

# VFW, GAH Host Second Annual ‘A Day to Change Direction’

## Oct. 28 campaign focuses on service and action to change the dialog on mental health

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**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – Leading the national effort to change the barrier surrounding mental health, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and Give an Hour (GAH) are pleased to host their second annual “A Day to Change Direction” on Oct. 28, 2017.

As our national day of service and action, October 28 will focus on educating the public on the [Five Signs of Emotional Suffering](#) and the Healthy Habits of Emotional Well-



being.

Across the country, VFW Posts and Auxiliaries will host activities in their local communities that help change the dialogue on mental health not only for America’s veterans, but for our communities as well. Many Posts and Auxiliaries will also host a screening of [Into the Light](#), a documentary about a Marine returning from Afghanistan with the invisible injuries of war who meets a therapist who is confronting her own family history of mental illness.

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“A staggering 20 veterans commit suicide every day, yet only six of them were actually enrolled in VA care,” said VFW National Commander Keith Harman. “It is up to our nearly 1.7 million members of the VFW and Auxiliary to step up and start a dialog to help change the barrier and culture that oftentimes might deter someone from voluntarily seeking care. By working with our nation’s leading mental health organizations, the VFW is committed to reducing the veteran suicide rate to zero — one veteran at a time.”

[In a recent video message, VFW National Commander Keith Harman](#) encourages everyone to get involved with the second annual “A Day to Change Direction,” and participants in the day’s events are encouraged to use **#VFWPostPride** and **#changementalhealth** to highlight their events. Get ready for Oct. 28 by promoting your support to **#changementalhealth** [with a Five Signs T-shirt from the VFW store](#). Be sure to follow the VFW on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) and stay up-to-date on all the day’s activities nationwide.

Together with industry leaders like [Give an Hour](#), the [Campaign to Change Direction](#), [One Mind](#), [PatientsLikeMe](#), [Walgreens](#) and the [Elizabeth Dole Foundation](#), we will continue to raise awareness, foster community engagement, improve research and provide intervention to help combat this critical issue.

**About Change Direction:** The Campaign to Change Direction, a national initiative to change the culture of mental health in America, encourages Americans to care for their mental well-being just as they do their physical well-being. The Campaign is led by Give an Hour, a national nonprofit organization providing free mental health services to the military and veteran community. Change Direction addresses common barriers to understanding mental health and raises awareness about Five Signs that may indicate someone is suffering emotionally and needs help: change in personality, agitation, withdrawal, decline in personal care, and hopelessness. Over 550 partner organizations are using their unique skills and opportunities to spread awareness. Organizations and individuals who are interested in learning more or making a pledge can visit [www.changedirection.org](http://www.changedirection.org).