

**U.S. Marine Corps
Suicide Prevention Training
Train-the-Trainer Guide
NCO Course
Junior Marine Course**

USMC Suicide Prevention Train-the-Trainer Guide

Introduction

This Train-the-Trainer Guide is designed to train Marine Corps personnel to prepare for and conduct Marine Corps Suicide Prevention Training for both the NCO and the Junior Marine courses. This Guide is accompanied by Instructor Guides for both courses.

Objectives

Upon completion of the Train-the-Trainer session, the trainees will be able to:

- Understand the objectives of the NCO and the Junior Marine Suicide Prevention Training courses;
- Prepare and deliver the NCO and Junior Marine Suicide Prevention Training courses to ensure that all objectives are met; and
- Utilize effective presentation skills.

Guidance for Conducting the Training

Size of Training Group

Because most trainers are familiar with the NCO course, the NCO December 2010 Update training can be conducted outside of a formal classroom setting. The Junior Marine course, though different in scope from the NCO course, is similar in content and is taught with a similar instructional style.

Instructors familiar with the NCO course are strongly recommended to review and practice the NCO December 2010 Update and the Junior Marine course with one another, and offer each other tips and best practices based on experience.

Trainers responsible for training new instructor trainers will need to provide more structured, rigorous guidance than they would for those familiar with the course.

Materials Required

The following materials are recommended for the Train-the-Trainer course:

- Data DVDs containing the PowerPoint presentations, including embedded video, of the NCO and the Junior Marine Suicide Prevention training courses;
- Playable DVDs containing the “Never Leave a Marine Behind” dramas for the NCO and the Junior Marine courses.
- One copy of each Instructor Guide (NCO December 2010 Update and Junior Marine) for each instructor trainee;
- A PDF of the RACE bi-fold printout, which contains five bi-folds, for each trainee.

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Equipment/Settings

- All training settings must have audiovisual equipment. In small groups (2-3 trainees), the materials can be viewed on a computer monitor. In auditorium-type settings, a large projection screen is essential. (More tips for effectively presenting video are discussed in each course's Instructor Guide.)
- If possible, dim the lights near the projection screen or monitor. The room, however, should have enough light to encourage interaction.
- Cell phones and other electronic devices must be silenced.

Training Format

The format of the NCO and Junior Marine Suicide Prevention courses is dynamic and innovative. Many instructor trainees will find that these courses differ from any they have attended or taught for the following reasons:

- The training for these courses is taught by sergeants, not by officers or professional trainers.
- The training incorporates few traditional PowerPoint slides and instead relies on two types of video—dramatic movies and documentary segments—to make the appropriate teaching points:
 - Both the NCO and the Junior Marine movies feature a fictional but realistic scenario of a Marine who is in distress and is suicidal. The movies feature the same scenario, but told from different perspectives. The distressed Marine's sergeant narrates the movie for the NCO course, and the distressed Marine's buddy narrates the movie for the Junior Marine course.
 - The documentary interviews feature Marines and family members who have been affected by a Marine's death by suicide.
 - All video segments are embedded in the PowerPoint presentation slides.
- The extensive use of video is designed to engage the trainees. With practice, instructors will find that it greatly enhances their instruction. Instructors should be very familiar with the videos in each course so that they can reference and discuss them where appropriate.
- Marine Corps Suicide Prevention Training is designed to be interactive, and the Train-the-Trainer course will help prepare instructor trainees to lead discussions and activities. The discussions and activities are designed to engage participants and to ensure their understanding of the course content. Both courses are more meaningful if instructors interject personal stories and anecdotes.

Format of the Instructor Guide

All instructors will need the Instructor Guides for the NCO December 2010 Update and the Junior Marine courses in order to adequately prepare to teach both.

- The Instructor Guides include screen shots of each slide, talking points, and a suggested script for each slide.

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- Instructors should avoid referencing or reading directly from the Instructor Guides, if possible. The guides have key words bolded so that instructors can occasionally glance at the guide to find their place.
- Each instructor will develop his or her unique teaching method. As instructors work with the material, they will develop their own style, favorite stories, questions, and ways to approach the material.
- The guides have ample space in the margins for notes, as well as space to write out personal stories.

Interactivity

The subject matter of these suicide prevention courses will likely provoke many questions and much discussion. The following guidelines are important for conducting the courses:

- **Keep an eye on the clock and stay on topic.** Instructors have a lot to accomplish and can't afford to let discussions or excessive questions keep them from moving to the next topic. Instructors need to know when to move on.
- **Avoid reading directly from the slides or script.** Instructors should feel comfortable enough with the material to maintain eye contact with the participants and to rarely refer to the Instructor Guide.
- **Discussions are important.** If class participants are engaged, they will initiate and participate in discussions. Despite the need to stay on schedule, allow such discussions to proceed, as long as the participants stay on topic.
- **Be sure to thank Marines for sharing personal stories.** This reinforces the message that it's OK to talk about problems and can help reduce the stigma of experiencing psychological distress or of getting professional help.

Important "Dos and Don'ts"

Make sure the instructor trainees are aware of the following tips:

- **Do not** use the phrase "successful suicide." The loss of life should never be considered a "success."
- **Do** refer as much as appropriate to the dramatic movie and the documentary segments because they are illustrative references and useful launching platforms for further discussion.
- **Do** be alert to statements that reveal a stigma toward Marines who are suffering from psychological and/or emotional distress or seeking help for such distress. **Do not** reinforce these types of statements.

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Suggested Preparation

The Train-the-Trainer course can be tailored depending on existing knowledge and familiarity of the trainees with the NCO course. Trainers familiar with the NCO course should review the NCO December 2010 Update (some material has changed), and become thoroughly familiar with the new Junior Marine course. New instructor trainers unfamiliar with the NCO course should be taught both courses in detail, to include the appropriate instructional techniques, the course content and videos, and all important teaching points.

NCO COURSE

Distribute Materials

- Instructor Guide for NCO December 2010 Update
- RACE bi-fold

Watch/review the NCO Suicide Prevention (December 2010 Update)

- For new instructor trainers, present the NCO Suicide Prevention Training in its entirety.
- For experienced NCO course instructor trainers, review the changes that have been made to the course:
 - PRESS has been removed, and RACE has been added in its place (Instructor Guide, Pages 62-69)
 - Resource slides have been modified (Instructors Guide, Pages 80-88)

Review the RACE Bi-fold and other Resources

All instructors should be familiar with the resources listed on Slides 32-34, and should review the resource list on the MCCS website before teaching the course.

RACE Bi-fold

- Master instructors should be familiar with all the resources provided on the RACE bi-fold and should be prepared to discuss them in detail.
- The bi-fold is available at http://www.usmc-mccs.org/display_files/R_A_C_E%20BI-Fold%20with%20Explanation%20Page.pdf.
- The bi-fold is in a PDF with form fields that can be filled out to add local phone numbers. Instructors should look up the phone numbers for each resource and to add them to each of the five bi-folds.
- The bi-fold can then be printed and distributed to each Marine in class.
- Instructions on how to explain the bi-fold to training participants are also available on that web page.
- The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is a crisis line that is available 24 hours a day seven days a week. It is staffed with people trained in intervention. When you call the toll-free number, you are connected to a resource in your area.

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- The five recommended local resources are listed as chaplain, medical, behavioral health, duty office, and sergeant major.
- Include the number of the command or battalion chaplain. Instructors may also suggest that Marines personalize the bi-fold with the number of a pastor or other local religious leader.
- Under medical, add the number of a local medical facility, the Battalion/Squadron aid station, or the command doc. Marines may be instructed to add the phone number of their primary care physician as well.
- Insert the number of the local Behavioral Healthcare Clinic, sometimes called the Mental Health Clinic. Other options may be the Marine and Family Services Counseling Center or the Deployment Health Clinic. Instructors should include the number of the resource they personally trust the most.
- Instructors should insert the number of their local 24/7 command duty office.
- Instructors should insert the number of the command sergeant major, the 1st sergeant or the most recognized and trusted senior enlisted leader.
- Marines may be reluctant to notify the chain of command if a fellow Marine is in crisis. The “Never Leave a Behind Course” provides an opportunity for sergeant instructors to reinforce that Marines can trust their leadership.
- In an immediate crisis—if a Marine is having suicidal thoughts and has a plan to kill himself or herself—emergency intervention is necessary, and 911 should be called or the Marine should be escorted to the nearest emergency room.
- Discuss the variety of suggestions that might arise and how to respond to those questions.

Share instructional tips and techniques

- For new instructor trainers, go over the training format, format of the Instructor Guide, the importance of interactivity, training Dos and Don'ts, and have the trainer practice-teach portions of the course. Answer any training-related questions the new instructors might have. Emphasize that the script is designed as a guideline for beginning instructors but that instructors, as they become familiar with the material, should be able to teach from the talking points without relying on the script.
- **All instructor trainers should:**
 - Discuss teaching strategies. Share tips based on personal experience teaching the course.
 - Share and discuss two personal stories:
 - A 2-to 3-minute personal story about dealing with stress. (Slide 26)
 - A 2- to 3-minute personal story, about taking action. (Slide 38)
 - Review the course's exercise questions. Discuss the variety of issues that might arise and how to respond:
 - Do you know someone like LCpl Decker? Sgt Bridges? (Slide 2)
 - Where did Sgt Bridges do a good job? Poor job? (Slide 10)

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- What causes you stress? (Slide 22)
- What are other signs of stress you have seen in your Marines? (Slide 23)
- What issues were the Marines in the video facing? (Slide 28)
- Where would you have taken LCpl Decker? (Slide 31)
- Where could Sgt Bridges have taken LCpl Decker if he recognized Decker's lingering guilt? Problems with Kelly? Financial troubles? (Slide 32)

JUNIOR MARINE COURSE

The course for Junior Marines differs from the NCO December 2010 Update course in a number of ways:

- The drama that leads off the training has been retold from the point of view of LCpl Brian Williams. The emphasis is on what a buddy should do to look out for a fellow Marine, not what an NCO should do.
- All documentary segments are new to the Junior Marine course.
- The main case study focuses on Pvt Timothy Koundry, who took his life early in 2010.
- The course is designed to be no longer than 90 minutes.
- Every group discussion is designed to include all participants. (There is no breaking into small groups.)
- The course places greater emphasis on personal stories.

Distribute Materials

- Instructor Guide for the Junior Marine Suicide Prevention course

Watch/Review the Junior Marine Suicide Prevention Drama

- Become familiar with the new character, LCpl Joseph Chapman, and notice his attitude toward LCpl Decker's situation.
- Pay attention to the new perspective, told from LCpl Williams' point of view.

Review the Course

- Go through the course, slide by slide. Watch all documentary clips, and follow along in the Instructor Guide.
- Share and discuss personal stories:
 - A 2-3 minute personal story about why the training is personally important (Slide 2)
 - A 2-3 minute personal story about receiving help and getting promoted/re-enlisted (Slide 6)
 - A 2-3 minutes personal story about what you do to take care of yourself (Slide 14)

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- Review the course's exercise questions. Discuss the variety of suggestions that might arise and how to respond.
 - Do you know someone like Decker? (Slide 2)
 - Why do you think Marines might keep quiet? (Slide 2)
 - What kinds of things cause you stress? (Slide 7)
 - What were some of the risk factors you've seen in the videos? Consider Decker and Koundry. (Slide 10)
 - What are other risk factors you can think of that we didn't see in the videos? (Slide 10)
 - What are some of the warning signs that we saw in Decker and Koundry? (Slide 10)
 - What are some other warning signs you can think of? (Slide 10)
 - How many of you have every asked someone, "Are you thinking about killing yourself?" (Slide 11)
 - How many of you thought you should ask, but found it too hard? (Slide 11)
 - Does anyone want to share an experience about asking the question? (Slide 11)
 - What do you think it means to actively listen? (Slide 12)
 - Tell me some ways that you can show your buddies that you're there for them. (Slide 12)
 - Off the top of your head, what resources could you suggest? (Slide 13)

For More Information

Marine Corps Suicide Prevention Program

Web: <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/suicideprevent/>

Phone: 703-784-9542