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18 veterans kill themselves every day: report

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The suicide rate among war veterans is extraordinary, new data reveals.

Thirty try to commit suicide each day, on average, reports the [Army Times](#). Eighteen succeed, roughly five of whom receive medical care from Veterans Affairs, rated one of the best health programs in the country.

"Of the more than 30,000 suicides in this country each year, fully 20 percent of them are acts by veterans," said VA Secretary Eric Shinseki at a VA-sponsored suicide prevention conference in January, [Inter Press Service reported](#).

The Times noted that "In general, VA officials said, women attempt suicide more often, but men are more likely to succeed in the attempt."

The report cites access to health care and age -- younger veterans are less likely to try -- as two major factors in the suicide rate, and notes that the VA is seeking to strengthen its suicide prevention programs.

According to the [National Coalition for Homeless Veterans](#), "Roughly 56 percent of all homeless veterans are African American or Hispanic, despite only accounting for 12.8 percent and 15.4 percent of the U.S. population respectively."

The struggle among veterans to return to everyday life has been documented over the years.

The [Associated Press reported](#) in November 2007 that one in four homeless people across the nation is likely to be a veteran, even though veterans constitute a mere 11 percent of overall adults in the United States.

"And homelessness is not just a problem among middle-age and elderly veterans," AP added. "Younger veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan are trickling into shelters and soup kitchens seeking services, treatment or help with finding a job."

Homelessness among women who served in Afghanistan and Iraq is on the rise.



The [Boston Globe reported](#) last year that "number of female service members who have become homeless after leaving the military has jumped dramatically in recent years."

One in ten homeless veterans under 45 years of age is a woman, statistics showed in July of 2009.

"Some of the first homeless vets that walked into our office were single moms," Paul Rieckhoff, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America's executive director and founder, told the Globe.

"When people think of homeless vets, they don't think of a Hispanic mother and her kids. The new generation of veterans is made up of far more women.'"