



# HOLISTIC WELLNESS CHALLENGE

## FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS



**CHALLENGE** your Service members and yourself to adopt at least one of the recommended resources to strengthen family relationships.

### FACTS & FIGURES: DID YOU KNOW?

- The support of a stable **family acts as a protective factor** that helps mitigate risk and promote well-being. The absence of a strong family unit can leave individuals vulnerable to harm.
  - Nearly **20 people per minute are physically abused** by an intimate partner in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>
  - Intimate relationship problems were reported in **40% of suicides and 33% of attempts** in the National Guard.<sup>2</sup>
- **Safely storing firearms** at home can protect family members.
  - Having access to a firearm in the home **increases suicide risk by four to six times** for all household members.<sup>3</sup>

### HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS BUILD RESILIENCE



#### Physical

- ↑ Performance and Sleep
- ↓ Blood Pressure, Heart Rate, and Stroke Risk



#### Mental

- ↑ Mood and Concentration
- ↓ Depression and Suicidal Behavior



#### Social

- ↑ Security and Coping Skills
- ↓ Risk Factors (Drug, Alcohol, Firearms)

### CONTACT US

For more information on how to enhance family relationships, email us at: [ng.ncr.ngb-arng.list.j1-m-division@army.mil](mailto:ng.ncr.ngb-arng.list.j1-m-division@army.mil)

### FOCUS ON THE FOUNDATION

A healthy family relationship begins with a healthy partner relationship. Most partners do not start out violent. Yet, there may be early clues that indicate the long-term health of your union. It is important to know which behaviors protect against harm and which ones enhance risk or predict violence.<sup>4</sup> Form a stable family foundation with a partner that exhibits protective behaviors. If your partner displays risky behaviors help is available.

- **Protective:** Your partner values your abilities and opinions, and respects boundaries.
- **Risky:** Your partner tries to change you, is unsupportive, or criticizes you.

**You are not alone.**

**National Domestic Violence Hotline advocates are available 24/7/365.**

Call: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)  
Text: "START" to 88788  
Chat: [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)

### STRENGTHEN FAMILY TIES

Military families are no strangers to adversity (e.g., time apart, financial stress). How your family responds to those challenges impacts your readiness. Follow these tips to strengthen the bonds that can help you overcome obstacles and avoid harm.

- **Create connection:** Stay emotionally engaged, even when physically apart.
- **Foster flexibility:** Be willing to adapt.
- **Highlight hope:** Cultivate optimism.
- **Express emotion:** Show empathy.
- **Promote problem-solving:** Work together to find common ground.
- **Remain reliable:** Keep promises.
- **Stay safe:** Secure firearms and avoid substance abuse.



## FORTIFYING FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

### What does it mean?

- Hallmarks of a healthy relationship are connection, trust, respect, communication, honesty, equality, boundaries, and consent.

### Why does it matter?

- Healthy relationships form a protective barrier that enhance coping skills and lower the likelihood of experiencing harm.

### What can you do?

- Invest time and energy in healthy relationships.
- Reach out to your Military Family Readiness staff to tap into local programs and resources that can help strengthen your family ties.
- Take a courageous step and sign up for relationship counseling through Military OneSource or Cohens Veterans Network.
- Protect your loved ones by safely storing personally owned firearms in your home.
- Contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline if you experience abuse or your partner exhibits risky behaviors.
- Check on Service members who are having a tough time at home and let them know they are not alone.



## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The National Guard (NG) recognizes that for military families to be healthy, they must be drug free. That is why we are participating once again in the Red Ribbon anti-drug campaign.

The NG is seeking nominations for the Red Ribbon Awards to acknowledge Drug Demand Reduction Programs that promote community drug prevention efforts.

Nominations are due by MAY 31. Winners will be recognized during DoD's Red Ribbon Week Awards Ceremony on OCT 17, at the Pentagon.

For more information, email: [ng.ncr.ngb.mbx.resiliency-branch@army.mil](mailto:ng.ncr.ngb.mbx.resiliency-branch@army.mil)



## RESOURCES TO RECOMMEND



National Guard's Military Family Readiness staff are available to connect Service members and their families to community resources. For more information, email: [ng.ncr.ngb-arng.list.j1-m-division@army.mil](mailto:ng.ncr.ngb-arng.list.j1-m-division@army.mil)



Military OneSource provides podcasts, webinars, online tools, counseling, and other resources to keep family relationships strong. [www.militaryonesource.com/resources/millife-guides/keeping-your-relationship-strong](http://www.militaryonesource.com/resources/millife-guides/keeping-your-relationship-strong)



Human Performance Resources by CHAMP delivers evidence-based resources to optimize family relationships. [www.hprc-online.org/social-fitness/family-optimization](http://www.hprc-online.org/social-fitness/family-optimization)



Cohen Veterans Network offers in-person and online support to Service members and their families to assist with marriage counseling, relationships counseling, and children's behavioral issues. [www.cohenveteransnetwork.org](http://www.cohenveteransnetwork.org)



## SPOTLIGHT: STAR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDERS (SBHP)

- SBHP is a national program that trains civilian providers to better understand and treat National Guard members and their families.
- Military-aware providers are available in-person and online to address relationship issues, domestic violence, and other concerns such as anger and anxiety.
- For more information, or to access the SBHP registry to find a trained provider, go to [www.starproviders.org](http://www.starproviders.org).

## REFERENCES:

1. Domestic Violence Statistics. National Domestic Violence Hotline. [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)
2. Annual Report on Suicide in the Military, CY2022 [www.dspo.mil](http://www.dspo.mil)
3. Prevention of Suicide by Firearm: A Communication Guide for Military Leaders and Support Providers. [www.dspo.mil](http://www.dspo.mil)
4. The Predictive Validity of Intimate Partner Violence Warning Signs. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/19485506231209076>