



Armys ACE Suicide Intervention Program

Setting
Military

Type of Program
Education and Training

NSSP Goals Addressed
6.0

Program Description

The *Armys ACE Suicide Intervention (ACE-SI) Program* is a three-hour training that provides Soldiers with the awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary to intervene with those at risk for suicide. *ACE* stands for *Ask, Care, and Escort*. The purpose of *ACE* is to help Soldiers and junior leaders become more aware of steps they can take to prevent suicides and confident in their ability to do so. *ACE* encourages Soldiers to directly and honestly question any battle buddy who exhibits suicidal behavior. The battle buddy should *ask* a fellow Soldier whether he or she is suicidal, *care* for the Soldier, and *escort* the Soldier to the source of professional help. This training helps Soldiers avoid letting their fears of suicide govern their actions to prevent suicides.

ACE program materials include: a trainer’s manual; PowerPoint slides with embedded video messages; suicide prevention tip cards (which list risk factors and warning signs for suicide); and *ACE* wallet cards (with simple directions for identifying and intervening with those at risk).

ACE was created in response to an Army leadership request to develop a suicide intervention skills training support package (TSP) for Army-wide distribution. The program is based on relevant research literature and has undergone a process of testing and revision that included focus group interviews and pilot testing to determine training utility and feasibility. A preliminary report describing the results of the pilot test is available for review. *ACE* has been reviewed by Army Medical Command personnel and Army G-1 for applicability and was approved for Army-wide training by the Army Task Force on Suicide Prevention.

Program Objectives

After training, Soldiers should:

1. Feel increased individual and group responsibility for the well-being of others.
2. Have increased awareness of stigma and its negative effects on help-seeking.
3. Have increased knowledge and skills for identifying, intervening, and referring suicidal Warriors for help.
4. Have increased competence and confidence in the application of these skills.
5. Have increased knowledge of military and community resources for Warrior referrals.

Implementation Essentials

- *ACE* should be implemented as instructed in the training protocols. Deviations from these protocols should be approved in advance by the *ACE* development team.

Contact Information

James W. Cartwright, Ph.D.
Scott Weichl, Chaplain (LTC)
5158 Blackhawk Rd E4430
APG, MD 21010-5403
Voice: 410-436-7945
Fax: 410-436-7381
Email: james.cartwright@us.army.mil
Website: (see Costs)

Costs

The *Army ACE Suicide Intervention Program* is available for free from the Center for Health Promotion & Preventive Medicine (CHPPM – transition to U.S. Army Public Health Command) website at: <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/dhpw/Readiness/suicide.aspx>
Or, from the Army Knowledge Online (AKO) website for those with authorization at: <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/334798>

*The content of practices listed in Section III (Adherence to Standards) of the SPRC/AFSP Best Practices Registry address specific goals of the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* and have been reviewed by a panel of three suicide prevention experts and found to meet standards of accuracy, safety, and programmatic guidelines. Practices were not reviewed for evidence of effectiveness. Additional information about the Best Practices Registry can be found at www.sprc.org.

The Best Practices Registry is supported by a grant (1 U79 SM57392-05) from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). No official endorsement by SAMHSA or DHHS for the information in this document is intended or should be inferred.