

## Defender 6 Sends -- Resiliency

Resilience is also the ability to bounce back in the face of adversity... it's mental toughness! Webster defines resilience as, *“the capability of a strained body to recover its size and shape after deformation caused especially by compressive stress”* and *“an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.”*

The strength of our Nation is only as strong as the Soldiers, Families, and Civilians that courageously support and defend it. Over the last 8 years, more than one million Soldiers have deployed to combat, over 3,900 Soldiers have sacrificed their lives, and more than 25,000 have been wounded in service to our country. Army units and Families across the globe are relocating in compliance with the Base Realignment and Closure Law, and we continue to transform our business practices. To remain strong in this dynamic environment, leaders must proactively maintain and develop resiliency programs and services to enable the total Army Community (Soldiers, Civilians, Families, and Retirees) to maintain healthy relationships and happy lives.

Our approach to supporting resiliency for the Army Community is to enhance their ability to adapt to stress by supporting, maintaining, and developing programs and services that promote total wellness. As I have said before, I am convinced that the Army spends too much time fixing Soldiers after they break, evidenced by the rise in suicide and substance abuse rates. We should be spending our time, energy, and resources to make the Army Community resilient to prevent them from breaking.

We will use the Public Health Model of assessment, education, intervention, and treatment to integrate and deliver services to help prevent Soldiers, Civilians, and Families from breaking. By applying this model before a crisis happens we will be better able to keep the Army Community strong in all dimensions of resiliency.

Individuals must be fit mentally, physically, and spiritually to achieve optimum resilience. The Installation Management Community will provide the best care, support, and services for the Army Community by improving quality of life through initiatives, such as the Army Family Action Plan, the Army Family Covenant, Army Community Covenants, the Installation Management Campaign Plan and the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Program.

When I was the senior commander at Ft. Hood, I built a Resiliency Campus to enable the Army Community to become resilient before deployments, during deployments, and to solve many other challenges faced by Army Families. Other IMCOM garrisons are also focusing on resilience. Fort Bliss has a Restoration and Resilience Center that offers a Warrior Resilience Program and a Family Resilience Program. Fort Jackson is planning to open a Master Resilience Training school that will offer a 10-day Master Resilience Training Course to equip leaders to teach coping skills to unit members. At Fort Campbell, the Family Resiliency Council has teamed up with key organizations to be one of the first installations to publish an online resource guide to provide accurate and accessible information to Soldiers, Families, and Civilians.

These are but a few initiatives underway dedicated to enhancing Soldier, Civilian, and Family resilience.

The strain of multiple deployments and other stress factors may continue into the future. Therefore, I challenge leaders and personnel throughout the Army Community to think of new ideas to enhance installation resiliency initiatives and to send your ideas to your installation leadership or me. I also challenge each of you to take advantage of existing programs and services on your installation and in your community to remain mentally, physically, and spiritually fit. The Army Community is strength of our Nation and IMCOM garrisons are the Army's Home!

Support and Defend

*Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch, Defender 6*  
*Commanding General, Installation Management Command*