



COMMANDER'S CALL TALKING POINTS

JUNE 2021



June Is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Awareness Month

June is dedicated to promoting awareness about post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a leader, it's important to openly communicate to your Airmen and Guardians about the signs, symptoms, causes and treatment of invisible wounds and highlight the importance of seeking support when needed.



94% of Airmen who **received PTSD treatment continued to progress in their career.**¹

2.5x

Women are **2.5x more likely** to develop PTSD than men.²

8 MILLION

About 8 million people in the United States currently **live with PTSD.**³

[Download the complete PTSD infographic.](#)

Signs & Symptoms of PTSD

It is essential that all are aware of the [signs and symptoms](#) associated with an invisible wound so they can identify invisible wounds in themselves or others. While everyone experiences trauma and PTSD symptoms differently, the following are the most common symptoms in those experiencing PTSD:

- Flashbacks
- Irritable, frustrated, angry
- Trouble with memory and attention
- Fatigue
- Poor self-care
- Feeling anxious
- Trouble sleeping, insomnia
- Feeling depressed

Causes of PTSD

All Airmen and Guardians are susceptible to invisible wounds, regardless of their career field. While everyone experiences different traumatic situations, some events that can lead to PTSD include:

- Combat and other military experiences
- Sexual or physical assault
- Learning about the violent or accidental death or injury of a loved one
- Child sexual or physical abuse
- Serious accidents, like a car wreck
- Individual threat to one's life, such as:
 - Natural disasters, like a fire, tornado, hurricane, flood, or earthquake
 - Terrorist attacks

Getting Support and Treatment for PTSD

Treatment is available and can help Airmen/Guardians experiencing PTSD improve their quality of life. There are a variety of treatment and resources options aimed to manage invisible wounds, including the Mental Health Clinic, Air Force Chaplains, and Military & Family Counseling Program (MFLC).

Read [Capt. Joseph Siler's](#) story about how he sought help from Mental Health Clinic and [Capt. Casey Ross'](#) experience working with her Commander and the Director of Psychological Health (DPH) to learn about experiences of Airmen getting support and treatment for PTSD.



Resources



The [U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs' National Center for PTSD](#) is the world's leading research and educational center of excellence for PTSD and traumatic stress. Visit the website for more information about PTSD, resources, and treatment options.



[AF Medical Service](#) offers resources on PTSD and information on the specific impacts on Airmen such as risk factors, symptoms, diagnosis, the CAF model, deployments, and more.



[AF Resilience](#) provides a Leader's Guide on how to support their Airmen with PTSD.



The [PTSD Coach app](#) can help Airmen manage symptoms that often occur after trauma.

1 - U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine. USAF Public Health Report. Vol 3, Issue 1. (2018).

2 - U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. How Common is PTSD in Women? (2019). https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/common/common_women.asp

3 - National Center for PTSD. Help Raise PTSD Awareness. (2019). <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/awareness/index.asp>.