



## LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS INNOVATIVE TOOLS AND PROGRAMS MEAN GREATER SUCCESS FOR ARMY SOCIAL WORKERS

From programs that help children come to terms with family illnesses and injury, to computer technologies designed to help Soldiers and their families face the challenge of deployment, Army social workers have a growing number of tools and programs that help improve their success rate.

Certainly in the private sector, Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs) address the needs of people with serious issues ranging from family and personal problems to substance abuse and disability. However, when individuals face issues that are exacerbated by additional challenges, such as active duty, separation, readjustment and PTSD, the need for assistance is even greater.

The Army has made behavioral health care a priority, a commitment made evident in the development of new programs and tools that are helping Soldiers and their families cope with a broad spectrum of challenges and behaviors.

### TOOLS FOR BUILDING RESILIENCY ONLINE COMPUTER ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING HELPING MILITARY FAMILIES OVERCOME DAILY CHALLENGES.

The innovative **Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF)** program makes use of computer technology to help Soldiers and their families cope with military life and everyday issues. Initiated in 2008 under the leadership of Brig. Gen. Rhonda L. Cornum, CSF is a holistic program designed to give all members of the Army community the knowledge, thinking skills and behaviors that will optimize the ability and likelihood to “thrive” in their lives, as well as their ability to successfully cope with life’s challenges and adversity.

Originally offered only to Soldiers and staff to strengthen their resiliency and ensure maximum readiness, over the

past few years, a version of the program has been offered to military families, as well.

“The CSF program will strengthen our families,” says Dana Whitis, family programs specialist for CSF. “This training will empower them to face life challenges with their Soldier—as a team.”

To begin the process, family members need to complete the Global Assessment Tool (GAT)—a private, online assessment that measures strength in four dimensions of fitness. Then, based on the assessment, participants immediately begin online training to enhance their strength in the following areas: social, emotional, spiritual, family and physical.

Training comes in the form of Comprehensive Resilience Models that provide people with the tools needed to



improve their coping, communication and other skills to more effectively communicate with their spouses or deal with adversity.

## **PROGRAMS THAT ENCOURAGE DIALOGUE** HELPING WOUNDED WARRIORS, AND THEIR FAMILIES, OPEN UP ABOUT TRAUMATIC EVENTS.

**Courage to Care, Courage to Talk**, a program partnered with the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress (CSTS), was designed to alleviate the impact of traumatic injuries on military families and their children.

In the process of communicating with families about injuries resulting from active duty, there are multiple opportunities to educate and help families understand the importance of connectedness and availability—both within the family and within one’s community.

The program has modules designed for family members, as well as for health care providers. **Courage to Care, Courage to Talk** helps the injured warrior, and his or her family, communicate about the trauma that has affected their lives.

Understanding the impact of injury on children, especially from a developmental perspective, enables providers to guide families on how best to communicate with children to sustain hope, connection to both parents and continuity with family and community routines.

Since its establishment in 2006, the CSTS, through its Child and Family Program (CFP), has been conducting research to advance scientific knowledge and clinical interventions that address the needs of children and families affected by trauma—especially military children and families. The focus of CFP research is on the impact of war, including stress due to taking leave, parenting and family function, as well as the impact of war injuries on military children and families. In addition to research, CFP provides education and consultation to the military health care system and its leadership, national media outlets, professional organizations and projects dedicated to helping families affected by traumatic events, focusing on the military child.

## **OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT**

ARMY SOCIAL WORKERS HAVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO PUT THEIR TALENTS WHERE THEY’RE NEEDED MOST.

The Army is breaking new ground to provide the best possible care for our Soldiers and their families; but more importantly, we put professionals in areas where they can make meaningful connections with Soldiers and their families.

Army social workers provide services in military hospitals where they can address adjustment to illness issues and coordinate discharge planning, as well as inpatient and outpatient behavioral health treatment for Soldiers and their families. They also provide services in a number of areas where their skills and talents can do the most good:

- **Combat Operational Stress Control Detachments and Brigade Combat Teams** work on the battlefield and on installations to address stress-related issues and counseling needs.
- **Warrior Transition Units** work with injured Soldiers and their families to assess levels of risk, behavioral health needs, adjustment to illness and reintegration to Army or private-sector life.
- **The Family Advocacy Program (FAP)** provides domestic abuse assessments and treatment for Soldiers and their families, while the **Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)** assesses and treats Soldiers dealing with substance abuse.
- In addition, the Army has **Exceptional Family Member Clinics (EFMP)**, where social workers help special needs children and their families. Another practice option is clinical training of Army staff with behavioral health-related educational programs through the U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School.

# ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS



Social workers take part in the research at the U.S. Army Public Health Command (Provisional) and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, as well as at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. They also work to establish behavioral health policies at facilities such as the U.S. Army Medical Command and Installation Management Command.

As a social worker on the U.S. Army Health Care Team, your skills and talents can be utilized in a truly meaningful way, no matter your area of interest. Imagine how rewarding it could be to make such a profound difference in the lives of those who give so much.

## ADDITIONAL REWARDS

SERVING AS AN ARMY SOCIAL WORKER IS GRATIFYING ON MANY LEVELS.

The U.S. Army Health Care Team offers many tangible and intangible rewards. First, there's the pride in serving your country by caring for men and women who have risked the ultimate sacrifice to protect and defend our nation. There's also the opportunity to concentrate on what you were trained to do: LCSWs with the U.S. Army Health Care Team can spend time focusing on their cases, rather than on managing the types of overwhelming caseloads they often must deal with in the private sector.



The lifestyle benefits offered by the U.S. Army Medical Department are quite impressive as well, including:

- **Competitive salary**
- **Paid continuing education**
- **Non-contributory retirement benefits** with 20 years of qualifying service for active Army social workers
- **Flexible, portable retirement savings and investment plan** similar to a 401(k)
- **Privileges** that come with being an officer in the U.S. Army
- **Training** to become a leader in your field

[Click here](#) to receive an information packet about advancing your career with the U.S. Army Health Care Team.