017

Research on models of peer based emotional support demonstrate the effectiveness of connecting individuals who share common experiences. One specific model known as Reciprocal Peer Support (RPS) describes how to organize and structure peer based emotional support to deliver care from anywhere in the world. In alignment with the Reciprocal Peer Support model<sup>1</sup> and 25 years of peer based emotional support, TAPS Survivor Care Team strives to:

1. LISTEN TO THE SURVIVOR AND ESTABLISH A CONNECTION
2. GATHER INFORMATION AND COMPLETE A RISK ASSESSMENT
3. CONNECT SURVIVORS WITH CASE MANAGEMENT ADVOCATES AND WORK WITH THEM TO SET GOALS
4. SUPPORT SURVIVORS WITH AFFIRMATION, PRAISE, AND ADVOCACY

*"I cannot thank you enough for all that you have done for me. Your support has meant so much. Your phone calls and talks with me helped me in so many ways. Just knowing someone is there for you that understands firsthand (unfortunately) what I have been going through. There are feelings/emotions that I feel only another mother can truly understand. Again, my deepest thanks for all you have done."*

## NUMBER OF SURVIVORS CONNECTING WITH TAPS SURVIVOR CARE TEAM



<sup>1</sup> Castellano, C. (2012). Reciprocal peer support (RPS): a decade of not so random acts of kindness. *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health*, 14(2), 105-110. doi:10.5040/9781408168516.00000003

**“TAPS IS THERE FOR THE EVERLASTING MOURNING AND GRIEF, FOR THE DAYS THAT TAKE YOU TO YOUR KNEES.”**

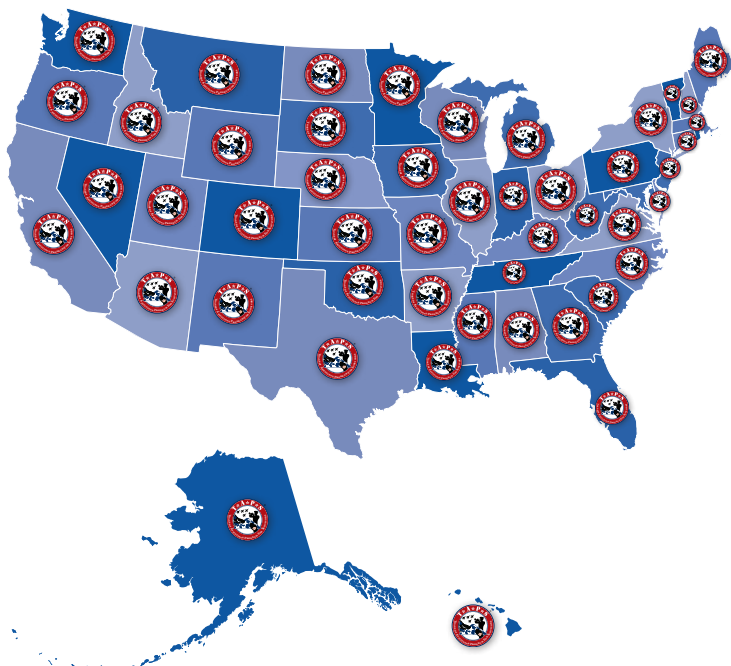
**~ TAPS SURVIVOR**



# 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline

The National Military Survivor Helpline is the only 24 hour helpline for all those grieving the loss of their military loved one. Staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, survivors call the TAPS National Military Survivor Helpline and are immediately greeted by a caring TAPS professional. Whether they are in emotional crisis, want information on TAPS resources and programs, or simply need someone to listen as they share their thoughts, TAPS is available.

The TAPS National Military Survivor Helpline is staff by expertly trained peer professionals. The TAPS peer professionals have been thoroughly trained in the TAPS model of companionship, emotional and behavioral risk assessment, crisis intervention, and peer mentoring. Survivors themselves, the staff answering the phone on the TAPS National Military Survivor Helpline have been through a loss of their own loved one in the military. This gives survivors calling the Helpline a sense of belonging and comfort to talk to someone else who has shared a similar loss.

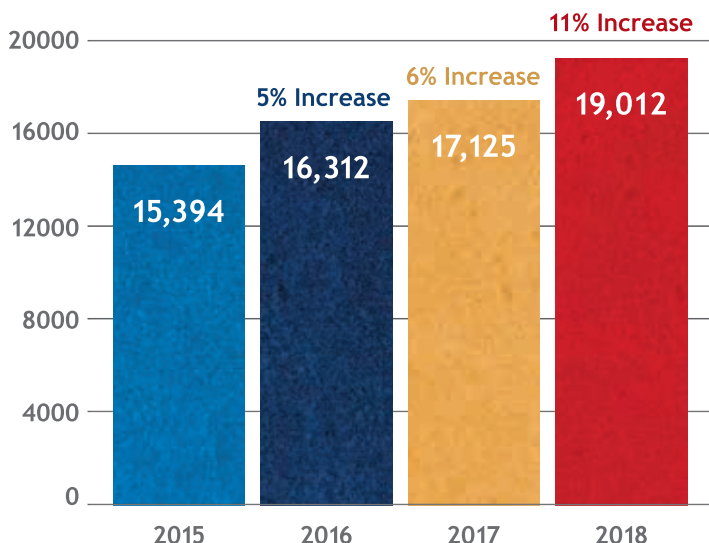


National Law Enforcement Interventionist Network

## TOP REASONS WHY SURVIVORS CALLED TAPS HELPLINE IN 2018

1. EMOTIONAL SUPPORT
2. CASEWORK ASSISTANCE
3. CONNECT WITH SURVIVOR CARE TEAM
4. INFORMATION ON VOLUNTEERING OR WAYS TO SUPPORT TAPS

## 19,012 CALLS TO THE 24/7 NATIONAL MILITARY SURVIVOR HELPLINE



## THE NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT INTERVENTIONIST NETWORK

Recognizing that surviving military family members reside across the nation and the necessity to immediately engage an on-site intervention to support—and possibly save the life of—a grieving family member, TAPS established the National Law Enforcement Interventionist Network in partnership with the International Conference of Police Chaplains.

Through a national network of law enforcement, first responders, military chaplains, mental health professionals and peer supporters, TAPS has created an interventionist program to reach out to survivors in their time of need. Upon receiving an alert to activate an intervention, the Coordinator then notifies the local or state law enforcement to tailor the proper response for the individual based upon their background, family history and situation on a more personal one-to-one level. The difference is the network of dedicated members, the ability to reach the right people across the country in a timely manner, and how to diffuse the situation before it becomes a tragedy. The community-based professionals provide support to surviving military family members (and others as designated by TAPS upon request), including times of suicidal ideation and attempt.

# Casework Assistance and Education Support Services

TAPS Casework Assistance and Education Support Services serve as a guide to scholarship information and benefit resources for military survivors. TAPS Education Support Coordinators help explain benefits, work to align resources and education goals, and provide guidance on connecting with schools, colleges, and universities to minimize out-of-pocket expenses for the survivor.

**OVER \$700 THOUSAND** IN EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

**\$4.3 MILLION** BENEFITS TAPS SECURED FOR SURVIVORS BY CONNECTING THEM WITH RETROACTIVE BENEFITS

**\$104 MILLION** EDUCATIONAL FUNDS TAPS IDENTIFIED FOR SURVIVORS

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED INCLUDED:

- Burial and cremation expenses
- Travel expenses related to the funeral services
- Post-mortem cleaning services
- Mortgage and rent
- Utilities
- Groceries and basic necessities
- Moving expenses
- Medical and dental expenses
- Tutoring
- Holiday financial assistance



## RETROACTIVE BENEFITS ARE BENEFITS RIGHTFULLY OWED TO THE ELIGIBLE SURVIVOR AFTER THE LOSS OF THEIR LOVED ONE

The types of benefits the TAPS Casework Assistance team has secured for TAPS survivors includes:

### Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS):

- Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)
- Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA)
- Arrears of Pay (AOP)

### Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits:

- Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)
- Survivor Pension
- Burial Allowance
- Accrued Benefits owed to the veteran

### Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (OSGLI) benefits:

- Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI)
- Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance-Disability Extension (SGLI-DE)
- Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI)

### Department of Defense (DoD) benefits:

- Death Gratuity
- Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)

### Other benefits secured

- Social Security
- Private Insurance

### Other types of cases processed included:

- Employment
- Flags
- Headstones
- Healthcare
- TRICARE Health and Dental
- FEDVIP
- Investigations
- Legal
- Line of Duty
- Medals
- Official Papers and Records
- Department of Defense (DoD) and all five military branches
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- National Personnel Records Center (NPRC)
- Personal Effects

# Casework Assistance and Education Support Services

## FEDERAL BENEFITS

### Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

- Chapter 33 – Marine Gunnery SGT John D. Fry Scholarship
- Chapter 35–Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA)

### Department of Education

- Pell Grant
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant

### State Benefits

- State tuition waivers in most states, whether full or partial
- Some states will also cover fees and/or room and board

### Private Scholarships

(some common examples listed below)

- Air Force Aid Society
- American Legion
- AMVETS
- Anchor Scholarship Foundation
- Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation
- Fisher House
- Folds of Honor
- Freedom Alliance
- Hope for the Warriors Foundation
- MAJ Lucas Gruenther Legal Foundation
- Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation
- Military Officers Association of America
- Military Order of the Purple Heart
- National Military Family Association
- National Ranger Memorial Foundation
- Navy Marine Corps Relief Society
- Pat Tillman Foundation
- Patriot Legacy Fund
- Thanks USA



TAPS Casework and Education Support Services offer guidance when survivors are ready to pursue their post-secondary education. Some survivors are very young when they lose their loved one. As they grow and decide to continue their education, TAPS is there to connect survivors to benefits.

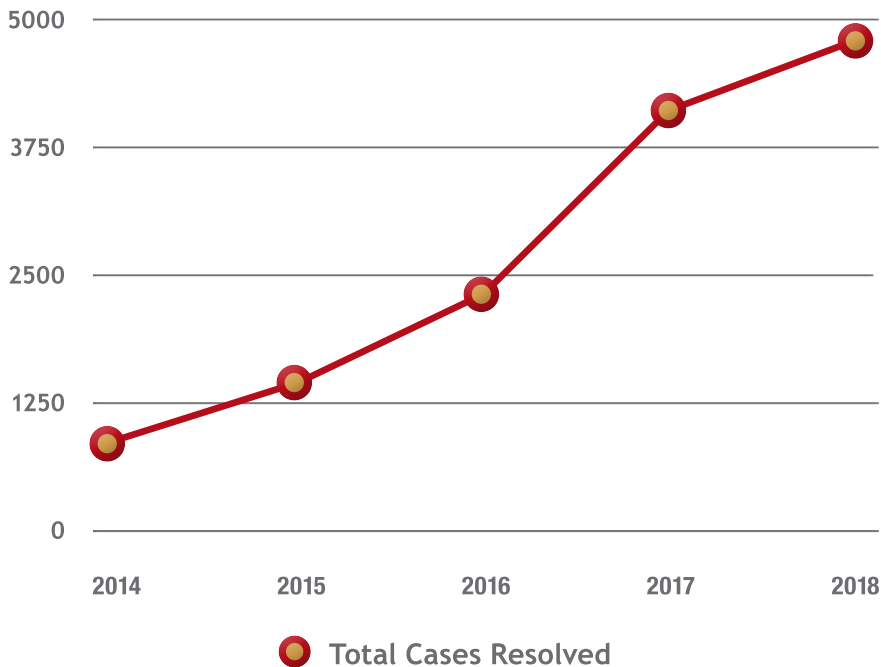
## PARTNERSHIPS TO EXPAND THE TAPS IMPACT

### TAPS CASEWORK AND EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES TEAMS CULTIVATE CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SERVICES TO OUR SURVIVING FAMILY MEMBERS.

- **24/7 Counseling:** Provides survivors access to free financial counseling and professional advice with Certified Veteran Counselors
- **Legal Assistance:** Provides survivors with discounted or pro bono legal assistance to help with civil legal issues such as probate and estate issues, assuming a home loan, drafting a will, etc.
- **Employment Referrals:** Provides survivors with free career development support and connections to career guidance and career networks
- **Education:** Provides college scholarships and educational counseling to the children of military personnel

# Casework Assistance and Education Support Services

## CASEWORK ASSISTANCE 2014 - 2018



**624% INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CASES RESOLVED OVER 5 YEARS**

### TOP 4 CASES FOR SURVIVORS

1. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
2. EDUCATION BENEFITS
3. SURVIVOR BENEFITS
4. OFFICIAL PAPERS AND RECORDS

### OTHER CASES INCLUDE

- Casualty Representatives
- Legal Requests
- Additional Flag Requests
- Burials in National Cemeteries
- Headstones

\* TAPS Casework also served Veteran Callers with Casework Assistance. Overall, there was a 15% increase in new cases resolved compared to end of year 2017

## THE IMPACT OF TAPS CASEWORK ASSISTANCE AND EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES

### TAPS DONORS SUPPORT OUR FAMILIES

A surviving ex-spouse of a USMC Veteran, who served combat tours in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as two non-combat tours in Korea and Europe, struggled with Post Traumatic Stress and died by suicide in mid-May, but was not found until June 1, 2018. He left behind their two children (6 and 11-years-old), but no other relatives, leaving his ex-wife to handle his burial and funeral arrangements. The surviving ex-wife reached out to TAPS requesting financial assistance for the burial and funeral expenses as there was no available savings or life insurance funds. TAPS Casework was able to cover the entire cost of the burial and funeral expenses thanks to the generous financial support of USAA, Gary Sinise Foundation, and The Hartwell Foundation.

### THE TAPS CASEWORK ASSISTANCE TEAM OPENS THE DOOR FOR OUR SURVIVORS TO BENEFITS WHEN THEY ARE READY

A Navy Veteran was honorably discharged in March of 2003 as a 100 percent permanently disabled veteran. He passed away on September 24, 2017 and left behind a surviving spouse. Originally, the surviving spouse reached out to TAPS Casework in April after being denied Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). With the guidance and advocacy of TAPS Casework, TAPS was able to get the DIC denial overturned and the surviving spouse was awarded retroactive DIC payments. Once her denial was overturned, the surviving spouse connected with TAPS Education Support Services regarding her ambitions to go back to school, as well as funding for her minor children as they prepare for college in the future. TAPS Education Coordinators identified potential VA education benefits, plus, state tuition waivers, and private scholarships for the surviving spouse. TAPS Casework also identified additional funds for college prep for her children.

# Policy and Legislation

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The Policy and Legislation Department at TAPS represents our surviving military families with other military and veteran organizations and federal agencies. The Policy and Legislation Department works to educate, represent and protect surviving families of America's fallen military heroes.

In 2018, TAPS Policy and Legislation worked with the Department of Veterans Affairs on the implementation of the

Forever GI Bill that TAPS helped pass in 2017. The Policy Department also worked with the U.S. House and Senate to introduce and pass the SITREP act, which guarantees students using GI Bill benefits will not be penalized due to the VA payment schedule. TAPS also worked with partner organizations to ensure that new survivors will be paid benefits during a government shutdown, and collaborated to protect students rights in higher education.

## IN 2019, TAPS WILL FOCUS ON FOUR MAJOR POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES:

### ADVOCATE FOR EARNED SURVIVOR BENEFITS

- Repeal the SBP-DIC offset
- Allow reinstatement of the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) to previously eligible spouses
- Increase Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)
- Retain benefits after remarriage for surviving spouses
- Remove the "Hold Themselves Out to be Married" clause
- Improve burial benefits through passage of the Brave Act
- Advocate for the victims and survivors of Toxic Exposure
- Protect and preserve Commissary and Exchange benefits

### ADVANCE COLLABORATIVE SUICIDE PREVENTION AND POSTVENTION STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

- Advance collaborative Suicide Prevention and Postvention efforts
- Help inform strategic initiatives, policy and protocols
- Pass the Somers Bill to improve information sharing between the Department of Defense and designated relatives and friends of members of the Armed Forces

### CREATE HEALTH CARE PARITY FOR SURVIVING DEPENDENTS

- Expand Young Adult CHAMPVA coverage to eligible surviving children up to age 26 to reflect the provisions in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA)

### STRENGTHEN EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT FOR SURVIVING FAMILIES

- Ensure Fry Eligibility for Guard & Reserve families of service connected deaths
- Guarantee In-State Tuition for Chapter 35 recipients
- Standardize and make permanent the Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant
- Permanently restore benefits for those impacted by school closures
- Advanced student protections for surviving families
  - › Protect students from predatory actors
  - › Preserve Borrower Defense and Gainful Employment
  - › Close the 90/10 loophole
  - › Preserve Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)
- Continue to monitor the implementation of Forever GI Bill



Toxic Exposure Illnesses refer to the service members' illnesses resulting from contact with environmental hazards during their military service.

To care for all of our families whose loved one died from illnesses, TAPS carefully listens to survivors to identify if their illness could be linked to their service. Service-connected related illnesses include exposures to toxins such as Agent Orange, depleted uranium and open-air burn pits. TAPS is leading the efforts to ensure survivors are recognized, cared for and aware of all benefits they are eligible to receive.

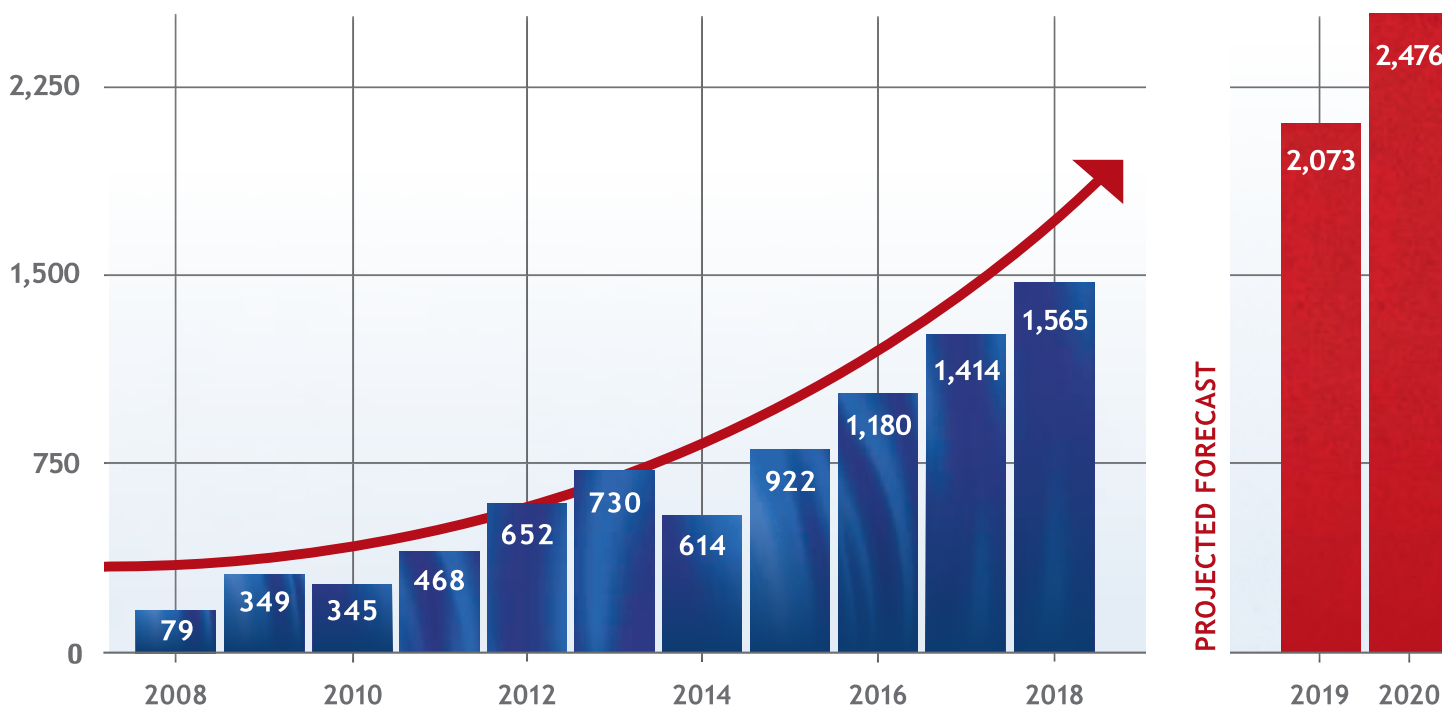
TAPS will work to increase education about risks and effects of toxic exposure, raise awareness and help families of the fallen navigate the benefits process after their loss.

In partnership with the Wounded Warrior Project and Vietnam Veterans of America, TAPS launched an initiative to increase the

understanding of the impact of Toxic Exposures in the military. TAPS has also taken the initiative to assist surviving family members whose loved one died after experiencing symptoms of a toxic exposure.

The TAPS Toxic Exposure team works to develop and curate a library of relevant legislation, medical studies, literature reports, and other forms of media research specific to the issues of toxic exposure in the military. In 2018, TAPS specifically collaborated on House Representative Bill 6582. This bill is known as the "Protection for Veterans' Burn Pit Exposure Act of 2018." In this legislative proposal, section 2 includes "Presumptions of service connection for illnesses associated with toxic exposure to open burn pits". The passing of this bill will enable TAPS to extend the impact and educate the greater public about the needs of families whose loved one died due to resulting illness in connection with an overseas military deployment.

## NEW TAPS SURVIVORS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR MILITARY MEMBER DUE TO ILLNESS



**IN 2018,**  
**26% OF ALL TAPS SURVIVORS ARE SURVIVORS OF A LOSS BY ILLNESS**  
**38% OF ALL TAPS MILITARY LOVED ONES DIED BY ILLNESS**

**SINCE 2008, TAPS THE NUMBER OF SURVIVORS OF A LOSS BY ILLNESS HAS INCREASED BY 1,995%**

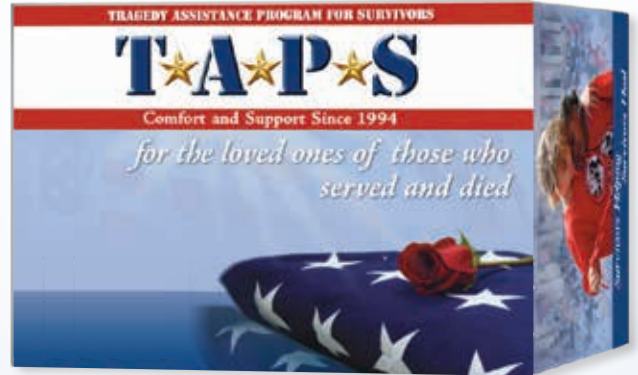
# Survivor Resources

Upon notification of a military loss, TAPS immediately responds to hurting hearts and delivers to each household, the Survivor Resource Kit. These care packages are filled with vital information, available resources, items to provide comfort, and a personal message offering a supportive presence for the journey ahead. All survivors receive these items for free.

## GRIEF EDUCATION MATERIALS

TAPS has authored a series of pocket-sized guides for various aspects of grief. These guides include the “Survivor Guide,” “Benefits and Finances,” “Education Support Services,” “Children’s Grief Guide,” and “Supporting Survivors of Suicide Loss.” These quick series guides are available at no cost to our survivors and are written in collaboration with experts in the field of grief and bereavement. These quick series guides are tools and resources that can be used no matter where our survivors are on their grief journey.

At TAPS, the Angelversary is the anniversary of the death of a military loved one.”



- | **2,748** RESOURCE KITS MAILED TO GRIEVING FAMILIES
- | **2,657** "THINKING OF YOU CARDS" MAILED TO FAMILIES ON THE BIRTHDAY OF THEIR FALLEN HERO
- | **24,097** ANNIVERSARY CARDS MAILED TO FAMILIES ON THE ANGELVERSARY OF THEIR FALLEN HERO
- | **35,830** EMAIL CONNECTIONS SENT TO GRIEVING FAMILIES ON THE BIRTHDAY AND ANGELVERSARY OF THEIR FALLEN HERO

At TAPS, the Angelversary is the anniversary of the death of a military loved one.



# TAPS in Print

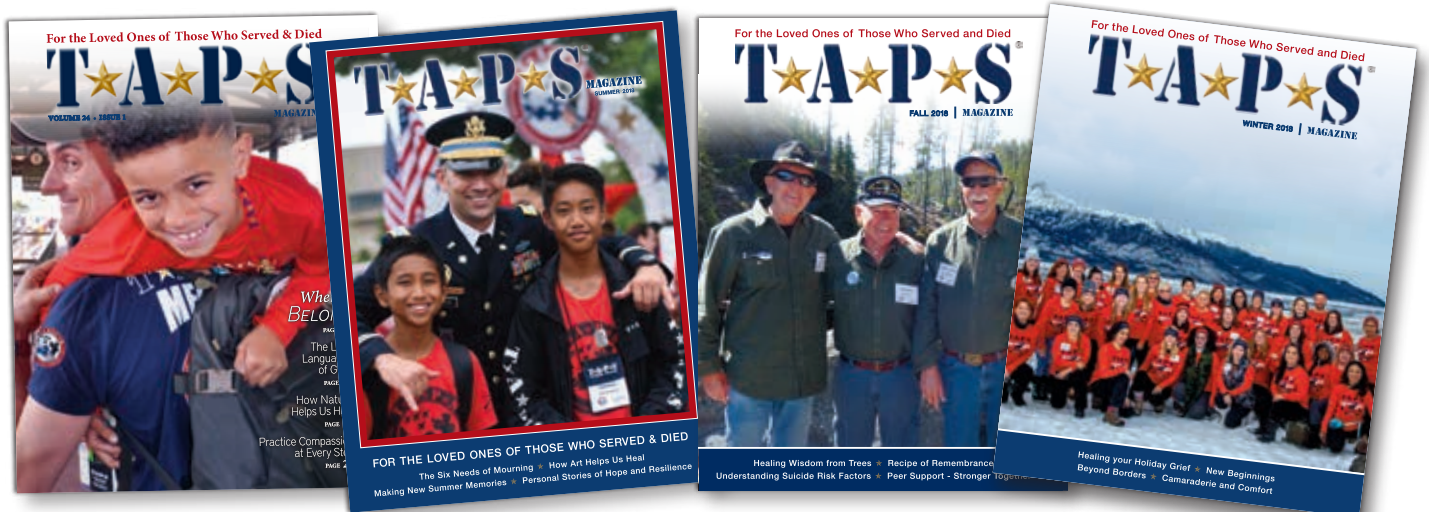
*“Yesterday, there was this large box at my front door, when I opened it, the most wonderful mementos were inside that warmed my aching heart. Each item was handled with great appreciation and heartfelt gratitude, I will utilize each one, knowing the care and concern that went into putting this wonderful package together. I can truly say that when I reached out to TAPS, the warm return phone call that I received made a tremendous difference. It showed me that after the funeral and burial; when everyone has gone back to their daily lives; there is a support system that I can turn to without feeling as if I am imposing. As a senior widow, the loneliness can be overwhelming, you spend a lot of time in your head and I realize this can be good and bad. Now, I feel I have a whole new community of kindred spirits that I can reach out to, and get deeply involved with to help me through my loss. Thank you TAPS for being there for all of us.” ~ TAPS Survivor*

## TAPS MAGAZINE

TAPS Magazine is dedicated to America’s fallen heroes, their surviving families, caregivers, and friends. This quarterly magazine is sent free of charge to anyone interested in receiving it, including survivors, service members, supporters, and grief professionals.

The articles in each edition are written by military survivors, grief professionals, and TAPS staff. Our TAPS survivors find inspiration, comfort, support, resources, and a sense of belonging within these pages. Each magazine contains an introduction to all of TAPS programs and services and information for any reader to connect with TAPS immediately.

*“I’d like to first of all thank TAPS for finding us...I had never heard of the organization before we received the care box with items designed to not only inform but reach out to our hurting hearts. What touched us the most was the hand-written note that offered not only condolences but offered to share our grief. Many, many people are quick with words of support and offers to do anything to help, but a precious few are actually prepared to come alongside this massive grief and linger for longer than a brief visit. It feels like TAPS is here for the long haul, and that means so much.” ~ TAPS Survivor*



**IN 2018,**  
**162,649** TAPS MAGAZINES WERE DISTRIBUTED TO SURVIVORS AND GRIEF PROFESSIONALS

# TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing®

*Empowering the bereaved and enhancing the expertise of professionals caring for the bereaved through grief, resilience and wellness education.*

Inaugurated on March 5, 2018, the TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing functions as a critical link between TAPS military and mental health leadership, clinicians, researchers and active duty service members, veterans and their families. Former Daily Show host and TAPS supporter Jon Stewart spoke at the Institute for Hope and Healing launch event about the complex needs of military families in the aftermath of loss and how the Institute will become the leader in helping to meet those needs as well as those of civilian loss survivors.

The TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing features innovative, insightful, high-impact, interactive educational programs and trainings delivered by experts in the field of grief and loss who use research-informed best practice models to provide first-class comfort and care for the families of the fallen. The TAPS Institute for Hope and

Healing also provides continuing education to social workers, nurses, funeral directors, casualty officers, chaplains, grief professionals, trauma counselors and others who support surviving military families. In less than a year, the Institute has become a widely used and highly sought-after resource throughout the U.S. and across the globe.

As of December 2018, the Institute hosted 18 programs consisting of online webinars and in-person workshops, and registrations for all programs exceeded 6,000. Most of these programs are accessible for on-demand viewing 24/7 at no charge through the TAPS website.



## TAPS INSTITUTE FOR HOPE AND HEALING PROGRAMMING

- MARCH 5 INSTITUTE LAUNCH WITH FORMER DAILY SHOW HOST JON STEWART**
- APRIL 20 TRANSFORMING LOSS: FINDING POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH**
- MAY 3 GRIEF IS A JOURNEY**
- MAY 16 PHOTOGRAPHING GRIEF**
- JUNE 27 UNDERSTANDING WHY PEOPLE DIE BY SUICIDE**
- JULY 17 WHY AREN'T YOU CRYING? UNDERSTANDING GRIEVING STYLES**
- AUGUST 7 UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S GRIEF**
- AUGUST 23 COPING WITH GRIEF, REACHING OUT FOR SUPPORT**
- SEPTEMBER 14 UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING MODERN GRIEF THEORY**
- SEPTEMBER 19 SUICIDE, GRIEF, AND TRAUMA: SUPPORTING VETERANS AND FAMILIES OF THE FALLEN**
- SEPTEMBER 26 COUNSELING BEREAVED TEENS: BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP**
- SEPTEMBER 26 TALKING WITH TEENS ABOUT DEATH AND DYING: BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP**
- OCTOBER 24 HANDLE WITH CARE: SUPPORTING YOUR GRIEVING BODY, MIND & SPIRIT**
- NOVEMBER 8 PASSED AND PRESENT: KEEPING THE MEMORIES OF LOVED ONES ALIVE**
- NOVEMBER 15 RELAXATION MEDITATION TO EASE THE ANXIETY, STRESS, AND TENSION OF GRIEF**
- DECEMBER 4 COPING WITH WAVES OF GRIEF DURING SPECIAL TIMES**
- DECEMBER 11 UNDERSTANDING AND MEETING THE NEEDS OF ADDICTION AND OVERDOSE DEATH**
- DECEMBER 13 COMPASSION MEDITATION FOR MEANING MAKING AND POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH**

TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing® presenters are central to the Institute's mission of helping survivors along their grief journey and equipping grief professionals with tools to support the bereaved. The Institute selects presenters from the highly

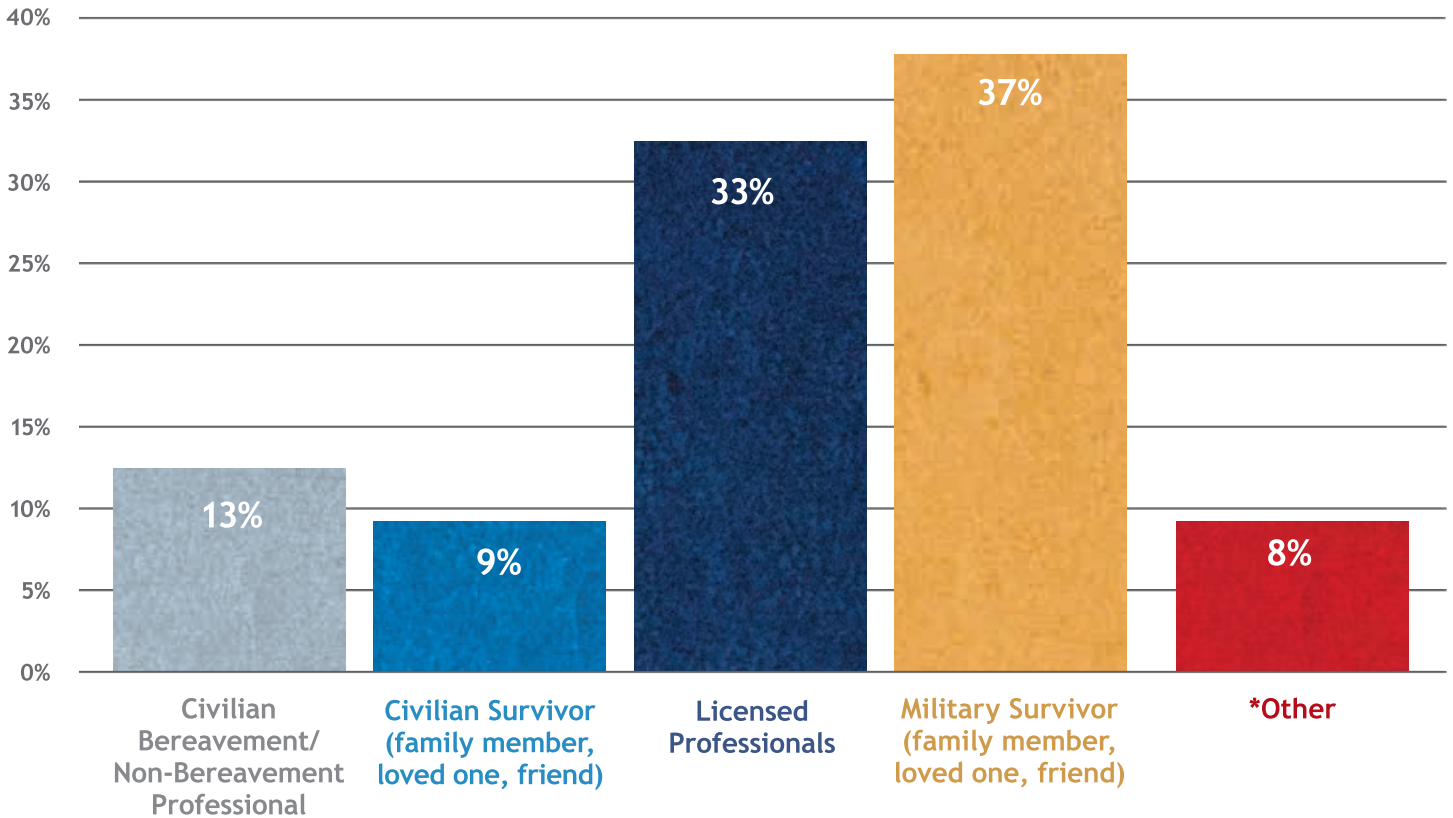
skilled and credentialed TAPS staff, accomplished members of the TAPS advisory board, and nationally and internationally recognized professionals based on their expertise in the fields of grief and loss, wellness, resilience, and posttraumatic growth.

# TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing®

## 2018 TAPS INSTITUTE FOR HOPE AND HEALING PRESENTERS

- ★ Patti Anewalt, PhD, LPC, FT
- ★ Ken Doka, PhD, MDiv
- ★ Linda Goldman, MS, LCPC, MBCC, FT
- ★ Heidi Horsley, PSYD, LMSW, MS
- ★ Andy McNeil, MA
- ★ Kim Ruocco, MSW
- ★ Shauna Springer, PhD
- ★ Bob Arrington
- ★ Pamela Gabbay, EdD, FT
- ★ Eleanor Haley, MS
- ★ Vicki Jay
- ★ Bret Moore, PysD, ABPP
- ★ Heather Stang, MA, C-IAYT
- ★ Litsa Williams, MA, LCSW-C
- ★ Tina Barrett, EdD, LCPC
- ★ Allison Gilbert
- ★ Gloria Horsley, PhD, MS, CNS
- ★ Min Krishnamurthy, MS, RD, LDN
- ★ Debbie Rambis
- ★ Carla Stumpf-Patton EdD, LMHC, NCC, FT, CCTP

## WHO REGISTERS FOR INSTITUTE PROGRAMS?



*I am part of a Gold Star Family. I don't know a lot about grief and I don't have a health or bereavement background. This was helpful for my family.*

*Very useful for survivors to learn strategies to help themselves and help each other through the grieving process.*

*Great review for licensed clinicians who don't regularly work with children and trauma.*

\*Other: child life specialist, college professor, counseling student, NZ Army researcher, employee assistance program, grief group facilitator, hospice nurse manager, Facebook grief group facilitator, medical case manager for HIV/addiction clients, nurse practitioner, pediatric/palliative nurse, research assistant, TAPS staff, TAPS sponsor, veteran, victim advocate.

# Suicide Pre/Postvention

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Over the past decade, the TAPS has served more than 11,500 suicide loss survivors. In the process, it has developed a best-practice “Suicide Postvention Model of Support.” In the course of developing its model of care, the TAPS Suicide Prevention & Postvention team has discovered some interesting, and perhaps counterintuitive, truths. For example, research out of the University of Kentucky, which performed a longitudinal study of TAPS suicide loss survivors, showed that while suicide loss is utterly devastating, it is also true that survivors are uniquely positioned to achieve post-traumatic growth after loss.

The year 2018 was a landmark year for TAPS Suicide Prevention & Postvention. We hosted a suicide loss seminar as well as several retreats. We conducted more than two dozen trainings for organizations in every sector and industry. We provided consultation to more than 100 organizations and individuals enduring a loss by suicide. We also got our messaging out through a variety of outlets, added new partners to our docket, and even received accolades from unexpected sources. In September, the nonprofit rating agency Charity Navigator recognized TAPS as one of five non-profit organizations that are leading the way in national suicide prevention efforts.

## 2018 SUICIDE PRE/POSTVENTION INITIATIVES

### SEMINARS

The TAPS annual National Military Suicide Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp has been recognized by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, the American Association of Suicidology, and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention as a “crucial healing event for those who have experienced the death of a loved one to suicide while serving in the military”. This year, we hosted our much anticipated Tenth Annual National Military Suicide Survivor Seminar in Palm Harbor, Florida, October 5-8, 2018. The event is a groundbreaking program that came into existence as a result of increased suicide rates in the military and veteran population that began a decade ago.

Almost one thousand survivors of military suicide loss – adults and children, young and old, new and familiar – convened for a weekend of connections, learning, hope, and healing. Adults chose from myriad sessions on everything from telling one’s story to family dynamics after loss. Participating survivors benefitted from the range of special, high-quality programming for which TAPS is known in a comforting and supportive environment and in a setting of rest and relaxation. The programming included workshops focused on a wide variety of familiar topics like loss, grief, trauma, and relationships, as well as new topics like storytelling, the role of spirituality, and methods for healing through physical activities like yoga.

The 2018 seminar included the piloting of a writer’s studio, where survivors could find solace through journaling and seek guidance on how to tell their own stories of loss, either publicly or just for themselves. There were familiar activities, too.

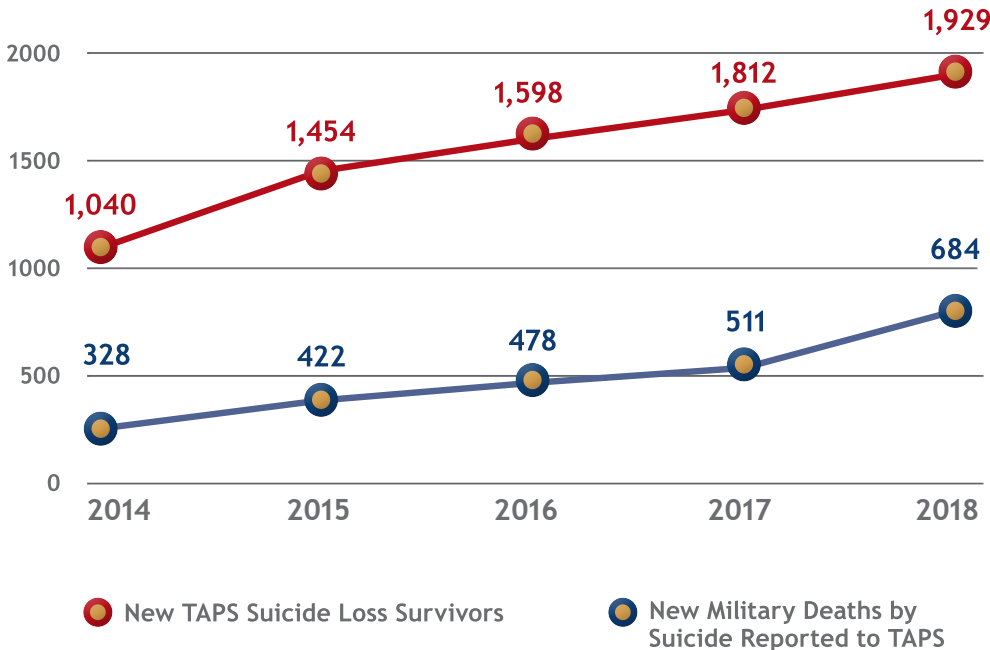
For the tenth year running, the “Artful Grief” studio allowed survivors to both make small “journals” about their loved ones and also to create pin dolls that serve as reminders of those lost. The weekend also featured speakers and panelists with both lived experience and professional expertise, who delivered remarks in a plenary setting that gave comfort to scores of families in attendance.

### TRAININGS

TAPS suicide loss experts presented at 50+ training sessions to organizations in every sector on best-practices for suicide prevention and postvention, including 27 trainings in 2018 alone. Our trainings develop insight around best-practice in suicide prevention, trauma informed care and grief support for suicide loss survivors. The ultimate goal is to decrease risk and increase hope and healing in this population by offering a road map toward post-traumatic growth. The broad dissemination of several of our TAPS Suicide Prevention & Postvention courses via the TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing is sponsored by the Boeing Foundation. Through the TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing, the TAPS Suicide Prevention & Postvention trainings have earned a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 78, the highest ever measured in a course of this type. Average NPS scores are 50. One trainee told TAPS, “I have been to countless trainings on suicide, but nothing has ever been as powerful as this. Some training topics from 2018 included: “Understanding Why People die by Suicide,” “Crafting Your Story of Loss for the Public: Safe and Strategic Sharing,” “Suicide, Grief, and Trauma: Supporting Veterans and Families of the Fallen,” and “Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).”

# Suicide Pre/Postvention

## NEW TAPS SUICIDE LOSS SURVIVORS AND NEW MILITARY DEATHS BY SUICIDE REPORTED TO TAPS



**BETWEEN 2017 AND 2018, THE NUMBER OF SUICIDE LOSS SURVIVORS COMING TO TAPS INCREASED BY 6.4%**

**THE NUMBER OF MILITARY DEATHS BY SUICIDE REPORTED TO TAPS INCREASED BY 33.8%**

**AS OF 2018, 32% OF ALL 2018 TAPS SURVIVORS WERE SURVIVORS OF A LOSS BY SUICIDE**

**30% OF ALL 2018 MILITARY DEATHS REPORTED TO TAPS DIED BY SUICIDE**

### CONSULTATIONS AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

TAPS Suicide Prevention & Postvention provided expert consultation to 111 organizations and individuals in 2018 on topics relating to suicide awareness, prevention, intervention, and postvention. TAPS is frequently requested as a source of subject matter expertise by organizations that include military units, service academies, veteran service organizations, news companies, business corporations, U.S. city administrations, grieving families, and many many more. In addition, TAPS Suicide Prevention and Postvention regularly is quoted in the media, including 31 media hits in 2018 alone in formats that ranged from print stories, magazine articles, op-eds, TV appearances, radio interviews, and podcasts.

### OTHER PARTNER PROGRAMS

#### 2/7 Marine Retreat (Suicide Prevention Program):

TAPS Suicide Prevention & Postvention hosted an eagerly anticipated retreat in support of veterans from 2/7 Marines. The reunion of former members of this beleaguered battalion was hosted February 9-11, 2018, in the hills above Chico, California. The team offered powerful insights and tools to the unit's veterans sharing the best of what we know for how to prevent suicide or deal with its aftermath. The veterans who attended have lost fellow Marines, and many are positioned to help others who are struggling with guilt, grief, and suicidal ideation.

#### 51<sup>st</sup> Annual American Association of Suicidology Conference 2018 and "Day of Healing":

TAPS Suicide Prevention & Postvention partnered with AAS to host a one-day event called the Healing After Suicide Loss (HASL) Conference (or "Day of Healing").

#### TAPS-CVN Couples Retreat:

Cohen Veterans Network (CVN) sponsored TAPS Suicide Prevention & Postvention to develop and offer a Veteran Couples Retreat Nov. 2-4, 2018, in Texas. The retreat addressed all types of loss and grief among couples but emphasized healthy communication and how to cope.

### SHARING SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH

TAPS Suicide Prevention & Postvention serves to provide best-in-class care to all survivors of military suicide loss through a suite of original programming. TAPS Suicide Pre/Postvention also serves to address the problem of suicide and its impact on families by bringing TAPS best-practice Suicide Postvention Model to outside organizations through a combination of high-quality trainings, expert consultations, and thought leadership.

**“NO ORGANIZATION IS AS RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT SENSE OF CONFIDENCE THAT OUR FAMILIES WILL BE TAKEN CARE OF AS TAPS. WE COULDN’T BE MORE APPRECIATIVE OF THE COURAGE OF THOSE WHO ACTUALLY ARE SURVIVORS THEMSELVES, WHO IN ADDITION TO GOING THROUGH THAT EXPERIENCE, HAVE CHILDREN WHO HAVE STEPPED UP AND BECOME LEADERS TO TAKE CARE OF SOMEBODY ELSE.”**

**~ GENERAL JOSEPH F. DUNFORD, USMC, 19<sup>TH</sup> CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF**





# TAPS in the Community

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

TAPS supports survivors around the globe. For survivors who request information on local support organizations within their own community, TAPS is there. TAPS Community Resource Reports are carefully crafted for each survivor specific to their local community, their relationship to their military loved one, and the type of loss they are grieving. TAPS contacts local bereavement groups, parenting support groups, and community organizations to gather as much information as possible to provide survivors with the additional support necessary for healing.

## COUNSELING CONNECTIONS

TAPS delivers comfort close to home through access to local grief support services, connections to clinical counseling, online support, and local events.

TAPS staff members are connected in communities across all 50 states. They use their training and networks to link survivors to local grief support resources. TAPS Community Based Care carefully researches and connects survivors with love and care to local mental health professionals.

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*“Wanted to let you know that my daughter Danielle and I had a wonderful time Saturday at Hope Reins! The folks there were so kind and welcoming. The grounds were lovely and I haven’t made a s’more over a campfire since I was a Girl Scout. Great event! It was also nice to be with other TAPS families. My brother’s passing was last Thursday, and his birthday is today...it’s been an emotional week, perfect time to be with others who understand.” ~ TAPS Surviving Sibling*

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## TAPS TOGETHERS

TAPS Community Relations serve to create and cultivate opportunities for survivors to connect within their local community. In communities across America, survivors enjoy family meals and experience new adventures together.

TAPS Togethers are one-day programs in communities across the country bringing surviving military families together in relaxed, casual settings. These programs can include an afternoon coffee at Starbucks, attending a ball game, afternoon picnic by the lake, breakfast at the local VFW, a group bike ride, a visit to a local museum, brunch on Sunday, or attendance at a local class to learn new skills.

TAPS Togethers allow survivors to get to know other surviving military family members who live in the same community and understand what it's like to lose a military loved one.

| 238 ENGAGEMENTS

| 2,393 SURVIVORS

the *Life*, Share the *Journey*.



# Our Beginning

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In November 1992, eight soldiers perished in a C-12 crash in Alaska. No support network existed for military families. These survivors found the most powerful comfort from each other, and in 1994, the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) was born. TAPS is committed to providing compassionate care to anyone who is grieving the death of someone who died while serving in the military regardless of circumstance of death or relationship to the deceased. Services are provided free of charge. Casualty officers immediately inform surviving families of the comfort and care available through TAPS. Soon after the notification of their hero's death, grieving military families are told they are not alone, there is support, comfort, and care available to them from TAPS.

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*“Tom’s death was devastating and debilitating in every way, and there was no place for me to come together with other military surviving family members and find a community of hope and understanding. The only ones who understood what I was going through were the other widows who had also lost husbands in the same crash. We all understood each other because we were walking similar paths in our grief.”*  
~ Bonnie Carroll, TAPS Founder and President

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ARCHIVES | 1992

## 8, Including General, Killed in Plane Crash

All eight people aboard a small National Guard plane, including the commander of the Alaska Army National Guard, were killed today when it crashed into a mountain range on its approach to the airport here.

The plane, a C-12F twin-engine Beechcraft, was overdue on a flight from Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage when the tower at the airport in Juneau lost contact with it this morning. Hours later a Coast Guard helicopter spotted the wreckage at an elevation of 2,600 feet in the Chilkat Range about 30 miles west of Juneau.

Among those killed was Brig. Gen. Thomas C. Carroll, 48-year-old commander of the state's Army National Guard, who also served as deputy commissioner and chief of staff of the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

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### ABOUT THE ARCHIVE

This is a digitized version of an article from The Times's print archive, before the start of online publication in 1996. To preserve these articles as they originally appeared, The Times does not alter, edit or update them.

**“IT’S ABOUT THE ABILITY OF SOMETHING SMALL HAVING AN ENORMOUS IMPACT - THAT’S WHAT TAPS DOES. ONE PERSON AT A TIME, ONE MEETING AT A TIME, ONE DAY AT A TIME TURNS INTO A THOUSAND OF YOU AND 1,200 OF YOUR CHILDREN NEXT DOOR AND IT’S ABSOLUTELY MIRACULOUS.”**

**~ GENERAL MARTIN DEMPSEY, (USA RET)**

**18<sup>TH</sup> CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF**



Remember the *Love*, Celebrate



# TAPS Through the Years

25 Years of Hope and Healing

## 1994

- ★ Incorporated as a nonprofit on October 17, 1994, with a national peer support network, information and resources, casework assistance, and 24/7 helpline at 1-800-959-TAPS



## 1995

- ★ First newsletter
- ★ First National Military Survivor Seminar and TAPS Kids Camp



## 1996

- ★ Website launch of TAPS.org



## 1997

- ★ First weekly chat sessions through America Online (AOL)
- ★ Recognized as a Veterans Service Organization by the VA
- ★ First TAPS Honor Guard event to raise funds and honor donors, legislators, and military



## 2000

- ★ First TAPS Run & Remember Team ran the Marine Corps Marathon



## 2001

- ★ Elite military athletes competed in the first TAPS Armed Forces Eco-Challenge, an extreme adventure race raising funds for TAPS
- ★ TAPS adopts motto of "Remember the Love, Celebrate the Life, Share the Journey"
- ★ TAPS present at Pentagon Family Assistance Center for six weeks providing support for 9/11 families and survivors



## 2002

- ★ TAPS Magazine graduates to full color 24-page publication
- ★ First all-day TAPS Peer Mentor Training at national seminar



## 1998

- ★ "TAPS is a wonderful story of courage and commitment. In its countless contributions, TAPS helps to deliver the triumph of tenderness and kindness over pain, suffering, and loss." ~ 12<sup>th</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell, USA



## 2003

- ★ TAPS partners with the VA Vet Centers to expand bereavement counseling to all family members



# 2004

- ★ TAPS Kids Camp renamed Good Grief Camp



# 2005

- ★ Launch of TAPS Regional Military Survivor Seminars

# 2007

- ★ First TAPS Resource Kit mailed



# 2009

- ★ TAPS collaborates with Sesame Street Workshop to produce *When Families Grieve*



- ★ First National Military Suicide Survivor Seminar for survivors of suicide loss

- ★ First overnight Good Grief Campout

# 2011

- ★ U.S. Navy Memorandum of Agreement signed
- ★ U.S. Air Force Memorandum of Agreement signed
- ★ First Quick Series Guide to Benefits and Finances published
- ★ Dickey Chapelle Award from the Marine Corps League



# 2010

- ★ U.S. Marine Corps Memorandum of Agreement signed



- ★ First printing of *Klinger, A Story of Honor and Hope*

- ★ First Quick Series Survivor Guide published



# 2012

- ★ Vice President and Mrs. Biden attend TAPS national seminar

- ★ *Big Miracle* Movie Premiere



# 2008

- ★ TAPS retreat program begins with a Widow's Retreat

- ★ The Office of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Public Service presented to Bonnie Carroll

- ★ I am eternally grateful for TAPS. We spend a lot of time, in these very challenging times, looking for organizations that make a difference." ~ 17<sup>th</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen, USN

# 2013

★ U.S. Coast Guard Memorandum of Agreement signed



★ Joint American/Israeli Good Grief Camp in Washington, D.C.



★ TAPS survivors join with counterparts in the United Kingdom to find comfort and healing



★ National Guard Memorandum of Agreement signed



# 2015

★ TAPS Founder and President Bonnie Carroll receives Presidential Medal of Freedom



★ Bonnie Carroll receives the Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher Distinguished Civilian Humanitarian Service Award



# 2016

★ Launch of Stars4TAPS



★ TAPS partners with USA Basketball

★ Partners with Home Base to provide Intensive Clinical program for survivors suffering from trauma related to their loss

★ TAPS is first non-clinical recipient of the Association of Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) Clinical Practice Award – Recognition of efficacy of emotional support programs for bereaved military families

# 2014

★ TAPS release of best practice three-phase model for suicide postvention

★ IDF Widows and Orphans organization – Trip to Israel

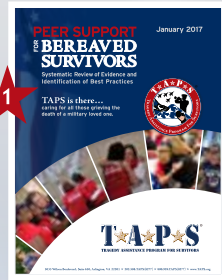
★ Launch of teams4taps





# 2017

- ★ TAPS publishes Peer Support for Bereaved Survivors - Systematic Review of Evidence and Identification of Best Practices
- ★ Department of Veterans Affairs Memorandum of Agreement signed
- ★ American Psychological Association (APA) Division 19, Society for Military Psychology's 2017 Yerkes Award for exceptional contributions to Military Psychology by a non-psychologist



# 2018

- ★ TAPS new National Headquarters opens
- ★ TAPS Inaugural Cruise
- ★ Launch of TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing
- ★ International Working Group and Statement of Support
- ★ Inaugural TAPS College Experience Week for Young Adult Survivors
- ★ 10<sup>th</sup> Annual TAPS National Military Suicide Survivor Seminar with over 1,000 survivors attending
- ★ Navy's Distinguished Public Service Award



# Peer Mentors

## PEER MENTORS

When a military casualty occurs, the ability to connect with others who have similar experiences can be life saving. This is the founding principle of TAPS. And the founding program of TAPS is the Peer Mentor network.

Peer Mentors are adult survivors at least 18 months beyond their own loss who have stepped forward to volunteer their

time and become a critical part of the TAPS mission. They complete a carefully crafted training program whereby they can take their experience and become a source of hope and healing to other survivors.

TAPS Peer Mentors are utilized as local Care Group facilitators, support at various TAPS seminars and gatherings.



*"Thank you, thank you, thank you. I don't know where I would be now without my sweet TAPS peer mentor. She pulled me out of some very dark places, held the light for me to find my way."*

*"I felt a growing sense of strength from being a peer mentor. It gave me a feeling of satisfaction and peace that I could be of comfort to another mother who was grieving the loss of her son."*



# Peer Mentors and Care Groups

In alignment with best practices<sup>1</sup>, the TAPS Peer Mentor program offers survivors a Peer Mentor who is:

- easily accessible and quick to respond
- a confidant
- trained to provide a safe environment for the survivor
- trained to provide peer support to a newly bereaved survivor based on similar life experiences
- carefully selected to assure their suitability for the role
- partnered closely with mental health professionals
- thoroughly trained to be a peer supporter
- monitored and cared for by the Peer Mentor Team

Research in peer-based emotional support<sup>1,2</sup> provides the framework for the design of the Peer Mentor program. In alignment with research, the TAPS Peer Mentor program offers the following benefits for survivors:

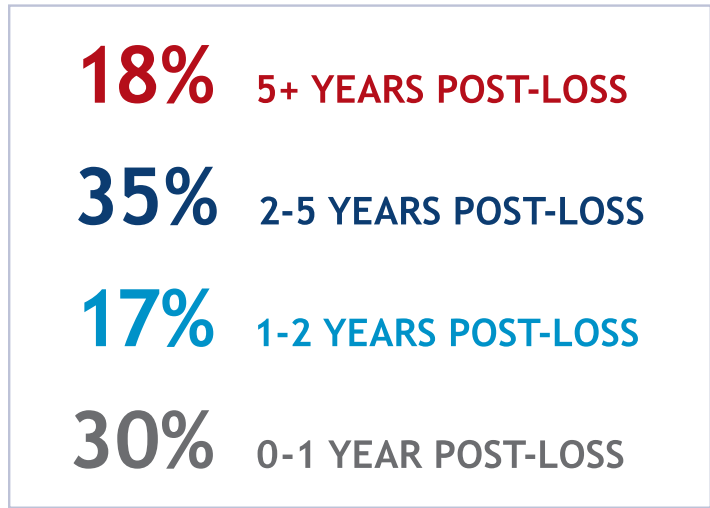
- foster social networking
- improve quality of life
- promote wellness
- improve coping skills
- support acceptance of illness/situation
- improve compliance
- reduce concerns
- increase satisfaction with health status

TAPS Survivors connect with their Peer Mentor for a lifetime. The bonds formed between those who share a similar loss are essential to a healthy grief journey.

1 Castellano, C. (2012). Reciprocal peer support (RPS): A decade of not so random acts of kindness. *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health*, 14(2), 105-110.

2 Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health & Traumatic Brain Injury. (2011). Best practices identified for peer support programs. Retrieved from [https://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/sites/default/files/Best\\_Practices\\_Identified\\_for\\_Peer\\_Support\\_Programs\\_Jan\\_2011.pdf](https://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/sites/default/files/Best_Practices_Identified_for_Peer_Support_Programs_Jan_2011.pdf)

## TAPS SURVIVORS ENGAGED WITH PEER MENTORS IN 2018 AND NUMBER OF YEARS POST-LOSS



IN 2018, MORE THAN **860** TAPS PEER MENTORS OPENED THEIR HEARTS TO MORE THAN **320** NEWLY BEREAVED SURVIVORS CREATING AN OVERALL VOLUNTEER SERVICE IMPACT OF MORE THAN **1,600** HOURS.

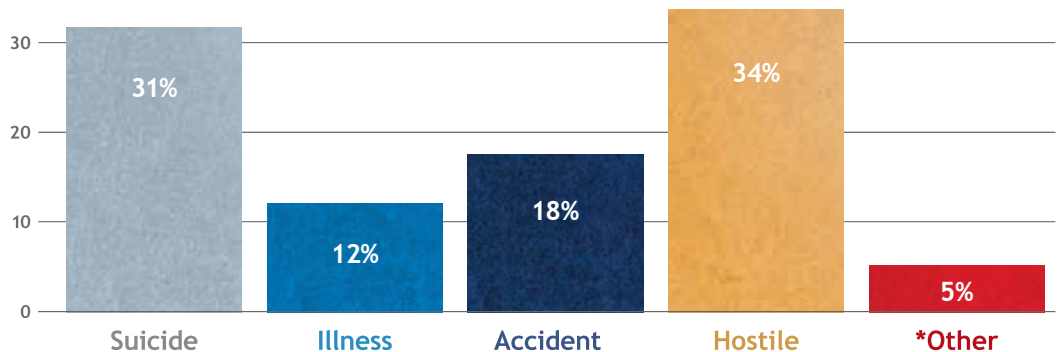
## TAPS CARE GROUPS

TAPS Care Groups offer support and camaraderie close to home. In communities across the country, TAPS Care Groups offers an ongoing source of support. Facilitated by a TAPS Peer Mentor and supported by a mental health professional, these local groups provide a safe haven for sharing, a place to learn from others and develop a social network to foster hope, healing and renewed sense of purpose.



**35** TRAINED TAPS PEER MENTORS FACILITATED MORE THAN **280** CARE GROUPS ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN 2018.

## PEER MENTORS BY MANNER OF LOSS



\*Other Causes of Death Include: Homicide, Non-Hostile, Non-Combat, Friendly Fire, and Unknown

# Survivor Programs

**IN GRIEF'S DARKEST HOURS, SURVIVORS ASK THE HARD QUESTIONS:**

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

WHAT DOES THIS NEW LIFE LOOK LIKE?

WHO ARE WE WITHOUT OUR LOVED ONES?

Survivors struggle with these questions as they face the everyday realities of their loss.



# Survivor Programs

Although the path to peace and purpose is different for everyone, TAPS programs can be signposts — pointing the way toward comfort, camaraderie and companionship. Through our TAPS programs, survivors gather to heal, console and start to answer those hard questions.

TAPS survivors gather at seminars for practical advice and sharing groups. Survivors see new worlds on expeditions. TAPS young survivors grieve together, play together and learn to laugh again at Good Grief Camp. TAPS survivors walk a similar grief journey through online chats.

TAPS creates opportunities for survivors to memorialize, celebrate and grow at family retreats. TAPS families connect and rediscover traditions making new memories through

*“Having the people in TAPS open their arms and engulf us in their loving, warm, compassionate and empathetic embrace at a time I couldn’t and didn’t know what was going on was a life saver. Every event we go to we feel the same, and more, from everyone.”*  
~ TAPS Surviving Father

teams4taps. TAPS programming creates opportunities for survivors to enrich their lives despite loss, knowing they will always carry their loved ones with them.

Every TAPS program is designed to help survivors feel companioned as they grieve, supported as they rebuild and united as they choose hope.



# TAPS Seminars and Good Grief Camps

## SEMINARS AND GOOD GRIEF CAMPS

Each year, TAPS hosts national and regional seminars to offer support and connections to families in all phases of their grief journey. The goal of TAPS seminars is to provide a safe space for survivors to share stories of their hero and experience a community of hope and healing. Both national and regional seminars are inclusive and host a variety of programs led by leading experts in the field of grief and loss, including members of TAPS Advisory Board, and TAPS staff. Programs at each seminar include workshops on understanding grief and bereavement, helpful tips for processing grief, and sessions specific to the manner of loss. Discussion-based programming is also available for survivors to attend and cover a wide range of topics which impact our grieving military survivors.

*“Attending the TAPS Seminar and Good Grief Camp, my daughters have the opportunity to be around other children and adults who understand what they have experienced. They receive unconditional support and love during Good Grief Camp.”*

**3,172 SURVIVORS CONNECTED AT A 2018 TAPS SEMINAR**

**2,113 ADULTS**

**914 CHILDREN AGES 4 - 18**

**84 CHILDREN AGES 0 - 3**

**1,037 MILITARY MENTORS**

**1,402 VOLUNTEERS**

**43,632 VOLUNTEER HOURS**

**92% OF ATTENDING SURVIVORS LEARNED NEW INFORMATION AT TAPS SEMINARS TO HELP THEM COPE WITH THEIR GRIEF**

**88% OF ATTENDING SURVIVORS EXPERIENCED A SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE LARGER TAPS FAMILY AT TAPS SEMINARS**

**86% OF ATTENDING SURVIVORS CONNECTED WITH ADDITIONAL TAPS RESOURCES, SERVICES, AND PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT THEIR FAMILIES THROUGH THEIR GRIEF BY ATTENDING A TAPS SEMINAR**

**18% OF ALL SEMINAR SURVIVORS WERE FIRST TIME SEMINAR ATTENDEES**

**92% OF SURVIVORS ATTEND WORKSHOPS WHILE AT A TAPS SEMINAR MOST HELPFUL WORKSHOPS**

1. ACCIDENTAL LOSS
2. SUICIDE SURVIVORS
3. WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT



# TAPS Seminars and Good Grief Camps

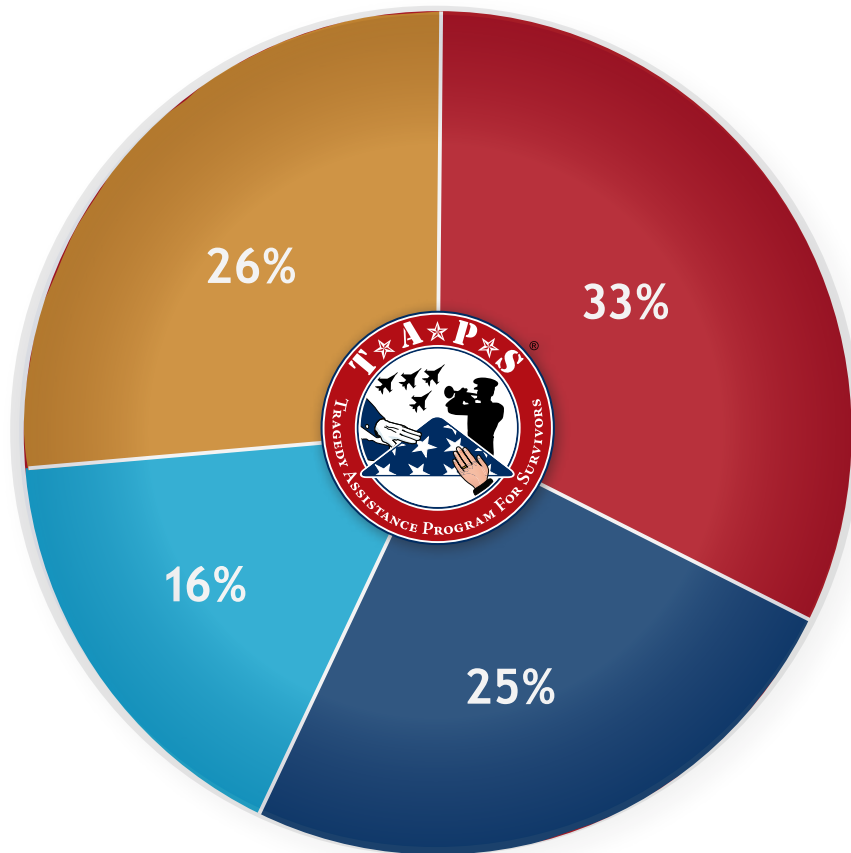
TAPS seminars are a special place for survivors to connect with each other. These seminars also offer volunteers the opportunity to support the mission of TAPS by donating their time to create a beautiful space, and lend logistical support for hope and healing.

## CARING FOR TAPS SURVIVORS WITH LOVE AND CARE

**Volunteers:** Include mental health professionals, industry experts, airport greeters, and other critical individuals to support a positive survivor experience.

**Military Mentors:** Volunteers connected to the Military companion a grieving child.

## WHY SURVIVORS ATTEND TAPS SEMINARS



**33% TO BE AROUND OTHER SURVIVORS**

**25% TO FIND HOPE AND HEALING**

**26% TO ATTEND WORKSHOPS**

**16% FOR THEIR CHILDREN TO ATTEND GOOD GRIEF CAMP**

# TAPS Seminars

## ART THERAPY



To meet the needs of all survivors, TAPS provides a safe space for survivors to engage in art therapy. Grounded in principles of research informed best practices, the Art Therapy studio welcomes survivors with materials to express their emotions through carefully selected art projects.

Art therapy allows for survivors to express the unspeakable. Survivors reflect, express, and share their emotions by engaging with professionally accredited art therapists specializing in grief and trauma. Engagement in art therapy allows survivors to increase their self-awareness, process trauma, and connect with other survivors to normalize their trauma. The creation of their art in a community with other survivors allows for the opportunity for all to bear witness to who each survivor is and what they are going through, without having to speak.

In 2018, the Artful Grief Studio at the National Military Survivors Seminar and the National Military Suicide Survivor Seminar offered a safe space for an estimated **450** survivors over the course of **53 hours**. Over **8 survivors every hour** sought comfort, solace, and a place to connect through art in the Artful Grief Studio offered at TAPS National Military Survivor Seminars.

**450 SURVIVORS IN 53 HOURS CONNECTED WITH TAPS ART THERAPISTS TO PROCESS THEIR GRIEF**

## CHILDCARE (SURVIVORS AGES 0 - 3 YEARS OLD)

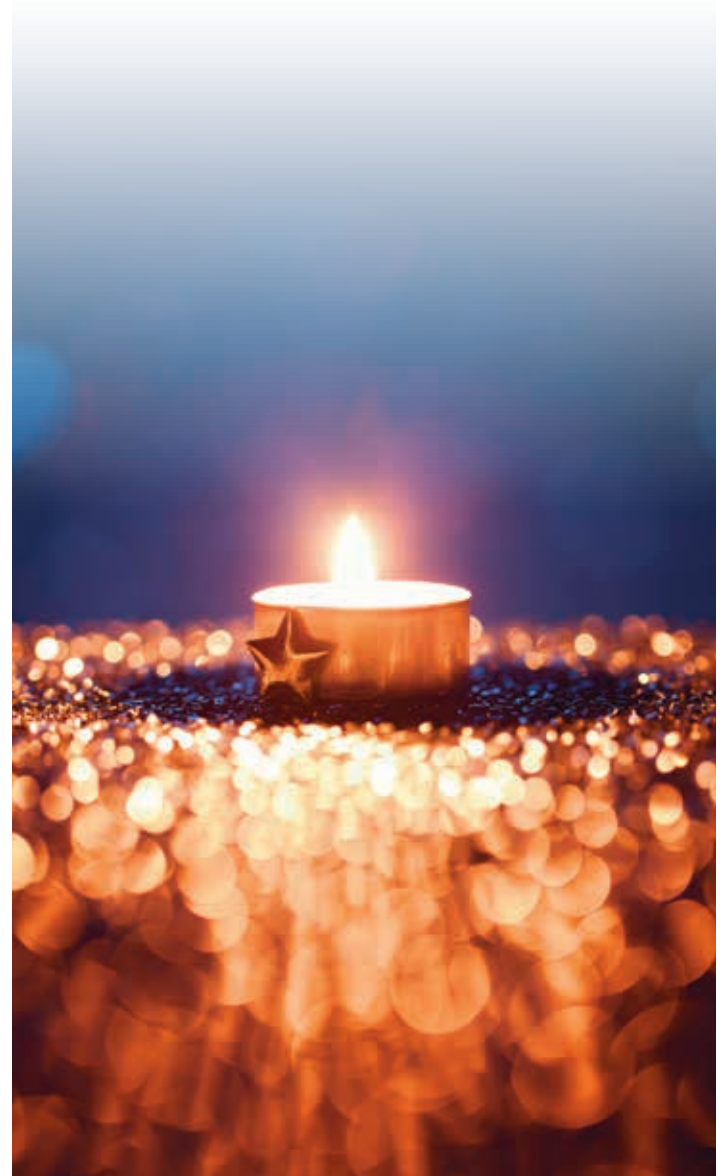


To ensure survivors are able to engage with all TAPS Programs, TAPS provides Childcare at Seminars and Youth Programs at no cost to survivors. TAPS Childcare is committed to healthy child development by providing a maximum of a 1:2 ratio of caregiver to child. TAPS Childcare is staffed with childcare professionals with extensive experience in child development and child bereavement.

## SURVIVOR SANCTUARY

The Survivor Sanctuary creates a safe and sacred place for survivors when they need a quiet place to heal. Staffed with professionally trained TAPS Survivor Care Team members and volunteer mental health professionals, this tranquil setting is always available for survivors to spend some time in solace or to hold the hand of someone while they work through their grief.

The Survivor Sanctuary is equipped with comfortable blankets, soothing, natural sounds, aromatherapy, soft lighting, and water fountains to promote a place of peace and tranquility.





# Military and Legacy Mentors

## MILITARY MENTORS

Military Mentors are members of our Armed Forces who selflessly volunteer their time to make a one-on-one connection with a grieving child at a TAPS Youth Program. Military Mentors, identified by the blue mentor shirts, are responsible for deploying as a caring companion for a grieving child. The time with a Military Mentor gives TAPS kids the companionship and support needed to feel comfortable connecting with peers and engaging in activities. The Military Mentor reminds their TAPS mentee that the military honors and remembers the service of their fallen service member.

TAPS Military Mentors are thoughtfully connected with each surviving TAPS child based on branch of service and specific characteristics unique to each child. TAPS establishes connections with local military organizations to keep an active database of available Military Mentors to maintain our one to one ratio of mentor to TAPS child.

Military Mentors are active duty, reserve, retired and service connected members of our armed forces who continue to serve their country. Military Mentors in a duty status serve in honor of their fallen brothers and sisters by mentoring the children they have loved and left behind. Volunteering as a mentor promotes post-traumatic growth, resilience and keeps members of our military connected to a unit with a shared purpose to care for the children of the fallen.

## LEGACY MENTORS

Legacy Mentors are special mentors for our younger survivors. Legacy Mentors are military survivors who have completed TAPS Good Grief Camps as a survivor and are now ready to mentor a younger survivor. The Legacy Mentors represent how the community of TAPS has walked alongside them to remember the love, celebrate the life, and share the journey. The TAPS Legacy Mentors are identified by the purple shirts they wear as a symbol of the mix of colors from growing up in the red Good Grief Camp Survivors shirts and blue represents the mentor role they now embrace.

**1,037** MILITARY AND LEGACY MENTORS ENGAGED WITH TAPS GRIEVING CHILDREN IN 2018

**45,112** VOLUNTEER HOURS BY TAPS MILITARY AND LEGACY MENTORS TO COMPANION GRIEVING CHILDREN

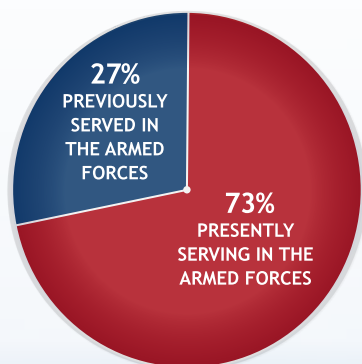
**92%** MENTORS REPORTED AN INCREASE IN THEIR ABILITY TO COMFORT A GRIEVING INDIVIDUAL AS A RESULT OF THEIR EXPERIENCE

**87%** MENTORS ARE MORE COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT ISSUES OF LOSS AS A RESULT OF THEIR EXPERIENCE

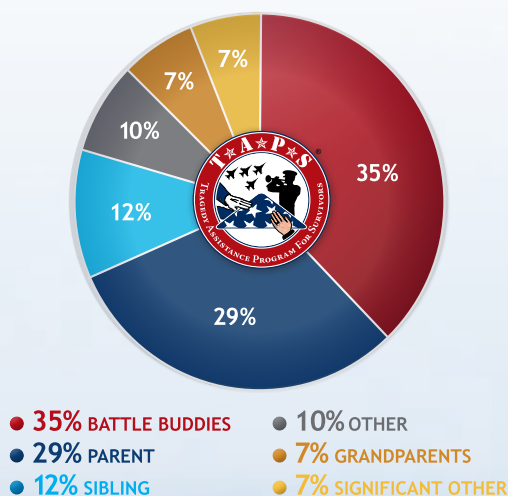
**87%** GAINED NEW KNOWLEDGE AND TOOLS TO MANAGE THEIR OWN GRIEF AS A RESULT OF THEIR EXPERIENCE

**95%** OF ALL MILITARY MENTORS WILL RETURN TO MENTOR ANOTHER TAPS GRIEVING CHILD

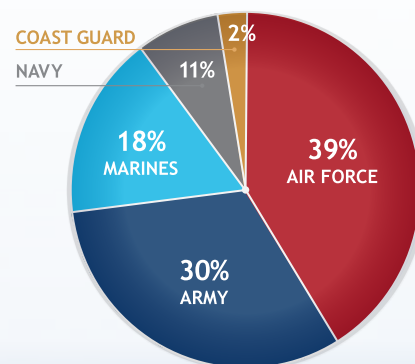
**MILITARY STATUS OF TAPS MILITARY MENTORS**



**TAPS MILITARY MENTORS SERVE IN HONOR OF THEIR...**



**TAPS MILITARY MENTORS SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES**



**“VOLUNTEERING WITH HASBRO AT TAPS EVENTS HAS GIVEN ME A FAMILY AND SENSE OF COMMUNITY THAT I DIDN'T KNOW EXISTED BEFORE.”**

**~ TAPS VOLUNTEER**



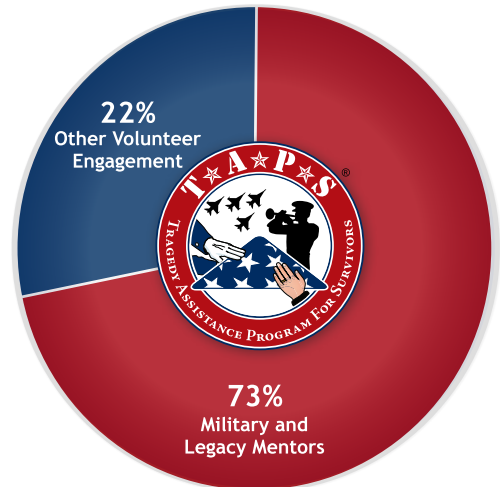
# Volunteer Resources

Volunteerism is the foundation of TAPS. Each year, more than 2,000 TAPS volunteers spend a combined total of 60,000+ hours supporting survivors. Every program across the organization benefits from the selfless service of volunteers who share our mission of caring for the families of America's fallen military heroes.

In 2018, TAPS was certified as a Service Enterprise by the Points of Light Foundation as an organization that effectively delivers on our mission by strategically engaging volunteer time and talent.



## 2018 MILITARY MENTOR AND OTHER VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT



- VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES:**
- VOLUNTEER PHOTOGRAPHERS
  - MILITARY AND LEGACY MENTORS
  - GUEST LIAISONS
  - INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES WITH TAPS
  - LOGISTICS AND OTHER VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES
  - PROGRAM SUPPORT

**2,354 VOLUNTEERS**  
**61,400 VOLUNTEER HOURS**  
 (VOLUNTEERS, LEGACY MENTORS AND MILITARY MENTORS)



*“What a pleasure to review the certification application for Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS). I especially liked their focus on sharing evaluation data with leadership monthly and how they framed some of their google questions on the action plan to be outcomes focused. I would also like to compliment them (and you) for having an action plan that was completed as intended. It would be great if it could be used as a sample for training and placed in the SEI resource library.” ~ Service Enterprise Reviewer*

# Youth Programs

TAPS Youth Programs provides opportunities for children and families to learn how to talk openly about the loss of their loved one and share their feelings to promote positive coping skills.

TAPS Youth Programs help children develop teamwork, communication skills, and positive grief processing skills that they will carry with them long after they leave the event. Special programming is also available to parents to provide them with information on resources, communication techniques, and ways to assist grieving children.

TAPS Youth Programs bring families together to develop positive coping skills, connection with others, and a sense of peace in this new, unexpected normal.

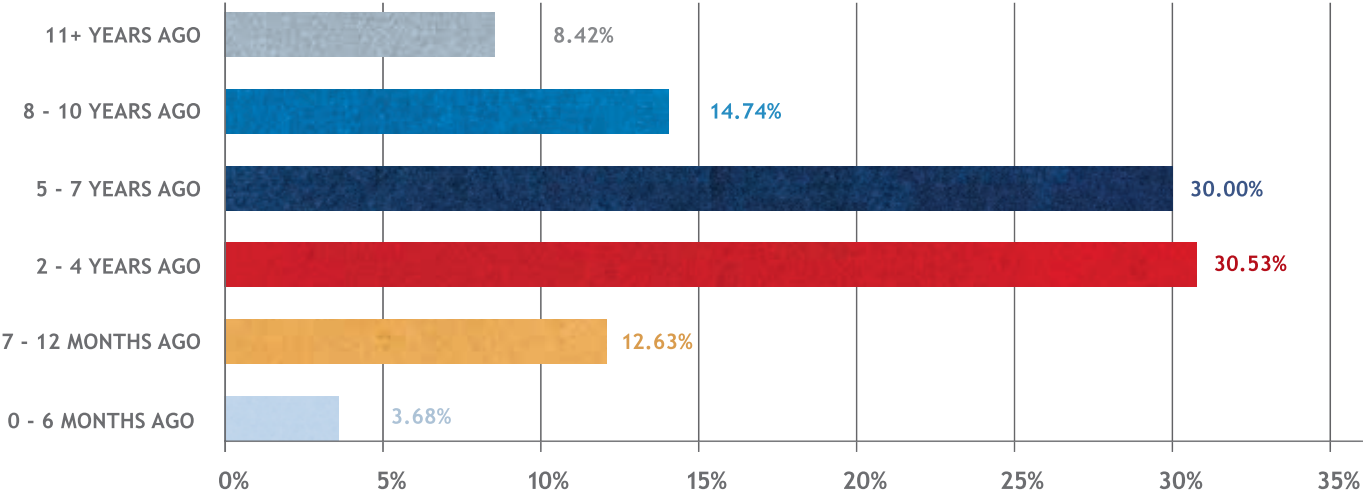
## YOUNG ADULTS

TAPS Young Adults Program is for 18 to 25 year old surviving children and siblings and gives our graduating Good Grief Camp children transition into a program all their own. Transitioning into adulthood is difficult enough, but when you add grief to the scenario, it becomes more challenging. This program follows five pillars of growth: Personal Development, Financial Stability, Communications, Career Development, and Service to Others. With practical life skills explored, the Young Adult Program strives to help each individual create a well-rounded life full of hope, healing, and growth.

**89% STRONGLY AGREE**

- TAPS YOUTH PROGRAMS PROVIDE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH ESSENTIAL COPING SKILLS THEY ARE UNABLE TO GET ANYWHERE ELSE
- THE SKILLS AND COPING TOOLS TAPS YOUTH PROGRAMS TEACH WILL REMAIN WITH OUR CHILDREN LONG AFTER THEY RETURN HOME

## HOW LONG AGO WAS THE DEATH OF YOUR FALLEN SERVICE MEMBER?



# Youth Programs

---

Though their lives are marked by grief, TAPS youngest survivors know their lives will also be filled with camaraderie, mentorship, emotional maturity, adventure, and fun.

Led by professional grief counselors, specializing in the fields of child development, mental health, and education, TAPS Youth Programs provide a safe space for military children that emphasize self-empowerment, social connectedness, and healing while helping them honor the life and service of their loved one.

TAPS Youth Programs engage children in activities to facilitate grief processing, rebuild their family, recognize negative coping skills, promote a social connection with other child survivors, and honor and remember the life and service of their fallen military loved one.

## GOOD GRIEF CAMPS

Children and teens come together to share and learn coping skills through games, crafts, and other activities in a fun and supportive environment. Each child is paired with a Military Mentor at a one-to-one ratio. The Military Mentor serves as a companion and reminds the child that he or she is still a part of the military community.

## TEEN ADVENTURES

Providing opportunities for young adults to tackle a challenging outdoor adventure while connecting with peers and preparing for the launch into adulthood.

## FAMILY CAMPS

Family Camps are a place for surviving significant others and children to connect and heal as a whole unit. With both the parents and children learning new positive coping skills, they can come together and work towards rebuilding the family unit. TAPS families leave a Family Camp with an enhanced connection between children and surviving parent to maintain communication as they grow through their grief journey.



**“THE BEST THING ABOUT GETTING INVOLVED IN TAPS IS THE CAMARADERIE. I MEET THE MOST WONDERFUL FAMILIES AND WE BOND WITHIN MINUTES. WE COME TOGETHER AND TALK, LAUGH, CRY, AND HEAL. WE HELP AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER. WE ARE TAPS, WE ARE FAMILY AND WE ARE FOREVER CONNECTED TO EACH OTHER.”**

**~ TAPS SURVIVING MOTHER**



# Health & Wellness

TAPS Health & Wellness program serves to promote personal growth, healthy lifestyles, and enable close connections among military survivors.

## RETREATS

TAPS retreats are five-day programs that bring together small groups of adult survivors in a unique location to further build a sense of community. Each TAPS Retreat includes physical and emotional movement; time for conversation and reflection, and unique travel experiences to help survivors understand how they can move forward in their grief journey. Separate retreats are held for surviving spouses, significant others, parents, siblings, and adult children.

## EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS

Survivors, who are at least two years post-loss, explore identity, purpose and direction at an Empowerment Week of Renewal. Empowerment Programs encourage survivors to consider how the past has influenced their identity where they are now by supporting them as they move toward a life of joy and healing.

TAPS creates and connects the visions of survivors lives, through art, journaling, mindfulness and movement.

## EXPEDITIONS

TAPS Expeditions are extended, outdoor, skills-based events that require dedication and a real sense of adventure. Professional guides lead small groups of survivors through some of the world's most challenging and inspiring landscapes — through the ancient city of Machu Picchu, to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro and more.

## INNER WARRIOR AND TRAINING CAMPS

Inner Warrior Wellness Weekends and Training Camps are three-day programs focused on nourishing the body and spirit. The weekends provide practical advice on self-care, nutrition, and exercise as well as time to process how grief affects the body. As part of a healthy grief journey, Inner Warrior programs provide knowledge, practical tools and radical self-care to facilitate survivors with a foundation for handling grief and loss.



# Sports & Entertainment

## STARS4TAPS

Stars4TAPS works with the entertainment industry across the country to bring joy to surviving military families and to honor the lives of their fallen heroes. Stars4TAPS partners with the entertainment industry to create opportunities for surviving military families to make new memories with the musicians and Broadway, TV, and film actors who once brought them and their fallen hero joy.



**STARS4TAPS TWEET:**  
@ROBERTIRVINE  
26 MAY 2018 MORE

*Tonight we had an Amazing night Cooking for 1,000 Gold Star Families WOW, most unbelievable night filled with Emotion. Thank you @Bonnie\_at\_TAPS @TAPSorg for allowing us to have an impact on these Awesome Families who have given so much #TeamIrvine/Military*

## TEAMS4TAPS

teams4taps collaborates with athletic teams across the country to bring joy to surviving military families and honor the lives of their fallen heroes. Through teams4taps, military survivors are able to share stories of their loved one with professional athletes, referees, professional coaches, team owners and managers. Stories shared are about the life their fallen hero lived, and the legacy they have left behind through all those who grieve their loss. teams4taps is more than a ticket to watch a game. It is an opportunity for survivors to connect with each other, identify with other survivors, and create new memories doing something they shared with their fallen hero.



**206** SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT ENGAGEMENTS





# Sports & Entertainment

“I just want to give my appreciation and respect to all of the TAPS families that were here and the Salute to Service from the organization for this game. I was proud to wear [Andrew] Bibbo’s button here for the game, from Clinton, from Milford. I actually spent a lot of time in Milford. I had several friends there from college and I spent a lot of time in that town. It’s a great town. Of course, he was in the Navy so I’m proud of that. I’m really just proud for all of us – all of our players, coaches – that we recognized that and what they’ve done, the sacrifices they’ve made and their families have made for our behalf.” ~ Coach Bill Belichick, New England Patriots (Following 2018 Salute to Service Game)

**3,542** SURVIVORS ENGAGED  
**1,192** FALLEN HEROES HONORED



# TAPS International- Beyond Borders

TAPS is an organization for all those who are grieving their military loved one. Just as American service members fought side by side with militaries from around the world, TAPS is engaging and connecting with the global community of military grievers, speaking the universal language of love and loss, hope and healing.

In July 2018, TAPS invited partner organizations from 27 countries for an International Working Group. These representatives are working in their own country to provide comfort and care for the families of their military loved ones. Attendees included representatives from England, Ukraine, Israel, India, Australia, Burma, Colombia, Turkey, Canada, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Nigeria. Together, as a global coalition, we rise above politics. We join together in honor, remembrance, hope and love to raise the next generation in peace.

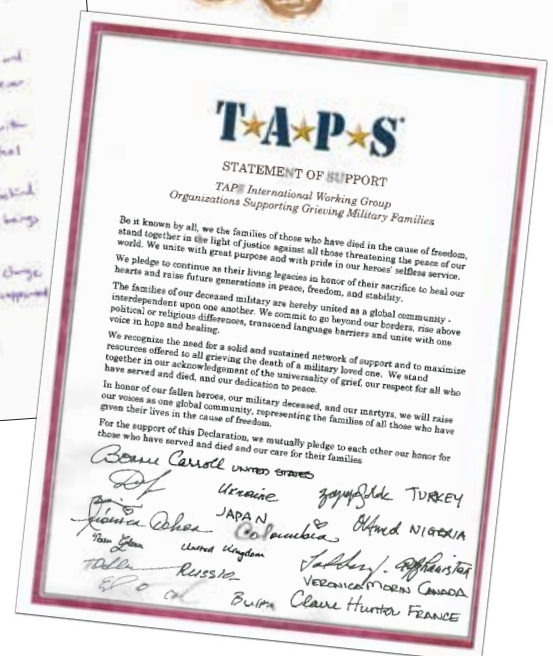
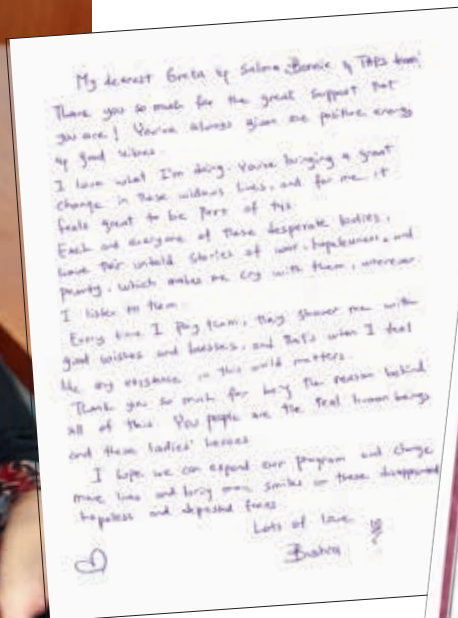
## TAPS4HOPE

In 2016, TAPS launched TAPS4Hope, a program to empower Afghan war widows to create stable societies and prevent violent extremism. To accomplish this, TAPS launched an initiative to provide for the women of Afghanistan who had lost their husband or sons in the fight against terrorism. This initiative includes beautiful Lapis Lazuli gemstone jewelry that is changing the world for the women and children of Afghanistan. The women engaged in this program receive an opportunity to develop their own community of support from each other, a reliable source of income, and access to education to promote self-sustainability.

**2,500,000** WIDOWS OF FALLEN SOLDIERS IN AFGHANISTAN  
(MOST WIDOWS PER CAPITA OF ANY COUNTRY)  
**88%** OF AFGHAN WOMEN ARE ILLITERATE  
**98%** OF AFGHAN WAR WIDOWS ARE UNEMPLOYED

**5,820** BRACELETS MADE BY AFGHAN WAR WIDOWS

**2.4 MILLION** ENGAGED ON TAPS.ORG  
**13%** OF USERS ON COUNTRIES OUTSIDE



# A Letter from our Chairman

---

The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors is the only organization to offer 24/7 support to the families of our nation's fallen heroes. We are proud to continue this tradition into the 25<sup>th</sup> year to make a difference in the lives of all those who loved and lost their military member. In 2018, we were able to provide comfort, companionship, hope, inspiration, and resources to over 6,000 newly bereaved survivors across the nation. We do not do this work alone.

TAPS is truly a family in every sense of the word. Led by the Board of Directors, Advisory Board, and an incredible staff, TAPS is generously supported by the members of the military, our corporate partners, and volunteers. In addition to thanking our Board of Directors, Advisory Board, TAPS staff, and volunteers, I would like to thank our partners for their tremendous support. Their generosity enables us to provide 24/7 companionship, compassion, care, and resources to all those who have loved and lost their American military member.

In 2018, TAPS received the generous support of over 63,000 hours of volunteer efforts through our Military Mentors, Peer Mentors, and other volunteer engagements.

We continue to focus our efforts on growing our programs and services to meet the ever increasing demand of newly bereaved military survivors. In 2018, we launched the TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing, an initiative designed to bring our TAPS model of best practices in grief education to thousands of grief professionals, survivors, and counselors. This service is offered at no cost and provides professionals with critical information on grief, trauma, and how to support those who are grieving the loss of their loved one.

TAPS also connected with over 28,000 survivors through the Survivor Care Team. These survivors received companionship by our professionally trained Peer Support Bereavement Specialists. The TAPS Casework Assistance rose to the challenge of our growing number of grieving military families by connecting surviving families with \$108 million dollars in education and retroactive benefits survivors are rightfully entitled to.

In 2019, we look towards expanding our frontline survivor care services to meet the large number of newly bereaved, publish research on our best practices in care for the traumatically bereaved, save lives through our survivor-informed suicide pre/postvention programming, and increase the TAPS National Military Survivor Helpline capacity to be there for survivors as the only organization staffed with professionally trained survivors to comfort those at their most vulnerable hours.

I am grateful for the organization we have built TAPS enables us to be there for over 85,000 survivors who mourn the loss of their service member. I look forward to an incredible 25<sup>th</sup> year in 2019 to extend our impact and touch the lives of so many who have sacrificed so much.

With gratitude,



John B. Wood  
*Chairman, TAPS Board of Directors*  
*CEO, Telos Corporation*



# Board of Directors

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*Chairman*  
*CEO, Telos Corporation*



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*Treasurer*  
*Founder, Valor Networks Inc.*



**Bonnie Carroll**  
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*TAPS Survivor honoring*  
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*Former United States Senator*



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*Former United States Senator*



**THE HONORABLE BARBARA MIKULSKI**  
*Former United States Senator*



**GENERAL COLIN L. POWELL**  
*12<sup>th</sup> Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff  
65<sup>th</sup> U.S. Secretary of State*



**THE HONORABLE JIMMY CARTER**  
*39<sup>th</sup> President of the United States*



**SLOAN GIBSON**  
*Former United States Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs*



**ADMIRAL MIKE MULLEN**  
*17<sup>th</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*



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*American Actor, Musician*



**THE HONORABLE WILLIAM A. CHATFIELD**  
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15<sup>th</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*



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*American Actor,  
Film Director, Musician*



**GENERAL JAMES T. CONWAY**  
*34<sup>th</sup> Commandant of the United States Marine Corps*



**C. EDWARD MCVANEY**  
*Co-founder and former Chief Executive of J.D. Edwards & Company*



**KYRA PHILLIPS**  
*ABC News*

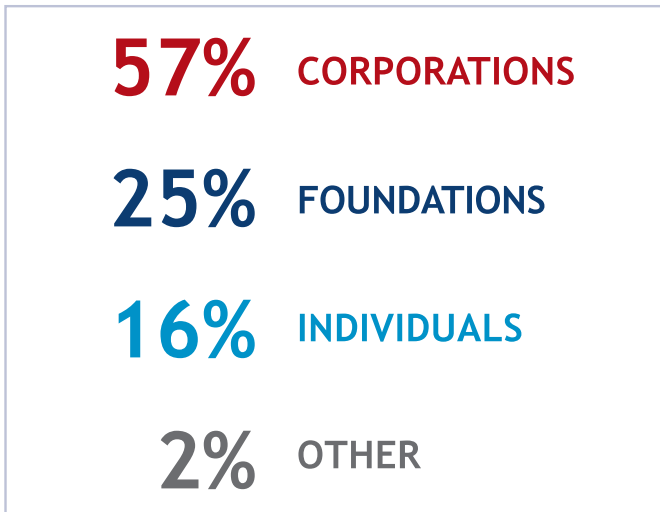


**BEN STEIN**  
*Actor, Author, Attorney,  
Economist, Patriot*

# Funding

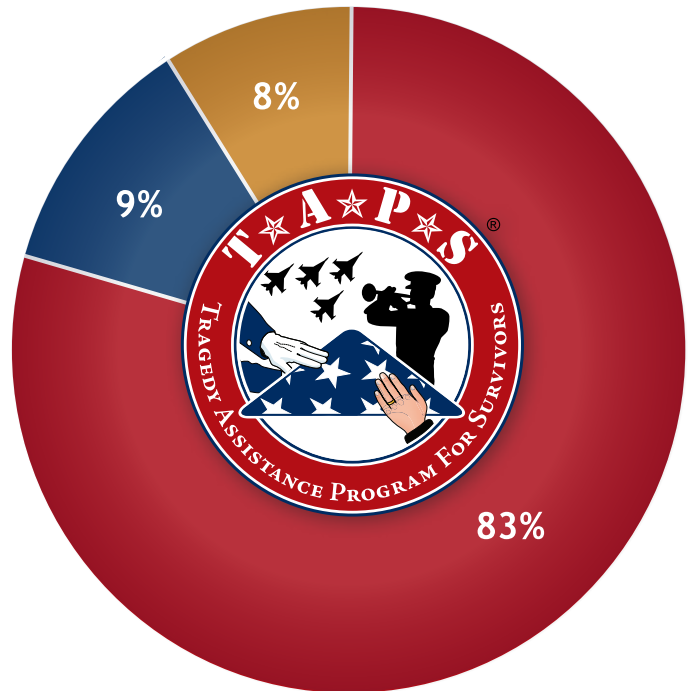
TAPS RECEIVED **\$18 MILLION** IN SUPPORT FROM GENEROUS DONORS

IN 2018, TAPS DONATIONS CAME FROM THE GENEROUS SUPPORT DONORS



*\*The financial results included in this report may contain unaudited figures. TAPS complete, audited financial statements can be obtained online at [TAPS.org/financials](http://TAPS.org/financials)*

## PROGRAM EXPENSES



- **83% SURVIVOR SERVICES AND PROGRAMS**
- **9% FUNDRAISING TO PROVIDE SURVIVORS WITH 24/7 CARE AND SUPPORT**
- **8% KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON FOR THE FAMILIES OF AMERICA'S FALLEN HEROES... TAPS IS ALWAYS HERE**

TAPS RECEIVES  
**ZERO**   
 GOVERNMENT FUNDING

*\* Unaudited percentages. For updated funding, expenses, and allocations, visit [taps.org/financials](http://taps.org/financials)*

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## HERO SPONSORS



## VALOR SPONSORS



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**“THANK YOU FOR ONE OF THE MOST AMAZING, INSPIRING, AND HEALING EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE.”**

**~ TAPS SURVIVING SPOUSE**





# Support the Mission and Honor Their Service

- | TAPS AVERAGES **17** NEW SURVIVORS EVERY DAY
- | TAPS CARES FOR **85,000** SURVIVORS
- | YOUR SUPPORT ENSURES TAPS IS AVAILABLE **24** HOURS A DAY, **7** DAYS A WEEK, **365** DAYS A YEAR

## GET INVOLVED

Support TAPS in our mission to provide healing and hope to families who have lost a hero who served in our Armed Forces. There are many meaningful ways to make a significant impact on the children, spouses, parents, siblings and loved ones who will forever mourn their loss.

TAPS is not a government agency and is entirely funded by the generosity of donors who care deeply about our nation's legacy of service and sacrifice.

DONATE TO TAPS TAPS.ORG/DONATE	VOLUNTEER WITH TAPS TAPS.ORG/VOLUNTEER	FUNDRAISE FOR TAPS TAPS.ORG/SUPPORT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ <b>Direct Contributions</b> fund TAPS services. Survivors pay nothing and TAPS receives no government funding.</li> <li>★ Sponsor the <b>Annual TAPS Honor Guard Gala</b></li> <li>★ Double your Gift through your <b>Employer Matching Gift Program</b></li> <li>★ Designate TAPS in your <b>Combined Federal Campaign No. 11309</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Every year, TAPS hosts a number of programs across the country to support surviving military families.</li> <li>★ We need the support of many <b>Volunteers</b>. There are a variety of volunteer positions available.</li> <li>★ Military Mentor, Grief Professional, Team TAPS Supporter, Guest Liaison at TAPS National Headquarters, Seminar Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Host a <b>Holiday Gift Card Drive</b> for TAPS Families</li> <li>★ Organize a <b>Cause Marketing Campaign</b> for TAPS</li> <li>★ <b>Run for TAPS</b> at an endurance sports event like the Marine Corps Marathon</li> <li>★ Designate TAPS as the beneficiary for a <b>Community Event</b></li> <li>★ <b>Shop for TAPS</b> at retailers like AmazonSmile, iGive, TAPS Store at TAPS.org/shop and others</li> </ul>

Our team will guide you through the process of creating a successful partnership  
**Contact us at 202.588.TAPS (8277) or Sponsor@TAPS.org**

*“We are humbled by the sheer tenacity of TAPS families and their dogged determination to honor their heroes and make a meaningful commitment to build a better future. That is the legacy of TAPS – it has been for 25 years and I'm confident it will remain unchanged for the next 25 years.”*  
 ~ Michael Neidorff, Chairman and CEO, Centene Corporation



# Honor Their Service

YOUR SUPPORT ENSURES TAPS  
IS AVAILABLE 24/7/365

THOUSANDS OF MILITARY FAMILIES RECEIVE A LIFE-CHANGING KNOCK ON THEIR DOOR EVERY YEAR AFTER THE TRAGIC LOSS OF A SERVICE MEMBER. OVER 6,000 FOUND THEIR WAY TO US IN 2018. TAPS IS THERE FOR THESE FAMILIES, AS WELL AS THE ADDITIONAL 85,000 SURVIVING LOVED ONES OF OUR FALLEN MILITARY HEROES WHO REACHED OUT FOR HOPE AND HEALING SINCE TAPS WAS FOUNDED IN 1994.

TAX ID # 92-0152268  
TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS  
3033 WILSON BLVD. THIRD FLOOR • ARLINGTON, VA 22201

TAPS.ORG ★ 202.588.TAPS (8277)

Your generous gift supports the TAPS mission to provide the families of the fallen who will forever mourn their loss with comfort and care. TAPS receives no government funding and relies on supporters to be there for our military families.

DONATE FUNDS, TIME, AND TALENT NOW BY VISITING [TAPS.ORG/SUPPORT](https://taps.org/support) OR CALLING 202.588.TAPS (8277)