



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. ARMY ARMOR CENTER AND FORT KNOX
FORT KNOX, KENTUCKY 40121-5000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

ATZK-CF (600-85a)

10 January 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR

Commanders, All Units Reporting Directly to This Headquarters
Commanders, Fort Knox Partners in Excellence
Directors and Chiefs, Staff Offices/Departments, This Headquarters

SUBJECT: Thunderbolt Six Policy Memo No. 38-29 - Suicide Prevention

1. Reference AR 600-63, Army Health Promotion, 17 November 1987.
2. Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death in the United States and the second leading cause of death for active duty soldiers. The goal of the Fort Knox Suicide Prevention Program is to save lives and to preserve our fighting force by minimizing suicidal behavior among our soldiers, family members, and Army civilian employees. This goal is achievable only by the concerned involvement of all of us.
3. Everyone must work to erase the stigma of seeking mental health services. Leaders must use a variety of training venues to disseminate suicide prevention information and information on mental health services. But, this must be followed with one-on-one involvement by leaders and friends to really affect someone considering suicide.
4. Commanders, and leaders at every level, must learn to recognize the symptoms of suicidal behavior and immediately involve themselves providing help. Suicide prevention screening and initial interventions should occur at the unit level. Commanders and senior NCOs must assist soldiers in developing an effective course of action to resolve problems that may lead to suicide. Individuals determined to be a risk should be referred to unit chaplains or the Department of Behavioral Health.
5. Effective suicide prevention is everyone's responsibility. We all have the obligation to help our subordinates and teammates who may be having a hard time. The importance of a concerned and caring leadership talking to and assisting a soldier in trouble cannot be underestimated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Steven Whitcomb".

R. STEVEN WHITCOMB
Major General, USA
Commanding

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