



# Marine and Family Programs

## Role of Peers in Suicide Prevention

LCDR Andrew Martin, Psy.D.  
Manager, Marine Corps Suicide Prevention Program

---

***“Keeping Faith”***



# Agenda

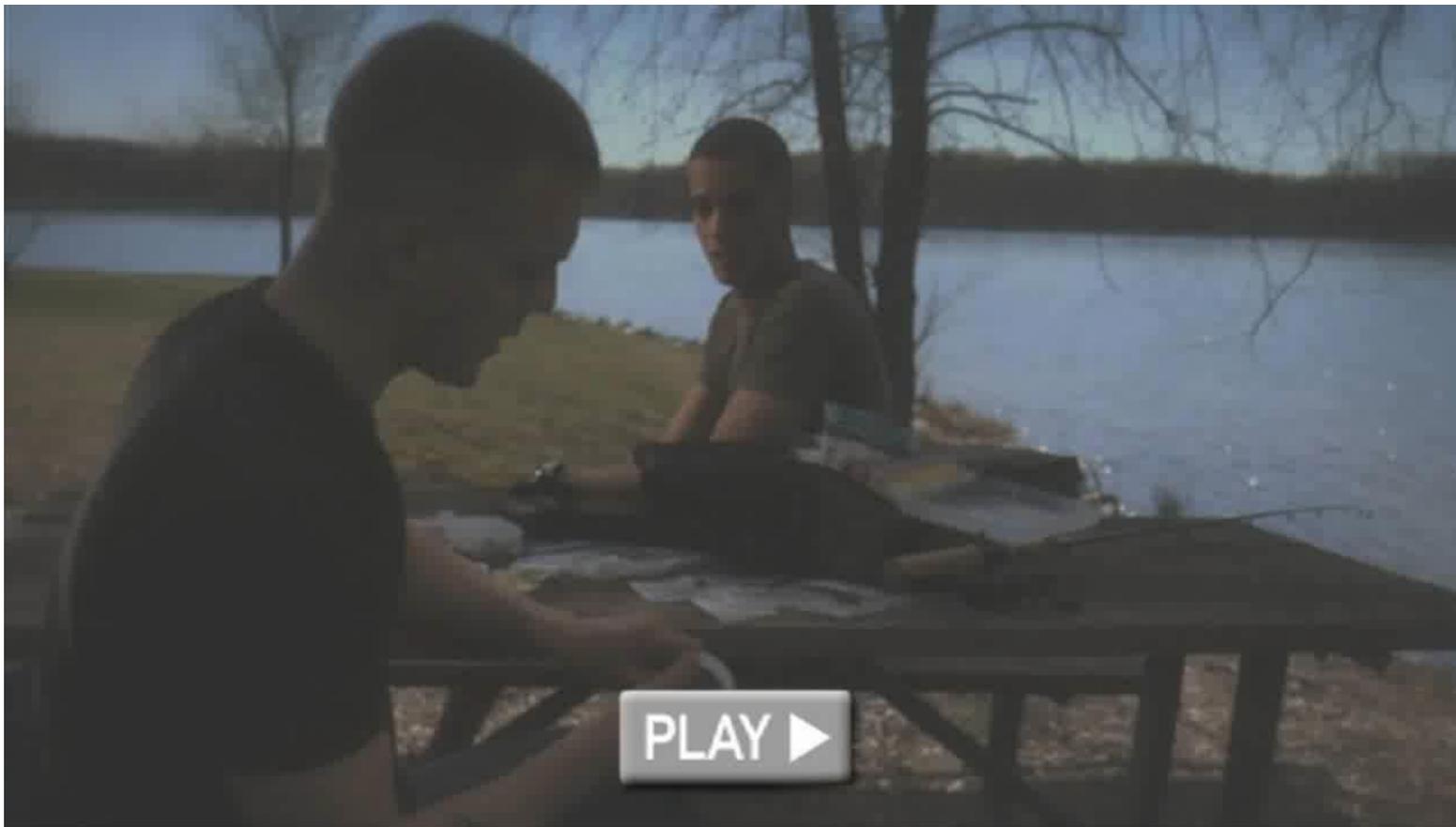
- *Story of Never Leave a Marine Behind*
- *Answer these questions:*
  - *Why use peers in suicide prevention training?*
  - *How are peers used in suicide prevention training?*
  - *How are peers used in suicide prevention?*
  - *What are the challenges associated with using peers?*
- *Wrap-up and questions*

---

***“Keeping Faith”***



# *Never Leave a Marine Behind*

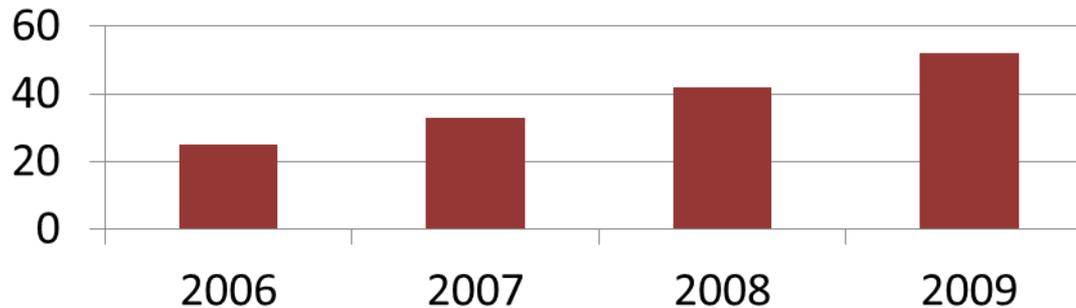


***“Keeping Faith”***

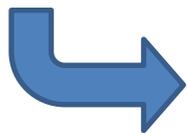


# Rising Suicide Rates

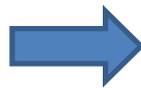
## Active Duty Marine Suicides



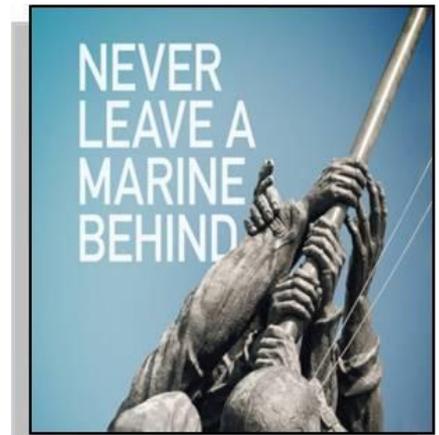
- 2009 Executive Safety Board



NCOs



**SAIC**  
From Science to Solutions



***“Keeping Faith”***



# *Inadequate Training*

- “Boring...A check in the box, then I forget it all”
- “The Navy doesn’t understand us”
- “I hate PowerPoint”
- “I’m not going to talk about this stuff with officers / SNCOs in the room”
- “We’re used to being trained by our unit Sgts”
- Perception that medical, chaplain, and civilians are responsible for suicide prevention

---

***“Keeping Faith”***



# *Training Development*

- Peer focus groups examined:
  - Concepts
  - Content
  - Format
  - Delivery method
- Results indicated how peers would be used:
  - As trainers and facilitators
  - As characters in opening dramatic video
  - In testimonial video footage of Marines discussing suicide
  - As audience members (discussion, small homogenous classes)

---

***“Keeping Faith”***



# Peer Testimonial Video



***“Keeping Faith”***



# Results

- “Outstanding,” “I learned something,” “I like the suicide prevention training”
  - Best-of-Show award, 2010 National Health Information Awards
  - Gold Medal, 2011 National Health Information Awards
- Good reviews insufficient – effectiveness?
  - USUHS prelim results
  - J-MHAT-7 results (training quality/availability, reduced stigma)
  - DCoE/BAH review in progress

---

***“Keeping Faith”***



# *Challenges of Peer Involvement*

- Trainer / facilitator aptitude
- Maintaining two trainers per unit
  - Regional Master Training Teams
  - Lost fidelity over time
  - Operational obstacles (Joint Saudi Arabia, Embassy Guards)
- Previous trainers lose work
  - Prevention Specialists
  - Chaplains
  - Medical
- “Re-run” effect of peer videos

---

***“Keeping Faith”***



## Wrap-up

- Peers listen to peers; have influence and credibility
- Peers see the first signs of distress
- Create a protective environment
- Give the community a sense of ownership
- Pilot testing / program development
- Peer audiences encourage discussion

---

***“Keeping Faith”***

# UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS



*“We will keep faith with our Marines,  
our Sailors, and our families.”*

General J. F. Amos

35th Commandant of the Marine Corps

Marine and Family Programs Division

