

Airmen at all levels of the Air Force have a responsibility as Wingmen. Being a Wingman means taking care of fellow Airmen. They take actions when signs of trouble are observed. This is especially true in situations where someone appears as if they are going to make a poor decision, are in despair, or show signs of hurting themselves or others.

Wingmen must be vigilant for signs of invisible wounds, including TBI, PTSD and depression, in themselves and others. Even if you do not suffer from invisible wounds, you play a critical role in caring for your fellow Airmen.

How to be a Wingman to an Airman in distress:

- Inform your Commander when a distressed Airman is identified and help them get the right resources from the start
- Actively take steps to reduce potential stressors by talking to them and working to understand the situation and their needs
- Express your concerns and support; tell them it is ok to ask for help and that seeking it is a strength
- Know the location and availability of your installation's resources; recommend them to those in need; [see available resources here](#)
- Check in with your Airman to make sure they are getting the help they need and know you care

Watch for these signs that an Airman may be in distress:

- Becomes socially withdrawn or loses interest in activities that they previously enjoyed
- Acts unsafe; often includes reckless driving or alcohol or drug abuse
- Makes statements that suggest feelings of guilt, self-criticism, hopelessness, worthlessness, or of being a burden
- Displays restlessness, irritability, agitation, depression, or anxiety, or begins having relationship problems
- Expresses thoughts of suicide or increasingly talks about death
- Changes in hygiene, grooming standards, appetite, or weight
- Reduces quality in work, shows less initiative, or has difficulty with supervisors, supervisors and/or coworkers

How Commanders can support their Airmen:

If an Airman comes forward with [symptoms of an invisible wound](#) or identifies someone who may be suffering with an invisible wound, you can aid the distressed individual by:

- Considering information received from coworkers or family members expressing concerns about the emotional state of an individual to be serious
- Decreasing potentially upsetting situations to the distressed Airman
- Facilitating attendance for appointments to helping resources
- Recruiting unit and community support for personnel who are in need
- Keeping in mind that an individual's difficulties can impact their entire unit. Assessing for negative impact, you can provide the appropriate amount of support
- Informing them about available resources and helping connect them to these



The following hyperlinked checklists also provide helpful information:

- [Supporting an Airman who shows signs of TBI](#)
- [Supporting an Airman who may be suffering from PTSD](#)
- [Supporting an Airman suffering from potentially traumatic events](#)

Be sure to know the location and availability of your installation's resources to recommend them to those in need. [Click on available resources here.](#)

Source: *Airmen's guide for Assisting Personnel in Distress*

Warrior Care Month

November is Warrior Care Month. The goal is to highlight what is being done for wounded, ill, and injured service members and share how they gave back to the communities that they sacrificed to protect.

Air Force Warrior CARE events host Air Force Wounded Warrior Program members and caregivers for one week. These events feature education in caregiver support, recovering Airman mentorship and employment, career readiness, and adaptive sports. [See dates for future Warrior CARE events.](#)

Get your unit involved with Warrior Care

Warrior Care means keeping Airmen healthy and strong in mind and body. It's about building resilience and ensuring that Airmen have access to and receive what they need when they need it. It's having Wingmen and leaders you can count on.

In honor of Warrior Care month, here are some ideas to get your unit involved:

- Host a potluck picnic for Airmen and families
- Set up an intramural sports tournament weekend event
- Plan a book club and select books dealing with military-related issues
- Invite a provider from your Military Treatment Facility (MTF) to host a discussion about the importance of mental health fitness
- Set up extracurricular activities, such as fishing or golfing
- Watch [this video](#) and talk about the value of having and identifying a Wingman
- Download [this infographic](#) about an Airman's road to care and recovery; hang it in an office or main area where people easily can see it