

WARRIOR WOD

EXERCISE • NUTRITION • MENTORSHIP

Veteran PTSD Recovery



Prioritizing exercise and nutrition as for veterans' recovery
from post-traumatic stress and suicidal ideation

WarriorWOD

www.warriorwod.org

info@warriorwod.org

@theWarriorWOD

IMPACT REPORT 2024



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INTRODUCTION

In a time where the mental health of our veterans demands urgent attention, our commitment to their well-being has never been more critical. Statistics paint a concerning picture: one in three veterans battles major depression or Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS), leading many down a path of substance abuse and isolation. Notably, veterans are 50% more likely to die by suicide compared to non-veterans, with 22 veterans losing their lives daily to suicide, and 20 more to substance abuse.

Addressing this crisis, WarriorWOD's "Exercise, Nutrition, Mentorship of Veterans' Recovery" program offers a three-pronged approach: exercise, nutrition, and mentorship. This strategy is grounded in research showing that regular exercise can reduce PTS symptoms, improve mood, and enhance overall mental health. Nutrition, too, plays a crucial role in mental well-being, with balanced diets linked to lower rates of depression and anxiety. Moreover, mentorship provides invaluable peer support, fostering a sense of community, understanding, and accountability that is vital for recovery.

The efficacy of our approach is reflected in the positive outcomes experienced by our veterans. Participants have reported a 29.7% decrease in PTS symptoms, improved mental health, and a renewed sense of purpose. Our program not only helps in mitigating the immediate challenges but also paves the way for long-term resilience and reintegration into civilian life.

This report delves into the stories and successes of the past year, highlighting how WarriorWOD has made a tangible difference in the lives of those who served. Together, we are committed to a future where every veteran has the support and resources to overcome the challenges of PTS and lead fulfilling lives.



HERO FOR OUR HEROES

WarriorWOD supports hundreds of veterans in their journey to recovery. We are making very positive impacts on veteran suicide and deaths from substance abuse. 1 death is a tragedy, we will not stop until we are at zero.

Platinum
Transparency
2024

Candid.



WarriorWOD was founded in 2021 after Marine Corps combat veteran and Purple Heart recipient Phil Palmer discovered the life-saving impact of exercise during his own battle with Post-Traumatic Stress. Returning home from combat deployments, Phil struggled with the same invisible wounds that haunt countless veterans—PTS, substance abuse, and suicidal thoughts. Traditional treatments left him numb, disconnected, and without hope. But through exercise, nutrition, and the support of peers, he began to heal.

Recognizing a powerful pattern among fellow veterans, Phil launched WarriorWOD with a bold and urgent mission: to use fitness, fuel, and fellowship to reduce PTS symptoms and prevent veteran suicide. What began as a personal recovery story has become a national movement. Since launching, WarriorWOD has supported over 2,500 veterans, with more than 225 veterans completing our full six-month recovery program—and hundreds more impacted through our outreach and peer support.

Our structured recovery model combines three key interventions: exercise (via gym memberships or adaptive home equipment), bi-weekly virtual nutrition coaching, and mentorship from a trained “Battle Buddy” who has walked the same path. Participants undergo monthly wellness assessments using the clinically validated PCL-5 and C-SSRS tools. All services are provided at no cost to the veteran.

In 2024, our program led to a 29.7% reduction in overall PTS symptoms among participants. Hyperarousal symptoms (e.g., insomnia, irritability) decreased by 29.8%, while re-experiencing symptoms (e.g., flashbacks, nightmares) dropped 26.6%. Cognitive and emotional symptoms improved by 31.7%. Most significantly, nine veterans who entered our program struggling with suicidal ideations are alive and thriving today because WarriorWOD intervened.

Beyond the statistics, the transformation is visible. Veterans report increased confidence, restored trust in others, healthier coping mechanisms, and a renewed sense of purpose. Our alumni become mentors, giving back to the very program that changed their lives.

What makes WarriorWOD different is simple but radical: we treat invisible wounds with real, accessible tools. There are no bureaucratic waitlists, no prescriptions required. Just movement, clean fuel, and meaningful connection. While the VA still relies heavily on antidepressants, WarriorWOD offers a proactive, empowering alternative—one grounded in research, data, and community.

Veteran suicide is preventable. WarriorWOD is proving that every day.

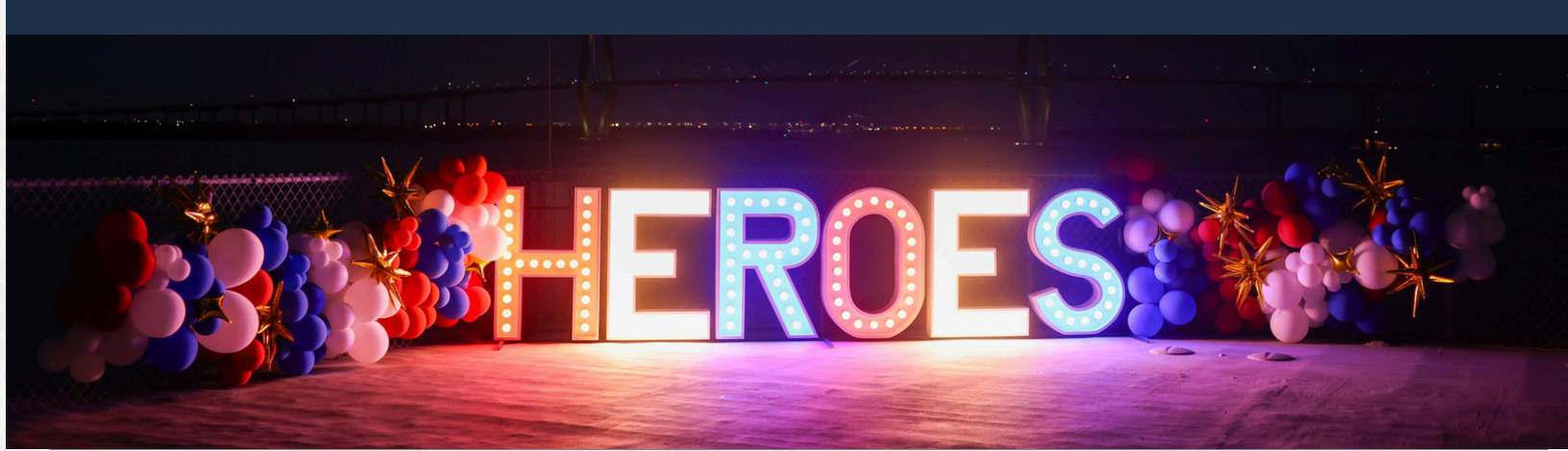
Our Vision

Our vision is the cultivation of a nation that values and prioritizes fitness, nutrition, and mentorship as a non-medical intervention that addresses our veteran's mental and physical wounds, and enhances the quality of life that they earned through their dedicated service to our country.



Our Mission

WarriorWOD combines exercise, nutrition, and mentorship in a research-backed, results-driven recovery program for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress, suicidal ideations, and substance abuse.



WHO WE SERVE

OUR NATION'S HEROES

The battle for many veterans doesn't end upon returning home. The toll of mental and emotional struggles is immense, often more devastating than decades of conflict overseas. Our veterans grapple with significant mental health issues, notably Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) and depression, which frequently lead to substance abuse and an alarmingly high risk of suicide. It's a stark reality: veterans are 50% more likely to die by suicide compared to non-veterans, with daily losses of 22 veterans to suicide and 20 more to substance abuse.

“Ultimately by addressing the root cause, PTS, we will reduce the staggering veteran suicide rate and the number of deaths from substance abuse.”



The prevalence of substance abuse among veterans, coupled with the widespread impact on their families, highlights the urgent need for holistic support. Recent findings emphasize the effectiveness of exercise and proper nutrition in mental health recovery, surpassing even medication in most cases. This knowledge is crucial in shaping programs like WarriorWOD's "Exercise, Nutrition, Mentorship of Veterans' Recovery" which focus on physical health, dietary balance, and community support as pillars for recovery.

WarriorWOD's commitment is unwavering: to actively engage in supporting our veterans. Recognizing the severity of these challenges, we are dedicated to offering impactful solutions. Our program aims to provide a lifeline, helping veterans overcome their invisible wounds and rebuild their lives with dignity and purpose.

Key Finding

Combining exercise, nutrition, and mentorship drastically accelerates and improves recovery from Post-Traumatic Stress symptoms by 29%

WARRIORWOD'S "EXERCISE, NUTRITION, MENTORSHIP OF VETERANS' RECOVERY" PROGRAM

At the heart of WarriorWOD's mission is our innovative program specifically designed for veterans' recovery from Post Traumatic Stress and other invisible wounds. WarriorWOD is built on the pillars of exercise, nutrition, and mentorship, aiming to facilitate veterans' recovery from Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) and, in the process, reduce both veteran suicide and substance abuse-related deaths.



OUTCOMES OF WARRIORWOD'S PROGRAM

Outcome 1: Reduce Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms

Outcome 2: Reduce Suicidal Ideations and Decrease the Veteran Suicide Rate

Outcome 3: Reduce of Substance Abuse

EXERCISE

The first pillar of our program is structured physical activity. Recognizing the crucial role of exercise in mental health, we offer veterans tailored fitness plans that cater to their individual preferences and abilities. Regular exercise has been proven to significantly reduce symptoms of PTS and depression, as it releases endorphins that naturally boost mood. Our approach ensures that veterans have access to a variety of physical activities, from gym workouts to outdoor exercises, providing them the flexibility to find what works best for their physical and mental health.

Veterans Impacted

1500+

Veterans impacted beyond our program, WarriorWOD aids in their journey towards resilience and healing.

NUTRITION

Good nutrition is a cornerstone of mental well-being. Our program includes personalized nutrition coaching, where veterans work with experts to develop healthy eating plans. This aspect of the program is based on research that shows a balanced diet can have a profound impact on mental health, helping to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. Veterans learn how to nourish their bodies with the right foods, which can improve their overall mood, energy levels, and physical health.

WarriorWOD Program

207

Veterans empowered toward recovery through WarriorWOD's program.

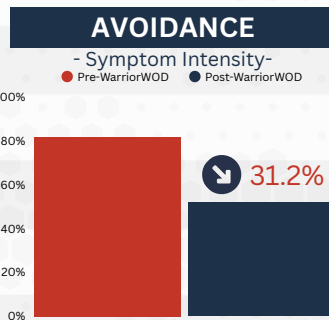
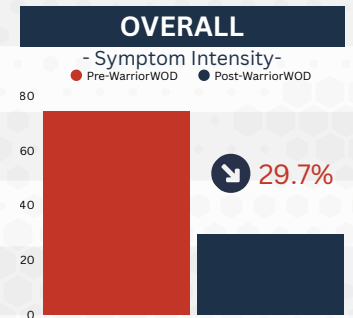
Mentorship

Our mentors, known as Battle Buddies, are also veterans, who have walked a similar path, understanding the challenges of struggling with invisible wounds. The Battle Buddy helps veterans stay engaged in the program, fosters accountability, and provides an empathetic ear, which in turn drives results and mitigates the symptoms of PTS. The solidarity found in these relationships often leads to profound transformations in our veterans' lives.

**total since 2021

IMPACT ON SYMPTOMS: A REMARKABLE 29% REDUCTION

The effectiveness of WarriorWOD's program is not just anecdotal; it's backed by solid data. We meticulously track the progress of our participants through comprehensive surveys conducted before, during, and after their involvement in the program. Using the PCL-5, these surveys monitor 20 different symptoms commonly associated with Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS). The results are compelling: we've seen an overall 29.7% reduction in these symptoms across all standard categories and subcategories related to Post-Traumatic Stress.

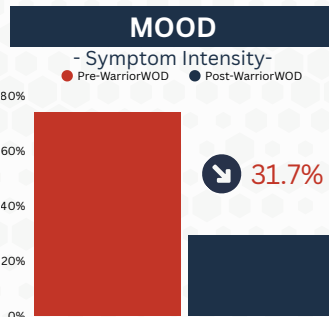
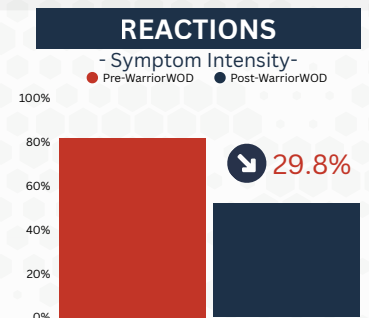


AVOIDANCE SYMPTOMS: A 31.2% IMPROVEMENT

Avoidance is a common coping mechanism that many people use to deal with the distressing thoughts and feelings that come with trauma. While it may offer temporary relief, avoidance often exacerbates the underlying issues in the long run. Through our program, we've been able to help our participants tackle this head-on. The data shows a 31.2% improvement in symptoms related to avoidance, which is a testament to the effectiveness of our comprehensive approach to mental and physical well-being.

PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL REACTIONS: A 29.8% UPLIFT

After experiencing a traumatic event, whether in combat or back home, veterans often undergo significant changes in both their physical and emotional states. These changes can adversely affect their quality of life, relationships, and even their ability to hold a job. Our program has made a significant impact in this area, with a 29.8% improvement in symptoms related to these physical and emotional changes. This is more than just a statistic; it's a transformative change that positively impacts every aspect of a veteran's life.

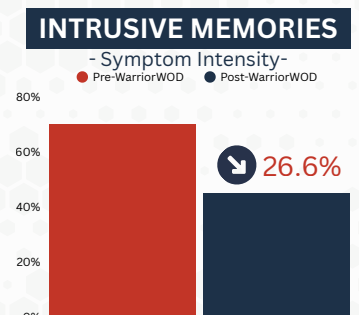


NEGATIVE THINKING & MOOD SYMPTOMS: A 31.7% IMPROVEMENT

One of the most debilitating aspects of Post-Traumatic Stress is the intense, disturbing thoughts and feelings that linger long after the traumatic event has ended. These can manifest as flashbacks, nightmares, or even a general sense of sadness, fear, or anger. Through the WarriorWOD program, we've seen a 31.7% improvement in symptoms related to negative changes in thinking and mood. This is a significant step forward in helping our veterans regain control of their thoughts and emotions, allowing them to lead more fulfilling lives.

INTRUSIVE MEMORIES: A 26.6% ENHANCEMENT

Intrusive memories are a challenging symptom of Post-Traumatic Stress, where veterans relive traumatic experiences through vivid, unwelcome recollections. This can severely disrupt daily life, sleep, and emotional stability. The WarriorWOD program has achieved a notable 26.6% reduction in intrusive memory symptoms. This progress is vital in helping veterans break free from the grip of these memories, paving the way for a calmer, more peaceful state of mind and improved quality of life.



SUCCESS STORIES

James's story is a powerful testament to the life-saving impact WarriorWOD has on veterans battling Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) and suicidal thoughts. An Army veteran who served in Afghanistan, James was no stranger to the mental health struggles facing many veterans. Despite working at the Department of Veterans Affairs and knowing about available programs, he couldn't find the support he needed. By November 2023, he was in a dark place, isolated and losing hope.

James later shared a moment that haunts him to this day. On Christmas morning, just nine days before he joined WarriorWOD, he sat alone in his bedroom, a pistol in his lap, contemplating ending his life. In the next room, his wife and toddler daughter were opening presents, unaware of the heartbreak that nearly shattered their family. The thought of his daughter growing up without a father weighed on him, but at that moment, he couldn't find a reason to stay.



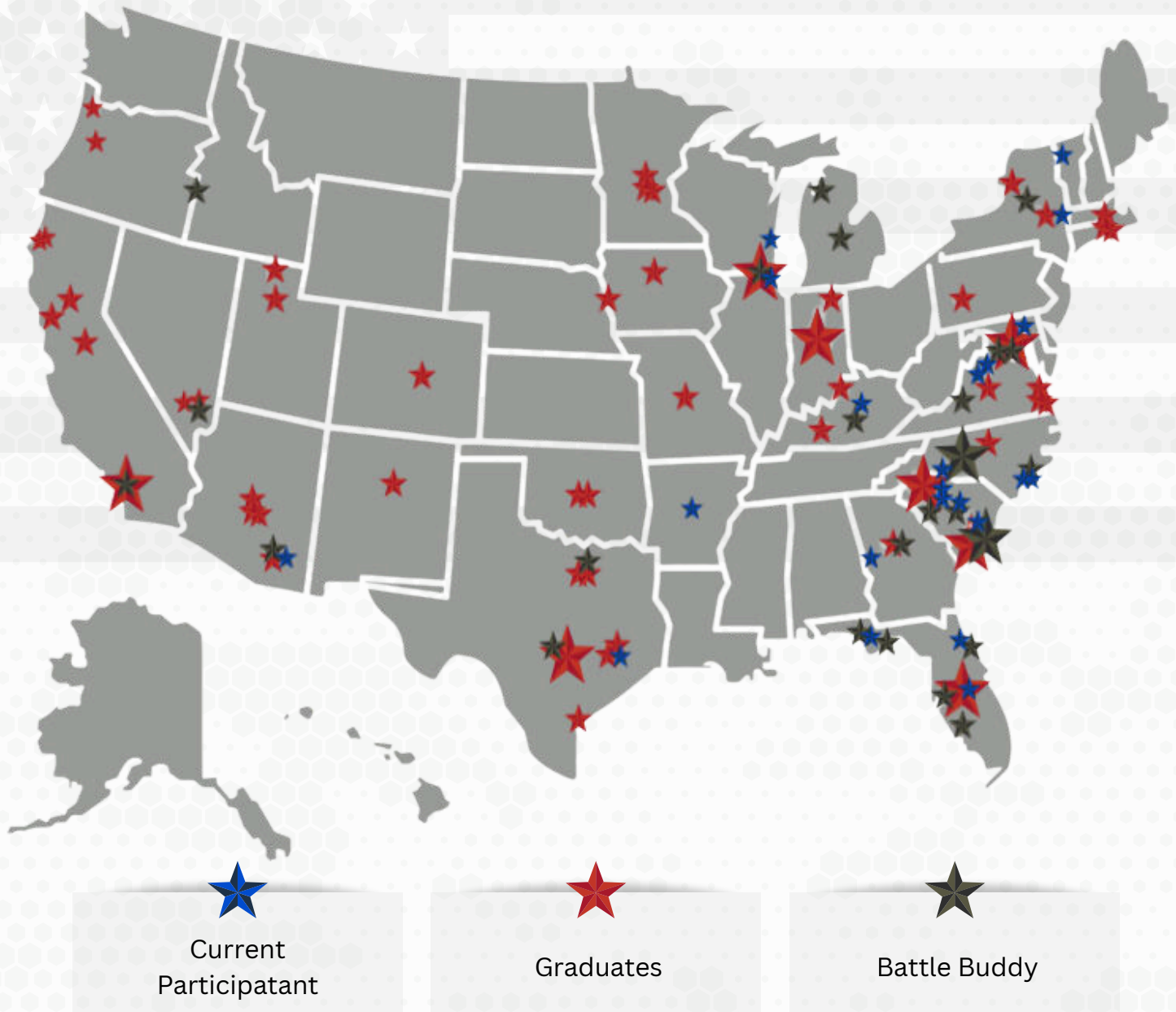
Thankfully, James didn't go through with it. On January 3, 2024, he joined WarriorWOD. From that moment, everything began to change. Through WarriorWOD's focus on exercise, nutrition, and mentorship, James found more than just physical fitness—he found a community that understood his struggles and a purpose that gave him hope. He rediscovered what he called “joy and purpose,” a shift that not only saved his life but ensured that his daughter didn't lose her father and his wife didn't lose her partner.

James is not alone. He's one of nine veterans that WarriorWOD has directly saved from suicide. These veterans came to us on the brink, feeling hopeless and lost, and left with the same words James used to describe his transformation—“joy.” The ripple effect is immeasurable, with WarriorWOD creating a community where veterans find healing, purpose, and the support they so desperately need.

After completing our program in June 2024, James didn't stop there. He became a mentor in the WarriorWOD community, using his experience to guide other veterans along their own recovery journeys. His story is one of many, but it demonstrates how WarriorWOD doesn't just save lives—it creates a ripple effect of transformation, bringing hope to veterans and their families.

But we can't do this alone. There are countless veterans like James who need this support, who are battling in silence and don't know where to turn. Your donation can be the difference between life and death for these veterans. When you give to WarriorWOD, you're not just contributing to a cause—you're directly helping veterans find their joy, their purpose, and their reason to live.

NATIONAL REACH



WarriorWOD is headquartered in Charleston, South Carolina, and is actively expanding its reach both within the state and nationwide. WarriorWOD has supported veterans in 32 states, including Puerto Rico, and two veterans living internationally. Our most significant impact is felt in South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Florida, Texas, and California. WarriorWOD will support veterans regardless of geographic location as long as they have served in the US Military and are suffering from PTSD or other invisible wounds.

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT

A critical factor in the success and sustainability of the WarriorWOD program is the unwavering support and involvement of our community. The collective effort of volunteers, donors, and community members has been instrumental in transforming the lives of countless veterans.

The power of community support extends far beyond financial contributions. It encompasses the time, energy, and compassion shared by those who believe in our mission. Volunteers form the backbone of our daily operations, offering their skills and time to ensure that our programs run smoothly and effectively. They are the unsung heroes who work behind the scenes, from organizing events to providing administrative support, each playing a vital role in our collective endeavor.



Our donors, too, have been pivotal in enabling us to reach more veterans and expand our services. Their generosity has helped us not only sustain our “Exercise, Nutrition, Mentorship of Veterans’ Recovery” program but also innovate and refine to further address the needs of our veterans. These contributions, whether big or small, demonstrate a shared commitment to honoring and supporting those who have served our nation.

Community involvement goes beyond material support. It's about creating a network of care and understanding for our veterans. Local businesses, schools, and other organizations have partnered with us to raise awareness and foster a more inclusive environment for veterans. These partnerships have been crucial in breaking down barriers and building a supportive community where veterans feel valued and understood.

The impact of this community support is evident in the success stories of our veterans. It's in the renewed hope seen in their eyes, the smiles on their faces, and the positive changes in their lives. This support has not only aided in their recovery but has also empowered them to become active, contributing members of the community.

Our success is a tribute to you – our community. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to every individual and organization that has stood with WarriorWOD. Your contributions, in whatever form, have made a tangible difference in the lives of veterans. You have helped create a community where respect, gratitude, and support for our veterans are not just ideals but lived realities.