



DoD

# Safe Helpline

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## Safe Helpline Outreach Toolkit

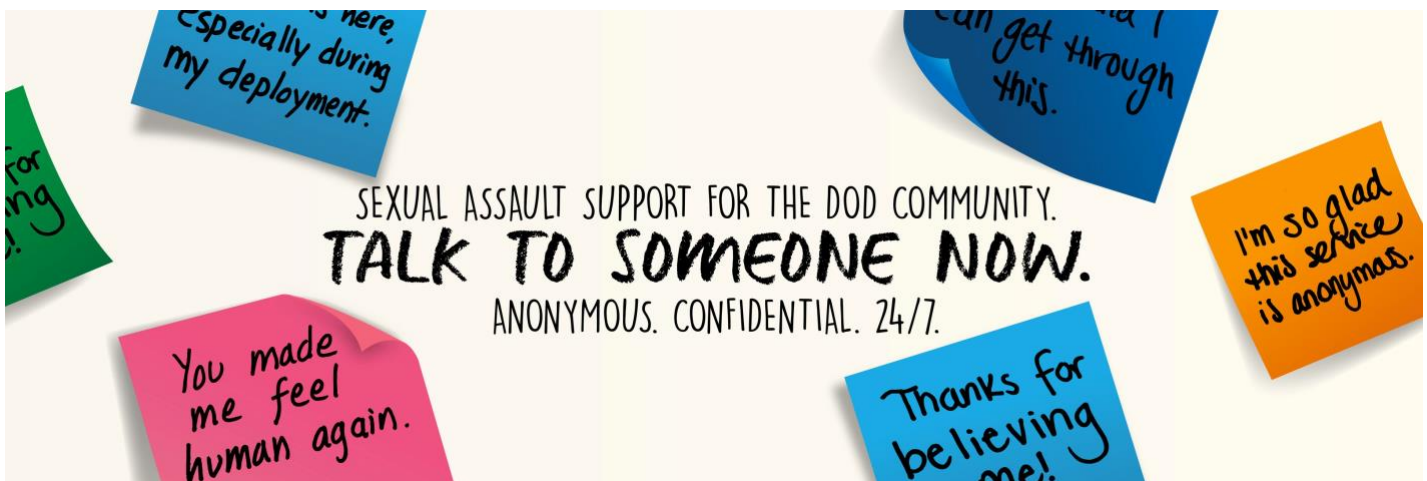
Updated August 2021

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# Introduction

Thank you for the work you do to provide your community with valuable information about sexual assault. The Safe Helpline is dedicated to offering you useful ways to include Safe Helpline in your sexual assault prevention and response (SAPR) programming.



This toolkit is a one-stop shop for all of your Safe Helpline communications needs. For example:

- Use the background information to introduce Safe Helpline to other sexual assault service providers on base, such as chaplains, medical professionals, legal counsel, and military police;
- Use the sample newsletter article to incorporate Safe Helpline into your regular base emails or print newsletters;
- Post copy and graphics on your social media accounts to spread awareness about Safe Helpline.
- Additional talking points and marketing materials can be adapted to fit your needs.

This toolkit contains:

- Tips on how to talk about Safe Helpline.
- Tips on how to engage your base or installation leadership.
- Information about Safe Helpline promotional materials.
- Sample social media posts for Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.
- A sample newsletter article.

# About Safe Helpline

Launched in 2011, the Department of Defense (DoD) Safe Helpline is the Department's sole secure, confidential, and anonymous crisis support service specially designed for members of the DoD community affected by sexual assault. Safe Helpline is available 24/7, worldwide. The Safe Helpline staff provides live, one-on-one support to survivors, their families, and other DoD stakeholders. It is operated by RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network), a national anti-sexual violence organization, through a contract with the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO).

Safe Helpline was created to meet the unique needs of survivors in the DoD, who may have challenges accessing support because of operational, geographic, and other constraints. The anonymous nature of Safe Helpline services ensures that Safe Helpline is a key source of support for Service members who might not otherwise reach out for help through military channels, and can be the first step in the reporting process. Safe Helpline is a reliable and trusted resource for members of the DoD community, including Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) and SAPR Victim Advocates (VAs) wishing to connect survivors with additional resources, and is a safe and confidential space for friends, family members, co-workers, military leaders, and responders seeking information and tools to better support the survivors in their lives.

## Safe Helpline serves:

- Adult Service members in the Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve Component, as well as the Coast Guard, and their dependents 18 years of age and older.
- DoD civilian employees and their family dependents 18 years of age and older when they are stationed or performing duties outside of the United States.
- U.S. citizen DoD contractor personnel when they are authorized to accompany Armed Forces in a contingency operation OCONUS and their U.S. citizen employees.

Adult military dependent sexual assault victims who are assaulted by a spouse or intimate partner and military dependent sexual assault victims who are 17 years of age and younger are supported through the the Family Advocacy Program (FAP). Due to the anonymity of the Safe Helpline hotline service, no questions to confirm eligibility are asked prior to providing support. Therefore, anyone contacting Safe Helpline will receive crisis intervention support by Safe Helpline staff. If, during the conversation, an individual indicates that they are not affiliated with the DoD, and not eligible for Safe Helpline services, hotline staff can provide appropriate civilian or military resources, such as the National Sexual Assault Hotline.

Safe Helpline also operates as the DoD's Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Hotline for all Military Correctional Facilities.

safehelpline.org       877-995-5247

# User Safety and Anonymity

## How does Safe Helpline remain anonymous?

All Safe Helpline services are completely anonymous and confidential. RAINN's proprietary technology is helping Safe Helpline continue to meet the needs of survivors, their friends and family, and stakeholders every day. So, how does the technology work?

- IP addresses are never logged.
- Session transcripts are not recorded or saved.
- All data is encrypted.
- All routing is done anonymously.
- Members of the DoD community can access help from anywhere through the DoD Safe Helpline website and the Safe Helpline app.

## Does Safe Helpline ask any prerequisite or screening questions of visitors?

No, Safe Helpline does not screen users who access services. Safe Helpline staff never ask questions about Service or rank, or for any identifying information. The only questions staff routinely ask during every session are during an initial safety check and review of some basic protocol, including:

- Checking in around physical safety.
- Reviewing what to do if the chat/call is disconnected.
- Addressing any computer safety or privacy concerns.

## What will happen if a user shares personal information with Safe Helpline staff?

To maintain anonymity, if a user starts to share personally identifying information (PII) with staff, they'll kindly be reminded that Safe Helpline does not require any personal information to support a visitor's needs.

No PII shared this way will ever be documented or recorded. However, if a user shares information that falls under one of the exceptions to confidentiality, a Safe Helpline staff member may be required by law to file a mandatory report. These exceptions to confidentiality include any of the following situations: threats to harm others; exhibits suicidal ideation; or neglect and abuse of a child, disabled individual, or the elderly. If an event like this occurs, staff are trained to explain what mandatory reporting means and will support the user through the process.

# Safe Helpline Staff

## Who are Safe Helpline staff?

Safe Helpline is made up of approximately 60 professionals from a variety of backgrounds who all share a passion to support survivors of sexual assault in the DoD community. Before a Safe Helpline staff member is able to begin taking calls and chats they must be cleared by a licensed clinician (licensed social worker, counselor, etc.) to ensure they are ready to support survivors. Communication between a victim and Safe Helpline staff are protected from disclosure in cases arising under the Uniform Code of Military Justice in accordance with [Military Rules of Evidence \(MRE\) 514 - Victim-Victim Advocate Privilege](#).

## How are Safe Helpline staff trained?

All Safe Helpline staff complete more than 60 hours of extensive, trauma-informed training according to National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) guidelines. All Safe Helpline staff receive enough training to be certified through the National Advocate Credentialing Program, which is the civilian equivalent to the DoD Sexual Assault Advocate Credentialing Program (D-SAACP) that certifies SARCs and SAPR VAs.

The training covers:

- Active listening & empathy
- Crisis intervention
- How to talk to survivors
- Neurobiology of trauma
- Military environment & traditions
- Reporting options & military-specific resources

## Are Safe Helpline staff trained to support military personnel?

Safe Helpline staff receive specialized training to provide support and resources to military communities. The training curriculum was developed with oversight and information from DoD SAPRO and all of the individual Service SAPR offices.

The military-specific training covers:

- Effective responses to the needs of sexual assault survivors who are affiliated with the military.
- Knowledge about military systems, protocols, and environment to improve services to sexual assault survivors who are affiliated with the military.
- A thorough understanding of on-base resources including SARCs, SAPR VAs, and Special Victims' Counsel/Victims Legal Counsel (SVC/VLC), as well as other responders.
- Adapting service delivery to support callers from military installations throughout the United States, as well as overseas.

# Safe Helpline Services

Safe Helpline has a number of anonymous services to help support sexual assault survivors directly, as well as to assist SARCs and SAPR VAs working with survivors in your community.



## Telephone Helpline

Speak directly with a Safe Helpline staff member over the phone, 24/7, for confidential support, information, and resources by calling 877-995-5247.



## Online Helpline

Access one-on-one, anonymous, and secure support with a staff member through Safe Helpline's online chat portal at [www.safehelpline.org/online](http://www.safehelpline.org/online).



## Safe HelpRoom

Connect with other survivors of sexual assault through Safe HelpRoom- a secure, anonymous, and moderated topic-specific group chat service. Learn about upcoming sessions at [SafeHelpline.org/safe-helproom](http://SafeHelpline.org/safe-helproom). Sessions just for men are also available every Sunday from 1300-1500 ET.



## Self-Paced Educational Programs

Learn more about issues related to sexual assault, the services Safe Helpline offers, and how to support a friend or loved one with Safe Helpline's guided educational programs. All programs can be completed anonymously, and approved courses are available for D-SAACP credit.

[www.safehelpline.org/education](http://www.safehelpline.org/education)



## Responders Near Me

Find information about military and civilian responders and resources near you with the Safe Helpline Responder Database, anytime, anywhere through the [website](#), via text, and on the Safe Helpline app using your zip code or installation name.



## Safe Helpline App

Create a personalized self-care plan and access self-care exercises as well as the other Safe Helpline services with an easy-to-use mobile app. Download the app for free on the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).

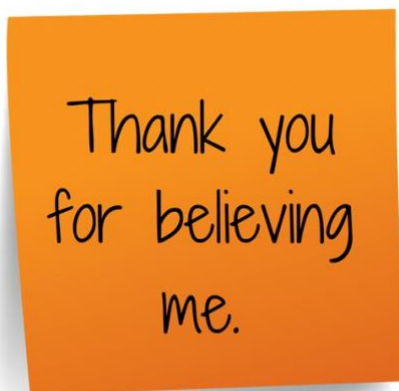
# Helpful Resources

## Safe Helpline Virtual Hope Board

The Safe Helpline Hope Board is a place where Safe Helpline staff post notes with encouraging words from the survivors they have assisted. These notes are a constant reminder of how the support provided through Safe Helpline services can have a positive effect on the lives of survivors today and every day. To share these messages with the Safe Helpline community, we created the Virtual Hope Board. This webpage showcases some of the hopeful and inspiring messages that survivors, friends and family members, and other DoD community members have left for Safe Helpline.

You may want to:

- Show survivors you are working with the virtual Hope Board before referring them to Safe Helpline services.
- Start your own Hope Board to showcase the inspiring messages from survivors on base. Be sure to remove all personally identifying information from the sticky notes before sharing.



Visit the Virtual Hope Board at [SafeHelpline.org/HOPE-Board](https://SafeHelpline.org/HOPE-Board).

safehelpline.org      877-995-5247

# Helpful Resources

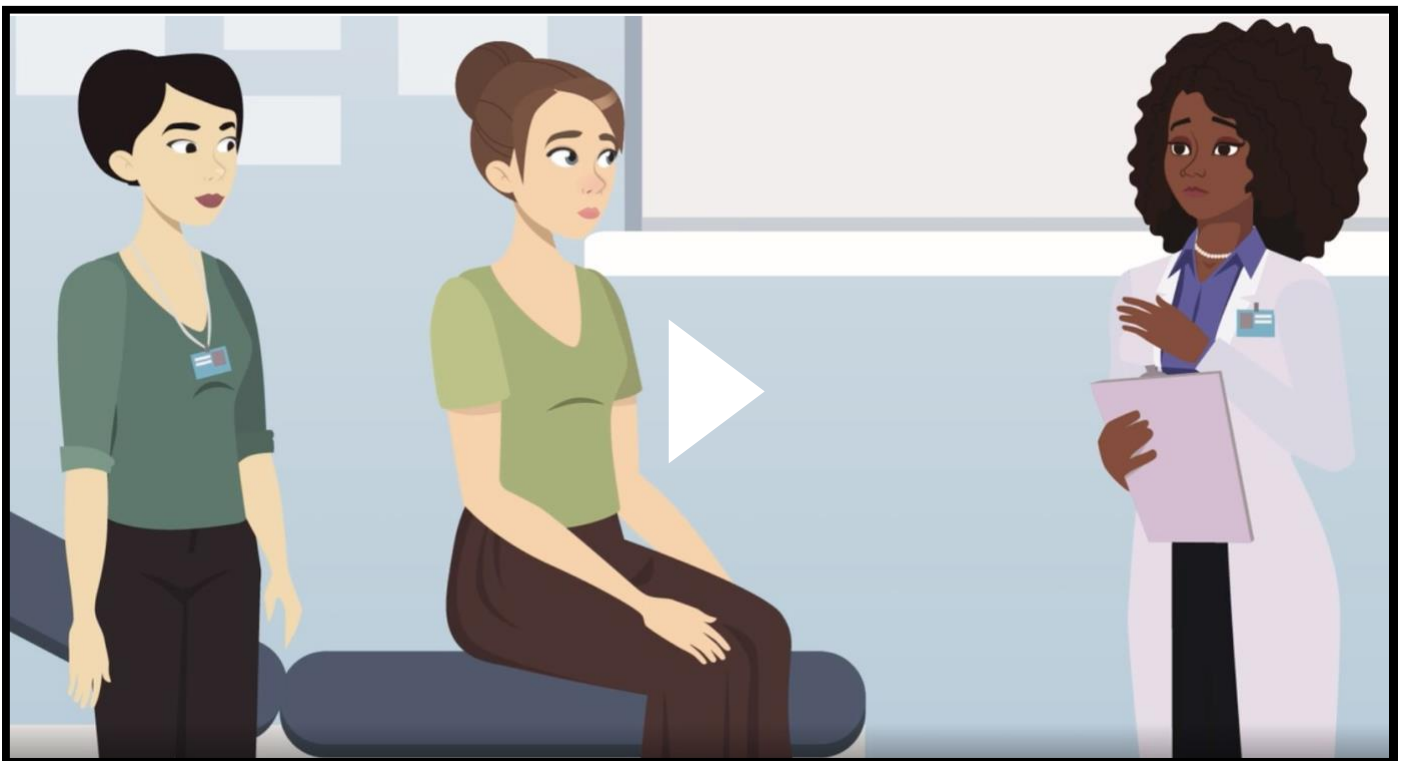
## SAFE Video

Safe Helpline designed a short, animated video with information about sexual assault forensic exams, or SAFEs, to help answer some of the questions survivors may have. These questions include:

- When can I get a SAFE?
- Do I have to make a report?
- What happens during a SAFE?
- What is the role of a SARC and SAPR VA?

The SAFE video has been a useful resource for SARCs and SAPR VAs to share with survivors considering an exam. You can download and share the video on your website or social media sites to inform your community about SAFEs.

Learn more and watch the video at [SafeHelpline.org/SAFE](https://SafeHelpline.org/SAFE).



To download a sharable version of the video, please visit [Shop.SafeHelpline.org](https://Shop.SafeHelpline.org).

safehelpline.org       877-995-5247

DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) | 4800 Mark Center Drive, Room 07G21 | Alexandria, VA 22311-8000 | 571-372-2657

# Helpful Resources

Some survivors may feel anxious or uneasy when reaching out for support, particularly if it is their first time disclosing what happened to them. To help ease concerns and answer some common questions, we created the Safe Helpline Infographic to walk through ways to connect to Safe Helpline services and provide insight into the unique support provided by our specially-trained Safe Helpline staff members.

Ensuring that visitors are informed about Safe Helpline services and comfortable with every step of a session is important to respecting their boundaries and providing survivor-led services.

**DoD Safe Helpline: How it Works**

**All Safe Helpline services are:** anonymous, confidential, 24/7, and tailored to support members of the DoD community and their loved ones affected by sexual assault.

**CALL**  
877-995-5247

**CHAT**  
Online.SafeHelpline.org

**DISCUSS**  
SafeHelpRoom.org

**You will always be connected to a live, specially trained professional.**

“ One of the most profound gifts we can give survivors who come to Safe Helpline is simply listening to them. No one should have to go through healing from a sexual assault alone. ”  
—Sami, Safe Helpline staff member for over three years

“ Compassion and support are at the heart of DoD Safe Helpline staff. It is what they provide to each visitor, and why we enjoy being a part of Safe Helpline. ”  
—Sydney, Safe Helpline staff member for over ten years

“ When a survivor is connected with one of our staffers, they should know that this is a safe place, free from judgment or shame. We can help survivors find the support they need and deserve. ”  
—Jason, Safe Helpline staff member for over three years

For a sharable copy of the Safe Helpline infographic, please visit [Shop.SafeHelpline.org](https://shop.safehelpline.org).

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# SHARE

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## Safe Helpline

There are a number of easy ways to share information about DoD Safe Helpline:

- Safe Helpline promotional materials.
- Social media copy and graphics.
- Newsletter announcement.

The following outreach content and ideas have all been approved for use by DoD SAPRO. However, please ensure that you also receive any necessary approvals from your Service and base leadership prior to posting or using the following materials.

# Promotional Materials

## Safe Helpline Email Signature

SARCs, SAPR VAs, and other stakeholders are encouraged to incorporate Safe Helpline into their email signature to help spread awareness of Safe Helpline with those you work with. Please consider using the following text:

- Safe Helpline offers free, anonymous support to survivors of sexual assault in the DoD community, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Learn more at [SafeHelpline.org](https://SafeHelpline.org).
- No matter where you are, Safe Helpline can connect you to the resources you deserve after experiencing an assault. Call 877-995-5247 or visit [SafeHelpline.org](https://SafeHelpline.org).
- Need to talk? Survivors of sexual assault in the DoD community can access specialized support at [SafeHelpline.org](https://SafeHelpline.org) or by calling 877-995-5247.

## Download Web Banners

Many Service members bookmark the base/installation website homepage to find general information on events or available resources. By including Safe Helpline on your homepage, it makes it easier for a Service member to access sexual assault support through Safe Helpline. You can download a variety of web banners here: <http://shop.safehelpline.org/webbanners>.

Posting Ideas:

- Download an image and work with the base/installation IT department to make Safe Helpline information the screen saver or wallpaper for public computers on base.
- Work with the base/installation IT department to embed the image and Safe Helpline link directly into your website.



# Promotional Materials

## Use the Safe Helpline PowerPoint Presentation

The Safe Helpline PowerPoint presentation is a DoD SAPRO-approved presentation that can be used to brief stakeholders or Service members on your base or installation. The presentation includes:

- Ways Safe Helpline staff support survivors, friends and family members of survivors, and responders.
- How Safe Helpline ensures services are anonymous and confidential, and what that means for survivors utilizing the services.
- Videos and demonstrations on tools Safe Helpline has created to ensure survivors have a number of ways to access support.
- How Safe Helpline services work with existing SAPR/SHARP services.

You can download the PowerPoint presentation here: <http://shop.safehelpline.org/store/p/39-Safe-Helpline-PowerPoint-Presentation.aspx>.

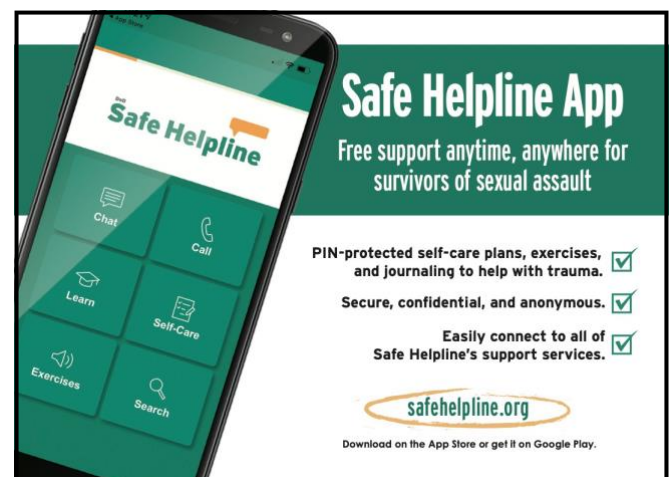
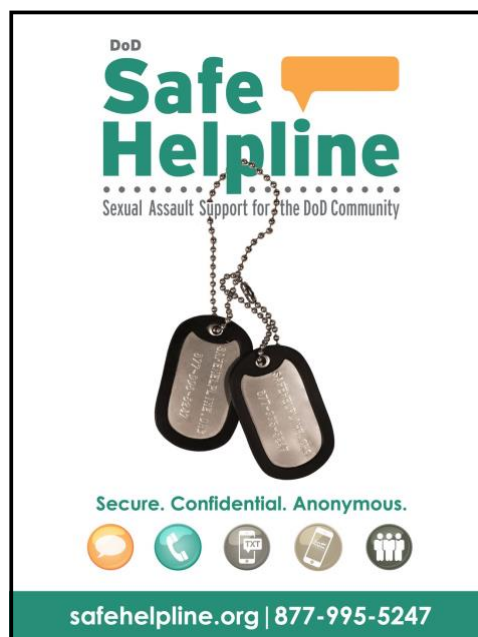
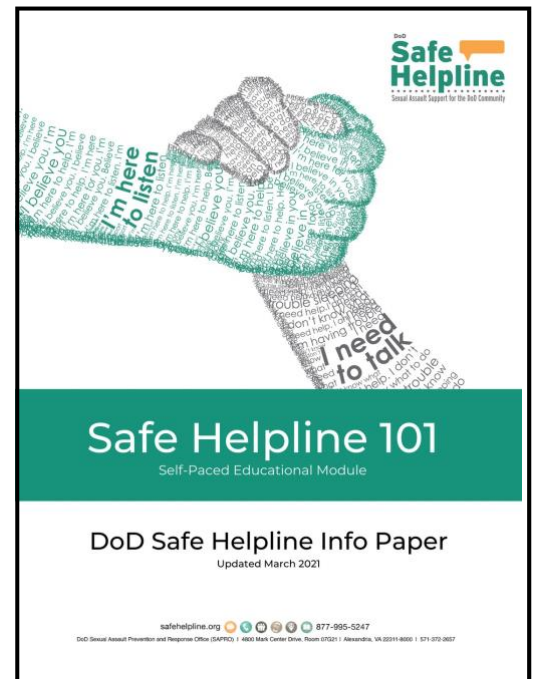


# Promotional Materials

Safe Helpline has free outreach materials available for download and to order at [Shop.SafeHelpline.org](https://shop.safehelpline.org). Materials available include brochures, coffee sleeves with survivor quotes, and dry-erase magnets. Safe Helpline can also ship materials to bases and installations worldwide at no cost.

Some ways to use the Safe Helpline outreach materials include:

- Distributing them during base/installation-wide events.
- Making the items available all over the base (i.e., off-duty lounges, hospitals, and other medical and mental health facilities).
- Connecting with and making items available to stakeholders including Chaplains, Family Advocacy offices, Ombudsmen and Family Readiness Groups, Substance Abuse Awareness and Prevention offices, Special Victims Counsel/Victims Legal Counsel, and others.
- Distributing the items throughout your local community (i.e., local coffee shops frequented by Service members, emergency rooms, local sexual assault service providers).



# Media Mentions

Below are a selection of short blurbs on Safe Helpline that can be useful to include in an email, newsletter article, presentation, or other format where sharing information about Safe Helpline is needed. The blurbs are meant to introduce an audience to Safe Helpline and encourage them to learn more.

If you are interested in a longer-form piece, please see the example newsletter article starting on page 19 or contact us at [outreach@safehelpline.org](mailto:outreach@safehelpline.org).

- If you or someone you know in the DoD community has experienced sexual assault, please consider reaching out to DoD Safe Helpline for 24/7, anonymous, one-on-one support at 877-995-5247 or [SafeHelpline.org/live-chat](https://SafeHelpline.org/live-chat).
- Launched in 2011, the [Department of Defense \(DoD\) Safe Helpline](#) is the Department's sole secure, confidential, and anonymous crisis support service specially designed for members of the DoD community affected by sexual assault. Safe Helpline is available 24/7, worldwide. The Safe Helpline staff provides live, one-on-one support to survivors, their families, and other DoD stakeholders. It is operated by RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network), a national anti-sexual violence organization, through a contract with the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO).
- Since the launch in 2011, Safe Helpline has leveraged important insight and feedback from survivors and responders in the field to develop new services and resources. In addition to the support provided by the foundational [Telephone](#) and [Online Helplines](#), Safe Helpline now includes a [comprehensive app](#), a [suite of educational materials](#), and a [responder database](#) to meet the needs of the community. Safe Helpline is dedicated to providing survivor-centered and trauma-informed crisis intervention services that are anonymous, confidential, and available 24/7 worldwide.
- Safe Helpline services include the [Telephone](#) and [Online](#) Helplines, a comprehensive mobile [app](#), suite of [educational materials](#), [responder database](#), and more. The proprietary technology behind Safe Helpline ensures that services are safe and secure for every survivor, friend, family member, intimate partner, or DoD stakeholder who connects with Safe Helpline staff.

# Social Media

## Share Safe Helpline Social Media Content

Use your own social media platforms to connect with your community about Safe Helpline. One way to do so is to retweet or re-share RAINN's Safe Helpline related posts on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. You can also attach images to your posts by downloading them for free from the [Safe Helpline Store](#).

The following social media content has been approved for use by DoD SAPRO. However, please ensure that you also receive any necessary approvals from your Service and base leadership prior to posting.

### Twitter (@RAINN):

- You call, #DoDSafeHelpline answers. Dial 877-995-5247 for 24/7 confidential sexual assault support and resources tailored to meet the needs of the DoD community. @RAINN
- You are not alone, Safe HelpRoom is here. Join the conversation and connect with other military survivors of sexual assault and in a safe, secure, and anonymous online forum at [SafeHelpline.org/safe-helproom](#) #DoDSafeHelpline @RAINN
- No matter where you are, #DoDSafeHelpline can connect survivors of sexual assault to the resources they deserve. Find resources on or off base at [SafeHelpline.org/nearme](#) @RAINN
- Need to talk? If you are a survivor of sexual assault, you can get specialized support at [safehelpline.org](#) or by calling 877-995-5247. #DoDSafeHelpline @RAINN
- #DoDSafeHelpline is an anonymous support service for sexual assault survivors in the military. We don't need to know who you are to get you the help you deserve. Learn more at [safehelpline.org](#) @RAINN
- Since 2011, Safe Helpline has grown to provide the services and access to resources that military survivors of sexual assault deserve. We look forward to our continued work supporting this community worldwide, today & every day. [SafeHelpline.org](#) @RAINN



safehelpline.org      877-995-5247

# Social Media

## Facebook & Instagram:

Consider attaching Safe Helpline images to your posts for additional outreach or incorporate #DoDSafeHelpline into your posts. You can tag RAINN in your posts, too! Instagram: @RAINN, Facebook: @RAINN01

- Be Available. Be Supportive. Be Informed. Learn How to Support a Survivor in the DoD community at [SafeHelpline.org](https://www.safehelpline.org) #DoDSafeHelpline
- Safe Helpline is proud to have served members of the military community affected by sexual assault for 10 years. Safe Helpline has grown its services immensely since its start in 2011 in partnership with DoD SAPRO. Learn more about Safe Helpline at [SafeHelpline.org](https://www.safehelpline.org).
- Are you familiar with all the ways survivors in the DoD community can access support through #DoDSafeHelpline? Hint: It's not just through the phone. Learn more about how Safe Helpline can help at [SafeHelpline.org](https://www.safehelpline.org).
- Be Available. Be Supportive. Be Informed. Learn How to Support a Survivor in the DoD community at [SafeHelpline.org](https://www.safehelpline.org) #DoDSafeHelpline
- Survivors of sexual assault in the military can get free, anonymous, support from anywhere in the world, 24/7 with the Safe Helpline App. It's free and available for download on the [App Store](https://www.safehelpline.org) and [Google Play](https://www.safehelpline.org) #DoDSafeHelpline



# Graphics

The graphics below have been approved for use by DoD SAPRO. However, please ensure that you also receive any necessary approvals from your Service and base leadership prior to posting. The graphics below may be downloaded at [safehelpline.org/outreachtools](https://safehelpline.org/outreachtools).



Anonymous. Confidential.  
Secure.

You are not alone.  
Safe Helpline is  
standing by.

**DoD Safe Helpline**  
877-995-5247  
SafeHelpline.org

**DoD Safe Helpline Supports Survivors**



**Today and Every Day.**

877-995-5247 | SafeHelpline.org

**Did You Know?**

Safe Helpline is:

- **Anonymous**
- **Confidential**
- **Secure**
- **Worldwide**
- **Available 24/7/365**

**DoD Safe Helpline** 877-995-5247  
SafeHelpline.org

# Newsletter Announcements

Consider using a newsletter announcement to talk about Safe Helpline. The sample newsletter articles below have been approved for use by DoD SAPRO. However, please ensure that you also receive any necessary approvals from your Service and base leadership prior to posting.

## Sample Newsletter Option 1:

### **Safe Helpline Supports Survivors Today and Everyday**

Safe Helpline staff have assisted survivors, their loved ones, and military stakeholders since 2011. “We’re here to support survivors at every stage of the process. Whether you are looking for resources or just to talk, Safe Helpline staff are here for you,” says Keeli Sorensen, vice president of victim services at RAINN.

### **How Does Safe Helpline Address the Needs of Military Survivors?**

Safe Helpline was created to address the unique needs of those in the DoD community who are affected by sexual assault. Some of these needs include privacy concerns, fears of retaliation, and geographic isolation due to deployment or separation from family members. Due to these unique barriers, survivors may be hesitant to reach out to responders on base and choose to connect with Safe Helpline for anonymous and confidential support before reporting or disclosing their assault. In fact, more than half of those contacting Safe Helpline have not yet reported to military authorities and Safe Helpline is their first step to accessing support.

Safe Helpline uses an empowerment-focused approach that works to meet each survivor’s needs in that moment. Safe Helpline staff are here to listen to each user, validate and normalize their emotions, and help brainstorm and problem solve with them to address their concerns. “We believe survivors are the best judge of what next steps are right for them,” says Sorensen. “Our role is to provide the support, information, and resources so that each survivor can make that decision about how to move forward.”

If you would like to connect with a Safe Helpline staff member for one-on-one support, please call 877-995-5247 or visit [SafeHelpline.org](https://SafeHelpline.org).

### **Peer-to-Peer Support Through Safe HelpRoom**

For many survivors, it is important to have the option to connect with one another online in safe ways. That is why Safe Helpline designed Safe HelpRoom, an online, moderated, peer-to-peer group chat service that provides a space for survivors to share their experiences while protecting their anonymity and privacy. Connecting with others in the DoD community who are affected by sexual assault can often reduce feelings of isolation and shame for survivors.

safehelpline.org       877-995-5247

# Newsletter Announcements

Safe Helpline staff moderate topic-specific sessions twice a month. To learn about upcoming sessions, please visit [SafeHelpline.org/safe-helproom](https://www.safehelpline.org/safe-helproom). Special sessions just for men are also available every Sunday from 1300-1500 ET.

*Safe Helpline launched in February 2011 and is operated by SAPRO through a contract with RAINN (the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network), a national anti-sexual violence organization. DoD SAPRO is responsible for the policy and oversight of the Department's sexual assault prevention and response program. SAPRO works hand-in-hand with the Services and the civilian community to develop and implement innovative prevention and response programs.*

For more information about Safe Helpline and the services it offers, please visit <https://www.sapr.mil/> or [www.SafeHelpline.org](https://www.safehelpline.org).

# Thank You

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Thank you for including Safe Helpline as part of your SAPR programming! Please remember to tag RAINN and use #DoDSafeHelpline on social media!

Safe Helpline representatives are available to support your events. If you would like Safe Helpline to provide a brief or participate in an event you are hosting, please email [outreach@safehelpline.org](mailto:outreach@safehelpline.org) with details.

In addition, if you want to leave feedback, or would like to share photos with Safe Helpline, please contact [outreach@safehelpline.org](mailto:outreach@safehelpline.org).