

Research Shows Pandemic Is Worsening Wounded Veterans' Health

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., Dec. 10, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- New research from Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP), with funding by CSX, shows the COVID-19 pandemic is disproportionately affecting WWP warriors with mental health challenges. WWP found those living with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are more than three times as likely to have mental or physical health-related challenges during the pandemic compared with warriors without mental health challenges.

The research is presented in a WWP white paper, "[Invisible Wounds and COVID-19: Heightened Risk for Wounded Warriors.](#)" The research also concludes warriors experiencing suicidal ideations are more than twice as likely to feel disconnected and have worsening mental or physical health during the pandemic.

Warriors with moderate to severe depression and feelings of loneliness are also at an increased risk of having these feelings, which are compounded for warriors facing multiple mental health challenges simultaneously.

"The COVID-19 pandemic created a perfect storm for many of the warriors we serve, especially those with mental health challenges," said Dr. Melanie Mousseau, WWP vice president of program operations and partnerships. "A lack of social connection along with mental health conditions magnifies the burden warriors are experiencing."

Greater psychological well-being and resilience can mitigate the pandemic's negative effects. WWP is finding its virtual offerings are bridging this gap for many warriors. From mid-March to mid-November, WWP held more than 22,000 telephonic and virtual sessions for emotional support and follow-up on mental health workshops. This is a 10% increase over the previous eight-month period.

WWP's findings are critical not only to the veteran community but also to military-friendly employers, like its partner CSX.

"We are proud that one in five CSX employees is a veteran or active reservist," said Bryan Tucker, vice president of Corporate Communications for CSX. "We depend on data and insights from our partners, like WWP, to help inform our community investment initiatives aimed at supporting the veteran community as well as our own employee wellness programs."


WWP will continue to adapt its programming to respond to warriors' needs during the pandemic and will partner with CSX in the spring of 2021 to provide suicide prevention training to CSX employees and its [Pride in Service](#) partners.

About Wounded Warrior Project

Since 2003, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) has been meeting the growing needs of warriors, their families, and caregivers – helping them achieve their highest ambition. [Learn more.](#)

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