

## Navy Family Ombudsman Program - Operational Stress Control (OSC)



### BACKGROUND

Ombudsmen are official volunteers whose role is to serve as a liaison between the command and its families, and to provide information and resources to command families. As such, ombudsmen have the opportunity to talk to personnel and families from their command and may notice behavioral and mood changes, un-noticed by others. In many cases, these types of changes may be caused by stress – whether it is brought about by a deployment or from normal stressors in our lives. Military leadership encourages service members to seek help when going through a bad time, no matter what the cause. Although it's important to note that ombudsmen are not counselors or medical providers, sometimes it just takes someone to ask how you're doing and lend an ear. If in the process you identify a concern, feel free to refer that person to an appropriate resource.

### GOALS

- Understand that stress is the process by which we respond to challenges to the body or mind.
- Spread the message that it's okay to ask for help when needed.
- Become familiar with the Stress Continuum Model and use it as a guide when speaking to command families and service members; fellow ombudsmen; friends and family.
- Take responsibility for ourselves and be more aware of others and how they might be feeling.

### KEY MESSAGES

- Stress comes from many sources and can affect mission readiness.
- Don't wait for it to "go away" or to "just get over it" – use the resources available to help yourself feel better sooner rather than later.
- It's okay to ask for help.
- When addressed early, most issues caused by stress can be resolved before becoming a chronic problem.

### COMMAND STATEMENT

"It's time we made everyone in uniform aware that the act of reaching out for help is, in fact, one of the most courageous acts and one of the first big steps to reclaiming your career, your life and your future."

*Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
ADM Mike Mullen  
May 2, 2008*



Supporting Sailors and Families  
through Preparedness and Resiliency



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### **ACTION**

Ombudsman Assemblies should discuss Operational Stress Control and the Stress Continuum Model and the resources available for those in need.

- Describe ways Sailors, commands, and families can build resilience
- Discuss ways to recognize stress reactions, stress injuries, and stress illnesses
- Identify actions for managing stress reactions and injuries and getting help for stress illnesses

### **RESOURCES**

- OPNAVINST 1750.1F - Navy Family Ombudsman Instruction
- Fleet and Family Support Programs (FFSP) – [www.ffsp.navy.mil](http://www.ffsp.navy.mil)
- Stress Continuum Model: [www.ffsp.navy.mil](http://www.ffsp.navy.mil); Download Center
- Shipmate, family member, command leadership
- Chaplain
- Doctor, nurse or other medical staff member
- USMC COSC: [www.usmc-mccs.org/cosc](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/cosc)
- Navy Public Health Center: <http://www-nehc.med.navy.mil/>
- Military OneSource: [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com)
- Naval Center for Combat and Operational Stress Control: <http://medtechiq.ning.com/group/traumaticbraininjurytbi/forum/topics/naval-center-for-combat>
- Vet Center: [www.va.gov/rcs](http://www.va.gov/rcs)
- Navy Safe Harbor: <http://www.npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/SafeHarbor/>



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