



Ohio Adjutant General's Department

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Day brings more awareness to serious disorder

June 27 is National Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Awareness Day. This mental health disorder can develop after a person experiences a traumatic event, like a car crash or assault, and often increases the likelihood of suicidal ideation.

There is a misconception that PTSD is only a problem among military veterans and only relates to combat experiences. In fact, a survey of Ohio National Guard members found that less than 10 percent suffer from significant PTSD and more than half of those identify events in civilian life. Make no mistake, that figure is still alarming and requires us all to take appropriate action to make sure members who need help are getting the treatment they need. Recognizing when someone is struggling is the first step.

According to the Mayo Clinic, symptoms of PTSD include:

- Feeling detached from family and friends
- Avoiding thinking or talking about the event
- Engaging in self-destructive behavior, such as drinking too much
- Upsetting flashbacks, dreams or nightmares about the traumatic event

If you know of a Soldier or Airman in distress who needs immediate assistance, call the Military Crisis Line at 800-273-8255. The crisis line staff can connect you with mental health support and crisis counseling services. Also, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services provides responses from crisis counselors within 5 minutes to those who text "4hope" to 741 741.

Extensive behavioral health resources for Guard personnel, their families and commanders are available. Psychological health coordinators are available free of charge for consultation, and there are tools and resources available on the newly revamped **OhioCares** website at www.ohiocares.ohio.gov

Even suspecting you or a loved one may have PTSD is reason enough to get a professional opinion, especially when there's free assistance available 24/7.

Recognizing a problem and taking steps to change – that is a sign of strength.

Major General Mark E. Bartman,
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