



# DPRR

## COMMUNITYLINK

THE DIRECTORATE OF PREVENTION, RESILIENCE AND READINESS NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 2023



Army Community Service helps Families cope with the challenges of Army life by providing comprehensive support services. (Photo by Spc. Vincent Levelev)

## Mission Possible: Improving Family Readiness Starts With Community

By Tara Davis, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

Soldiers are defined by the missions they are assigned, whether a specific task on base, a rescue operation or natural-disaster relief. The list of duties of Army Soldiers can go on and on. Soldiers, however, have been assigned an additional task of improving Family readiness, which is crucial to supporting service members and their Families, thereby ensuring mission success.

"Military-Family readiness refers to the preparedness and well-being of military Families. It encompasses a range of resources, programs and support systems designed to help service members and their Families cope with the unique challenges and demands of military life," says Steve Yearwood, program analyst at the Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness. The Defense Department defines "Family readiness" as being prepared to effectively navigate the challenges of daily living experienced in the unique context of military service, including frequent moves, separation from loved ones, long work hours and deployments.

Across the Army's components, [60 percent of all Soldiers have a spouse or dependents](#), which means the service has many more people to take care of than just its Soldiers. Family readiness is

uniquely tied to Army morale, retention and readiness in that Soldiers' trust in the service and its leaders is influenced by their perceptions of the care and concern shown to them.

With over half of Soldiers having a spouse or dependents, two major goals of the Army are making sure they are ready for the demands of military life and providing them with opportunities to strengthen their readiness and resilience. "When military Families are well supported and prepared, they provide a stable and resilient foundation for service members to focus on their mission," says Yearwood.

[Army Community Service \(ACS\) Programs and Services](#) is one of the ways the Army is committed to building Family readiness. ACS covers everything from financial health to community resilience events. "Army Community Service is a comprehensive network of programs offered to the entire Army to assist Soldiers and their Families in meeting various challenges and improving their overall well-being," Yearwood says. "The specific services ACS provides may vary between installations, but the overall aim is to enhance our Soldiers' and their Families' quality of life." ACS programs and services are available to all Soldiers, from their first assignments all the way to separation

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## DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Team,

It's hard to believe that another year has flown by so quickly! It has been an extremely eventful year, and, of course, the past few months were no exception.

In October, we hosted several highly successful Family forums during the Association of the United States Army Annual Meeting, Oct. 9-11. Also, we supported the planning and execution of the National Discussion on Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment at America's Colleges, Universities and Service Academies on Oct. 24.

We recognized the 40th anniversary of the Army Family Action Plan and Military Family Appreciation Month in November. We continued to provide compassionate support to survivors by hosting the fiscal year 2024 first-quarter Survivor Advisory Working Group on Nov. 15-16.

We also finalized the development and production of the Army Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) and Suicide Prevention awareness campaign materials. Developed under the tagline "More to Be Done," the materials will be available on the DPRR Products on Demand Website in January.

These are just a few of the many projects, initiatives and requirements the DPRR Team has accomplished during the past few months in support of our enduring effort to provide exemplary support to command teams, Soldiers, Army Civilians and Family members by improving quality of life, strengthening the collective resilience of the force and preventing harmful behaviors.

To that end, we developed the [Winter Resilience Strengthening social media campaign](#) for use by program managers and public affairs officers to share across local digital platforms. The campaign is designed to increase awareness about the importance of resilience as a protective factor that buffers against the stressors that may lead to harmful behaviors.

The campaign focuses on the 5 Dimensions of Readiness and provides timely, actionable tips to strengthen social connections during the winter permanent change of station and holiday season and contains informative links to Army resources.

The Winter Resilience Strengthening campaign is more important than ever as a recent Harvard

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## Navigating Your First Holiday Season Without a Loved One

By *Mavia Hanson, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness*

The holiday season is usually considered a time of year when most are celebrating being joyous and bright. For those enduring their first holiday season without a loved one, it can be particularly sad and disorienting. The daunting task of gathering family and friends can seem challenging and painful or prompt more grief. "Sometimes people have an idea of how we should grieve, some type of timeline," says Karen Mojecki, Gold Star mother of the late Maj. Wesley James Hinkley. "Don't let other people put expectations on you. Do what's right for you; do what you have the energy for." Her son died on April 4, 2011, in Baghdad, Iraq.

"The important thing to remember is, there's no right way to grieve," Mojecki says, describing her first Christmas without her son as a fog. "It was eight months later and still a fog, but the neat thing I kept remembering is my son's personal motto: 'My mission in life is to feed the world.' So he would buy me cookbooks. That first year, I made a cookie recipe from one of the books and took them to share with his unit battle buddies. It was a way we could all share in celebrating Wes's life."

For Mojecki, that was the start of a series of traditions she began practicing annually to help share and keep alive her son's legacy.

Aaron Hudgins, the husband of the late Staff Sgt. Jari "JJ" Jeanine Hudgins, who died on April 29, 2019, had a very difficult first Christmas. "We were a blended Family with five children, three sons and two girls. Our world changed immediately," Hudgins says. "The girls left immediately to live with their father, so it felt as if our Family was even further apart. Their biological father was a nice guy, and we were still able to visit each other, but the shock of everything initially was rough." He shares that what really helped during that time was not dwelling on the negative but focusing on the good times they had together. "The children really helped with that. They'd remember all the funny moments we'd all shared, and they'd bring them up constantly and we'd all laugh together. The laughter helped. The kids wanted to talk about her. It's amazing all the funny little things they'd remember, down to the most minuscule memories. They'd bring it up in those first days—laughter was really the best medicine."

Here are some tips from Mojecki and Hudgins to



Aaron Hudgins and the late Staff Sgt. Jari "JJ" Jeanine Hudgins pose with their Family. (Courtesy photo)

consider when navigating your first holiday.

- Be gentle with yourself, and don't expect to do everything solo. Share the responsibilities for the holiday when you can.
- Don't be afraid to try a new tradition—whether it is a twist on an old tradition or starting a new one.
- Don't dwell on the negative aspects; remember the good times.
- Don't be afraid to laugh and include your deceased loved one in your celebrations. There's no right or wrong way to feel, and including memories of your loved one can make a big difference.
- Respect your own grief. There is no need to hide the pain you feel from family and friends.
- Avoid unhealthy coping mechanisms like heavy drinking, and protect your mental health to lessen the strain of this holiday season.

Know that wherever you are in your grief journey, Survivor Outreach Services is available. SOS is the official Army program designed to provide long-term support to Families of fallen Soldiers. If you are a surviving Family member, SOS is here for you.

SOS coordinators and financial counselors provide support to survivors, regardless of a loved one's Army component, duty status, location or manner of death.

SOS serves Army National Guard, Army Reserve and active-duty Families at offices across the country. For more information on the SOS program and locating a coordinator, visit: <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/survivor-outreach-services/pages/survivor-outreach-coordinators.html>.

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## Researchers Discuss Factors in Primary Prevention

By Chester Curtis, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

Opening the 2023 National Discussion on Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment at America's Colleges, Universities and Military Service Academies, Dr. Shamus Khan, Willard Thorp professor of sociology and American studies at Princeton University, and Dr. Jennifer Hirsch, professor of sociomedical sciences at Columbia University, discussed the results of their study concerning the sexual relationships among young

people on college campuses, which they also highlight in their book, *Sexual Citizens*.

Hirsch defines sexual citizens as "people's understanding of their right to choose the sexual experiences they engage in and their understanding that the same applies to other people."

Click [here](#) to read the full article.

## National Discussion 2023: Leaders' Role in Developing Healthy Climates and Prevention

By Antwaun Parrish, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

The final panel of the daylong 2023 National Discussion on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at America's Colleges, Universities and Service Academies focused on leaders' role in developing healthy climates and prevention.

ND23 was held virtually and in person at the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York, on Oct. 24.

This year's event brought together approximately 300 people, including experts and leaders at public, private and government-run educational institutions, to better understand and address the challenges of eliminating sexual assault and sexual harassment on college and university campuses across the nation.

This collaborative forum was intended to develop partnerships, share best practices in prevention and leverage research to create safe and healthy

learning environments free of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

The discussion panel included Brig. Gen. Cindy R. Jebb, Ramapo College of New Jersey president; Dr. Kevin Kruger, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators president; Tania Tetlow, Fordham University president; and Joseph Storch, Grand River Solutions, senior director of Compliance and Innovation Solutions.

The panel moderator opened the discussion by asking the panelists for some of the biggest aha moments they've had during the discussion.

Jebb stated that it's important to set the conditions for community members to get to know one another and to identify and value diversity.

"This is how you build trust," says Jebb.

Click [here](#) to read the full article.

## Importance of Using VA, BH and SVC During the Sexual Assault Recovery Process

By Jeff Travers, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

After a sexual assault, feelings of disempowerment and disconnection are at the center of psychological trauma. Recovery depends on reestablishing empowerment and rebuilding relationships. During the recovery process, the survivor learns to trust again, to take initiative and to reestablish their identity. It is through reconnection and relationships that an individual can transition from being a victim to becoming a survivor.

One of the first opportunities a victim has to be empowered and establish connection after a sexual assault begins with their victim advocate. The victim advocate explains reporting, medical and legal options, which prioritize the victim's ability to make decisions and increase their sense of control and access to resources. The advocate assists the individual in rebuilding trust by validating and stabilizing the victim through safety planning and managing their emotional reactions. Additionally, this professional sets clear expectations of services, maintains appropriate boundaries and keeps information confidential. The advocate also facilitates other support services, such as behavioral

health care, medical care and legal assistance, which also decrease victims' feelings of isolation.

Victims of sexual assault may experience distressing mental health symptoms, such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and feelings of shame and guilt. The trauma from the incident can last for an extended period. A therapist specializing in trauma can provide validation, support and coping skills to help the survivor navigate life. This relationship with the client helps them to reestablish trust and move toward autonomy.

A special victims counsel (SVC) can play a critical role in a sexual assault victim's recovery. The SVC's main goal is to provide legal representation and independent advice to individuals eligible for military legal assistance. They empower their clients by ensuring that they understand their rights and options in the military-justice process so that they can make informed decisions.

Although each of these resources plays a valuable role in a sexual assault victim's recovery, these

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This monthly podcast series provides helpful information through casual conversations with experts. You can listen to the latest episodes at <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/podcast.html>.

**Episode 12:**  
Stress and Physical Performance, with Whitney Tramel

Whitney Tramel, senior health education administrator for CHAMP-HPRC, will discuss how stress affects service members' physical performance, including reviewing and defining what stress is and explaining how to identify military stressors.

**Episode 13:**  
One Second of Hope, with Leslie Weirich

Leslie Weirich shares the story of her son's death by suicide, explaining brain triggers and responses and how to build resilience in times of crisis.

<https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/podcast-gallery.html>

resources are being underused, based on the documentation of sexual assault response coordinators in the system of record. Fewer than half of eligible victims are working with a victim advocate or an SVC, and only 30 percent are seeking behavioral health services. The difficulty sexual assault victims have in asking for help is exacerbated in the military environment. When victims do not establish positive connections and coping skills, they often turn to unhealthy behaviors (substance abuse, self-harm, isolation, suicidal thoughts).

"Victims of sexual assault should never hesitate to reach out to the resources and support systems provided by the Army SHARP program and other agencies. Utilizing these resources is a brave and essential step toward healing and reclaiming their lives," says Jill Londagin, director of the SHARP program. It is imperative, therefore, that all leaders encourage their subordinates to seek assistance when struggling with the aftermath of sexual violence and trauma so that they can transition from victim to survivor.



## DOD Announces the Winners of the 33rd Annual Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Awards

By Chester Curtis, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

The Department of Defense announced that U.S. Army Garrison West Point Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) was selected as the recipient of the 33rd Annual Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award.

The Community Drug Awareness Award recognizes the best drug demand reduction program within each military service, the National Guard, Reserves, defense Agencies and DOD field activities. This year's award nominations highlighted efforts aimed at preventing fentanyl misuse.

The award was established by the department in 1990 to promote its support of outreach and prevention programs within the DOD community.

"This year's award nominations highlighted efforts and actions aimed at preventing fentanyl misuse. Nominations were evaluated by the Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness on how fentanyl was addressed within their prevention activities," says Tom Gilliard, DPRR deterrence program manager.

For the military services to win the award, they must adhere to the judging criteria, which include maximizing the use of DOD drug demand reduction assets to effectively reach the targeted audience, documented participation in Red Ribbon Week observances, and program impacts as determined by some observable and measurable events, such as number of personnel supported by the programs.

During fiscal year 2023, West Point ASAP engaged



Dr. Brain Crandall interacts with community members at Fickens Field in Highland Falls, New York, using the Name That Drug game wheel. (Courtesy photo)

in a robust awareness and educational campaign throughout the year on the West Point Garrison and in the surrounding community. The dangers of fentanyl misuse were emphasized at all events. The top three highlights of the year were:

- Red Ribbon Week, Oct. 23-31, 2022: The campaign used \$2,100 in funding from drug demand reduction sources, benefiting one elementary school and two middle schools, and providing awareness to cadets, faculty and staff at the United States Military Academy.

"This positively impacted over 1,000 public school students, 4,400 cadets, and additional school staff and faculty," says Col. Brian Jacobs, interim Garrison Commander. This also included the West Point Department of Defense Education Activity and the Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery Central School District.

- Drugged, Drunk and Distracted Driving, or 3D, December 2022: ASAP conducted several activities during the month. A totaled car was displayed on post, with an electronic marquee emphasizing safe, drug- and distraction-free driving.

"The dangers of fentanyl misuse were addressed at this event," says Jacobs. "ASAP also partnered with the local high school social worker and spent a day staffing a display and engaging with high school students on the 3D month theme."

- Highland Falls Family Fun Day, June 3, 2023: ASAP supported the Highland Falls Family Fun Day, held at Fickens Field, New York. ASAP set up a tent/display alongside the Orange County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council and the Highland Falls Community Coalition (a group ASAP participates in to address substance misuse in community schools).

Numerous individuals and families stopped by the tent to play the wheel game, receive promotional items and informational brochures, and discuss the dangers of substance misuse, to include fentanyl misuse, according to Jacobs. Over 500 people from the local community and West Point attended the event.

"Fentanyl abuse has taken a toll on the nation," says Gilliard. "Taking care of people, including the prevention of misuse of prescription or illicit drugs, is a priority for the Army. The Drug Awareness Award is well-deserved for the USAG West Point Army Substance Abuse Program."

## DOD Releases Annual Report on Suicide in the Military: CY2022

By Department of Defense

On Oct. 26, the DOD released the DOD Annual Report on Suicide in the Military: Calendar Year (CY) 2022, providing annual suicide data of service members and their dependents, and outlining current and ongoing suicide prevention efforts across the DOD.

As part of Secretary Austin's far-reaching efforts to prevent suicide, including establishing the Suicide Prevention and Response Independent Review Committee (SPRIRC) in 2022, he recently approved a campaign plan in September 2023 with five lines of effort and multiple enabling tasks to strengthen the department's suicide prevention strategy. This includes over 100 actions directed by the secretary to help prevent suicide among our Armed Forces.

The previous announcement on the department's ongoing way forward to prevent

suicide is accessible at this [link](#), and Austin's memo, "New DoD Actions to Prevent Suicide in the Military," can be found at this [link](#).

Every death by suicide is a tragedy. The department will continue to build on these efforts to demonstrate our unwavering commitment to the wellness, health, and morale of our Total Force, and honor the memory of those lost to suicide.

About the data and findings in the Annual Report on Suicide in the Military:

The Department's public health experts assess suicide rates, which is the number of suicide deaths per 100,000 people per year, to better understand changes or trends. Suicide rates fluctuate from year to year, and as a result the Department considers overall trends and seeks a sustained reduction in rates over multiple years.

For example:

Active Component suicide rates have gradually increased since 2011. While the 2022 Active Component rate is slightly higher (3%) than 2021, both years remain lower than 2020.

For the Reserve and Guard, there is no increasing or decreasing trend across 2011-2022. Although there were 12% and 18% rate decreases in the Reserve and National Guard (respectively) from the previous year, like the Active Component these changes are not statistically significant. (In this context, 'not statistically significant' means that experts who analyze the data cannot be certain this is a true change and, instead, changes from one year to the next could be due to normal variations in data.)

Click [here](#) to read the full article.



## Boundary Setting: Saying No in a Positive Way

By Lytaria B. Walker, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

“Sometimes people can get confused on what a boundary is, so I think, when it comes to setting boundaries and saying no in a positive way, it pays to be very clear,” says Joy Ingram, a workshop facilitator at Resilience for Advocates through Foundational Training (RAFT).

RAFT’s mission is to support organizations and advocates in a way that cultivates human-centered workspaces through foundational wellness, practices, resources and training in order to build resilience and to promote a positive gender-based violence advocacy ecosystem.

“So basically, we work with advocates who help survivors in order to keep them well so that they can continue to do the hard work,” Ingram says.

Boundaries are a major component of saying no in a positive way. Ingram explains boundaries as

guidelines, rules and limits that people create for themselves. “Boundaries should be reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to treat them as well. Boundaries also include how that person will respond when someone steps outside of those limits.”

She continues: “When you set these limits, you know, sometimes people will try and cross your boundaries, and so you have to be able to say no as a barrier to them crossing your boundaries. And the way that we talk about saying no in a positive way helps you maintain relationships with people, and it also helps you maintain your power in those relationships with people.”

There are three types of boundaries: physical, psychological/mental and spiritual. Physical boundaries pertain to personal space, your

personal bubble and privacy. An example of this boundary is, “I am so glad to meet you! I don’t shake hands—let’s elbow bump instead.” According to Nina Brown, author of *Coping With Infuriating, Mean, Critical People*, there are four types of psychological boundaries: soft, rigid, spongy and flexible.

Ingram says, “When your boundaries are soft or spongy, people don’t take you serious.” According to Ingram, flexible boundaries are the best type in most situations. Flexible boundaries can change, but they change for a reason and in certain situations. The person setting the boundaries understands why those boundaries changed. The person adhering to the boundaries also understands why the boundaries changed.

Click [here](#) to read the full article.

## Making Army Bases Holiday Havens for Kids

By Kim Ferraro, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

There’s likely no time of year that kids look forward to more than the December holidays. It is a magical month, when homes and stores glow with lights, trendy toys are on display everywhere, and iced gingerbread replaces wheat bread in diets. Kids everywhere are under the seasonal spell, but for those whose parents serve in the military, that spell can be broken at times when they think of their far-off relatives and friends. And for military parents, with physically and mentally taxing 24/7 jobs, it is a daunting challenge to meet their children’s expectations, which are as high as Santa’s sleigh in the sky.

Army bases, while no North Pole substitute, do their best to transform into spellbinding playlands that will rival those of the outside world and dazzle kids big and small. Fort Campbell, in Tennessee, and Fort Johnson, in Louisiana, are just two that carry out this top-priority mission.

Fort Campbell kicks off the festivities with a Winter Wonderland, an extravagant two-day affair featuring brilliant lights, handmade crafts, food trucks, caroling and music from the Army band. Over the month, kids have multiple opportunities to engage with the season’s twinkle-eyed MVP: at a photo session; during a breakfast-and-bowling event, at which Santa gives each child a gift; and in his “satellite workshop,” within the base’s library. At the tree lighting, “Santa usually arrives on a fire truck with lights flashing and helps to turn on the tree lights, along with a child and the commander,” says Melissa Schaffner, NAF Support chief.

“Seeing their faces with smiles and laughter as they receive a gift or experience something festive has the same impact on the adults around them, as if we were all related to one another—and in a way, we are. No matter where in the world these children may be as they follow their parents through Army transitions, we strive to provide a feeling of home and family.”

At Fort Johnson, the staff of the Morale, Welfare and Recreation division also tackles holiday entertainment plans with military precision. “We are a very robust organization that provides programs and events for all audiences in our community,” says Stormie Tippit, NAF Support chief. Along with traditional activities like a tree-lighting ceremony and visits with Santa, the base offers more unusual recreational options, including “elf hunting” on the golf course (à la the game Elf on the Shelf) and a brunch with the Grinch. Families on a tight budget can snag a free tree and gifts to put under it, courtesy of Trees for Troops and the toy drive. Together, parents and kids can burn off cookie and eggnog energy in the Jingle Bell 5K.

Yet despite the abundance of festivities, kids may feel twinges of sadness over being apart from friends and other loved ones outside of their military community. This is natural, and parents should stress that to their children, says Lt. Col. Justin Orton, the chief of the department of behavioral health at Blanchfield Army Community Hospital at Fort Campbell.

Click [here](#) to read the full article.

## SAAPM 2024 Theme Announced: Change Through Unity

The 2024 Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month theme is “Change Through Unity: Empower. Protect. Prevent.” This theme emphasizes the change within the Army Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program; unity in the fight against sexual assault; promotion of respect and empowerment for all; and the role of Army Team members in creating healthy climates while reinforcing their responsibility to act to prevent sexual assault/sexual harassment.



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**SAAPM**  
Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month

# AROUND THE FORCE

- ▶ SHARP
- ▶ ASAP
- ▶ Family Advocacy Program (FAP)
- ▶ I-PAG
- ▶ AUSA 2023



### Army SHARP Academy SARC/VA Career Course Graduation Awardees

FORT LEAVENWORTH, Kan.—On Nov. 17, the Army SHARP Academy graduated 31 students from the SARC/VA Career Course (Class 24-001). Col. Travis Jacobs, the director of the SHARP Academy, recognized individuals for exceptional performance, including Academic Excellence Award recipient Capt. Toni Salvatore, Army National Guard, and Jay Lee Hoffman Spirit Award recipient Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Sessoms, INSCOM. Congratulations to Class 24-001 graduates!



### 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command Celebrates Red Ribbon Week 2023

FORT LIBERTY, N.C.—Colonel John Hinson, commander of the 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, participates in a red ribbon-cutting ceremony at Randall David Shughart Elementary and Middle Schools. The event, hosted by the Army Substance Abuse Program, was a key component of Red Ribbon Week. This annual observance takes place October 23 to 31 and encourages Soldiers and their Family members to wear and display red ribbons, symbolizing their dedication to a drug-free lifestyle. The week is designed to foster a commitment to drug-free communities and healthy living among students and their Families. Red Ribbon Week also serves as a tribute to Drug Enforcement Administration Special Agent Enrique “Kiki” Camarena and other law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the war against drugs.



### Humphreys Community Raises Awareness for Domestic Violence Through Resource Fair

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea—The U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys community services Family Advocacy Program organized Purple Pumpkins for a Purpose as a way to gather the community and raise awareness about domestic violence and the services available to Soldiers and Families. Michael Duncan, the garrison’s executive officer, is shown judging pumpkins.



**G-9 Booth at the Association of the United States Army Annual Meeting and Exhibition**  
WASHINGTON, D.C.—Chester Curtis of DPRR oversees the HQDA Deputy Chief of Staff, G-9 Booth at the 2023 Association of the U.S. Army Annual Meeting and Exhibition.



### Military Charity Organization Receives Humanitarian Award

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Secretary of the Army Christine E. Wormuth awarded the 2023 Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher Distinguished Civilian Humanitarian Award to members of the Children of the Fallen Patriots Foundation. The award honors individuals who profoundly impact the lives of service members and their Families.



### Hall Presents at the American Public Health Association Conference

ATLANTA, Ga.—Dr. Stephanie Hall, prevention integrator of the Integrated Prevention Division, presents “Building Evaluation Capacity Across the Army Through Integrated Primary Prevention” at the American Public Health Association Conference held Nov. 12-15. The presentation focused on the Army’s shift toward primary prevention and the development of evaluation strategies for assessing implemented programs.



## Mindful Eating: An Approach to Health and Nutrition for Our Military

By Chester Curtis, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

Military personnel are not immune to weight gain or obesity. In 2017, the Defense Department was estimated to spend \$3.4 billion annually on obesity-related health care costs for service members. A strategy for weight management that is growing in popularity is mindful eating, and with the holidays approaching, it is worth investigating.

Mindful eating is an approach to food that focuses on individuals' sensual awareness of the food and their experience of it. It has little to do with calories, carbohydrates, fat or protein, JB Nelson says in his book *Mindful Eating: The Art of Presence While You Eat*.

According to Nelson, the purpose of mindful eating is not to lose weight, although it is highly likely that those who adopt this style of eating will lose weight. The goals are to help individuals savor the moment and the food and to encourage their full presence for the eating experience.

Nelson says diets tend to focus on rules of eating (such as what to eat, how much to eat and what not to eat), with the intended measurement of specific outcomes. These outcomes are most likely weight loss and, in the case of diabetes, improved blood glucose values and improved A1C. All diets have the potential for success or failure based on a weight loss outcome.

Mindful eating is about being present, listening and responding to our internal cues—namely, our hunger and fullness cues. Research shows that mindful eaters are less likely to eat in response to negative emotion (stress eating). They also make



U.S. Army Reserve Brig. Gen. Karen Monday-Gresham, commanding general of 7th Mission Support Command, and other senior leaders serve a holiday meal to Soldiers, Civilians and their Families on Nov. 22, at Kleber Kaserne, Kaiserslautern, Germany. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Angela Ohern)

less restrictive eating choices and have a greater preference for healthful foods. Often choosing fruits over sweets like candy and cookies, they're less likely to snack without noticing—what we often call mindless eating or distracted eating—which could help with weight loss and digestion.

Practicing mindful eating can have significant positive effects on our health, according to Alannah Gore, a registered dietitian and a member of the Healthy Living team at Giant Food.

"There's evidence that mindful eating can lower blood pressure, improve sleep and even help people cope with pain," Gore says. "Emotionally, mindfulness treatment has been shown to

reduce anxiety and depression. Being aware of one's body and needs leads to more emotional self-regulation, which then empowers people to make choices in their own best interest, which will improve your overall health."

"Healthy habits are not about perfection; it's about balance," she says. "When we eat in a balanced way, there are a lot of benefits for our body and our minds. It can prevent nutritional deficiency. It can boost the nutrient density of the food. It can also boost our immunity and can help prevent certain illnesses. And balanced eating can keep you feeling fuller longer."

Click [here](#) to read the full article.

## PERSONAL READINESS: GOAL SETTING IN THE NEW YEAR

The new year is a time to identify and attain new goals. Remember to follow these tips when creating your New Year's resolution.



### Define Your Goal

Set a deadline for achieving your goal, to prevent procrastination.



### Identify Obstacles

Determine potential obstacles that might prevent you from achieving your goal.



### Take S.M.A.R.T Action

Make sure your goals are specific, measurable, action focused, realistic and time-bound.



### Maintain Motivation

Use power statements that are purposeful, to keep yourself motivated.



### Stay Committed

Keep visual cues to remind yourself of your goal, or enlist a family member or friend to keep you accountable.

To learn more about goal setting, visit <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/R2/Goals-Settings.html>.





## Army Community Service *BOLSTERS FAMILY READINESS* Continued from page 1

or retirement. ACS also provides services to all members of the Army community, including Families, Department of the Army Civilians, veterans, wounded warriors, survivors and retirees.

At the Association of the United States Army annual meeting, three of the top five concerns Soldiers had directly involved spouses and dependents. Those three concerns were childcare, spousal employment, and Family housing and barracks. The Army has made improvements, such as expanding [Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts](#), and announced temporary boosts in the [basic housing allowance](#) for high-demand geographic areas.

As for spousal employment, one of the ways the Army is helping spouses is through the [My Career Advancement Account Scholarship](#). The goal is to assist eligible military spouses in their pursuit or maintenance of a license, certificate or associate's degree so that they can attain a job in their desired field. The MyCAA scholarship can provide up to \$4,000 in tuition assistance. Military spouses who are interested in using this scholarship can call Military OneSource at 800-342-9647 to connect with a career coach from the Spouse Education and Career Opportunities program.

Another valuable resource for Soldiers and their Families is the [Army Family Action Plan](#). AFAP



Sgt. Tatiana Morales Garcia, human resource specialist, 1st Theater Sustainment Command, sits with her aunt, Elizabeth Morales at the University of Louisville Cardinals Military Appreciation Day football game, Nov. 4.

voice [quality of life](#) issues through the [Issue Management System](#). More than 700 issues have been raised, which resulted in 500 improvements through AFAP.

AFAP helps prioritize issues so that Army leadership can review and work on a solution. Yearwood shares that one of the issues that was recently addressed via AFAP was Soldier household goods (HHG) weight allowances.

"One of the recently resolved AFAP issues was about basing Soldier HHG weight allowances on the number of dependents. Although a change in the Joint Travel Regulation was warranted, it was not fully supported. The Army encourages individuals to submit an exception to policy that exceed their weight allowance and submit to G-4; however, the 18,000 pounds statutory cap remains in place. The process has been streamlined and incorporated into the PCS Move app," he says. This issue was identified by Army community members, and a resolution was made to alter the HHG weight allowances. Although there has not been a change to the 18,000

pound cap, submitting exceptions to policy will provide Army leadership with a better example of the average HHG weight for Soldiers when they move. The Army also revised the process by incorporating filing the exception to policy into the PCS Moves app.

"AFAP ensures that the voices and concerns of the Army community, including Soldiers, Family members and Civilians, are heard and considered in the decision-making process. By involving the community, the Army gains diverse perspectives, allowing for a more comprehensive approach to resolving issues," Yearwood says. "Involving the community fosters a sense of collaboration and ownership over problem-solving. It allows community members to actively participate in finding solutions, leading to increased engagement, buy-in and a shared responsibility for the well-being of the community."

If you are a leader, DA Civilian, Soldier or Family member looking for more information on ACS or other DPRR programs, visit [DPRR's website](#).

**"Army Community Service is a comprehensive network of programs offered to the entire Army to assist Soldiers and their Families in meeting various challenges and improving their overall well-being."**

— Steve Yearwood, Program Analyst, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

gives active and reserve Soldiers, Army Civilians, retirees and Family members (including those of deceased service members) a platform to

## Supporting Command Teams in the New Year *DIRECTOR'S COLUMN* Continued from page 2

study indicated that loneliness is a public health problem that has a greater negative impact on people than obesity and lack of physical activity. So, strengthening those social connections are imperative. And remember, watch out for your battle buddy, and check on those who may be struggling.

In January, we have a full slate of financial

readiness events scheduled to include webinars, podcasts, and a Facebook Live event. These events are designed to help Army team members prepare for unexpected events and plan for long-term financial stability.

In preparation for next year's Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month observance, we've selected the theme, "Change Through

Unity: Empower. Protect. Prevent." Look for the SAAPM guidance letter soon and Army campaign materials on the DPRR website by the end of January.

I wish you and your Family a peaceful holiday season and a happy new year!

Dee Geise, DPRR Director



## Performance Experts Coach Soldiers at Holistic Wellness Week

*Erik Moshe, Contractor, Ready and Resilient (R2) Performance Center*

Performance Experts (PEs) Kennisha Murphy and Kanata Omori from the National Capital Region (NCR) Ready and Resilient (R2) Performance Center joined personnel from Fort Belvoir Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR), Fort Belvoir Armed Forces Wellness Center (AFWC), and Alexander T. Augusta Military Medical Center for the sixth time in support of Navigating Operational Wellness (NOW). NOW is a holistic wellness education program created for leaders in the NCR to become informed, well-rounded wellness ambassadors for their units.

Omori taught an interactive lesson on performance enhancement skills to Soldiers to kickstart the week of training. Murphy and Omori also conducted hip-pocket performance training while the group learned exercises and completed the Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT).

"The hip-pocket training during the ACFT allows Soldiers to use performance skills in real time to see how they can be applied during performances and to identify times where their Soldiers could implement the skills," Murphy says. "Application of the skills throughout the week enabled a greater understanding of performances and individual ability."

In addition, Murphy and Omori, with assistance from other PEs, led participants through a resilience obstacle course, adding in mental components to each obstacle.

"The obstacle course allows students to learn how to work together as a team while coaching others on performance skills in the moment," Omori says. "Students had a rich debrief discussion about the importance of talent management and cohesion for an effective team. Soldiers translated teamwork on the obstacle course to the real-life military workforce."

According to Omori, the soldiers enjoyed the obstacle course. "They worked together to overcome physical and mental challenges while implementing some skills they learned throughout the week. Many Soldiers saw the obstacle course as an activity they could take back to their unit for a chance to bond with their Soldiers."

After the course, a Soldier commented, "This course has helped me feel more confident in conducting unit MRT trainings. I now have specific resources to help me enhance trainings and be a more competent advocate for myself and my Soldiers."

"We're very proud of the training we worked together on with all of the installation resources located on Fort Belvoir," Omori says. "It's great when different organizations can come together to make a great product to complete the mission of taking care of our service members!"

Murphy conducted a leadership development workshop and a loaded ruck march through the wellness campus to conclude the week.



Soldiers partake in wellness obstacle course guided by performance experts. (Courtesy photo)

"The connection (Active Constructive Responding and Effective Praise) skills, along with strategies to build trust, equip leaders to initiate rapport with their Soldiers," Murphy says. "They can provide advice for challenges the Soldiers may be experiencing or the baseline foundation of common behavior to identify if there are indicators present that the Soldier needs to seek help from outside resources."

Contact your nearest R2 Performance Center to schedule training to increase your team's performance and cohesion. Visit <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/R2/I-Want-to-Schedule-Training.html>.

## Three Free Holiday Gifts That Boost Well-Being

*By Human Performance Resources by CHAMP at the Uniformed Services University*

Gift giving is a fun and meaningful part of many cultures during the holidays. Try giving three "different" gifts to boost the well-being of the recipient and improve your well-being too. Best of all? They're free!

### Gratitude

People often buy a gift as a token of gratitude. However, often the appreciation is overshadowed by the gift itself. Expressing gratitude should help the other person understand what they mean to you, and what specifically they're doing that you appreciate, so they can continue and build on those behaviors. The holidays are also a great time to thank those whose help might be taken for granted. Showing thanks can improve your relationships, health and well-being—and inspire others to bring more good into the world. Here are a few ways to show gratitude this year.

**Write a letter.** The power of a handwritten letter expressing what someone means to you can be the most precious gift in the world. Often, people wait until it's too late to truly honor someone and express what that person means to them. Use the holidays

as an opportunity to reflect on who you cherish, but never properly thanked, and write them a letter. Learning the impact they have on you will be a much more special stocking stuffer than another pair of socks.

**Thank the unthanked.** There are many people who work hard throughout the year to make your life better. This holiday season, thank those who might not be thanked often. Consider a cashier working extra hard to get shoppers through the line or your postal worker and sanitation worker, or a TSA officer or customer service representative. Want to take it a step further? Let their managers know how much you appreciate their outstanding service.

Take a look at HPRC's tips on how to grow your gratitude for more ways to include it in your holiday traditions.

### Kindness

Doing kind acts for others will make them and you happier and healthier! Gift giving is in itself an act of kindness, but you can also give your time and talent. Each kind act you do can inspire someone to help

others—and improve their view about you and the world. Here are some ideas for gifting kindness this holiday season.

- Help a family member with homework or volunteer to tutor at an after-school program
- Help a neighbor with yard work or snow removal
- Coach youth sports
- Visit a nursing home
- Let someone in line go in front of you
- Check in on a friend who might be going through a rough patch

Big or small, find ways to volunteer to help enhance the well-being of yourself and others.

### Joy

What's great about joy, or any positive emotion, is that it doesn't just make you happier in the moment: It's important for your well-being in the long term too. Joy helps you to be more creative, open to new experiences, and resilient in the face of adversity. Here are some ways to spread joy to others.

Click [here](#) to read the full article.



## Army Recognizes Needs of Families With Exceptional Family Members

By Shirley Tien, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

Soldiers and Families sacrifice immensely while serving our country. Although November is recognized as Military Family Appreciation Month, the Army shows its gratitude year-round through resources such as the [Exceptional Family Member Program \(EFMP\)](#).

An exceptional Family member is a child or adult with any physical, emotional, developmental or intellectual disorder that requires special treatment, therapy, education, training or counseling. According to Paul Grossman, program manager at the EFMP, the program was founded in the early 1980s. The EFMP is mandatory for active-duty service members who have Family members with ongoing special medical or educational needs.

“The Army designed the EFMP to be a comprehensive, coordinated, multiagency program that provides community support, housing, medical, educational and personnel services to Soldiers and Families with special needs,” Grossman says. “The EFMP identifies and takes these needs into consideration during the assignment process. The intent is for them to stay together and be assigned to posts where the medical and/or education needs of the Family can be met.”

One of the most sought-out benefits of the program is [Family Support](#). This service consists of systems navigators (staff members located on most Army installations who guide Families’ needs through systems of care), respite care (which provides a temporary rest period for Family members responsible for regular care of people with disabilities) and DirectSTEP staff (who teach military children). Another important resource is [Education Services](#), which includes information on where Families can access video libraries, education



Family makes cards for veterans during the EFMP Holiday Cookie and Recipe Exchange at Camp Zama, Japan. (Courtesy photo)

directories and 504 plans for children with special needs.

Grossman says, “Increased quality of life for Soldiers and Families is directly tied to increased mission readiness. We are continually working to improve the quality of life for our people and their Families so they can excel in their jobs and build successful careers and lives in the Army. The EFMP site has a plethora of information on topics such as education, finances and childcare. The site also

includes a community forum to allow Families to connect.”

For more information on the EFMP or other Army support programs, visit [Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness](#).

It is our duty to provide care and support for those who protect this country. Active-duty service members, military Families and veterans, we thank you, we appreciate you, and we are grateful for your service.

## AFAP Gives Voice to People, Celebrates 40 Years

By Chester Curtis, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

Did you know you have a voice in the Army? Did you know that you can submit issues that are affecting your quality of life, and they will be heard by Army senior leaders?

During the recent Association of the United States Army national meeting, the newly confirmed Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. Randy A. George, encouraged commanders to survey their Soldiers and Family members to see what improvements are needed in their local communities and advise how Army senior leaders can help.

George was giving a shout-out to an effective program that is the voice of the Army’s people and has been in place for 40 years, to be precise—the Army Family Action Plan, better known as AFAP.

“AFAP is an Army grassroots program that engages

Soldiers, Family members, survivors, retirees and Department of the Army Civilians across all Army components to identify, prioritize and elevate quality of life issues that cannot be resolved by their command and require HQDA resolution,” says Brent Jurgensen, senior leader Engagement Division Chief, Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness. “It is the Army’s primary tool to communicate to leaders issues of importance.”

The AFAP mission, which originated in 1983 because of a white paper signed by Army Chief of Staff Gen. John A. Wickham, is to help Army leaders address the needs and concerns of the total Army Family. The program uses representatives from the total Army Family from around the world to identify issues that will improve the quality of life for Soldiers and Families. This feedback to

leaders provides for policy changes that become tangible end products for the Army Family. AFAP beneficiaries include Soldiers, survivors, retirees and Department of Army Civilians and all their Family members.

Since its inception in 1983, 775 issues have entered AFAP. These issues fall into the following six categories:

- Soldier support
- Family support
- Military health care
- Civilian support
- Retiree support
- Survivor support

Click the link to read the full article: <https://www.army.mil/article/271663>.



# DPRR

DIRECTORATE OF PREVENTION, RESILIENCE AND READINESS

DECEMBER 2023

## HAIL AND FAREWELL

We invite the DPRR community to join us in welcoming new members to DPRR headquarters. Congratulations to current members on taking new positions and a fond farewell to outgoing members.

### Hail

- Charlene Sanchez, Family Advocacy Program
- Carmen Leggett, Family Advocacy Program
- Carla Brewton, Plans and Operations Division
- Tammy Coon, Morale, Welfare and Recreation Division
- Angela Byrd, Family Advocacy Program

### Farewell

- Amy Rodick, Senior Leadership Engagement Division
- Angela Byrd, SHARP program
- Antwaun Parrish, Communications and Outreach Division
- Tammy Coon, SHARP program



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### JANUARY

#### Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America (CADCA) 34th National Leadership Forum

Jan. 29–Feb. 1: CADCA assists community coalitions in creating and maintaining safe, healthy and drug-free communities worldwide. Its annual forum for criminal justice professionals, law enforcement officers, educators and those in the mental health and substance misuse fields offers training in critical areas such as prevention resources and strategies and youth leadership, as well as information sessions with the most up-to-date news and research on substance misuse.

**Location:** National Harbor, Maryland. **Learn more:** <https://forum.cadca.org/forum2024>

### MARCH

#### International Association of Chiefs of Police Officer Safety and Wellness Conference

March 1–3: This symposium for law enforcement professionals will feature experts presenting resources and best practices for developing comprehensive officer safety and wellness strategies.

**Location:** Louisville, Kentucky. **Learn more:** <https://www.theiacp.org/OSWConference>

#### Society for Public Health Education 2024 Annual Conference

March 19–21: The theme of this year's conference is "Gateway To Health Equity: Global Solutions To Strengthen Health Education and Promotion Capacity." The conference offers learning experiences and opportunities to connect with colleagues in the field.

**Location:** St. Louis, Missouri. **Learn more:** [https://www.sophe.org/professional-development/conferences\\_events/2024-annual-conference/](https://www.sophe.org/professional-development/conferences_events/2024-annual-conference/)

**Find a New Fitness Facility**

**Discover the Power of Self-Compassion**

**Winter Resilience Campaign**

**The Winter Resilience campaign is now available on the Product on Demand site!**

To learn more visit [https://marcomcentral.app.pti.com/Ironmark/ARDmaterials/login.aspx?company\\_id=24509](https://marcomcentral.app.pti.com/Ironmark/ARDmaterials/login.aspx?company_id=24509).

## TOP-PERFORMING POSTS

## SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

## Follow @ArmyResilience

Please coordinate with your Public Affairs Office to share or retweet @ArmyResilience content on command or installation Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn platforms. Contact Kevin O'Brien for questions regarding DPRR social media at [kobrien@strategyconsultingteam.com](mailto:kobrien@strategyconsultingteam.com).

FACEBOOK	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM	LINKEDIN
<p><b>WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY</b></p> <p>Impressions: 2,277</p>	<p><b>EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM</b></p> <p>Impressions: 17,858</p>	<p><b>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH</b></p> <p>Impressions: 390</p>	<p><b>Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts Supporting Families</b></p> <p>Impressions: 269</p>

## Directorate of Prevention, Resilience and Readiness

### DPRR COMMUNITYLINK

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**Do you want to contribute to the next issue of the newsletter?**

Submit articles and photographs by Jan. 18. For any questions, contact the editor at [Tara.Davis@mat-inc.net](mailto:Tara.Davis@mat-inc.net).

## Connect With DPRR!

Contact DPRR Communications & Outreach at [usarmy.pentagon.hqda-dcs-g-1.list.dape-ars-sp@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.pentagon.hqda-dcs-g-1.list.dape-ars-sp@army.mil)

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