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U.S. ARMY MANEUVER SUPPORT CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FT. LEONARD WOOD, MISSOURI



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Help obtainable for victims, Families

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. – Rich or poor, military or civilian communities, domestic violence is an issue that people from all different walks of life face. Staff members at Army Community Service want people to know help is available.

October is Domestic Violence Prevention Month, and according to Natalie McCart, ACS Family Advocacy Program specialist, education and awareness are key to helping prevent people from falling into the clutches of abuse and violence.

“The purpose of a prevention and awareness month is to bring the subject of abuse from out of the darkness, where it thrives, and into the light, so it can be seen and addressed, since the very nature of domestic violence is shrouded in secrecy and shame,” McCart said.

“For those who find themselves in abusive situations, it is crucial to know they are not alone and are not at fault for the isolation, threats, name calling, sexual and physical violence and other obstacles that take place in their lives,” she said

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, on average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. During one year, this equates to more than 10 million women and men.

“Domestic violence is about power and control,” McCart said. “There are many tactics an abusive individual will utilize to gain and maintain control over their intimate partner or spouse.”

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Perpetrators may also threaten to harm children, pets and other loved ones. They may destroy their partner's sentimental property such as pictures, mementos and collectibles. McCart said the abuser might display extreme jealousy, denying a person access to money, vehicles, personal hygiene items and food.

Often the abuser may obsessively check up on a partner and have an inability to trust, including unwarranted accusations of the partner having an affair.

“Survivors in abusive relationships will often: be reluctant to discuss their home life; have vague explanations of visible bruising; miss a lot of work, go along with whatever their partner says or does, worry about partner's jealousy and be afraid of their temper,” McCart said.

Those facing abuse and in immediate danger should call 911 for assistance.

“If not, then the first thing someone should do is find out what their rights are. This can be accomplished for military and Family members or intimate partners of military members by contacting the Fort Leonard Wood Family Violence Response Line at 573.596.0131, ext. 60446.

“(Calling the response line) will get them in touch with the Family Advocacy Program on-call licensed clinical social worker, and an Army Community Service victim advocate who will discuss whether the victim wants to keep the report restricted which means that law enforcement, and command are not notified, but the victim can still have access to medical treatment, counseling and safety planning without having the abuse reported to anyone outside the protected sphere,” McCart said.

The victim can also choose an unrestricted report where command and law enforcement are notified and access to all services are available such as civilian and or military protective orders, safety planning, police reports, appointments etc.

Get involved

The community can get involved with promoting domestic violence awareness by taking part in any one of the upcoming events on Fort Leonard Wood.

The second annual Women's Health Expo is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 16 at Nutter Field House. The theme is “Every Woman Deserves a Lifetime.”

McCart said the Army Volunteer Program and the Family Advocacy Program are also partnering to bring awareness with a 5k fun run/walk, scheduled for 8 a.m. Oct. 24. Participants can register the day of the event at ACS, Building 486. This event is and open to the public. Participants are encouraged to wear purple in support of domestic violence prevention.

About Fort Leonard Wood

Fort Leonard Wood is a thriving and prosperous installation that has evolved from a small basic training post 70 years ago to a premier Army Center of Excellence that trains about 80,000 military and civilians each year.

Home to the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence, Fort Leonard Wood now trains and educates service members and develops doctrine and capabilities for the Training and Doctrine Command's U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear School, U.S. Army Engineer School, and U.S. Army Military Police School, three gender integrated Initial Military Training brigades, and the Army's largest Noncommissioned Officers Academy.

Over the past several years, Fort Leonard Wood has received numerous additional responsibilities to include supporting a colonel-commanded Marine Corps Detachment and an Air Force Detachment, which are both the largest on any Army installation, are located on Fort Leonard Wood; a large Navy Seabee Detachment and elements of the Coast Guard train here as well.
