Supporting Military Children

The Month of the Military Child is time to celebrate Navy children. Navy children are tough, resilient and adaptable but they also need support when navigating the stresses of belonging to a military family, especially during a parent’s deployment. Below are a few popular support resources developed specifically for children.

Sesame Street for Military Families: For young kids, military life can be confusing and a parent’s deployment can be overwhelming. Elmo and the team at Sesame Street provide videos and resources on deployments, homecomings, relocation and other military-specific challenges to help young children understand and build the skills they need to thrive in a military family. Visit Sesame Street for Military Families to explore more.

Military Kids Connect: Military Kids Connect offers informative activities, fun games, helpful videos and an online community that help build coping skills in military children. The monitored online forums allow military children to share ideas and experiences and provide support to other military children. Visit Military Kids Connect to find out more.

Fleet and Family Support Center: The Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) is a great resource with a wealth of valuable information for military families. In addition to being an amazing information and referral source, FFSCs located around the globe also provide education and training opportunities for military families. They offer a host of children and deployment workshops and individual support, as well as parenting, budgeting and employment workshops. To find your local FFSC and more information about course offerings, please visit the Fleet and Family Support Center Directory.

Deployment Support Handbook: In addition to being a great resource for all things deployment, this resource has valuable information on helping children to cope with deployment, recommendations on activities for children during deployment and tips for preparing children for homecoming and reintegration. Download a copy of the Deployment Support Handbook today.

United through Reading: United through Reading allows deployed parents to connect with their children by reading to their children. With more than 200 recording locations worldwide, United through Reading records military parents and then sends the book and recording to their children. Regardless of location, a deployed parent can still read their children bedtime stories. Find a United through Reading recording location to participate.
Strong Communities = Strong Families

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month and time to remind the Navy community that they play an important role in making our communities better places for children and families. By ensuring that parents have the knowledge, skills and resources they need to care for their children, we can create strong and thriving children, youth and families in our communities and so help prevent child abuse and neglect.

Research shows that protective factors are present in healthy families. Promoting these factors is among the most effective ways to reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect. The factors are:

- Nurturing and attachment.
- Knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development.
- Parental resilience.
- Social connections.
- Concrete supports for parents.
- Social and emotional competence of children.

Fleet and Family Support Centers offer several professional free services to promote these factors that create the enriching family life and community our military children deserve. Other parent resources include:

- Military OneSource
- Military Kids Connect
- The Amazing Brain
- National Parent Helpline at 1-855-4A-PARENT (1-855-427-2736).

Teaching Financial Literacy to Military Children

How our parents talked about and interacted with money impacted our adult relationship with money. Remember the parental quotes:

“Money doesn’t grow on trees.”
“Do you think I am made of money?”
“We can’t afford that!”

These sayings can create a sense of perceived scarcity and disempowerment. If you are now a parent, consider rewording these quotes so your children feel empowered in their relationship with money. Your memorable parental quotes can be:

“How many allowances would that take to buy?”
“What ways can you earn extra money to purchase that?”
“Is that really where you want to spend your money or would you rather save for . . . ?”
“We choose not to spend our money on that; instead we budgeted for . . .” (Examples, a family vacation, dependable car, dance lessons and/or soccer fees.)

The real-life financial experience children receive at home through conversations about money and observations of their parents’ money habits has a huge impact on their adult relationship with money. So be thoughtful of what money behaviors you are showing your children.

For more tips on youth financial literacy, register for the free workshop, Raising Financially Fit Kids. Or schedule an appointment with a personal financial management consultation at a Fleet and Family Support Center near you.

Continued on next page
Parents should share a room with a new baby but never the same bed. Some 3,500 babies are lost to sleep-related asphyxiation and falls every year. Babies should sleep on their backs without toys and soft bedding. Participate in the New Parent Support Home Visitors Program to learn more about nurturing your baby through all the stages of development.

Parents should worry about their screen time as much as their children’s screen time. Childhood accidents can happen in a split second, so be aware of electronic distractions. Chronically distracted parents can also emotionally starve their children. Parents can grow irritable when interrupted and less likely to understand their child’s emotional cues. Model healthy limits on electronics.

The military lifestyle has lots of change and these changes can bring strong emotions from children. However children often have a difficult time expressing their emotions appropriately. Parents can help by teaching children how to name, express and manage their emotions - in words, faces, drawings or questions. Listen intently to children’s questions. It is important to them that you hear their concerns.

Lack of sleep. Juggling multiple responsibilities. Deployment emotions. Moving to-do list. Parents often dismiss even the basics for themselves. This models unhealthy behaviors to their children and increases irritability and sadness. Parents need to know that self-care is essential to reducing stress and maintaining a positive parenting attitude.

Parenting is overwhelming and social connections can provide a buffer to parenting stress. Seek social connections with friends, family members, neighbors and other members of a community who provide emotional support and concrete assistance. Take time off to reenergize or phone a friend for advice. Bonus: social connections provide children with opportunities for healthy social interaction also.

Knowledge of child and youth development is important in providing an environment for children to thrive. Fleet and Family Support Centers offer a variety of parenting classes including Baby Bootcamp, Toddler Time, Parenting School Age Children, Parenting Teens, Children and Divorce, Parenting during Deployment, Single Parenting in the Military and more.
Spouse Employment Corner

The Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education® (AFCPE®) and the FINRA Investor Education Foundation, in partnership with Blue Star Families and the National Military Family Association, are accepting applications for the 2019 FINRA Foundation Military Spouse Fellowship Program. The program will provide up to 50 military spouses with the education necessary to earn the AFC® (Accredited Financial Counselor®) certification; a $1400 value. This fellowship gives military spouses the opportunity to build a rewarding career that is flexible to the demands of military life. AFC® certified financial counselors are sought-after by banks and credit unions, non-profit and government agencies, higher education and financial aid offices, military services organizations and community housing agencies. Learn more about the Fellowship and how other FINRA Fellows are using their credential at https://www.saveandinvest.org/military/military-spouse-fellowship-program.

Spring into Action

SUPPORT APRIL’S AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS WITH STYLE

Start the month by “Lighting it Up Blue” for Autism Awareness on April 2nd. Light Blue by changing outdoor/indoor white bulbs to blue bulbs. Wear Blue by sporting blue t-shirts, ties and scarves. Share Blue by posting photos of your support on social media with the hashtag #LightItUpBlue.

Then be on the look-out in mid-April for when your installation and/or school system schedules “Purple Up! For Military Kids!” Proudly wear your best purple outfit to show support for our smallest military heroes.

All month long participate in Teal Tuesdays to recognize Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the Navy’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program (SAPR). Every Tuesday in the month of April wear teal or “pin on” your teal ribbon.

Show your earthy style by modeling your cloth grocery bags, mesh produce bags, reusable water bottles/cups and washable straws on Earth Day, April 22. Plastic bags, bottles and straws are the biggest sources of plastic pollution so show your support by refusing plastic shopping bags, disposable plastic bottles and plastic straws.

End the month of April by making a social statement with a fashion statement by wearing jeans on April 24. Denim Day is a protest against misconceptions surrounding sexual violence and shows support for sexual assault victims.
Moving: No Problem

Moving can be a stressful and time-consuming process for military families. Anxiety may arise when they receive notification of their permanent change of duty station (PCS) until they unpack the last box in their new home. Here are ways to cope with the stress of moving and relax during the moving process:

**Start Early.** Beginning planning and researching a few months in advance. Visit Military Installations to explore your new duty station. Contact the Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) for moving workshops and enroll in the sponsorship program.

**Organized.** To make your move smooth, plan, and organize your tasks and schedule your activities. Use Military One Source’s Plan My Move tool to build a custom checklist.

**Think about the “What Ifs.”** Brainstorm all the things that may go wrong and create back-up plans. What if you cannot find a hotel that accepts pets? Make sure you have a recent copy of your pet’s health records readily available for boarding.

**Embrace the change.** Moving is an adventure and an opportunity for change. Embrace the new opportunities and enjoy a new exciting experience.

**Be kind to yourself.** Give yourself a reasonable amount of time to relax and enjoy the moving experience.

The summer PCS season is fast approaching and there are plenty of resources available to help you plan and adjust to your new duty station. Visit the Relocation Assistance website for information on moving workshops, sponsorship, spouse and youth sponsorship, loan closet, and more. Enjoy your move!

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LIVE WELL

Resiliency Webinars for Sailors and Families

Join us Live!

Webinars are open to all Sailors and Family Members.

**Building Resilience in Military Children**

Wednesday, April 3 at 1 p.m. EDT

“As we raise children, our goal has to be to prepare children to be happy, healthy 35 year olds.” – Dr. Ginsburg. Celebrate your child by learning how to help them develop the skills that will make them happier and more resilient. Child development experts will explain seven strength-based strategies or the seven C’s in building resilience.

**Sleep and Mental Health**

Wednesday, April 17 at 2:30 p.m. EDT

Sleep is as important to our health as eating, drinking, and breathing. Poor sleep is linked to a weakened immune system, weight gain, impaired memory, and depression. Join us to discuss the importance of proper sleep and tips on guaranteeing you get enough.

**Your Sailor is Returning: Now What?**

Tuesday, April 30 at 7:00 p.m. EDT

Reuniting after a deployment is filled with happiness, relief, and excitement. But it is also a time of frustration, confusion, and worry as a family readjusts to the “new normal.” This webinar examines how to prepare for “the big return” from planning the first day to renegotiating roles and responsibilities.

Register today at CNIC’s LMS. For future topics or more information, visit Fleet and Family Support Program’s Live Well Resiliency Webinars Website.

Do you have a suggestion for a Live Well topic?

Send us an email: livewellresilientweb@navy.mil.
Make the Commitment to Prevent Sexual Assault

PROTECTING OUR PEOPLE PROTECTS OUR MISSION — MAKE THE COMMITMENT

The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program continues to focus on prevention by exploring different ways to prevent sexual violence. We challenge you to examine the social norms, values and climate that create an environment where sexual violence is permissible. Then consider what you can do to challenge them.

Make the commitment!

Considering at least one act to build your prevention skills? Have the courage to point out a sexist joke. Speak up when you see someone disrespect another person or group. Keep an eye on friends in social situations with alcohol. Make the commitment to have a healthy sexual relationship and respect a partner’s boundaries. Join the global conversation by using the hashtag #SAAPM and show others how you make the commitment for sexual assault prevention.

Throughout the month of April be sure to get involved with your installation’s SAAPM events. For more information about sexual assault prevention strategies and the SAPR Program, contact your local Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), or go to https://www.cnic.navy.mil/sapr.

Confidential DoD Safe Helpline services are available 24/7, both in the United States and abroad. DoD Safe Helpline is a crisis-support service specially designed for members of the DoD community affected by sexual assault. Contact DoD Safe Helpline at 877-995-5247 from anywhere in the world. When in doubt about your own immediate safety, always call 911 or base security.

APRIL SCHEDULE
Wed. - 3rd: 1 p.m. EDT - Building Resilience in Military Children
Wed. - 17th: 2:30 p.m. EDT - Sleep and Mental Health
Tues. - 30th: 7 p.m. EDT - Your Sailor is Returning - Now What???
New Pentagon MWR Program Offers Service Members Leisure Travel Savings

Stephen Clutter and Chief Mass Communication Specialist Brian Morales, Commander, Navy Installations Command Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. February 27, 2019—When Gas Turbine Systems Technician (Mechanical) Third Class Kayla Pomroy was considering taking leave to travel from Japan to be with family in Pennsylvania this past Christmas she checked out a new website called American Forces Travel.

She had heard about American Forces Travel from a family member and was impressed the moment she logged in. “The website was very easy to navigate,” said Pomroy, who is stationed on the Yokosuka-based guided missile destroyer USS Stethem (DDG-63).

American Forces Travel is open to all military and military-affiliated personnel who are eligible to use Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) programs. First-time users will be asked to verify their eligibility through the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES). The verification process is secure and requested information will not be retained.

Priceline Partner Network (PPN) was selected as the vendor to run the military MWR online leisure travel service, which was rolled out in late January, but was live for testing starting in November, when Pomroy booked her travel.

Pomroy, who is from Philadelphia, traveled from Tokyo on Dec 14, 2018 for two weeks of leave. Her route took her through Los Angeles, Atlanta and finally, Harrisburg, Penn., where she surprised her family when she arrived.

“The day I landed, I went straight to my neighbor’s house for their holiday party, Pomroy said. “My mom had absolutely no idea that I was coming home. My neighbor asked my mom to come over early to help set up, and so she did. When I heard the doorbell ring my stomach dropped, but it was in a good way.”

When her mother walked in the door, Pomroy peeked around the corner and saw her mother in the kitchen. Then the Sailor who has been in the Navy for a little more than two years ran into her mother’s arms.

“The feeling was absolutely amazing,” she recounted. “There was so much emotion, but all we could do was hug and cry. My mom is my best friend so being away for even a month is hard let alone months and months and years at a time like I am.”

Pomroy said she was surprised by how much she saved by using American Forces Travel. “All the sites that I looked on the fares were well over $1,500 most were close to $2,000,” she said. “After taxes and the protection plan I only spent $941 on the ticket round trip to come home all the way from Japan. American Forces Travel was an extremely good deal!”

That’s the kind of experience that the Navy MWR team likes to hear.

“American Forces Travel wants to provide the best value and opportunities for access to the world’s most exclusive travel deals,” said Leslie Gould, Navy MWR Recreation Program Manager.

Although not all savings are as good as Pomroy experienced, Priceline does at least match the best rates offered by airlines and other travel sites. “We have a best price guarantee for all product lines, not just airfare,” said Debbie Phillips, Technology Manager for the Commander, Navy Installation Command’s Fleet Readiness Division.

American Forces Travel is unprecedented as the only leisure travel site sponsored by the U.S. military, Gould noted. It was the result of a year-long joint service initiative among the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Forces, and Coast Guard to provide exceptional deals on flights, hotels, cruises and rental cars.

Continued on next page
Priceline was selected among many online travel agencies as the vendor because of its experience in negotiating specials deals with travel brands worldwide and their 20 years of online travel expertise.

Pomroy said she was grateful for her experience using the new American Forces Travel website.

“Coming home like that is not a moment that everyone gets to have,” she noted, “but people need to savor those little moments. Because years down the road, I will look back at all the pictures and videos of surprising them and I will be so thankful that I got to do that.”

Another important feature to American Forces Travel is all transactions generate a commission that will support Quality of Life programs within each service branch.

Gould notes that the American Forces Travel site is in keeping with MWR’s goals to provide recreation pursuits that ultimately support resiliency, readiness, and retention.

“By providing quality and value through a leisure travel program, service members and their families can enjoy experiences and travel opportunities for rest and relaxation, which helps reduce stress and improve morale,” Gould said.

American Forces Travel is currently available to all active duty, reservists and retirees from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, as well as their eligible dependents. The verification process is currently being updated to also include civilian employees from all five services.

The site address is www.americanforcestravel.com.

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**Navy Fleet and Family Support Program Staff are Dedicated to Navy Family Support!**

On right: Shauna Turner, Director, Navy Family Support Program (right) at Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) is presented a certificate for a decade of service. Ms. Turner was awarded her 10-year certificate by Ed Cannon, Director, Navy Fleet and Family Readiness. Here is to many more years of faithful and honorable service helping Navy families!

Below: Last month the Family Readiness Regional Program Directors (RPDs) from around Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) gathered at headquarters in Washington, D.C. for their annual Regional Advisory Board (RAB). RPDs meet annually to update and improve Family Readiness programs and services. They also focus on streamlining policies, procedures, programs and learn the best practices on how to deliver them to Navy families, improving their quality of life while serving.