



Family CONNECTION

Your Link to the Navy Community since 2007

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Questions?



Your FFSC, Empowering Rock-Solid Healthy Navy Families

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and this year, we are celebrating the strength and resilience of our military families with the theme MilParents Rock! This kicks off our year-long, evergreen...



Home Safety Spotlight: Window Fall Prevention

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Wellness Watch

Pause to Reset: The Power of Mindfulness Breaks During Stressful Days
When life feels overwhelming, it is easy to move from task to task without stopping to breathe.



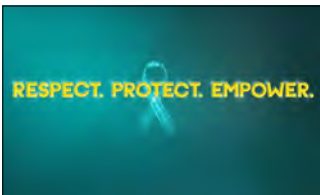
Honoring a Legacy of Sacrifice: A Tribute to Gold Star Spouses

Every year on April 5, we observe Gold Star Spouses Day, dedicated to honoring the surviving spouses of our nation's service members who died while serving on active duty.



What's Happening? Good News from Local Fleet and Family Support Centers

Breaking the Ice: Coffee, Conversation & Mental Health in Navy Region Southwest
Fleet and Family Support Centers across Navy Region Southwest are finding...



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Every April, the Navy observes Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM). It is a dedicated time to reaffirm our commitment...



Your Virtual FFSC Webinars

See the full list of webinars available on www.MyNavyFamily.com this month. Topics include Deployment, Employment, Finance, Life Skills, Parenting, Relocation and Transition...

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 resilience of Sailors and their families. We provide information that can help you meet the unique challenges of the military lifestyle. The appearance of external links in this newsletter does not constitute official endorsement on behalf of the U.S. Navy or Department of Defense.

Your FFSC, Empowering Rock-Solid Healthy Navy Families

Let's celebrate the strength and resilience of our military families with the theme MilParents Rock! This kicks off our year-long, evergreen campaign, focused on a strength-based approach to building rock-solid, healthy families and keeping our children safe.

Being a military parent comes with a unique set of challenges and rewards, and this campaign is all about providing the support and resources you need to rock your parenting journey!

The Foundation of a Strong Family: The Five Protective Rock Layers

A strength-based approach focuses on building up five key protective factors. Think of these as the essential layers that form a rock-solid family. Each layer adds strength and resilience, creating a foundation that can withstand pressure and protect what is most precious within the children. When these are strong, they create a positive environment where children can thrive.



Bedrock Layer – Parental Resilience: This is the deep, strong foundation. It is a parent's ability to cope with stress and bounce back. Parenting is tough, and military life adds its own pressures. Building resilience is key.

Sedimentary Layer – Social Connections: This layer is formed over time by connecting with friends, family and the community. Each connection is like a new grain of sand or sediment pressed together to create a strong, supportive layer. Building a strong network of friends, family and community provides a crucial support system.

Sandstone Layer – Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development: This represents the practical knowledge and tools of parenting. Like sandstone, it is made of countless individual grains of wisdom and information that, when cemented together, create a solid, reliable surface. Understanding your child's developmental stages helps you provide the right support and have realistic expectations. community provides a crucial support system.

Granite Layer – Concrete Support in Times of Need: This is the hard, unyielding layer of support you can rely on when things get tough. It represents concrete resources such as the Family Advocacy Program (FAP), New Parent Support Program (NPSP), and child care that provide dependable support in a crisis. Knowing where to turn for help, whether it is for counseling, financial assistance, or another resource, is essential.

Geode, the Gem Within – Social and Emotional Competence of Children:

This is not a layer, but a beautiful result. When all the protective rock layers are strong, they create a safe space for the child's social and emotional health to crystallize and shine like a geode's hidden crystals.



Helping children learn to communicate their feelings, solve problems and build relationships is a cornerstone of healthy development.

Support for New Parents

A fantastic resource for new and expectant military parents is the New Parent Support (NPS) Program. This voluntary program offers home visits from professionals who provide guidance on everything from preparing for a new baby to navigating the challenges of parenting infants and toddlers. Participating in the NPS Program is a wonderful way to build your parenting skills and confidence in a supportive, one-on-one setting.



Our Collective Responsibility to Protect

Keeping children safe is a community effort; everyone has a role to play.

All War Department personnel are mandated reporters, which means they have a duty to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect. If you have concerns, you can report them to your installation's FAP victim advocate, local law enforcement or child protective services.

For more information on your duty to report, you can refer to the resources available on [Military OneSource](#).

Resources to Help You Thrive

Military OneSource is your go-to for a wide range of resources to support you on your parenting journey. Here are a few to get you started:

- [MilKids are Priority One landing page](#): This is the central hub for parenting support with articles, tools and resources to help you build a strong family.
- [New Parent Support Program](#): Learn more about how the NPSP can support you and your growing family.
- [Military Parent Resource Center](#): A comprehensive collection of articles, podcasts and other resources on a wide variety of parenting topics.
- [Thrive Online Parenting Program](#): This evidence-based program offers tools and strategies for positive parenting.

This month and all year long, let's celebrate the incredible strength of our military parents. By working together to lay a rock-solid foundation and utilizing the amazing resources available, we can ensure that our communities are safe and supportive places for every child to grow and thrive.

Share Your Story: #MilParentsRock

Are you a military parent? Do you know one? We want to celebrate the incredible strength and resilience of military families. Share a story, a photo or a piece of advice that highlights the unique journey of military parenting. Join the conversation and build a supportive community by posting on your favorite social media platform using the hashtag #MilParentsRock. Your story can inspire and encourage others.

APRIL HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES

- April 5 – Gold Star Spouses Day
- April 19-25 – National Volunteer Appreciation Week
- April 23 – Take Your Child to Work Day
- Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month
- Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Alcohol Awareness Month
- National Financial Literacy Awareness Month



**Gold Star
Spouses Day**

April 5th

Ensuring Sailors, Families are Prepared—Just in Case

Supporting Sailors and their families begins with making sure important decisions and documents are clearly understood. While many Sailors carefully complete required forms and designations, it is just as important for both Sailors and their families to understand what those choices mean for the future. Taking time to review these details together helps ensure wishes are clearly documented and that loved ones are prepared and supported if they ever need to rely on those plans.

The [Navy Gold Star Program's](#) "Just in Case" brief helps Sailors and their families take this important step. This brief focuses on responsibility and preparedness, providing a clear review of key documents such as DD Form 93, Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, and other support systems that help ensure a Sailor's wishes are accurately recorded and legally protected.

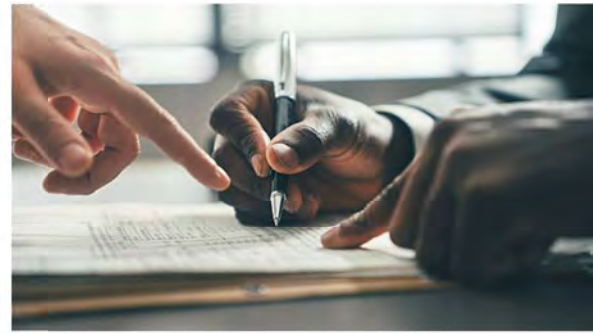
The brief closes the knowledge gap by:

- **Explaining the DD Form 93:** This provides a clear, practical understanding of the Record of Emergency Data and designations like "person authorized to direct disposition of human remains" (PADD).
- **Explaining support programs:** Familiarizes Sailors with robust resources, chiefly the Navy Gold Star Program.
- **Teaching records management:** Instructs Sailors on how and when to update their information to reflect life changes.

Hosting this brief is a powerful act of leadership. It sends a clear message: We care about you and we care about your family. A Sailor who is confident that a plan is in place for their family is more focused, resilient and mission-ready. It is our duty to ensure the support our Sailors are entitled to is understood long before it is ever needed.

A single hour can provide invaluable peace of mind and reinforce the readiness of your entire command.

Ready to take the next step? Schedule a "Just in Case" brief with your Navy Gold Star coordinator today. For more information, find your nearest Gold Star [coordinator online](#) or by calling 888-509-8759.



Honoring a Legacy of Sacrifice: A Tribute to Gold Star Spouses

Every year on April 5, we observe Gold Star Spouses Day, dedicated to honoring the surviving spouses of our nation's service members who died while serving on active duty.

It is a day to recognize these spouses' profound loss, their unwavering strength and their enduring commitment to the memory of their loved ones.

The Gold Star Tradition

The term "gold star" dates back to World War I, when families would display a service flag in their window with a blue star for each family member serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. If a service member died, the blue star was replaced with a gold star, a solemn symbol of a family's sacrifice for freedom.

This tradition of honoring surviving family members has continued and evolved, leading to the establishment of Gold Star Spouses Day to recognize the husbands and wives of those who have died in service to our country.

The Navy Gold Star Program: A Promise of Support

For surviving Navy families, the [Navy Gold Star Program](#) stands as a beacon of support and a lasting connection to the Navy family. This official Navy program is committed to providing long-term support to the surviving families of Sailors who have died while on active duty, regardless of the branch of service, location or manner of death.

The Navy Gold Star Program offers a comprehensive network of resources to help families navigate the challenges they face.

Coordinators located across the country are ready to aid in several key areas, including:

- ★ Requesting official documents.
- ★ Providing guidance on benefits and entitlements.
- ★ Connecting survivors with support groups and counselors.
- ★ Organizing events to help gold star families connect and remain part of the Navy community.

On Gold Star Spouses Day, we honor the incredible strength and resilience of these surviving spouses. We remember the service and sacrifice of their loved ones, and we renew our commitment to supporting the families who have given so much for our nation.








April is Sexual Assault Awareness & Prevention Month: Building a Stronger, Safer Navy

Every April, the Navy observes Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM). It is a dedicated time to reaffirm our commitment to eliminating sexual assault and strengthening a culture of respect, trust and accountability across the fleet. SAAPM is more than a series of events; it is a call to action for every Sailor, spouse and civilian employee to help create a Navy community where all individuals feel safe, valued and supported.

Why SAAPM Matters

Sexual assault undermines readiness, erodes trust and impacts the well-being of our people. SAAPM provides an opportunity to:

-  Increase awareness of sexual assault and its impact.
-  Reinforce prevention strategies and active intervention skills.
-  Highlight available resources for survivors.
-  Encourage open dialogue about healthy command climates.
-  Strengthen our collective responsibility to look out for one another.

Prevention is not limited to a single month; it is a year-round shared responsibility, and when we work together, we strengthen not only our commands but the entire Navy by creating a climate where sexual assault is never tolerated.

SAAPM also serves as a reminder that survivors are never alone. The Navy's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program provides confidential, 24/7 support.

The [DoD Safe Helpline](#) provides live, individualized support and can connect you with your local SAPR Program. Services are available to the military community 24/7 via telephone at 1-877-995-5247, text at 55-247 or 001-202-470-5546, or [online](#).

Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (SAPR)

RESPECT. PROTECT. EMPOWER.

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Home Safety Spotlight: Window Fall Prevention

Window fall prevention takes center stage this April as we recognize National Window Safety Week, April 7-13. Remember, a few simple steps can make a big difference.


In the U.S., more than 3,000 children under the age of six are injured each year from falling out of windows. Do not be deceived by your window screen; it may keep bugs out, but it will not keep children in. Simple precautions can make a big difference.

Here are three important tips to keep your family safe:

- ✓ **Install it!** Window safety devices are the best way to prevent falls.
- ✓ **Move it!** Rearrange furniture, such as beds, dressers and shelves, to make windows less accessible to young children.
- ✓ **Lock it!** Always keep windows locked when closed. Only open windows when children are under supervision.

Window falls can happen in an instant, so take action to protect your family. Learn more about preventing window falls at [NCS.org](https://www.navyhousing.org/national-window-safety-week).

For more information about Navy Housing programs and services, including PPV, government, community and unaccompanied housing options, visit [Navy Housing online](https://www.navyhousing.org).



Pause to Reset: The Power of Mindfulness Breaks During Stressful Days

Wellness Watch

When life feels overwhelming, it is easy to move from task to task without stopping to breathe. Deadlines, responsibilities and constant notifications can keep our minds in a state of stress for hours at a time. One simple yet powerful way to restore focus and calm is by taking short mindfulness breaks throughout the day.

A mindfulness break does not require special equipment or a long block of time. In fact, even two or three minutes can make a meaningful difference. The goal is simply to pause and bring your attention to the present moment.

During a mindfulness break, you might close your eyes and take several slow, deep breaths. Focus on the feeling of air moving in and out of your lungs. If your mind wanders, which it naturally will, gently bring your attention back to your breath.

Another option is a quick sensory reset. Look around and notice five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell and one thing you can taste. This simple exercise can help ground you and calm your nervous system.

Mindfulness breaks can also involve movement. Standing up, stretching your shoulders or taking a brief walk outside can release physical tension and clear your mind.

The benefits of these short pauses can be significant. Regular mindfulness breaks may help lower stress, improve concentration, boost mood and increase resilience during challenging times. They also remind us that we do not have to power through every stressful moment without support.

Consider setting a gentle reminder on your phone or computer to pause once every few hours. Over time, these small breaks can become a healthy habit that helps you approach the rest of your day with greater clarity and calm.

When stress rises, sometimes the most productive thing you can do is simply pause, breathe and reset.



GOOD NEWS!

Breaking the Ice: Coffee, Conversation & Mental Health in Navy Region Southwest

Fleet and Family Support Centers across Navy Region Southwest are finding innovative ways to meet Sailors where they are.

At Naval Air Station Lemoore, the education services facilitation team traded the traditional classroom for a local Starbucks on February 2. By setting up a resource table during the morning rush, staff engaged with 45 active-duty service members and their families. The event provided low-pressure access to information on healthy relationships and stress management, reaching people who might not otherwise visit an office.

The focus continued at Naval Base Ventura County on February 7, where the Fleet and Family Support Center hosted "1 Degree of Separation," a mental health-focused comedy show. The event used humor to tackle topics like depression and suicide prevention, drawing 20 service members and dependents. By blending real talk with laughter, the center successfully de-stigmatized mental health services while providing a table of local therapeutic resources.



Special Thanks to this Month's Contributors:

- Hedy Rogers-Jones, NAS Lemoore Fleet and Family Support Center
- Jazmin Guerrero, Naval Base Ventura County Fleet and Family Support Center
- Antonella DeLuca, CNIC Navy Family Housing Program
- Stephanie Hunter, CNIC Navy Gold Star Program
- Arlinda Ezell, CNIC Fleet and Family Support Program
- Amy Fustino, CNIC Fleet and Family Support Program
- Tim McGough, CNIC Fleet and Family Support



YOUR *Virtual* FFSC WEBINAR SCHEDULE

We have webinars scheduled to suit time zones around the world!

Visit MyNavyFamily.com, select a topic, and view available sessions with times automatically converted to your local time.

EMPLOYMENT

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| AI Resume Building - A Paradigm Shift | 04/01/26 | 9:00 AM EST | 6:00 AM PST |
| Leveraging AI For Your 2026 Job Search | 04/03/26 | 9:00 AM EST | 6:00 AM PST |
| AI Prompt Engineering: From Idea to Output | 04/08/26 | 9:00 AM EST | 6:00 AM PST |
| The Road to Remote Job Success | 04/08/26 | 1:00 PM EST | 10:00 AM PST |
| USAJobs 2026 | 04/10/26 | 9:00 AM EST | 6:00 AM PST |
| Pain Free Resume Writing | 04/14/26 | 1:00 PM EST | 10:00 AM PST |
| The ART of the Interview | 04/21/26 | 1:00 PM EST | 10:00 AM PST |
| Launch Your Life: Family Employment Edition | 04/22/26 | 12:00 PM EST | 9:00 AM PST |

Want more? Click on Employment for dates and times for:

- Becoming Federal Resume Savvy
- Job Search Hacks
- Mastering the Modern Resume
- Mastering Virtual Interviews

PARENTING

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| Exploring Through the Senses | 04/08/26 | 2:00 PM EST | 11:00 AM PST |
| | 04/27/26 | 12:00 PM EST | 9:00 AM EST |
| Self-Care: Parent Edition | 04/13/26 | 12:00 PM EST | 9:00 AM PST |
| | 04/29/26 | 2:00 PM PST | 11:00 AM EST |
| Terrific Toddlers | 04/15/26 | 12:00 PM EST | 9:00 AM PST |
| What About the Kids | 04/16/26 | 1:00 PM EST | 10:00 AM PST |
| Tear Free Dinner | 04/20/26 | 12:00 PM EST | 9:00 AM PST |
| Active Parenting Lunch and Learn | 04/28/26 | 12:00 PM EST | 9:00 AM PST |
| Self-Care: Parent Edition | 04/29/26 | 2:00 PM EST | 11:00 AM PST |
| Proactive Parenting Strategies for Healthy Sexual Development | 04/30/26 | 4:00 PM EST | 1:00 PM PST |

Join us for these webinars offered several times throughout the month:

- Helping Kids Thrive Through Change
- Spotting the Signs of Youth Suicide

MENTAL WELL-BEING

| | | | |
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| Safety Transfers and Transitional Compensation Q&A | 04/02/26 | 10:00 AM EST | 7:00 AM PST |
| Child Abuse and Neglect: Identification and Reporting | 04/21/26 | 11:00 AM EST | 8:00 AM PST |
| What is Stalking and How it's Changing in a Digital Age | 04/30/26 | 10:00 AM EST | 7:00 AM PST |

TRANSITION

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|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Preparing for a Job Fair | 04/03/26 | 5:00 PM EST | 2:00 PM PST |
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PERSONAL GROWTH

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| Motivating by Appreciation | 04/15/26 | 2:00 PM EST | 11:00 AM PST |
| Organize Your Life | 04/22/26 | 2:00 PM EST | 11:00 AM PST |



- 1 Go to MyNavyFamily.com to log in or create a free account.
- 2 Select the category on the home page, then select your webinar.
- 3 Confirm the start time and click "Enroll Me."

The FFSC LMS also has comprehensive resources like New Spouse Orientation, the Navy Family eHandbook, and the Navy Spouse library.

PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Command Financial Specialist (CFS) Day 3 | 04/01/26 | 1:30 PM EST | 10:30 AM PST |
| Home Selling | 04/23/26 | 1:00 PM EST | 10:00 AM PST |
| Money, Money, You're Ruining My Honey! | 04/27/26 | 4:30 PM EST | 1:30 PM PST |

Click Personal Financial Management for webinars on:

- Booties & Budgets: Welcoming Your First Child and Baby-Proofing Your Finances
- Command Your Credit
- Emergency Financial Preparedness
- Financial Readiness Before Deployment: Securing Your Future
- Stretching Budgets and Maximizing Nutrition and more!



RELOCATION

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|---|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Click the Relocation category for Calming Cultural Shock, Planning the Perfect PCS, Stepping up Support: Sponsorship Training, and The PCS Process — all offered several times throughout April for your convenience! | The Smooth Move Advantage | 04/30/26 | 3:00 PM EST | 12:00 PM PST |
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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

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|-------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Get Organized for Emergencies | 04/06/26 | 12:00 PM EST | 9:00 AM PST |
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EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM

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| 504 BLUF: The Bottom Line Up Front About 504 Plans | 04/20/26 | 1:00 PM EST | 10:00 AM PST |
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RESILIENCE

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Understanding Anger | 04/07/26 | 10:00 AM EST | 7:00 AM PST |
| Stoicism Principles and Stress Management | 04/17/26 | 9:00 AM EST | 6:00 AM PST |
| Stress Management | 04/21/26 | 10:00 AM EST | 7:00 AM PST |

Want to learn more about resilience? Join us for Bounce Back Better, Mission Ready, Mentally Strong or Run for Resilience. See the LMS for times in your time zone.

