



Engaged Families

The strength of our Soldiers comes from the strength of their Families.



U.S. ARMY

ARMY STRONG.



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

<https://crc.army.mil>

ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG

Family Engagement Kit

As leaders, we've come to realize that "battle buddies" are a key factor in keeping Soldiers safe on the battlefield. They provide each other with an extra set of eyes and ears and, sometimes, a much needed sanity check.

On the home front, a Soldier's "battle buddy" is often his or her family. Family Members are frequently the front line of defense when it comes to affecting a Soldier's decision making process or reaction to a particular situation. And just as engaged leadership has made a difference in Soldier's safety on-duty, engaged Families can have that same impact in our Soldiers' off-duty safety as well.

I ask each of you to be that home front "battle buddy" and help the Army take better care of your Soldier. Family Members are also each other's "battle buddies" when their spouses are deployed. Watch over each other and recognize when to step in or to ask for help. Soldiers can better do their jobs when they know their Families are safe back home.

With your help we can better protect our Nation's most valued assets – our Soldiers and their Family Members. This kit has simple, yet effective, "how to" instructions combined with other useful aids to help you take care of all our Soldiers. If you have any questions, please contact your local Safety Office or ACS.

Army Safe is Army Strong!



WILLIAM T. WOLF
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding General
U.S. Army Combat
Readiness/Safety Center



Major Concerns

- **Privately Owned Vehicles (POVs)**

There were 125 POV fatal accidents involving 130 Soldiers from 10/1/07 to 30/09/08 (FY08).

Of the 125 POV fatal accidents, 40% were motorcycles, 38 % were sedans and 22% were other types of vehicles (trucks, vans, SUVs, ATVs).

- Of the 130 fatalities **72%** were SGT or below and **28%** were SSG or above.

Privately Owned Vehicles Sedans



- Good News: There were fewer alcohol related fatalities in FY08 than in FY07.
- Bad News: There was a **23% INCREASE** in sedan fatalities in FY08 compared to FY07.
- During FY08, most sedan accident fatalities occurred between the hours of **midnight & 6 a.m.**
- **January & February** were the worst months for sedan fatalities during FY08.

*While seatbelt wear is mandatory, Soldiers continue to drive without buckling up. Approximately **25%** of Soldiers fatally injured within one year of returning home from deployment were **not** wearing a seatbelt.*

Privately Owned Vehicles

Motorcycles

- Good News: The Army and Navy joined forces to field the *Military Sport-Bike Rider Course in FY08*.

- Bad News: Motorcycle fatalities continue to be one of the leading causes of Soldier deaths (**75%** sport bikes).

- **45%** of fatally injured motorcyclists were not wearing a helmet even though the military requires it regardless of state laws.



- Twice as many motorcycle fatalities occurred on weekends and nearly 1 in 4 were not properly licensed.

- Choose the right motorcycle and examine the insurance costs at:

www.amadirectlink.com/roadride/NewRider/choosing.asp

www.amadirectlink.com/roadride/NewRider/startright.asp

www.business.com/directory/automotive/finance/insurance/motorcycle

Privately Owned Vehicles

SUV/Trucks/Vans



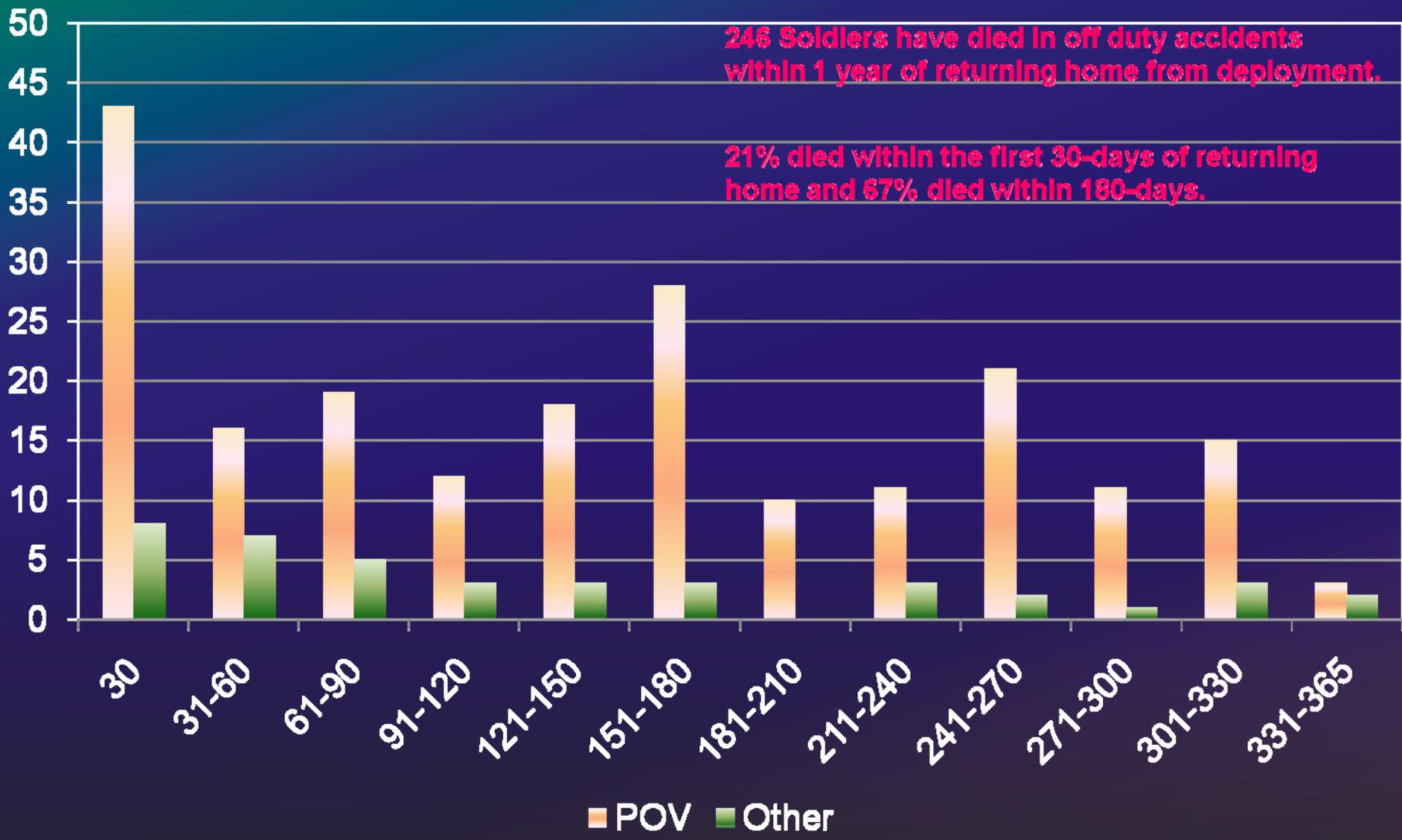
- Good News: There were **fewer SUV and truck fatalities** in FY08 than FY07.
- Bad News: **6 p.m. to midnight** continues to be the worse time for SUV/Trucks/Van accident fatalities.

During FY08 there were more reported fatalities from SUV, truck, and van accidents during the months of **July, October & December** than any other time of the year.



www.nhtsa.gov

Post-deployment Stats



Leading Causes of Accidents

- Distracted driving
- Speeding
- Aggressive driving
- Fatigue
- Alcohol



Distracted Driving

- According to AAA, distracted driving is a major contributor to car crashes.
- Between 4,000 and 8,000 distracted driving crashes occur daily in the U.S.
- Distracted driving contributes to as many as 3 million U.S. crashes a year.

Action	Number of Times More Likely to Have an Accident
Reaching for a moving object	9
Looking at an external object	3.7
Reading	3
Applying makeup	3
Dial a hand-held device (e.g., cell phone)	3
Talking or listening on hand-held device	1.3

Speeding

- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) during 2008 more than **13,000 lives** were lost across America in speeding-related traffic crashes.
- Crash data since 1995 shows a continuous increase in the number of deaths and injuries attributed to speed.
- Despite advancements in vehicle safety and passenger protection, thousands die each year in speed-related crashes.
- Speeding is driving faster than the posted speed limit or driving too fast for conditions.



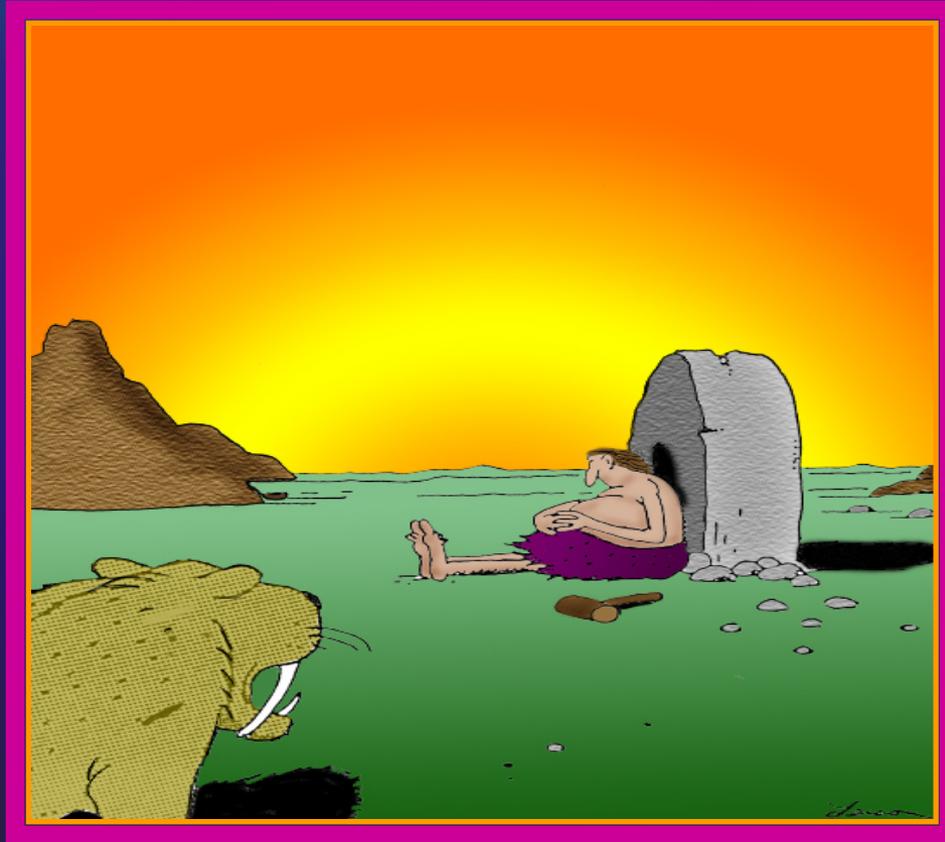


Aggressive Driving

- An aggressive driver is someone who commits a combination of moving traffic offenses which endanger other people or property.
- Three categories of aggression:
 - Lack of Courtesy (obscene gestures, refusing to yield, etc.)
 - Breaking the Rules (speeding, running red lights, etc.)
 - Angry Driving (tailgating, frequent lane changes, flash lights, etc.)
- Consequences include:
 - Physical and Mental Harm
 - Legal and Financial Hardship
- In its extreme form, aggressive driving can escalate into “**road rage**”.

www.nhtsa.dot.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/menuitem.5928da45f99592381601031046108a0c/

Falling Asleep at the Wheel is No Laughing Matter



**Thag Anderson becomes the first fatality
as a result of falling asleep at the wheel.**



Fatigue

- We spend one-third of our lives sleeping.
- Approximately **70 million** people in the U.S. are affected by one or more sleep problems.
- Drowsy drivers cause an estimated 100,000 police-reported crashes each year.
- Fatigue-related crashes are more likely to result in a fatality.
- Early signs of fatigue:

Yawn repeatedly

Can't remember having driven the past few miles

Difficulty focusing or keeping eyes open

Fatigue Calculator

Q1: How much sleep have you had in the 24 hours prior to when you woke today?

Q2 : How much sleep have you had in the 48 hours prior to when you woke today?

Q3 : How long will you have been awake from when you got up today through till the end of your working day

Try a program designed by the Centre for Sleep Research. The Fatigue Calculator will calculate a Fatigue Risk Score which is categorized as:



fatiguecalculator.com.au/



Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS)

- TRiPS is a tool to help you plan your drive.
- It is designed to reinforce common sense driving such as staying alert, not drinking, getting adequate sleep, wearing your seatbelt, and slowing down.
- Last year alone the Army lost a Soldier every 32 hours as a result of accidents.
- So do your part. Fill out TRiPS with your spouse. Be aware of driving risks and take the appropriate actions.

In FY 08, TRiPS users were about 6.5 times less likely to be involved in a fatal POV accident than non-TRiPS users!



Alcohol

- **National Statistics**

- In 2006, 64% of people who died in alcohol-impaired driving crashes had a BAC of .08 or higher.
- In 2006, **306 children** age 14 and younger were killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes.
- Of these children, 153 were riding in a vehicle with a driver who had a BAC level of .08 or higher.

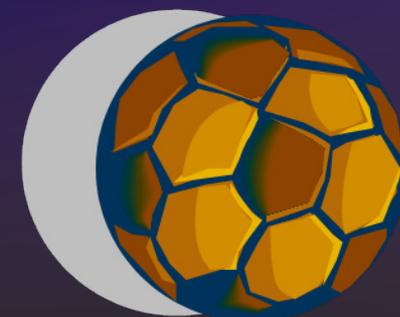
- **Consequences for Military Personnel**

- Enlisted Soldiers can face penalties which may result in forfeiture of pay, reduction of rank, 45 days extra duty and 60 days restriction.
- Officers can also face forfeiture of pay and 30 days arrest in quarters or 60 days restriction.
- Accidents involving alcohol can be ruled *Not in the Line of Duty* and can result in the loss of Family benefits.

Other Off-Duty Activities

In addition to POV accidents, other leading causes of off-duty accidents include:

- **Water-related activities**
(Watercraft/fishing/swimming)
- **Pedestrian activities**
(Struck by vehicle/train/bicycle)
- **Weapons-related activities**
(Mishandling/firing of a weapon)
- **Sporting Activities**
(Basketball/Football)



Water Related Activities

- There were 3 water-related fatalities in FY08. The Soldiers were two 21-year olds and one 22-year old.
- All three were Active Duty Army.
- All three accidents occurred on the weekend (Saturday) between the hours of 2 p.m. and 5 p.m.



Intervention/Prevention Measures

- Swim only in authorized areas and avoid alcohol.
- **Always have someone accompany you when swimming.**
- Take a Safe Boating course and wear a personal flotation device.
- Avoid being a victim of someone Boating Under the Influence (BUI).

www.uscgboating.org

Pedestrian Activities

- In FY08, there were 5 Soldiers who died as pedestrians; 3 were killed between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m.
- 4 of the 5 fatal accidents occurred on or near the roadway; 1 of the accidents occurred in a parking lot.
- In the first **45 days** of FY09 there have already been 3 Soldiers killed.



Intervention/Prevention Measures

- Walk on sidewalks and use crosswalks.
- No sidewalks: walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible.
- Have a designated driver or use a taxi if consuming alcohol.

www.nhtsa.dot.gov

www.crc.army.mil

Weapons-Related Activities

- Five of six off-duty fatalities involved privately owned weapons.
- Five occurred during the hours of 8 p.m. and 3 a.m.
- Ages were between 21 – 24 years old.
- Alcohol was involved in two of the accidents.

Intervention/Prevention Measures

- Range & Weapons Safety Toolbox:

<https://crc.army.mil/rangeweaponssafety>

- Do not handle weapons when consuming alcohol.
- Always **THINK** weapons safety:

www.hunter-ed.com

chppm-www.apgea.army.mil



Sporting Activities

- Basketball and football: top injury-causing activities.
- Fractures, dislocations, sprains and strains.

Intervention/Prevention Measures

- **Wear appropriate protective equipment.**
- Ensure suitable warm up and stretching prior to activity.
- Monitor fluid intake to prevent dehydration.
- Attend training for specialized activities.
- Check out the Ground Risk Assessment Tool (GRAT) on the CRC web site.





Other Family Concerns

- Sleep Problems
- Depression
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Alcohol/Drug Abuse
- Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI)
- Financial Stress
- Family Bonding



Sleep Problems

- Difficulty falling asleep
- Difficulty staying asleep
- Stop breathing during sleep
- Excessive snoring
- Limb jerking
- Wake up still feeling tired
- Difficulty staying awake during the day

All of these problems can be treated.

Check out www.sleepfoundation.org for more information.

Depression

- Symptoms of depression may differ for everyone; however, the following are some examples that many may experience:
 - Persistent sad, anxious or "empty" feelings
 - Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, guilt or worthlessness
 - Irritability, restlessness, fatigue or decreased energy
 - Loss of interest in activities or hobbies once pleasurable, including sex
 - A change in sleep pattern or excessive sleepiness
 - Overeating or appetite loss
 - Thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts
- The Army suicide rate has **increased** from **12.4** per 100,000 in **2003** to an estimated **19.5** per 100,000 in **2008**.
- Depression is treatable and **suicide** is preventable!

www.nimh.nih.gov

<http://www.nami.org>

PTSD

- About 20% of returning *Operation Iraqi Freedom* (OIF) Soldiers meet screening criteria for PTSD.
- Symptoms may include flashbacks, excessive nightmares, isolation from others, numbing of emotions, hyper-arousal, irritability.
- PTSD may worsen without treatment and remember, it can even show up several months or years after a person leaves the battlefield.
- Some **40,000 U.S. troops** have been diagnosed with the disorder since 2003 (Associated Press; Nov 13, 08).
- For more information contact your local veterans health administration.

www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/fact_shts/fs_what_is_ptsd.html

www.battlemind.org/spouse_battlemind.html#

Alcohol/Drug Abuse

- “Self-medicating” by drinking or abusing drugs is a common way many cope with upsetting traumatic stress reactions.
- Most commonly used drugs for “self-medicating”: alcohol, marijuana, prescription medications, cocaine, crystal methamphetamine, and ecstasy.
- Outpatient treatment for alcohol dependence and abuse has increased significantly since FY03.
- According to the National Center for PTSD, sufferers tend to turn to using alcohol and other drugs as a means of coping:

Over half (51.9%) of men and 27.9% of women with PTSD abuse alcohol or are dependent.

34.5 % of men with PTSD abuse drugs or are drug dependent.

Resources: MedlinePlus, National Center for PTSD, Dept. of Veteran Affairs and American Psychological Association

mTBI (Concussion)

- **Mild Traumatic Brain Injury:** a relatively **mild blow to the brain** can impair memory, attention, mental organization and logical thinking.
- **Common signs and symptoms:**
 - Headaches or neck pains that do not go away
 - Difficulty remembering, concentrating or making decisions
 - Slowness in thinking, speaking, acting or reading
 - Mood changes
 - Getting lost or easily confused
 - Changes in sleep patterns or feeling tired all of the time
 - Blurred vision, eyes that tire easily, increased sensitivity to light

For more information: www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/TBI.htm

For help: www.militaryonesource.com/skins/MOS/home.aspx

Commonalities:

Sleep Loss, PTSD, Alcohol Abuse, & mTBI

HEALTH	WORK	RELATIONSHIP	SAFETY
Increased risk for depression	Errors	Impatient	Slowed reaction times
	Impaired concentration	Cranky	Higher incidence of workplace and traffic accidents
	Slowed reaction time	Irritable	
	Poor work performance		Microsleeps (unintended mini-naps)

Financial Stress

- People experiencing financial stress are more likely to numb their anxiety by drinking, smoking, overeating and practicing other unhealthy coping behaviors. This in turn leads to more stress.
- Family finances may change when your Soldier returns home and is no longer receiving hazardous duty and family separation pay.
- Emotions, both positive and negative, can drive spending and cause you to go deep into debt.
- Recognize that you and your spouse can experience anxiety, frustration and a sense of hopelessness as your debt piles up.

Make a spending plan and stick to it.

www.militaryonesource.com/skins/MOS/home.aspx

stress.about.com/od/financialstress/a/financialstress.htm



Family Bonding

- Coming together as a couple after deployment isn't always easy.
- Each person has grown and changed during the separation and taken on new responsibilities.
- Most couples argue about three things: children, money and sex.
- Be patient with yourself and your family. Fatigue, confusion and worry—common during a transition—can lead to short tempers.
- It's a two-way street. **Negotiate the transition of family duties** as your home returns to normal.
- Know when to seek help.

<http://www.militaryonesource.com/skins/MOS/home.aspx>



Summary

- Last year 154 Soldiers died in off-duty accidents.
- Be aware of the at-risk activities that can affect you and your family, especially if you have a Soldier redeploying.
- If you or your Soldier are having issues, please **ask** for help. There are many sources available to you and your Family.

Thank you for all that you do to help us keep our Soldiers out of harms way. Your involvement is crucial to keeping our Soldiers safe while they are home!

Questions?

