Veterans Crisis Line

May 11, 2011

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is unique because all of our members have served overseas in a combat zone. Our nation is in debt to all of those who served, and we understand that returning home and reintegrating into society can cause stress in many aspects of life. Because of this, VFW is participating in a campaign with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to increase awareness of the Veterans Crisis Line (1-800-273-8255 and Press 1).

The campaign revolves around the confidential Veterans Crisis Line (formerly the Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline), establishing a unique identity designed to lower the threshold for Veterans and their families to make that critical call for help.

The line, available 24 hours a day and seven days a week, has answered more than 390,000 calls and has made more than 13,000 life-saving rescues since its launch.

The campaign is a national outreach effort to increase awareness and use of the confidential Veterans Crisis Line and online chat service, support and promote broader VA suicide prevention efforts, and promote help-seeking behaviors among Veterans.

The rebranding emphasizes the “Press 1” option for Veterans, friends, and family members, ensuring their call is immediately transferred to the VA’s call center in Canandaigua, N.Y., staffed with professional responders trained and dedicated to serving Veterans and their families. New messaging reinforces the confidentiality of the Veterans Crisis Line and chat for both Veterans and their family members, who may be the first to realize a Veteran is in crisis.

VFW members have the opportunity to spread the word about the Veteran Crisis Line campaign through a variety of online resources and promotional materials – including posters, print ads, online ads, social media, wallet cards, magnets and coasters. The promotional materials include ads targeted toward specific demographics, and will be

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available electronically in the near future.

Check back to www.vfw.org for updates on the campaign.

If you're looking for more information about the Veterans Crisis Line, visit www.VeteransCrisisLine.net. For more information about VA's suicide prevention program, visit http:http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/.