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CNMI's DISABILITY NETWORK PARTNERS



What is: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)



The National Institute of Mental Health describes PTSD as a disorder that develops in some people who have experienced a shocking, scary, or dangerous event.

It is natural to feel afraid during and after a traumatic situation. Fear triggers many split-second changes in the body to help defend against danger or to avoid it. This “fight-or-flight” response is a typical reaction meant to protect a person from harm. Nearly everyone will experience a range of reactions after trauma, yet most people recover from initial symptoms naturally. Those who continue to experience problems may be diagnosed with PTSD. People who have PTSD may

feel stressed or frightened even when they are not in danger.

Symptoms usually begin early, within 3 months of the traumatic incident, but sometimes they begin years afterward. Symptoms must last more than a month and be severe enough to interfere with relationships or work to be considered PTSD. The course of the illness varies. Some people recover within 6 months, while others have symptoms that last much longer. In some people, the condition becomes chronic.

Symptoms to be on the lookout for:

- Intrusive memories
- Flashbacks
- Re-occurring nightmares
- Intense distress or irritability
- Physical reactions such as rapid breathing, sweating, or nausea, when remembering or being reminded of the trauma
- Avoidance
- Feeling emotionally detached from others
- Emotional numbness

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- Experiencing hopelessness about the future
- Inability to remember important aspects of the traumatic event
- Arousal or anxiety symptoms
- Bouts of moodiness or anger
- Insomnia or difficulty staying asleep
- A sense of being "on alert" or "on guard" – Hyper vigilance
- Developing a destructive addiction
- Suicidal thoughts - If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, chat online at <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/> or call 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Do children react differently than adults?

Children and teens can have extreme reactions to trauma, but their symptoms may not be the same as adults. In very young children (less than 6 years of age), these symptoms can include:

- Wetting the bed after having learned to use the toilet
- Forgetting how to or being unable to talk

- Acting out the scary event during playtime
- Being unusually clingy with a parent or other adult

Older children and teens are more likely to show symptoms similar to those seen in adults. They may also develop disruptive, disrespectful, or destructive behaviors. Older children and teens may feel guilty for not preventing injury or deaths. They may also have thoughts of revenge.

Risk Factors

Anyone can develop PTSD at any age. This includes war veterans, children, and people who have been through a physical or sexual assault, abuse, accident, disaster, or many other serious events. According to the National Center for PTSD, about 7 or 8 out of every 100 people will experience PTSD at some point in their lives.

Women are more likely to develop PTSD than men, and genes may make some people more likely to develop PTSD than others.



Not everyone with PTSD has been through a dangerous event. Some people develop PTSD after a friend or family member experiences danger or harm. The sudden, unexpected death of a loved one can also lead to PTSD.

Risk Factors and Resilience Factors for PTSD

Some factors that increase risk for PTSD include:

- Living through dangerous events and traumas
- Getting hurt
- Seeing another person hurt, or seeing a dead body
- Childhood trauma
- Feeling horror, helplessness, or extreme fear
- Having little or no social support after the event
- Dealing with extra stress after the event, such as loss of a loved

Kids with PTSD may ...	Adults with PTSD may ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revert to bedwetting• Stop speaking• Act out trauma through play• Become extremely clingy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience vivid flashbacks• Avoid reminders of the trauma• Act on edge and startle easily• Feel anxious or depressed

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Information for this article was taken from the following sources:

The National Institute of Mental Health's website which can be found at <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/index.shtml>
The Mental Health America website which can be found at: <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/conditions/post-traumatic-stress-disorder>

Northern Marianas College Disability Support Services

Dr. Takahashi who is the Director of Pacific Basin University of Excellence Center (PBUCE) from Center on Disability Studies at University of Hawaii at Manoa and Dr. Roberts who is Professor and Director of Institute on Human Development at Northern Arizona University were on in Saipan in partnership with Northern Marianas College's CNMI University Center of Excellence for Developmental Disabilities led by Director, Mr. Floyd Masga and UCEDD Program Manager, Jennifer Castro to conduct a two day Disability Support Services Training for faculty, staff, note takers, tutors, and mentors at the Northern Marianas College.

The Northern Marianas College Disability Support Services provides reasonable accommodations through a variety of services and programs. Accommodations in partnership with other disability agencies may include: Exam Proctoring, Special Testing Procedures, and Extended Time on Exams, Priority Registration, Interpreter Services (ASL), Captioning Services, Readers, Note Takers, Brailled Formats, Enlarged Print Materials, Alternative Formats and Assistive Technology, to name a few.



VOICES of the CNMI – Tinian Chapter



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS EMPLOYMENT
FIRST CONSORTIUM

“2017 Take Your Legislator to Work
Campaign”

The VOICES of the CNMI, Tinian Chapter was offered by the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to implement “Take Your Legislator to Work” (TYLTW)

initiative to help promote the hiring of individuals with disabilities.

2017 TAKE YOUR LEGISLATOR TO WORK CAMPAIGN

The VOICES of the CNMI, Tinian Chapter is a non-profit organization led by individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Their purpose is to ensure that people with disabilities are treated as equal, and that they are given the same rights, responsibilities and chance to speak up and to empower themselves to make decisions and choices that affect their lives so they can be more independent.

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) was able to identify five self-advocates, three from Saipan, one from Rota and one from Tinian. They were employed either government or private sector.

The self-advocates were given the opportunity to identify a legislator from their precinct to invite to the event. They informed their employer to get their support to have a legislative visit them at their workplace to build awareness about the capabilities of people with disabilities and the valuable resource they are to their employers and community. The press release on this event was covered by Marianas Variety.

They were able to demonstrate to their legislator their skills and talents at the workplace as well as promoting the employment of qualified individuals with developmental or other disabilities to make our CNMI a better place to live – a place where everyone can work hard, live well, and be a contributing member of our

society. The elected officials were able to see how important work is for everyone, including individuals with developmental or other disabilities through this “PROJECT” be inspired to seek out creative ways in which to increase competitive integrated employment for all who want to work or pursue careers in the CNMI.

It's about people and jobs.

SAIPAN

Connie Atalig –

Department of Public Works/Building Safety



Connie Atalig has worked at the Department of Public Works/Building Safety for over five (5) years as an Administrative Assistant. She got employed through services provided by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. She is responsible for making schedules, answering phones, and making sure all applications submitted for Building Code Permits are complete. Representative BJ T. Attao visited her at her job site and learned from her Supervisor, Ms. Yvonne B. Tenorio that Connie is someone they can depend to handle administrative work.

On December 5, 2016, I Monika Diaz, VOICES of the CNMI, Tinian Chapter traveled to Saipan and conducted public awareness for people with disabilities to build awareness about the capabilities of people with disabilities and the valuable resource they are to their employers and community. Ms. Connie Atalig, Administrative Assistant for Department of Public Works demonstrated her abilities, skills, and talents at her workplace as well as promoting the employment of qualified individuals with developmental or other disabilities to make the CNMI a better place to live – a place where everyone can work hard, live well, and be a contributing member of our society to Congressman BJ T. Attao. Marianas Variety Newspaper covered the event.

John Cabrera –

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

John Cabrera has worked at Office of Vocational Rehabilitation for over 10 years as a Counselor Aid and is responsible for answering phones, filing documents, and making appointments with clients. Representative Ivan A. Blanco visited him there and learned from OVR Director, Arlene Yamagata that John is someone they can depend on administrative duties.



On December 14, 2016, Mr. Jan Barcinas of the VOICES of the CNMI – Tinian Chapter, also conducted public awareness at the Office of the Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR). Congressman Blanco who visited the office learned from OVR Director Arlene Yamagata that John is someone they can depend on administrative duties.

awareness at the Rota Mayor’s office. Mayor Efrem Atalig, who is currently Robert’s employer was able to take time to recognize his skills and talents with the work he does.

(c) Monika H. Diaz participated in this project by inviting the Mayor of Tinian to the workplace on March 23, 2017.



**Joe Aiyen –
Blue Sky Market**

Joe Aiyen has worked at Blue Sky Market for five (5) months as a Stocker and is responsible for keeping shelves stocked, receiving merchandise, off loading or un-packing merchandise boxes. Joe applied through Summer Training at DOL/WIA then applied on his own.

On December 14, 2016, Mr. Jan Barcinas of the VOICES of the CNMI – Tinian Chapter, again conducted public awareness at Blue Sky Market. Congressman Joseph “Lee Pan” Guerrero visited the Market and learned from his employer that Joe is someone they can depend on stacking merchandise on the shelves.

(b) Jan Barcinas traveled to Rota on March 04, 2017 during the event that Mr. Robert A. Mendiola invited the Mayor of Rota to his workplace;

On March 4, 2017, Mr. Jan Barcinas of the VOICES of the CNMI – Tinian Chapter traveled to Rota to conduct public

TINIAN

**Monika H. Diaz –
Tinian Mayor’s Office/Scholarship**



Ms. Monika H. Diaz has been working for the Tinian Mayor’s office/Municipal Scholarship Office about over two years now as an assistant at the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Office. She helps with answering phone calls, helping students fill out the application, and helps assist her co-workers with other things. She feels that people with disabilities should have an opportunity to work so that they can live independently and gain experience in the work force.

ROTA

**Robert Atalig Mendiola –
Rota Mayor’s Office
Public Information Office**



Mr. Robert Atalig Mendiola has been working for the Rota Mayor’s office/Public Information Office for 2 years now as a Public Information Officer. Mr. Mendiola’s duties include planning and schedule community events; prepares reports for each event & is in charge of taking pictures. He feels that people with disabilities should have the opportunity to work so that they can live independently and gain experience in the work force.

Alice, I'm Falling

Cherrie Lovejoy

*Down the hole I go
Again it comes
The brain goes slow
I'm falling.*

*Just like Alice
In the looking glass
I'm on a chess board
The game will pass.*

*Falling, falling
Then I swim
From the tears
Pouring within.*

*I'm losing control
I've tried so hard
But it slips away
Like a falling deck of cards.*

*I've lost my head
The queen made sure
Its gone and rolling
So much I've endured.*

*Then I wake
Form the terrible dream
Or is it?
As it seems.*

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one, pain and injury, or loss of a job or home

- Having a history of mental illness or substance abuse

Some resilience factors that may reduce the risk of PTSD include:

- Seeking out support from other people, such as friends and family
- Finding a support group after a traumatic event
- Learning to feel good about one's own actions in the face of danger
- Having a positive coping strategy, or a way of getting through the bad event and learning from it
- Being able to act and respond effectively despite feeling fear

Treatments and Therapies



The main treatments for people with PTSD are medications, psychotherapy ("talk" therapy), or

Is PTSD curable?

- Although there is no one perfect cure for PTSD, therapists use therapy and medication to help treat and control the symptoms.
- Normal treatment would include visiting therapy classes, as well as possibly being given a prescription for an antidepressant to help with depression or anxiety.



both. Everyone is different, and PTSD affects people differently so a treatment that works for one person may not work for another. It is important for anyone with PTSD to be treated by a mental health provider who is experienced with PTSD. Some people with PTSD need to try different treatments to find what works for their symptoms.

If someone with PTSD is going through an ongoing trauma, such as being in an abusive

relationship, both of the problems need to be addressed. Other ongoing problems can include panic disorder, depression, substance abuse, and feeling suicidal.

Commonly used treatments and therapies for PTSD:

Medications

Psychotherapy

Exposure Therapy

Cognitive Restructuring

Talk Therapies

Together we can build a future: A take on partnership



In life, we try as much as possible to rely on ourselves and figure things out on our own. And, there is nothing wrong with this at all, in fact, it is commendable!

But, there are those of us who require some assistance, and it is perfectly alright to ask others for help.

The government has a variety of programs put in place to help people with disabilities who want to work, and one of these programs is Vocational Rehabilitation, or VR. It can be daunting to try and navigate through this or any other public systems ourselves. Luckily, the staff at the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) are more than happy to work with you to achieve your employment goal.

One of the key elements in the VR process and for a successful closure is *partnership*. From the beginning of the VR process (application) the client and the counselor start with building rapport and an understanding of the *partnership required*. *The emphasis – always – is on “active” partnership*. There are ways for an applicant to demonstrate active partnership, and one is by providing certain information (employment, education, medical, etc.) that is necessary to move the application forward (eligibility or ineligibility).



In VR, active partnership can also be clearly demonstrated when a consumer (eligible individual) does his or her part to participate in training to the best of their abilities (no absenteeism) as they are being prepared for employment. Specific activities the consumer is required to engage in per his/her individualized plan for employment (IPE), must be undertaken with diligence and perseverance. Nothing is handed on a silver platter at OVR. Everyone must do their part.

Prior to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), VR cases were closed as successfully rehabilitated for a set of reasons including the consumer was able to maintain employment for at least 90 days after receiving vocational rehabilitation services. These days, however, exit from VR now takes on a different form. Partnership, in the form of ongoing communication between the consumer and counselor, will continue for one year after closure as WIOA requires VR programs to track new common performance measures including employment during 2nd and 4th quarters after exit.

This article has provided some examples on the importance of partnership in Vocational Rehabilitation. Not only is it recommended or encouraged, partnership is essentially required and is a key element to successful closure. So, if you want to see your case progress at OVR, it is a good idea to work in partnership with your counselor throughout the VR process. If you have any questions, speak to a counselor by calling OVR at 322-6537/8 or send an email to nmidir@ovrgov.net. Good luck to you!





Disability Network Partners from the Council on Developmental Disabilities, NMC-University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and trainers from the VOICES of the CNMI – Tinian and Rota Chapter provided Self-Advocacy and Leadership Training to Kagman High School Students on March 08, 2017.

OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Tel: (670) 322-6537/8 Website: www.ovrgov.net



Ever wondered how you can transition from high school to the adult world after graduation? The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, together with your Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, can be a part of your journey, if you let them.

OVR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES

The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA), a new federal law passed in 2014, requires that Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) be provided to students with disabilities who are:

- Between the ages of 16-21 years
- Enrolled in high school and is receiving Special Education Services, or is in college, or participating in another educational program.

Pre-ETS services include:

- Job exploration counseling
- Work-based learning experiences
- Counseling on postsecondary (college) options
- Work readiness training
- Instruction on self-advocacy

