



June—National PTSD Awareness Month

PTSD Awareness Day is observed every year on June 27th. PTSD stands for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and is a condition that many veterans and non-veterans alike suffer. PTSD can occur when someone experiences or witnesses a traumatic event. This condition wasn't always understood properly by the medical or military community, and the Department of Defense press releases often point to earlier attempts to identify PTSD symptoms in the wake of service in World War 2, Vietnam, and other conflicts.

PTSD Awareness Day will be observed on Thursday, June 27, 2019. June is also PTSD Awareness Month.

The History Of PTSD Awareness Day

In 2010, Senator Kent Conrad pushed to get official recognition of PTSD via a "day of awareness" in tribute to a North Dakota National Guard member who took his life following two tours in Iraq. Staff Sergeant Joe Biel died in 2007 after suffering from PTSD; Biel committed suicide after his return from duty to his home state. SSgt. Biel's birthday, June 27, was selected as the official PTSD Awareness Day, which is now observed every year.

In 2014, the Senate designated the full month of June for National PTSD Awareness.

How Do People Observe Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Day?

Much of what is done to observe PTSD Awareness Day involves encouraging open talk about PTSD, its' causes, symptoms, and most important of all, getting help for the condition. PTSD is, even in modern times, often misunderstood by those with no firsthand experience with the condition or those who suffer from it. PTSD Awareness Day is designed to help change that.

The Department of Defense publishes circulars, articles, and other materials to help educate and inform military members and their families about the condition. The Department of Veterans Affairs official site has several pages dedicated to PTSD, and when military members retiring or separating from the service fill out VA claim forms for service-connected injuries, illnesses, or disabilities, there is an option to be evaluated for PTSD as a part of the VA claims process.

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June Quote: "No one ever made a difference by being like everyone else." – P. T. Barnum

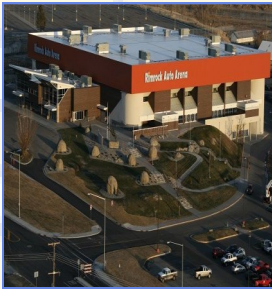
Club President:

Cory Hasiak



June Volunteer Opportunities:
June 15th—Food Truck Battle on the Yellowstone

Future Volunteer Opportunities:
July 13th—Brews & BBQ
July 25th—"Twins of Evil" Marilyn Manson & Rob Zombie
July 28th—Disturbed
August 5th—Marine Corps. Reception/Dinner
August 9th—BlackHawk, Restless Heart, & Shenandoah
August 10th—An Evening with 98 Degrees
August 11th—Old Dominion
August 25th—Weird Al Yankovic



Come weekly at 7:00 a.m. on Friday to the Yellowstone Room and get to know your fellow Exchangites!



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What Is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder?

As mentioned above, PTSD can be the result of experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event. The specific nature of the trauma can and does vary greatly. Medical experts are quick to point out that while combat and combat-related military service can be traumatic, not everyone who serves under such conditions reacts the same way. Some may develop symptoms of PTSD, while others may be unaffected.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: How Widespread Is It?

Some sources estimate that as many as 70% of all Americans have experienced a traumatic event sufficient to cause PTSD or PTSD-like symptoms. That does not mean that all 70% of Americans WILL suffer from PTSD. Using these statistics, some 224 million Americans have experienced a traumatic event. Of that number, some 20% will develop PTSD symptoms, roughly 44 million people.

Of that 44 million, an estimated eight percent experience active PTSD symptoms at any one time. An estimated 50% of all mental health patients are also diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

PTSD: Often Misunderstood And Misidentified

"Shell shock" and "combat shock" were earlier attempts to define and understand the symptoms of PTSD. Post-traumatic stress disorder was often stigmatized in popular culture after the Vietnam conflict, and many films and television shows featured antagonists or unsympathetic characters suffering from "Vietnam flashbacks" or other issues. The misunderstanding of PTSD slowly began to change in 1980 when it was recognized as a specific condition with identifiable symptoms. As a result, since that time Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is listed in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).

This manual is a diagnostic tool for mental health professionals and paraprofessional workers in the healthcare field and is considered a definitive reference. The addition of PTSD to the DSM was a highly significant development.

Today, the symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder are better understood, treatable, and recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs as a service-connected condition. PTSD is not exclusive to veterans or currently serving members of the United States military, but a portion of those who serve are definitely at risk for PTSD.

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U.S. Army National Guard
Photo by Staff Sgt. Mary Junell





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What Are The Symptoms Of Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome?

Some PTSD symptoms may seem vague and non-specific, others are more readily identified specifically as evidence of PTSD. In this context “non-specific” means that the symptoms may be related to other mental health issues and not specifically limited to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

In the same way, more “specific” symptoms may be manifest outside PTSD, but when looking for specific signifiers, these issues are common “red flags” that indicate PTSD may be the cause of the suffering rather than a different condition. This is often circumstantial, and there is no one-size-fits-all diagnosis for the condition.

Suicidal thoughts or self-destructive acts are often a result of PTSD or related symptoms. Anyone experiencing thoughts or urges to self-harm should seek immediate care to prevent the condition from getting worse in the short-term.

That said, more non-specific symptoms include varying degrees of irritability, depression, and suicidal feelings. More specific problems-especially where veterans and currently serving military members are concerned-include something known as “hypervigilance” or “hyperarousal”.

Other symptoms include repeatedly experiencing the traumatic event(s) in the form of flashbacks, nightmares, persistent memories of the event(s), and intrusive thoughts about the traumatic event(s).

These symptoms vary in intensity depending on the individual and are not ‘standardized’. They may come and go, or they may be persistent over a span of time. Sometimes PTSD sufferers can be high-functioning, other times they may be more debilitated by the condition.

Get Treatment For PTSD

Those who experience symptoms of PTSD or PTSD-like issues should seek help *immediately*. Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities, private care providers, counselors, and therapists can all be helpful in establishing an initial care regimen or refer those suffering from PTSD to a qualified care provider.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has more information on help for PTSD on its’ official site including help finding a therapist.

Those experiencing suicidal feelings or self-destructive urges should get help immediately. The Suicide Crisis Hotline (1-800-273-8255) has a specific resource for veterans and the Department of Veterans Affairs offers a Veterans’ Crisis Hotline confidential chat resource.

<https://militarybenefits.info/ptsd-awareness-day>

THE BREAKFAST
EXCHANGE CLUB OF
BILLINGS, MT

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Exchange, America's Service Club, is a group of men and women working together to make our communities better places to live through programs of service in Americanism, Community Service, Youth Activities, and its national project, the Prevention of Child Abuse.

Looking for something to do and support community organizations at the same time?

June 1—Island Adventure Run

June 1—SpringFest @ Moss Mansion

June 7—ArtWalk

June 7—Cornhole Tournament @ Red Door (benefits Relay for Life)

June 8—Strawberry Festival

June 11—Josephine Crossing Summer Concert (El Wencho)

June 14-15—Pints For Patriots and Paws (benefits Dog Tag Buddies)

June 15—Heart & Sole Run (benefits YMCA & Trail System)

June 21—MT Firefighters Memorial 5k

June 22—Rims to River 8k or 15k (benefits Trail System)

June 23—Festival of Cultures

June 23—Symphony in the Park

Mondays—Community Monday @ Hooligans (each week benefits different organization)

Tuesdays—Pint night at Last Chance Cider House (each week benefits different organization)



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CAP Center Corner

Summer Slide!

Before you get excited and bust out your swimsuit, we are talking about a different kind of summer slide. We are talking about the summer learning loss many kids experience.

With the final bell either right around the corner or here for kids, the “resource faucet” is being turned off for many kids especially for kids coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. What’s the “resource faucet” you ask? The “resource faucet” is financial and human capital resources (such as parental education) that is flowing during the school year for all kids, enabling all students to make learning gains. However, over the summer months, the flow of resources slows for students from lower income backgrounds while higher income students tend to continue to have access to the “resource faucet”.

On average, research has shown children without the appropriate learning resources over a summer lose:

- * 2.6 months in math skills
- * The equivalent of 1 month of overall learning
- * 2 months of reading skills

In the fall when school resumes:

- * 6 weeks is spent Re-Learning old material to make up for summer loss
- * It can take up to 2 months from the first day of school for a student’s brain development to get back on track
- * Summer learning loss can be recognized as early as first grade
- * By the end of sixth grade, students who have experienced summer learning loss over the years are an average of two years behind their peers
- * Two – thirds of the income based achievement gap is attributed to summer learning loss by the start of high school

Two to three hours per week is all that is needed during summer vacation to prevent learning loss and two months of subject focused learning is all it takes to improve specific learning.

What can you do to help? Consider donating new or gently used books and learning games to programs who offer summer learning programs and/or consider volunteering with an organization to read to children or be read to.

www.oxfordlearning.com
www.brookings.edu



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Committee Happenings:

BECON Committee—Your June BECON Editor is Cavin Noddings

Program Committee—Amber Parish will line up the speakers for June

Social Committee—Pig Races in Bearcreek on June 1st!

Freedom Shrine Committee—McKinley School and the Yellowstone Room to have rededicated Freedom Shrines.

Food Truck Battle Committee—The Committee is diligently back at work on the next food truck battle which will be Saturday, June 15th.

Patriotism Committee—Arranging for club members to hand out flags at Big Sky State Games on July 19th. Veteran's Day at the Fair details to come. Also working on a Chili Cook Off for Veteran's Day. Stay tuned.

Other Upcoming Happenings:

District Convention—June 6-8 in Idaho Falls. Tracy Edwards, National Exchange CEO will be the National Speaker (if you haven't met Tracy, she is AMAZING!)

National Convention—July 17—20 in Norfolk, VA (always a great event for learning and having lots of fun).

GET INVOLVED!!

****Committee Chairs**—Please email your upcoming events to dinaharmon1212@gmail.com to be included in next months newsletter!**