

# Carlisle Barracks works to combat suicide



## September is Suicide Prevention month

*Staff Sgt. Corey Baltos, USAWC Public Affairs*

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*"One suicide is one too many." - Kenneth O. Preston, Sergeant Major of the Army*

Sept. 16, 2010 – Suicidal behavior is not rare among human beings. Everyone knows someone who has thought of committing suicide. In the Army the rate of suicide has reached epidemic proportions. While there are no conclusive explanations, Col. Chris Philbrick, director of the Army Suicide Prevention Task Force, stated that continued stress on the force from the wars and the down turn of the economy may have contributed to the deaths.

On Sept. 15, 2010 Carlisle Barracks held two programs, one for teens and one for adults to give them the tools to recognize the warning signs of suicide.

The program geared towards Carlisle teens covered teen suicide, depression, cutting and substance abuse. "Being a teenager today is very stressful in itself, said Pete Baltos, the Youth Services middle school & teen lead. "Being an Army teenager is even more stressful. This program is designed to help kids get the help that they or their friends may need before it is to late."

Frequently the first person to notice that something is wrong is their spouse or battle buddy. So, Carlisle Barracks offered a "Gatekeeper" program to give these people the tools they need to identify possible suicidal behaviors.

"What we are teaching today is the QPR program which is, question, persuade, referral," said Dr. Ines Roe, a psychologist at the Dunham Army Mental Health Clinic. "This program is the equivalent to CPR for suicide prevention."

Historically the Army culture has stigmatized mental stress as a sign of weakness, so many Soldiers are afraid that seeking help will harm or end their career. To combat this thinking the Army is training its leaders to be more sensitive to their Soldiers needs. “Leaders need to be the one to set the stage to allow Soldiers and their families to seek help,” said Roe. Leaders that ignore the emotional needs of their Soldiers are destined to fail.

If you or someone you know needs help you can call the Dunham Army Health Center Behavioral Health office at 245-4602 or the national suicide hotline at: 1-800-SUICIDE.

**Remember: To Save a Life...**

Realize someone might be suicidal.

Reach out. Asking the suicide question DOES NOT increase risk.

Listen. Talking things out can save a life.

Don't try to do everything yourself. Get others involved.

Don't promise secrecy and don't worry about being disloyal.

If persuasion fails, call your mental health center, local hotline or emergency services.

**QPR for suicide prevention**

**Q** Question the person about suicide.

**P** Persuade the person to get help.

**R** Refer for help.