

Hi,

We want to tell you all about our registered charity; Service Dogs UK!

"I'm not ashamed anymore of having a mental illness as Bert has made it visible; it's easier to deal with. He helps me day to day function with the ghastly symptoms of PTSD. He's been my absolute rock."

Kerry about Bert, her PTSD Assistance Dog



We train and provide Assistance Dogs specifically trained for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), from rescue, for veterans of the Armed Forces, Emergency Services, MCA and RNLI.

We select rescue dogs to be trained as PTSD Assistance Dogs to the highest international standards, so they and their veterans will have Public Access (as covered by the Equality Act 2010).

Having a PTSD Assistance Dog can mean more or regained independence, confidence, 24/7 support & a different way of coping with daily life for a veteran.

We continue to support both, veteran and assistance dog, as part of our ongoing commitment to 'those that serve', past or present.



Why rescue dogs?

We feel that our veterans will have an empathy with rescue dogs. They know what it is like to be in a difficult and sometimes desperate situation. Now, they can change a dog's life for the better and change their own lives at the same time. Doing something positive is a very powerful feeling! Rescue dogs, like veterans with PTSD, have their 'battle' scars and being able to help each other empowers both.

make the difference!

We need **your support** to do what we do!

donate

With Just giving you can set up a direct debit, give a one-off donation or set up a fundraising or "in memory of" page.

Scan the QR code to access our JustGiving page.



Fundraise



See our website for oodles of excellent fundraising ideas.

Foster

Visit our website to find out how you can become an essential part of the charity by fostering a rescue dog under assessment for a PTSD Assistance Dog life!

Find out more...

Visit: ServiceDogsUK.org for lots more information, including how to apply if you are a veteran.

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Service Dogs UK is a registered Charity in England & Wales (no:1165409) and a company limited by guarantee (no:9553131) registered in England & Wales.
Registered address: Fareham Marina, Lower Quay, Fareham, Hants, PO16 0RA



SERVICE DOGS UK

for those with PTSD who have served

PTSD Assistance Dogs, from rescue, for veterans of the Armed Forces and Emergency Services for independence, confidence, 24/7 support & a new way of coping.



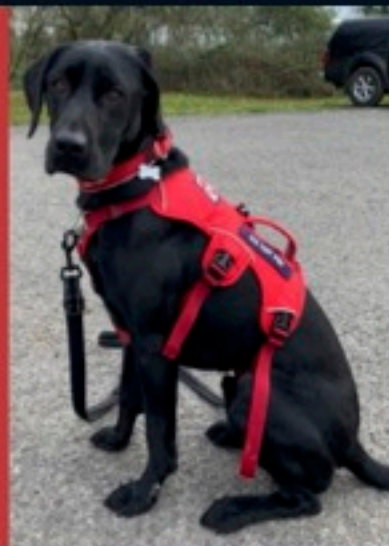
It is easy to forget, that those who serve on the front line, be it at home or abroad, often see and experience awful things so that you and I do not have to.

But this bravery does come at a cost for some and they need your support!

"Beau has become my everything. He has already given me so much joy and love that my day revolves around him."

"I can feel the positive changes in myself, as can others."

Glen about Beau, his PTSD Assistance Dog



What is PTSD?

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is the **brain's natural response** to an extremely traumatic experience or experiences.

For those in the Armed Forces, it's often triggered by being in combat. For those in the Emergency Services, it can be triggered by life-threatening experiences such as having to deal with horrific roadside accidents or stabbings. They can be situations where the person feels intense fear and/or helplessness.

People who suffer from PTSD can have various symptoms that make life very difficult and disabling - just because you cannot see the injury doesn't mean it's not there. Typically, sufferers will experience or feel anger, grief, flashbacks, guilt, despair, fatigue, depression, emotional numbness, sleeplessness, loss of trust, feeling overwhelmed, fear, work/family problems, frustration, insecurity and self-doubt.

Dogs can really help!

Research is currently being carried out in both the US and Canada looking into the benefits of specially trained dogs in terms of mitigating the symptoms of PTSD.

Dogs are able to 'draw out' even the most isolated people. Through engaging with a dog, veterans are able to overcome emotional numbness and lower social barriers.

Through training a dog veterans learn new skills which develop their sense of 'worth'. They learn to communicate with less frustration and fear.

By bonding with a dog emotionally, veterans feel more able to be out in the world, to engage; it's much easier to talk about dogs than yourself!

Having an Assistance Dog means working as a partnership. There is a need for responsibility, for continued training and routine which involves going out at least twice a day, this physical exercise also helps someone feel better.

An Assistance Dog is able to perform specific tasks that will make life easier for the veteran, allowing them to regain their independence and confidence, they also give non-judgemental friendship, comfort and importantly 24/7 assistance.



IMPROVEMENTS

Noted for veterans and service members (with PTSD) who are involved with service dogs.

Increase in patience, impulse control, emotional regulation

Improved ability to display feelings, decrease in emotional numbness

Improved sleep

Decreased depression, increase in positive sense of purpose

Decrease in startle responses

Reduce anxiety & lower blood pressure.

Decrease in pain medications

Increased sense of belonging/acceptance

Lowered stress levels, increased sense of calm

Service Dog Training Program for Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress in Service Members - Yount, Olmert, Lee published: US Army Med Dep J. 2012

What trained assistance dogs can do!



"Milo has changed mine and my families lives. I have learnt how to be a husband and father again thanks to him."

"He gets me out and about, and I feel as if he has my back all the time."

Stuart with Milo, his PTSD Assistance Dog.

Specially trained dogs can do many things like practical such as fetching items and other 'classical' assistance dog tasks. Our dogs are also trained in more 'specific' tasks for the particular veteran and their PTSD condition, such as:

- **Nightmares;** our dogs wake you, nudge, lick & calm you.
- **Medication;** our dogs can retrieve medication safely and on alert.
- **Panic & Anxiety;** our dogs are trained to distract you when you feel tense.
- **And much more...**

Why does it work?

Bonding with a dog releases the hormone oxytocin in the brain which impacts positively on trust, empathy and reduced anxiety - allowing for a sufferer to engage more in social activity. Oxytocin is also being researched specifically in relation to treating PTSD.