

Fight as Kentuckians



Kentucky National Guard Suicide Prevention



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Personnel Readiness

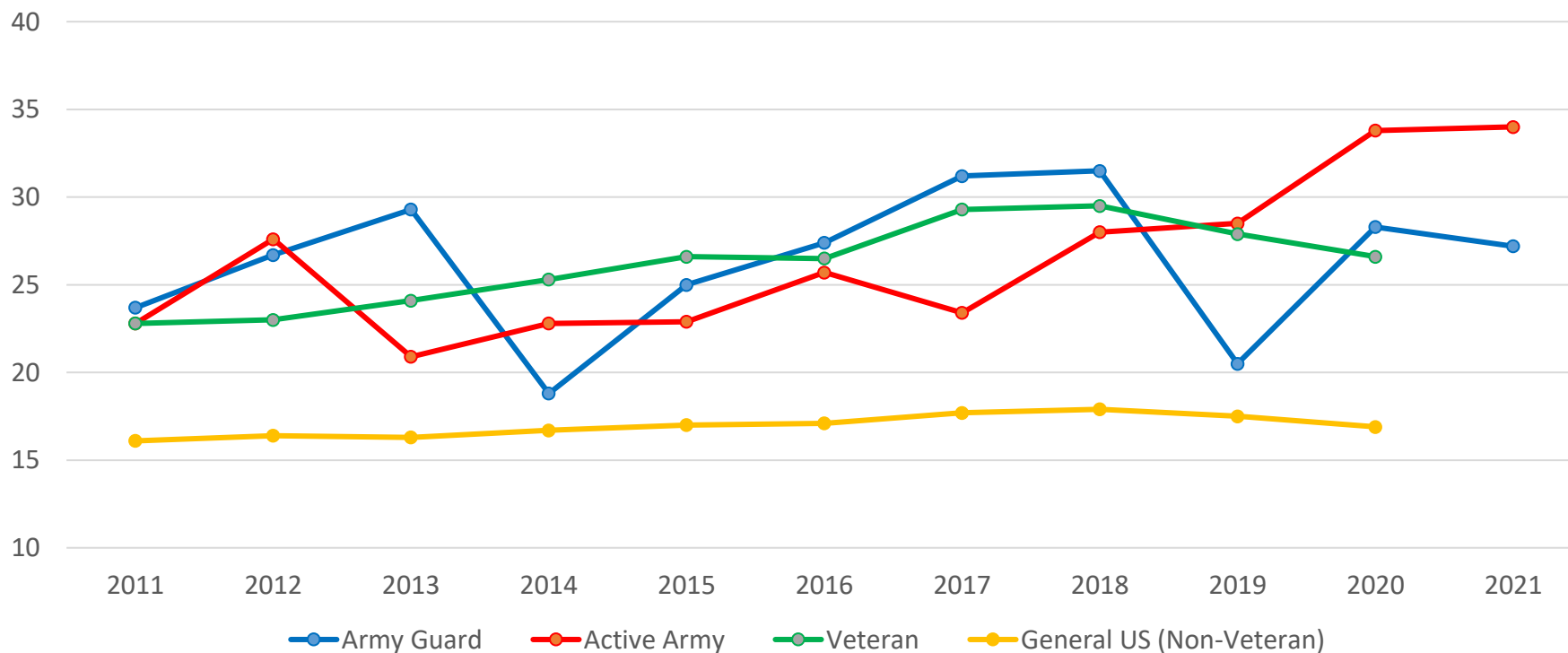
Fight as Kentuckians



Suicide Rates (per 100,00)*	
Army National Guard (2021)	27.2
Army Active Component (2021)	34
Veteran Population (2020)	26.6
General U.S. Population (2020)	16.9

*Age and sex adjusted data shown

Suicide Rates (per 100,000) 2011-2021



Personnel Readiness

Challenges



Stigma: *Greatest enemy in fight against suicide*

- Guard programs are focused on retaining service members and optimizing health

Common Guard Suicide Risk Factors (CY21)

- Relationship challenges/ distress (42%)
- Administrative/legal stressors (21%)
- Work-related stressors (12%)
- Financial distress (10%)
- Firearms access (76%+)
- Mental health diagnoses (33%)

****National Guard remains understudied population***

• Mixed access to healthcare

- Not all service members use or have access to Tricare
- Not all Guard members meet “Veteran” criteria for certain VA resources
- Balancing civilian career with military service limits time/funds available for care

• Policy and funding limit scope of internal services provided

- Unable to offer full mental health treatment internally



KYNG Past and Current Efforts

- **Increases in internal program development:**

- **Behavioral Health:** 6 Full-time and 5 part-time uniformed clinicians
 - 250+ service members actively engaged (15-20% addressing specific suicide risk factors)
- **Integrated Primary Prevention:** Evidenced-based upstream prevention with and program evaluations focused on reducing harmful behaviors.
- **Military and Family Services:**
 - **R3SP:** Resilience, Risk Reduction, Suicide Prevention education programs
 - **H2F (Holistic Health and Fitness):** Fitness, nutrition, performance, and health education
 - **Soldier and Family Readiness Specialists:** 11 staff aid in resource connection, budget counseling, family support programs
- **Chaplains:** 3 Full-time and 19 part-time ministry teams available. Confidential counseling, faith-based support, relationship skills training.
- **ESGR:** Employment support and protection

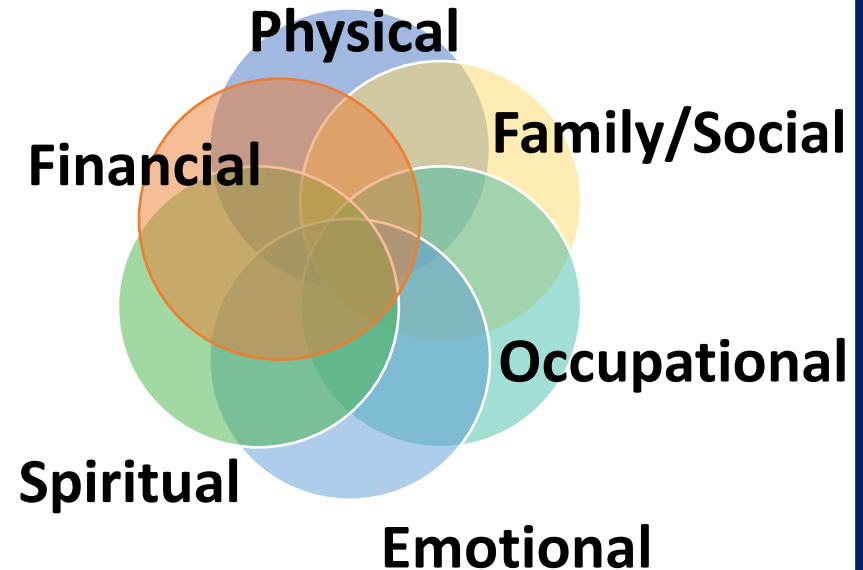
- **Community Partnerships:**

- Governor's Challenge, VA, Vet Center, KDVA, Department of Behavioral Health (Operation Immersion), research collaboration with UK (\$1.1 million grant in 2020)



Way Forward: Comprehensive Wellness

Early and integrated prevention and intervention



Opportunities:

- Suicide prevention as a component of wellness leading to health and retention
- Data on efficacy drive policy and evidence-based improvements
 - Advocacy for increased prevention and clinical intervention staff