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## Study concludes Master Resilience Training effective

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*Spc. Gerald Schumacher of 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, climbs a mountain Jan. 11, 2012, in Watapur district, Kunar province, Afghanistan. The U.S. Army's Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program helps prepare Soldiers like Schumacher for the physical and emotional rigors of combat.*

FORT MEADE, Md. (Army News Service, Jan. 24, 2012) -- The Master Resilience Training aspect of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness is working well. That's the conclusion of an Army report, released last month, covering a 15-month period of statistical evaluation.

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, or CSF, was launched in 2009 to teach Soldiers how to be psychologically strong in the face of adversity, such as combat. The program, also available to family members and DA civilians, was designed at the University of Pennsylvania by behavioral specialists using proven research-based methodologies.

Within CSF, all Soldiers, active and reserve component, are required annually to take the Global Assessment Tool, an online questionnaire which measures a Soldier's psychological health. The GAT scores give Soldiers an indicator of where they are strong and where they can improve. Those needing improvement could take Comprehensive Resilience Modules, which are online help tutorials, or seek professional counseling.

GAT scores are confidential but the results are aggregated for statistical purposes, such as for use in the recently released Longitudinal Analysis of the Impact of Master Resilience Training, or MRT, on Self-Reported Resilience and Psychological Health Data.

MRT is the second aspect of CSF. Master resilience trainers are Soldiers and Department of the Army Civilians who are graduates of the 10 day MRT-C course taught at University of Pennsylvania, Victory University, or by the Mobile Training Team. They teach leaders to instill resilience in subordinates -- meaning they help fellow Soldiers learn to bounce back from adversity.

The study evaluated GAT scores of eight randomly selected brigade combat teams, known as BCTs. Four received MRT and four did not. Over the 15-month period, scores of the four BCTs receiving the training were significantly higher than the others, irrespective of other variables, such as unit leadership and cohesion.

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"This report represents a significant milestone with respect to the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program and the Army's broader efforts to develop a more resilient and capable force," wrote Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, in the report's forward. "It is my hope that this report will spark fruitful discussions; leading to new and improved ways, we may help our Soldiers, Army civilians and family members to improve their overall psychological health."

The study has demonstrated that the program is successful, concluded Brig. Gen. Jim Pasquarette, the CSF program director.

"I believe this is something we're going to have forever, similar to physical training," Pasquarett said. "I think in the future, even under this budget, we're going to fund it. We believe this will save us money through prevention (because) it helps our Soldiers, family members and Department of the Army civilians deal with adversity in their life and more importantly -- thrive in their lives."

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