September is Navy Suicide Prevention Month

This month the Navy Fleet and Family Support Programs (FFSP) join the Navy Suicide Prevention Branch to highlight suicide prevention to share resources with Sailors and families. According to the National Association on Mental Illness, every year more than 41,000 individuals die by suicide. Though we often view statistics as a call-to-action, suicide prevention is not about numbers. The impact of losing one Sailor to suicide is felt by many and for some the impact last a lifetime. Each of us has the power to make a difference.

Every Sailor, Every Day starts with US. All members of the Navy community should lead by example and take proactive steps toward strengthening physical, psychological and emotional wellness on a daily basis, recognizing when it’s necessary to seek help. If you notice anything out of the norm with a loved one or a friend one conversation—1 Small ACT—can open the door for support by breaking the silence and facilitating early intervention. One conversation can change a life.

If you think a shipmate is having trouble navigating stress, ACT (Ask, Care, Treat):

- **Ask** – Ask directly, “Are you thinking of killing yourself?”
- **Care** – Listen without judgment. Show that you care.
- **Treat** – Get help immediately and don’t leave the Sailor alone. Escort him or her to the nearest chaplain, trusted leader or medical professional for treatment.

The “1 Small ACT” of the Every Sailor, Every Day campaign encourages all members of the Navy community to use common, simple act of kindness as opportunities to save lives and reduce the shame and stigma that prevents open discussion about suicide. The campaign also is a dedicated time to bring people together with collective passion and strength around a tough subject. Everyone can benefit from active dialogue about stress and suicide. One conversation can change a life.

FFSP staff are available to assist each Navy family member and provide useful resources to increase awareness and support. Watch for suicide prevention month resources on FFSP social media pages (Facebook and Twitter) in September and throughout the year.

Continued on next page.
Chaplain’s Corner

PRACTICE ASKING ‘HOW ARE YOU?’

Focusing on suicide prevention this month is a fitting tribute to seasonal changes marked by summer leaves falling, decreased daylight hours, and school children returning to classes after a long leisure summer full of fun and sun. Suicide Prevention Month marks seasonal changes in our lives as well. No one can categorically state that they have not been impacted by suicide. We all have lost due to loved ones or professional associates who take their own lives. Names and faces come readily to mind. Some are well-known personalities, but most are only known to a small circle of family, friends, and professional associates. Suicide has claimed Navy leaders, chaplains, doctors, social workers, civil servants, spouses, contractors, and yes, children.

Suicide Prevention Month is an excellent time to conduct a personal “vulnerability safety stand-down.” Take a moment to gauge where you are personally on the Navy’s Stress Continuum. Are you Green (Ready); Yellow (Reacting); or Red (Injured or Ill)? Do you have a strong safety net of support? Do you have the spiritual, psychological and emotional resources to weather storms that may enter your life? How good are you at “relaxing, relating, releasing” during emotional upheavals? Have you mothballed your “superhuman cape” and acknowledged the truth that sometimes, life really is not fair? In fact, sometimes bad things happen to good, innocent people. And when bad things happen, those who prevail do so, in part, because they know they do not weather their storms alone. We all are tougher when we stand together, pull together and drawing strength from each other.

The bond we share as service members and family members gives us permission – and responsibility – if we detect something amiss within our circle, to ask “Are you contemplating suicide?”

During September, make time to take inventory of ourselves first, then turn our attention to others. Practice asking “How are you?” Listen to people’s answers and, when we must, ask follow-up questions and take action to help prevent suicide.

Continued from Page 1.

Join the campaign:

- Download The FY-19 “1 Small ACT” Toolkit for graphics, training opportunities, discussion group ideas, outreach and engagement tips and a stress navigation plan.
- Check out the Every Sailor, Every Day YouTube channel, “Sailor on the Street,” featuring Sailors sharing their tips, hacks, opinions and personal experiences with stress, stress navigation and self-care.
- What “1 Small Act” can you do to save a life? Print the campaign poster, write your pledge and post a selfie on 1 Small Act Photo Gallery or other social media sites (#1SmallACT).

The FFSP has 81 service delivery sites worldwide and stands ready to assist service members and families with a full portfolio of programs and services.

Confidential, 24/7 Support Lines for Stress

Military OneSource: call 1-800-342-9647, visit www.militaryonesource.mil
DoD BeThere Peer Support Call & Outreach Center: call 1-844-357-PEER, text 480-360-6188, visit www.betherepeersupport.org
Real Warriors Live Chat: call 866-966-1020 or visit www.realwarriors.net/livechat

LIVE WELL: RESILIENCY WEBINARS FOR SAILORS AND FAMILIES

These one-hour webinars provide Sailors and families with various resources, tools and tips that can help service members and family members overcome adversity and thrive in their personal development.

Participants may register by sending an email request to livewellresilientweb@navy.mil. Be sure to include the webinar for which you are registering for in the subject line.

Upcoming Webinars:

Interview Skills
Friday, September 7, 1 p.m. Eastern

SPACE A Travel
Tuesday, September 18, 1 p.m. Eastern

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)
Tuesday, September 18, 4 p.m. Eastern

Emergency Preparedness
Thursday, September 27, 9 a.m. Eastern


Note: To fully participate in these webinars, you need to have access to the internet and a phone line. To enter the Adobe classroom, you need to have the most up-to-date version of Adobe Flash Player installed on your computer. If you would like to test your system ahead of time, you can use this link to see if you need updates: https://zeiders.adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meetingtest.htm.

For a full list of LWRW topics or more information, visit http://www.cnic.navy.mil/ResiliencyWebinars.
What Happened to Summer?

TIPS TO TRANSITION YOU AND YOUR KIDS BACK TO SCHOOL

Believe it or not, school time is here again. How can you help your whole family transition back to school as smoothly as possible? Consider the following tips:

Anticipate your kids’ anxiety. Normalize your child’s fears, keeping the focus positive. Visit the school with your child if possible. Children benefit from a school visit to meet the teacher, find their classroom, locker and/or lunchroom. Go swing with your child on the playground! This will ease anxieties and allow your child to ask questions. Remind your child that most of the other kids are going through the same uncertainties. Keep the focus positive on what they are looking forward to learning and/or activities they are excited to try.

Manage your own anxiety. Remember, your child is observing your personal reactions to the upcoming school year. Watching parents successfully cope with life’s stressors is an important learning opportunity for children. Acknowledge your emotional reactions to the morning rush with a little self-talk that your child hears, for example, “I got pretty annoyed when my travel mug leaked on the carpet just as we were heading out, but I’m okay now. Whew!”

Prepare, prepare, prepare. The more you know what to expect in the coming school year, the better off your kids will be. Review the school’s website and thoroughly examine any materials from the school. The first day packets often contain pertinent information about your child’s teacher, room number, school supply requirements, sign-ups for after school sports and activities, school calendar dates, bus transportation and health and emergency forms.

Adjust the schedule. For most families, this one can be the hardest. The week before school begins re-establish regular meal and sleep schedules. Adjust the sleep schedule by moving wake-up and bedtime hours by only 10 to 15 minutes each day. Make sure to “unplug” your child as part of the bedtime routine. And practice what you preach -- turn off your smart phone and try practicing yoga poses with your child!

Keep it simple. During the first week of school, if possible, postpone outside activities such as business trips, volunteering or starting a new project. You want to be fully available to help your child acclimate and address concerns that arise at the beginning of school. Ask questions about your child’s day, but be sympathetic to non-answers. Children often are overwhelmed and need time to sort out the events of the day. Let them process and remind them you are ready to help when they need it.

We hope the start to the school year for your family is a safe and happy. But remember, if school adjustments become a concern, a Fleet and Family Support Center child counselor may be able to help.

Thank you
Navy Ombudsmen
DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS SERVING NAVY FAMILIES

September is Ombudsman Appreciation Month

Thank you to all Ombudsmen for their selfless service in support of the Fleet, Fighter and Families

September 14 is the designated day to recognize the contributions of dedicated volunteer ombudsmen. The resilience of Navy families is underwritten by the commitment and service of ombudsmen each and every day. Knowing their families have a professional and reliable resource at home helps service members focus on the mission at hand when they are away. For more information about the Ombudsman Program, visit the FFSP’s website at www.ffsp.navy.mil.
Gold Star Mother’s and Family’s Day

Since 1936, the last Sunday in September has been designated as Gold Star Mother’s Day to recognize and honor those who have lost a child while serving our country in the United States Armed Forces. In 2009, fallen service members’ families were officially recognized and added by presidential proclamation and the observance was renamed Gold Star Mother’s and Family’s Day.

Members of our Armed Forces do not serve alone. Standing with each service member are parents, spouses, children, siblings, and other loved ones providing support and love.

This year, when the president signs the proclamation designating Sept. 30, 2018 as Gold Star Mother’s and Family’s Day we, as a nation, have the opportunity to let the families who have suffered the pain of losing a loved one while in active service to our nation know that we will not forget them or their hero.

Bells Across America For Fallen Service Members Rings For 3rd Year

On September 27, 2018, Navy Installations across the country will participate in the third annual Bells Across America for Fallen Service Members ceremony to honor those who died while on active duty. For centuries, bells have been used by the Navy for timekeeping, safety and communication, to sound alarms, in ceremonies and events and to signal the presence of important persons. During these memorial events, bells rung will not signal anyone’s presence, but instead will toll in their absence.

Bells Across America for Fallen Service Members is one way the Navy recognizes the sacrifices of fallen service members and families left behind. The ceremonies are held in association with Gold Star Mother’s and Family’s Day.

The Navy is committed to helping foster resiliency for families of fallen service members regardless of how they died. The Navy Gold Star Program honors Gold Star families throughout the year by hosting events that pay tribute to their lost loved ones, providing resources and opportunities to connect with one another. Contact your closest Navy Gold Star Coordinator to learn more about the ceremonies nearest you at 888-509-8759 or www.facebook.com/navygoldstar or www.navygoldstar.com.
Disasters Happen, Prepare NOW, Learn How

The devastating hurricanes and wildfires of 2017 reminded the nation of the importance of disaster preparation. During September, the Navy reminds Sailors and families that we all must be prepared, at all times, for a disaster. **It is time to make a plan!**

Knowing how to find one another will help your family stay safe in the midst of the confusion and fear that may accompany emergency situations.

**Making a plan is simple … just think of the five W’s!**

- **Who:** Involve all family members in the planning process, including children and those with special needs. Involvement in planning makes all family members more likely to remember important steps when an emergency occurs.

- **What:** Consider the various emergency situations or disasters that could strike your family. In addition to typical emergencies, consider potential hazards and weather patterns in your area.

- **When:** Because emergencies can happen at any time, make your family plan immediately. With back-to-school time upon us, it may be necessary to update old family emergency plans to take account a new school or work location.

- **Where:** Think about all the places you and your family may be throughout the day, such as at home, in the office, at school or in transit. Establish meeting places and discuss situations for using them.

- **Why:** By establishing and practicing a family emergency plan, you and your family are more likely to find each other quickly and help one another get through the emergency situation safely and with less worry.

The time and effort you and your family invest in preparedness will make a difference in your ability to handle emergency situations and will help each of you to stay safe.


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**CREATE YOUR EMERGENCY FAMILY PLAN**

- Make sure your family’s information is current in NFAAS so your command can account for you and provide support during a disaster ([https://navyfamily.navy.mil](http://https://navyfamily.navy.mil)).
- Create a card with phone numbers family members may need and make sure every family member has a copy.
- Include a communication plan so family members know how and to whom to report status, location and next steps.
- Make sure your family members can text. Phone lines and cellular towers may be nonfunctional for voice calls but still work for messaging.
- Ensure every member of your family has a cellular phone or a prepaid phone card to use during emergencies.
- If you can, establish an out-of-state, in-case-of-emergency (ICE) name and number (for example, a family member living elsewhere who can take or relay messages).
- Save the ICE information in everyone’s cellular phone.
- File the ICE information with the command ombudsman and the command.

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**Children Need to Prepare Too!**

Prepare with Pedro is a fun new way for parents, teachers and community leaders to talk about safety and disaster preparedness with young children. The activity book features Pedro the Penguin, who demonstrates how to stay safe during a variety of natural hazards, offering safety advice alongside crosswords, coloring pages, matching games and more.

Attention Teens!

This is part one of a two part series. Look for topics like paying for college next month.

MATCHING YOU WITH A CAREER

We are all a mixture of differing strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes and personality traits. As you move into your teens, the unique mixture that is YOU is becoming more and more evident. There are several ways to listen to YOUrself by exploring future career paths.

- Participate in your high school’s dual credit courses, virtual technology classrooms and high school/worksite cooperatives to expand your experience in the workforce or college environment.
- Take advantage of your high school’s career exploration programs (such as business and finance or engineering technology) or jump into a career exploration class offered at your high school.
- Volunteer or work within the industries or career areas you would like to explore. Are you interested in the medical field? Volunteer at the hospital. Are you considering a trade? Apply as a helper over the summer. Have you thought about teaching? Work or volunteer at a summer camp.
- Visit www.mynextmove.org and research possible careers. This U.S. Department of Labor website provides volumes of information on thousands of career paths. For each career, explore job growth and salary expectations in your state and educational requirements linked to programs in your area. You can also use the website’s assessment to link your likes and dislikes with the knowledge, skills, abilities and personality needed for success in that career field.
- Explore all your options. Remember there are often multiple educational paths to a career. Speak to technical schools, apprenticeship programs, community colleges, military recruiters and universities. Explore certificates and licenses along with associates, bachelors and professional degrees.

As you gain more real world experience in specific subject areas and career fields, a career path will emerge. This path may have challenges, turns, distractions and/or forks but wise navigation brings great success. Remember; there is no one that knows YOU as well as YOU!

Congratulations 2018 Ombudsmen of the Year

Mrs. Tiffany Croshaw, Ombudsman for Coastal Riverine Squadron FOUR (CRS-4), selected from all sea commands under Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

Mr. Garrett Zopfi and Mrs. Kumi Bergstraser, Ombudsmen for USS Fitzgerald (DDG 62), selected from all sea commands under Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Mrs. Johnna Johnson, Ombudsman for Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Korea/Navy Region Korea selected from all naval shore activities in the Navy.

Mrs. Barbara Schumaker, Ombudsman for Navy Operational Support Center Detroit selected from all Reserve commands under Commander, Navy Reserve Force.

Mrs. Sybil Stockdale
Ombudsman of the Year Award
Planning to Attend College?

Surprise! The college admission process starts now. Do not underestimate the importance of preparing for your ACT or SAT. You need to begin studying in your sophomore or early junior year. There are free resources that offer ACT and SAT prep. For example, Military.tutor.com gives active-duty service members’ eligible dependents free online ACT and SAT prep from The Princeton Review. The online test prep includes full-length practice tests, detailed score reports, engaging video lessons, powerful practice drills and robust resources such as test-taking tips.

During your junior year, begin exploring multiple colleges and universities’ programs and majors, academic standards, graduation rates, cost of attendance and geographic locations. The U.S. Department of Education’s College Navigator is a great place to research these topics along with information about admission and enrollment statistics, student population, campus setting and campus security. Also attend college fairs in your area to expand your options.

By the end of your junior year or early summer, create a list of four to six colleges to which you want to apply. Thoroughly explore the colleges’ website and note early admission due dates, admission requirements, application fees, honors college admission and learning community applications.

Most early admission due dates run from October 15 to November 1, so start the application process in August and September. If your selected schools accept it, use The Common Application to save time. It allows you to apply to multiple colleges using a single form. If application fees are a financial burden, indicate “yes” on the fee waiver question on The Common Application or ask the college’s admission office for a fee waiver application.

By October, finish your college essays, collect letters of recommendations and submit transcripts and test scores. All that is left is to review and hit submit before the due dates. Congratulations and relax. Admission’s notifications will arrive in January. Do not distress if you missed early admissions or do not receive an acceptance letter. College late admissions due dates run from January 15 to the end of February, so apply to additional colleges or update your original application with a new essay, updated test scores or your current GPA.

In the spring, it is time to visit the campuses and narrow your choices. Make a list of pros and cons and compare the cost of attendance to help rank your college options. Once you decide, notify the college’s admissions office and your high school guidance team on the next steps to your college adventure.