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## Table of Contents

- Navy Family Ombudsman Program - 40th Anniversary
- Grants for Children during Deployment
- The Written Word: Letter Writing During Deployment
- TurboTap.org
- Child Care Fee Policy - School Year 2010/2011
- Tutor.com
- PTA POWER
- Preparing for a Successful Phone Interview
- National Grandparents Day! Register and Request Your Ballot Now!
- Making a Family Preparedness Plan
- Suicide Prevention – Life Counts
- 125 Degrees – Adjusting After Deployment

*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.

For more information about the Fleet and Family Support Program, or to join the conversation about deployments and military life, visit:

[www.ffsp.navy.mil](http://www.ffsp.navy.mil)

[www.facebook.com/Navyffsc](http://www.facebook.com/Navyffsc)

[twitter.com/Fleet\\_Family](http://twitter.com/Fleet_Family)

If you have questions or comments about the content of *Family Connection*, please contact Bruce Moody at [bruce.moody@navy.mil](mailto:bruce.moody@navy.mil).



## Navy Family Ombudsman Program - 40th Anniversary

Advocates, liaisons, providers of information and referral, volunteers, spouses and friends are among the roles of our Navy ombudsmen. We celebrate the program's 40th anniversary on September 14th and salute those that serve and support our families. The Navy Family Ombudsman program was established in 1970, in response to the issues and concerns unique to Navy families.

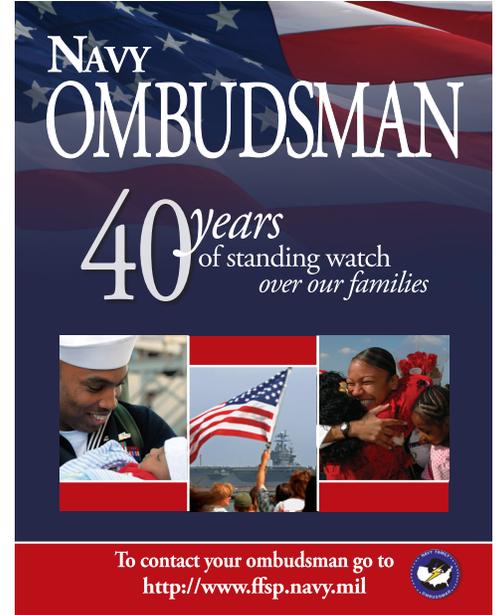
The program benefits are multi-faceted – commands have trained liaisons, family members have accessible advocates and ombudsmen are proud to know they are making a difference and providing a valuable service. Operating by a code of ethics guaranteeing professionalism and confidentiality, this volunteer program is designed to provide better communication between Navy families and Navy officials. Thank you to ALL Navy ombudsmen, past, present and future, who answer the call to serve Navy families and support family readiness!

## Grants for Children during Deployment

Our Military Kids is a national nonprofit organization that provides grants to children whose parents are currently deployed overseas with the National Guard or Reserve, as well as children with a Wounded Warrior parent from all branches of the military. The grants, up to \$500, pay for extracurricular activities such as sports, fine arts, camps, and tutoring. During a deployment of more than one year, a child is eligible for two grants – one every six months.

The Our Military Kids program helps children cope with the stress of having a parent in a war zone. Studies have shown participation in activities serves as a distraction to the negative feelings associated with deployment as well as to a child's belief that his or her parent is making a difference in the world. Service members and their families in the National Guard and Reserve are geographically dispersed throughout the country, and often live more than 30 miles from a military base or installation where support services are offered. Our Military Kids steps in to bridge the gap in services.

Parents and children choose the activity and Our Military Kids writes a check directly to the service provider. Children are eligible for a grant if a parent is currently deployed overseas with the National Guard or Reserve, or is classified as severely injured in one of the six categories designated by the Department of Veterans Affairs. For more information on programs and to download the simple one-page application, go to [Our Military Kids](http://OurMilitaryKids.org).



To contact your ombudsman go to <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>





## The Written Word: Letter Writing During Deployment

In the era of mobile devices, e-mails and texting, a simple envelope and stamp may seem as obsolete as the video game Atari. However, writing and receiving letters offers an experience that gadgets and the Web cannot touch. Facebook and Twitter are great ways to stay connected and share with family and friends. But, when it comes to expressing your most intimate thoughts, concerns and dreams, these tech-savvy tools are a distant second to pen and paper.

Sailors and their families often have the option of sending e-mails and receiving telephone calls, which indeed ease the challenges of deployment. Consider adding another option - get back to basics and revive the art of letter writing. Letters provide a more personal vehicle to communicate and can be therapeutic for the writer. Also, this could serve as the perfect platform to begin exploring homecoming ideas and the renegotiation of roles. You can share accomplishments, milestones and words of encouragement.

For your Sailor, opening a letter and reading heartfelt words from family provide a chance to briefly escape the warzone mentally. The anticipation of receiving a letter and hearing their name during mail call will undoubtedly light up the face of any Sailor. Letters are tangible, something to physically hold on to and read at anytime.

Commit to sending a handwritten letter regularly. There is no right or wrong way to write one and your Sailor will be happy to receive a personal, handwritten letter. Letter writing has an intrinsic value worth far more than just the ink on the page and the cost of the stamp.



## TurboTap.org

Returning to civilian life is an exciting time, but transitioning can be a complex undertaking. Transition assistance staff, personnel staff, relocation specialists and education counselors can help, but only you and your family can make the critical decisions.

The new "MyDecisionPOINT Plan" will help you develop your personalized game plan for successfully transitioning back to civilian life. The plan provides the framework to help you identify your unique skills, knowledge, desires, experience, and abilities to ensure you make wise choices.

Professional guidance and counseling are available at your Transition Assistance Office, as are workshops, publications, information resources, automated resources, and government programs. Further information is on the [Turbo TAP website](http://TurboTAP.org).



## Returning Warrior Workshops (RWW)

This weekend workshop focuses on making a successful transition from the war zone to the homefront. The workshops are expense-paid weekend events, set at four-star hotels, for service members and their spouses or significant other.

For the 2010 schedule, visit the Navy Individual Augmentee website at [www.ia.navy.mil/](http://www.ia.navy.mil/).





## Child Care Fee Policy - School Year 2010/2011

### Defense Department Adjusts Child Care Fees

The Department of Defense establishes fee ranges for all military child development programs and recently released a policy addressing the fee adjustment. The adjustment brings the number of fee categories to nine, causing some people to move into different categories.

The Navy is adjusting its child-care fees beginning Oct. 1, 2010, and adding categories for its highest income earners, to compensate for six years without fee range increases.

Under the new fee schedule, families with a total income of \$85,000 or less will see their child-care cost rise by one dollar a week. Child care costs for families earning more than \$85,000 will rise between \$10 and \$16 a week. For a 50-hour week, child-care costs will range from \$1.12 to \$2.74 per hour.

Here is the new fee schedule:

Fee Category	Income Range	Fees
Category I	\$29,400 or below	\$56 per week (no change)
Category II	\$29,401 - \$35,700	\$70 per week (+\$1.00 per week)
Category III	\$35,701 - \$46,200	\$83 per week (+\$1.00 per week)
Category IV	\$46,201 - \$57,750	\$99 per week (+\$1.00 per week)
Category V	\$57,751 - \$73,500	\$109 per week (+\$1.00 per week)
Category VI	\$73,501 - \$85,000	\$122 per week (+\$1.00 per week)
Category VII	\$85,001 - \$100,000	\$131 per week (+\$10.00 per week)
Category VIII	\$100,001 - \$125,000	\$134 per week (+\$13.00 per week)
Category IX	\$125,001 or above	\$137 per week (+\$16.00 per week)



An optional high-cost fee may be used in areas where it is necessary to pay higher wages to compete with local labor or at those installations where wages are affected by non-foreign area cost of living allowances (COLA), post differential or locality pay. Three Navy installations utilize this high-cost option: NNMC Bethesda, JB Pearl Harbor and PMRF Barking Sands.

“The Navy is committed to providing affordable child care to our military families,” Chuck Clymer, Child and Youth Program Manager at Commander, Navy Installations Command, said.

“For the first time in six years, fee ranges have been revised to account primarily for inflation, increased incomes, and increased caregiver salaries. Competitive salaries help to recruit and retain quality staff. Retaining high quality staff contributes to continuity of caregivers – stability that is very important to the young child’s emotional development.”

“The fee policy revision represents a balanced solution to the issue of adjusting fees to pay caregiver salaries while limiting the financial impact to the family,” Clymer said. “The Navy has a lifelong commitment to protecting the well-being of our Sailors and their families. Ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of the military children entrusted to the Navy’s care is a number one priority.”

**continued on page 4**





Child and Youth Programs



**Child Care Fee Policy - School Year 2010/2011**

*continued from page 3*

The Navy supports our Service members and families by caring for nearly 52,000 children, ages six weeks to 12 years, in 132 child development centers, 86 school-aged care programs and 3,115 on- and off-base licensed child development homes.

The Navy recently expanded its Child and Youth Program to include 7,000 child care spaces fleet wide for children ages 12 and under, and 31 new Child Development Centers. The expansion will reduce a child's time spent on waiting lists to three months or less to meet 80 percent of the potential need across the Navy by the end of 2011.

Navy Child and Youth programs are among the highest quality in the nation. Navy Child Development Centers are accredited with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Our Child Development Home Providers are certified by the Department of Defense, applicable state licensing agencies, and are currently accrediting with the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC). Navy before- and after-school programs are currently accrediting with the National AfterSchool Alliance (NAA). And, our youth programs are affiliated with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

For specific information about the installation fees, parents are encouraged to contact their local child development center and school-age care program. Additional information can also be found on the [Navy Child and Youth Programs \(CYP\) website](#).



★ Tutor.com ★  
for the Military

**Tutor.com**

Tutor.com for Military Families is free for eligible military families, including active-duty service members, their spouses and children. Provided by the Department of Defense, this program allows K-12 and adult students to connect to a live online tutor 24/7 for help with homework, studying, test prep, resume writing and more.

Service members, spouses and children will get customized help from professional tutors and career specialists in over 20 subjects at every skill level, from elementary to advanced studies. Military families worldwide can access the program from any Internet-enabled computer. Every session is one-to-one in a secure, online classroom

Navy members must login to Navy Knowledge Online to gain access. Once you sign in to Navy Knowledge Online, click on the REFERENCE tab in the navigation bar. Look for the Tutor.com box in the right column and click on the links Kids and Teens or Adults to get a tutor.

Go to [Tutor.com](#) to get started today!



**PTA POWER**

Back to school is not complete without the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Parent involvement has a positive effect on student success. Children achieve more when parents are involved in their children's education. Schools perform better. Teacher morale improves. Ultimately, communities are stronger when parents get involved. The PTA offers a number of annual campaigns specific to the military community as well as resources encouraging parent involvement. Check out [The National PTA® Military Alliance for Parents and Partners](#) for resources and information to help you get involved.





## Preparing for a Successful Phone Interview

In the effort to reduce the cost of hiring, many recruiters are using phone interviews as a method to screen potential candidates. This can be viewed as a definite advantage for the potential employee. You can literally own the room!

**Dress the part.** When we are in certain clothing, we act a particular way. Have your resume, sample questions and answers, and list of accomplishments with helpful notes on your table or desk for easy reference.

**Reduce possible distractions.** Schedule the interview when the children are at school, if possible, or enlist cooperation with quiet time in another room. Turn off the TV, radio or other audible devices. If you experience bad reception or feedback, ask to call the potential employer back; ignoring this will only make you more nervous.

**Show up early.** Just like an onsite interview, come to your designated space ready to go before the appointed time. Don't smoke, chew gum, eat or drink anything. Do have a glass of water handy, in case your mouth gets dry.

**Listen.** Listening carefully gives you time to think about your answer. Avoid the simple yes or no; market yourself at every opportunity. Consider taking notes on the key aspects of each question.

**Relax and smile.** Pretend you are having a conversation with a friend; without getting too informal, convey your skill sets and professionalism. Speak slowly and enunciate. Even over the phone, you can hear a smile; it projects a positive image. Stand up if possible, your voice sounds stronger.

**Wrap up.** Confirm the interviewer's name, company and contact information. Re-affirm your qualifications; express your appreciation for consideration, interest in the position and your availability to discuss the opportunity further in person. Remember to send a thank you e-mail or handwritten note.

### Monthly Quote

*"Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending."*

- Maria Robinson



## Joint Services Support (JSS)

JSS provides valuable information on benefits, entitlements, events, trainings and more. Making it easy to stay connected, anytime, anywhere with online access, mobile device applications and interactive voice response. Services are available to all military branches; featuring a community resource locator by state. <http://www.jointservicesupport.org>.



## Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS)

NFAAS allows Navy personnel to manage the recovery process for personnel affected by a wide-spread catastrophic event. It is also helpful in providing commands with information to support IA family members while their sponsors are deployed overseas. Log on to NFAAS at <https://www.navyfamily.navy.mil>.



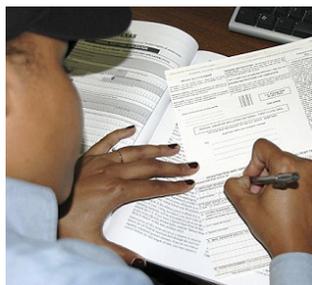


## National Grandparents Day!

A grandparent's commitment and dedication to family is undeniable. September 12th marks National Grandparents Day! Take the time to celebrate the contributions, love and support they provide the entire year. More and more grandparents are becoming caregivers to their grandchildren. As your family prepares for deployment, remember to share information. The Navy recognizes that deployments impact the entire family. When parents serve, their children and extended families serve too. Do something special to let grandparents know how much they are appreciated.

## Register and Request Your Ballot Now!

All members of the U.S. Uniformed Services, their family members and citizens residing outside the U.S. who have not registered or requested an absentee ballot this year, should do so as soon as possible. To register or request an absentee ballot use the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA).



Go to the [FPCA website](#) for instructions. Click on your state on the map and follow the instructions to register and request an absentee ballot. Some states allow submitting the FPCA by fax or e-mail in addition to regular mail. If your state allows an electronic alternative to mailing the form, FVAP recommends you use that option.

Send your FPCA NOW to your election office to ensure you have enough time to receive, vote, and return the ballot!

For more information, contact the Federal Voting Assistance Program at: [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov), 1-800-438-8683, DSN (312) 425-1584 or at [vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov). [Click here](#) for toll-free phone numbers from 67 countries.



## Making a Family Preparedness Plan

Emergencies and disasters can strike anywhere, anytime with little or no warning. Ensure everyone in the family understands what to do, where to go, and what to take in the event of an emergency! Fleet and Family Support Program's free emergency plans address concerns such as caring for infants and elderly, taking care of pets, protecting property and retaining critical records and documents. [Start developing your family plan NOW!](#)



## IA Discussion Group Schedule

Go to [www.ffsp.navy.mil](http://www.ffsp.navy.mil) to view the Fleet-wide list of classes, support groups and events specifically for individual augmentees (IAs) and their families.



## Suicide Prevention – Life Counts

Everyone can make a difference. Here are seven actions that anyone can take to contribute to suicide prevention at any time.

### 1. You make a difference – Pass it on!

Small seeds of hope and belonging can grow to form the threads that sustain us through tough times. For information and inspiration on how you can make a difference, go to: [www.blueribbonmovie.com](http://www.blueribbonmovie.com)

### 2. Run a “fire” drill.

Consider what you would do in a personal crisis within yourself or someone else.

- **Ask** – Ask if someone is depressed or thinking of suicide.
- **Care** – Listen, offer hope and don't judge.
- **Treat** – Take action, don't leave the person alone, and get assistance.

### 3. Complete a self-assessment.

Stress affects us all and health problems like sleep difficulties, depression, and anxiety are extremely common. Take a few minutes and complete an anonymous online self-assessment.

### 4. Connect with the community.

Don't go it alone; organizations and opportunities in your community and online can help.

- American Association of Suicidology [www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org)
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)
- Suicide Prevention Resource Counsel [www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org)

### 5. Engage in fellowship, meditation, or prayer.

Set aside time for meditation or prayer on behalf of those struggling in the darkness of a personal crisis in which they may be contemplating taking their life.

### 6. Good grief.

The pain caused by suicide loss does not heal quickly or easily. Some studies estimate that the effects of suicide on a family last for generations. If you are grieving a loss (or putting off even thinking about it for years), make some time to sort things out and facilitate healing.

### 7. Share your story.

Every day, people find hope and strength amidst adversity and reach out to help one another. If you have overcome a personal crisis, e-mail your story to share with others (no names will be included). Please share what helped you. Send your e-mails to: [suicideprevention@navy.mil](mailto:suicideprevention@navy.mil).

#### Resources:

- [Navy Suicide Prevention Program](#)
- [Chaplain Care](#)
- [National Resource Directory](#)
- [Fleet and Family Support Center](#)





## 125 Degrees – Adjusting After Deployment

The change in temperature is one of many adjustments a service member will experience at the end of a deployment. Going from a combat environment to the comfortable sofa at home may take some time to get used to. Adjusting after deployment will involve the efforts of the entire family. As a family prepares for the homecoming, it's normal to have mixed emotions.

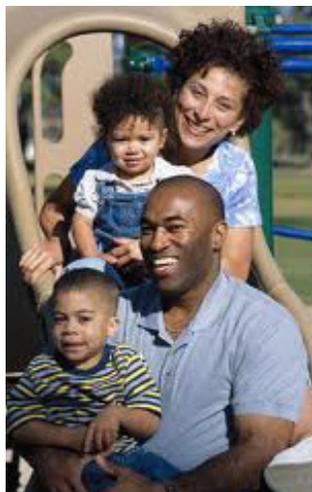
Family members and friends may be excited and anxious to celebrate, however discuss homecoming plans with your Sailor well in advance. Consider their wishes and keep plans simple. Change, even in preparing for a homecoming, can be stressful for everyone.

Be patient. Acting differently is not unusual after a deployment. Mostly temporary, it is normal during the reintegration period. Remember, you and your Sailor have had separate experiences. After assuming multiple roles and responsibilities, you may be ready to pass the baton. Delay this transition and provide your Sailor the opportunity to get reacclimated.

Talking and listening will begin the process of getting to know each other again, regain intimacy and assist in renegotiating family routines and responsibilities. There have been many changes; a lot of time has passed including significant events. Pace yourself and be flexible.

Choose a positive attitude. Remember you may not be privileged to all the circumstances experienced or feelings of your Sailor. Don't forget the issues that were present before the deployment have not gone away. Time apart sometimes presents a new perspective. Take one day at a time, be present everyday. Getting back to "normal" is a process.

125 Degrees will be an ongoing series dedicated to providing information and resources about reintegration - "adjusting after deployment." For more reintegration assistance and resources, [click here](#).



### Blue Star Families

Does your base library or kids' school need some new books? Well, YOU could deliver them with the help of Blue Star Families and Kids in Distressed Situations (K.I.D.S.). [Click here](#) to learn more about Books on Bases, Smiles on Faces.

