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Family Connection is a publication of the Fleet and Family Support Program.

The Navy's Fleet and Family Support Program promotes the self-reliance and resiliency of Sailors and their families. We provide information that can help you meet the unique challenges of the military lifestyle.

If you have questions or comments, contact Timothy McGough at timothy.mcgough@navy.mil.

Visit us online at:



Scan QR Code to access via mobile device

Overcoming the 'Holiday Blues'

The holiday season has arrived. For many this is an exciting time of decorations, feasts, folly and family. These folks are socially motivated and inspired by the connection with others that they adore. But, this is not the case for all. For some, the holidays bring stress and sorrow. The holidays are a reminder of their deceased loved ones, possible separations from their spouses due to deployments and managing life stressors of living in a military environment. How do we offer support to someone who is

experiencing the "Holiday Blues"? First we must acknowledge that this is a common occurrence and we all experience feelings of sadness at a given time. This ability to experience the emotions that accompany life events is what makes us human. Our second course of action is to observe when we or others are having issues such as:

- Insomnia or over sleeping
- Fatigue
- Weight gain or loss
- Physical pain and illness
- Lack of self-care or composure
- Withdrawal
- Work problems
- Relationship problems
- Statements of hopelessness or being trapped
- Statements of being worthless

These are indicators that we or someone we know may be struggling with the blues and needs support. Once we recognize these feelings, we must reach out and ask for support from experienced trained professionals to help during these difficult times. The Fleet and Family Support Centers (FFSC) have professionals who can support those struggling with the "Holiday Blues." As the holiday approaches, be mindful of your needs and those of the people around you. Allow the [FFSC](#) to provide you with the roadmap to getting back to enjoying and managing the upcoming holiday season.



"I have found that if you love life, life will love you back."

– Arthur Rubinstein



Healthy holiday eating

The holiday season serves as a special time to enjoy gatherings with friends and family as well as sample some delicious foods, but remember to try to control your indulgences. Whatever your health and fitness goals are, you can survive this holiday season if you follow just a few simple tips:

Stay away from the snacking table.

Portion your snacking by using a small dish to select a few delicious items from the buffet, then leave! The more you stay around the food, the greater the chance you will eat more than your share.

Pace yourself. Slowly snack and let your body recognize the food you are consuming.

Sip on calorie-free beverages like water or tea. Calorie free beverages can do an excellent job of filling you up and reduce the amount of snacks you may consume.

United Through Reading

United Through Reading offers deployed parents the opportunity to be video-recorded reading storybooks to their children. This opportunity can ease the stress of separation, maintain positive emotional connections and cultivate a love of reading. At nearly 200 recording locations around the globe, service members can read to their children from units on ships, on bases around the world and at 70 USO centers.

Each time a child reads a book with their deployed parent, they are reassured that their loved one is safe and thinking of home. This program fosters the opportunity to continue bedtime rituals and important one-on-one time between the child and parent during times of separation.

For more information about *United Through Reading* and to learn how to participate in this program, go to www.unitedthroughreading.org.



Plan ahead. Try to balance the day out. If you know you will be eating a heavy meal or splurging on some desserts later in the day, eat a light salad or soup for lunch.

Try modifying recipes this holiday season. There are plenty of healthy alternative ingredient options to many of the traditional recipes that have been in your family for years. Give them a try!

Fit in an exercise or workout. Contact your local [Navy Fitness Center](#) for a schedule of exercise classes available this holiday season.

Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS)



NFAAS allows Navy personnel to manage the recovery process for personnel affected by a widespread catastrophic event. It is also helpful in providing commands with information to support IA family members while their sponsors are deployed overseas. [Watch the video](#) and [log on to NFAAS](#).

Scan QR code to access NFAAS mobile website 24/7.



Add JSS to your Mobile Network
jssmobile.org

iPhone, iPad User...
Download JSS at the App Store ▶

JSS Dial-in Access 24/7?
1-877-JSS-NOW1
(577-6691)



Relocation tip:

A move during the holiday season can create STRESS, so take a little down time to recharge your battery. Visit your local [FFSC](#) to prepare for the ups and downs of moving during the holiday season.





The Joanne Holbrook Patton Military Spouse Scholarships

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) will begin accepting applications for the 2013 Joanne Holbrook Patton Military Spouse Scholarship on December 1, 2012. Spouses of all uniformed service members (Active Duty, National Guard, Reservists, Retirees and Survivors) are eligible to apply. A valid military ID is a requirement to apply. Visit militaryfamily.org for additional information.

DECA Rewards Card now available



As we head into the holiday season, it is important to make the most of our grocery buying budget. Most families spend a great deal of money during the holidays on parties, family get-togethers and baking. With that thought in mind, there is a new benefit for military families, Retirees, and limited availability for Reservists.

To help customers save even more on their commissary purchases, Defense Commissary Agency (DECA) has launched a rewards card. The new Commissary Rewards Card allows shoppers to access digital coupons and redeem them at checkout.

The cards are easy to use. Customers pick up their cards in-store, then visit DECA's website to complete registration and load digital coupons to their account. When the card is scanned at the register, the coupons are matched to their purchases and automatically deducted from the balance owed. New offers will typically be posted online every two to three weeks. Contact your local [commissary](#) for more information and to take advantage of this new benefit for our families.

December Guard/Reserve Commissary on-site sales

December 1
[Charles L. Sullivan ANG Base](#)
Jackson, MS 39232

December 7
[Camp Grafton Training Center](#)
Devils Lake, ND 58301

December 8-9
[Armed Forces Reserve Center](#)
Baton Rouge, LA

New app helps military families find resources

Military families can download a free mobile app that will help them quickly connect to programs, services and resources that meet their particular needs. MyMilitaryLife is free app available for both iPhone and Android platforms. It allows users to select a "life path" which will then provide related resources. Learn more at <http://www.militaryfamily.org/mymilitarylife.html>.





**2013
Military Child
of the Year®
Award**

**Now taking
nominations!**

Every year, Operation Homefront hosts a Military Child of the Year Award, with one winner chosen from each branch of the military. Ideal candidates for this award should demonstrate resilience, strong character and thrive in the challenges of military life. Those selected as Military Child of the Year, and their parent or guardian, will be invited to a special recognition ceremony taking place in Washington, DC, on April 11, 2013. Winners will also receive a monetary stipend of \$5,000 and a laptop. For more information on the program and details on how to nominate a child, please go to www.militarychildoftheyear.org. Deadline for submission of nominations is December 15, 2012.

NAVSUP announces 2012 holiday season mailing dates

The Naval Supply Systems Command's (NAVSUP) Postal Policy Division mail-by dates for pre-December 25 delivery of holiday cards, letters, and packages have been announced. For dates and details, click [here](#).



Transition and employment corner

Veterans get skills to fill advanced manufacturing jobs

To meet the need for skilled workers in advanced manufacturing positions, *Get Skills to Work*, a new coalition to hire



Veterans, was launched in October. The goals are to accelerate training of Military Veterans for advanced manufacturing-related jobs, offer skills translation and help veterans and employers determine if the veteran is ready to jump right into the workforce or will need more specialized training. "Badges" can be used to identify specific skill sets on the Veteran's LinkedIn account, alerting companies who are looking for employees with those specific civilian skill sets. If the Veteran is not ready, Get Skills to Work provides training in the skills they need to provide them additional opportunity for credentialing or licensing.

Go to the website and have a look. You can take an assessment and hit "See Your Results" to find suggested career paths in manufacturing along with salary information, education or training level, position descriptions, projected job openings and growth rate. Then go ahead and view the posted jobs—there are many.



U.S. Navy Individual Augmentees

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IA Discussion Group Schedule

[View the Fleet-wide list of classes, support groups and events.](#)

