



**UNITED STATES ARMY
THE CHIEF OF STAFF**

September 27, 2012

Suicide Prevention Stand Down

Today, our Army will stand down to conduct suicide prevention training. This is an opportunity to heighten awareness for Soldiers, Civilians, Families and communities about suicide threat factors, about the resources available for help, and about building resiliency across the force.

I cannot overemphasize how important this issue is to me. Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy to our Families, to our units, and to our Army.

We must work together to create a culture and an environment where people feel comfortable getting the behavioral health assistance that they need. Our Warrior Ethos states "I will never leave a fallen comrade." I need everyone to take that to heart. Every individual contemplating suicide has a friend, Family member, or leader in the position to help. I need you all to get involved. Intervening requires personal courage and leadership. It isn't easy, but there is no room for bystanders.

We are a resilient Army, and we are committed to building our individual and collective strength – physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and within our Families. You must continue to refine and apply the resiliency skills you learn.

Last week I visited Afghanistan, Djibouti, and the Sinai Peninsula where I had the opportunity to talk with, present awards to, and re-enlist Soldiers. I am so proud of and humbled by the dedication and professionalism I see throughout the Army on a daily basis. Every member of our Army Family is important, and we will never waver on providing you the care and support you so rightly deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Odierno". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a large initial "R" and "O".

RAYMOND T. ODIERNO
General, United States Army