

Counting the cost

By [David Heim](#)

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“War is not healthy for children and other living things.” That consciously obvious claim—a favored bumper sticker in the 1960s—came to mind while reading a [report](#) in *USA Today* saying that one in four soldiers at the nation’s largest army post have been in counseling during the past year.

The number would probably be even higher if the mental health services at Fort Hood, Texas, could keep up with all the requests for help. The number of demands overwhelm the counselors—and that’s despite the fact that acknowledging a need for counseling still carries a stigma in the military.

Depression and post-traumatic stress are common problems, especially among those who have gone through several deployments in war zones.

"I don't think we fully understand the total effect of nine years of continuous conflict on a force this size," said Peter Chiarelli, an army chief of staff. Don't understand that waging war is not healthy for human beings?