NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK, WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY AND ARMY SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH - SEPTEMBER 2012

It is truly remarkable what our Soldiers, Army Civilians and Family members have accomplished over the past 11 years. Our Army and our Nation have asked much of you and you have performed exceptionally well. That said, the stress and strain of more than a decade of war has had an impact on our Force and, in particular, on our people. Unfortunately, many are dealing with difficult issues and some view suicide as a solution to their problems. Every one of these individuals has a friend, a battle buddy or a leader who is in a position to help. We need everyone to get involved – there is no room for bystanders. We are a team, and the loss of even one member of our Army Family is one too many; every single person is too important to lose.

This September, the Army will expand National Suicide Prevention Week and World Suicide Prevention Day to Suicide Prevention Month. The theme is "A Healthy Force is a Ready Force." As part of Suicide Prevention Month, the Army will conduct a Suicide Prevention Stand Down on September 27. This stand down aims to promote good health, teammate involvement, risk reduction and resilience training. Units will promote Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness, stigma reduction, resiliency training, protective factors and effective treatment resources.

Many factors may influence whether someone is likely to attempt suicide. Developing resilient Soldiers, Army Civilians, and Family members requires comprehensive, collaborative Army-wide approaches. Effective suicide prevention and intervention activities require a continuum of services and strong communities that build on individual, unit/agency and Family strengths. Members of our Army Family must adopt effective coping skills, turn to trusted friends and Family members in times of need, and be willing to seek assistance when needed. There is no shame in asking for help.

We urge all Soldiers, Army Civilians, and Families to work together to prevent suicide and to raise their own awareness of the available tools and resources. Remember – your actions may save a life. Army Strong!

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