



**1-833-YU-FIRST**  
(1-833-983-4778)

## June is National PTSD Awareness Month



Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that can develop after witnessing or experiencing a traumatic event. Symptoms of PTSD include intrusive thoughts, avoidance, negative changes in thinking/mood, and a heightened arousal response. It is not uncommon for individuals to experience these symptoms after a traumatic event; we call this Posttraumatic Stress. However, once the symptoms last longer than one month and begin causing distress or functional impairment in one's social or occupational life, it may become a diagnosable disorder.

### What are the signs of PTSD?

- Nightmares, and recurring thoughts
- Emotional numbness
- Extreme worry, guilt, anger, or hopelessness
- Avoidance of people, places, or things that are reminders of the trauma
- A loss of interest in things that once gave pleasure
- Easily startled or jumpy
- Sleep issues
- Increased use in alcohol or other substances

### Does being diagnosed with PTSD make me weak?

- No! Everyone responds to traumatic events differently. Some people might experience a traumatic event and only experience symptoms for a short time period. Some individuals even experience posttraumatic growth which allows the individual to grow from his/her experience and find new meaning in life.

PTSD has nothing to do with mental toughness. However, you can always increase protective factors to manage or reduce symptoms. Protective factors include, increasing your social support system, seeking out therapy, utilizing healthy coping strategies and having a sense of purpose and/or faithplace.

### What should I do if I think I have PTSD or symptoms of Posttraumatic stress

- A great place to start is by taking an assessment. You can take a PTSD self-assessment by clicking here: <https://screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools/ptsd/?ref>
- After getting your results, you can call the Fire Capt. Ryan J Mitchell's First Responders Program at 1-833-983-4778 and we can help you with next steps. Whether it just be talking to someone about the results, or helping you get connected to a behavioral health expert. We are here for you!

## Free Training to Reduce Stigma within the First Responder Community

Mental Health is a top priority in the First Responder community. First Responders are at a greater risk for experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety due to repeated exposure to trauma. Many First Responders are hesitant to seek help because of the stigma surrounding mental health.

Our staff provides free in-person and Zoom presentations to educate first responders about stigma, recognize it's negative impact, and provide tools on how to reduce stigma within ones department. Contact us today to request an in-person or Zoom presentation.



[Request More Information](#)

## Resource of the Month



The Saddles In Service program offers First Responders the unique opportunity to explore their own healing alongside a rescue horse. Many men and women experience different stressors throughout their service to our Nation and communities. It is our goal to assist them in their process of working through these stressors.

Saddles in Service provides mental health wellness and healing for Active Duty Military, Veterans, Law Enforcement, Firefighters, First Responders, and their families that are experiencing or have been diagnosed with symptoms related to post-traumatic stress (PTSD), anxiety, depression, job-related stress, and/or traumatic brain injuries by partnering them with a rescued horse at no cost to them.

[More Information](#)



Due to the tragic events that occurred at a Los Angeles Fire Department, we wanted to take a moment of silence to recognize those who lost their life. Our thoughts and condolences are with the family and friends who were impacted by this event. You are not alone. There is help and resources available.

To learn more about resources, visit our resource page or call us at 1-833-983-4778

[Resources](#)



This program is funded by the County of San Diego/HHSA

1-833-983-4778

[Check out my website](#)