



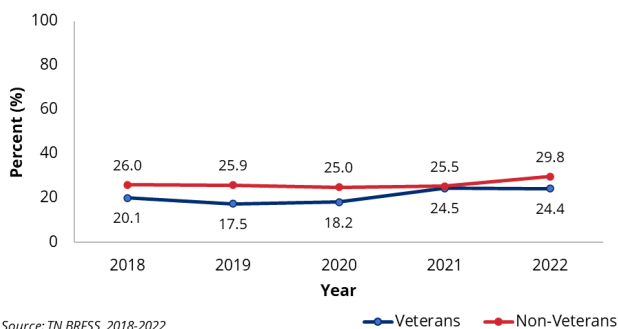
Tennessee Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Quarterly Newsletter

FALL 2023

Veterans' Health

Background: While the percent of veterans in Tennessee's population has not changed over the past ten years, increasingly more veterans have been reporting depression.¹ **Between 2018 and 2022, depression among Tennessee's veterans rose from 20.1% to 24.4% in 2022 (figure 1).**¹ While slightly less common than in non-veteran adults during this time, **veterans had a greater increase in reported depression each year.**

Figure 1: Trend of Reported Depression by Veteran Status among Tennessee Adults, 2018-2022



Source: TN BRFSS, 2018-2022

Data: In 2011 and 2012, the Tennessee Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) asked questions regarding veterans' experiences and mental health and experiences.

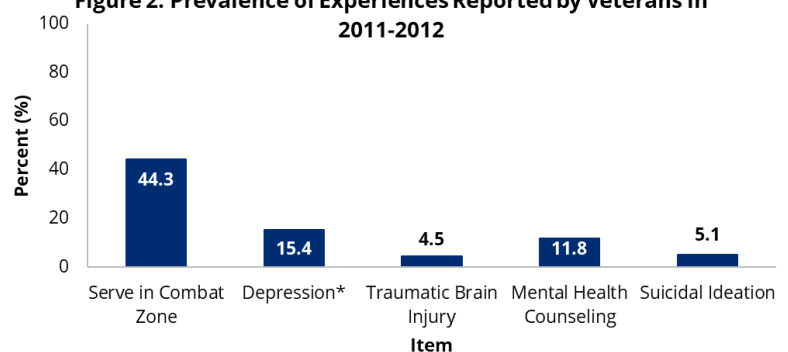
Over 1 in 8 of Tennessee adults were veterans in 2011 and 2012.¹

Among Tennessee Veterans during 2011 and 2012:

- ❑ 44.3% served in a combat or war zone;
- ❑ 4.5% reported having a traumatic brain injury (TBI);
- ❑ Less than 12% reported receiving any mental health counseling;
- ❑ And 5.1% reported experiencing suicidal ideation in the past year (figure 2).

Among those who experienced suicidal ideation, nearly 8% reported attempting suicide.

Figure 2: Prevalence of Experiences Reported by Veterans in 2011-2012



Source: TN BRFSS, 2011 and 2012

*As reported in the standard questionnaire, "Have you ever been diagnosed with depression?"

Implications: The number of veterans reporting depression or poor mental health has increased in recent years. Efforts to consistently track the experiences of, services provided for, and monitor the care sought by veterans should be continued in response to this increase in depression.



Tennessee Department of Health
Division of Population Health Assessment
Office of Population Health Surveillance



1. Tennessee Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2011, 2012, and 2018-2022. Tennessee Department of Health.

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Tennessee Supports its Veterans

- **Tennessee Department of Veterans Services** — TDVS's mission is to serve veterans of all eras through passionate advocacy, information outreach, and an honorable final resting place. TDVS provides information on veteran benefits at the local, state and national levels and advocates for Veterans before the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure they receive the benefits they have earned. It also provides pristine final resting places for Veterans and eligible family members at Tennessee's five State Veteran Cemeteries. To learn more, visit: <https://www.tn.gov/veteran.html>
- **United States Department of Veterans Affairs** – VA has a variety of mental health resources, information, treatment options and more – all accessible to Veterans, Veterans' supporters and the general public. To learn more, visit: https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=search-va&utm_term=phrase-match&utm_content=va%20mental%20health&gclid=CjwKCAjwnOipBhBQEIwACyGLupjp_mnrekOnF_WdaeWm_6ESK4aVSXOxQELtQkmXHS7cDQkE-tjvWxoChIUQAvD_BwE
- **Vet Centers (Readjustment Counseling)** – Community-based counseling centers that provide a wide range of social and psychological services, including professional counseling to eligible Veterans, service members, including National Guard and Reserve components, and their families. Counseling is offered to make a successful transition from military to civilian life or after a traumatic event experienced in the military. Individual, group, marriage and family counseling is offered in addition to referral and connection to other VA or community benefits and services. To learn more information, visit: <https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/>
- **Centerstone Military Services** – Centerstone's Military Services provides care for service members, veterans and family members. To learn more, visit: <https://centerstone.org/military-services/>
- **Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Centerstone** – Clarksville - The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Centerstone is a nonprofit philanthropic organization dedicated to supporting this selfless population by offering accessible, high-quality mental healthcare services. To learn more, visit: <https://centerstone.org/cohen-military-family-clinic/clarksville/>
- **Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services** — Supports and connects in-need individuals with crisis services, mental health care, substance abuse, and hospitals. For more information, visit: <https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health.html>

TN BRFSS Updates

- **2022 BRFSS data is now available!**
 - ◆ Codebooks and other related materials are now on the TN BRFSS website.
 - ◆ For information on accessing the data, contact the BRFSS Coordinator.
- **CDC BRFSS Analysis Tools** have also been updated with 2022 data. Visit: https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/data_tools.htm

The TN BRFSS team is always working on producing fact sheets, reports and data briefs on health issues important to the state of Tennessee. If your program would like to **collaborate on a BRFSS topic** for a data dissemination product, please contact the TN BRFSS coordinator,

Lauren Kuzma: **E-mail:** Lauren.Kuzma@tn.gov, **P.** (615) 532-7890

TDH BRFSS Website

<https://www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/statistics/health-data/brfss.html>

Data Requests

To request BRFSS data from TDH, please visit:

<https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5819792/TDH-Data-Request-Form>

Contact TN BRFSS

TNBRFSS.Health@tn.gov

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February 2024

