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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 John Levinson at john.levinson.ctr@navy.mil.
- Visit us online at:



Celebrating Military Children

April is the Month of the Military Child. This monthlong observance recognizes the sacrifices and celebrates the youngest family members that also serve. Raising happy, well-adjusted and well-educated children is the mission of every parent. Parents, educators, caregivers and the communities all play a major role in a child's stability and success.

Being heard, cared for and loved are the single most effective strategies used in reducing some of the challenges faced by military children. Acknowledge the stressors children may experience such as frequent relocation or having a deployed parent. Talk about what it means to be a military family and why military families are special. Encourage your children's interests and celebrate their individuality. While there is no substitute for a deployed parent, as a community let us participate in supporting and strengthening our Navy families.

Installations worldwide will host special events and activities in celebration of the Month of the Military Child. Check with your installation, command websites and local media.



"Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future."

– John F. Kennedy



Web-based Resources and Programs for Children and Youth

Military Health System

http://www.health.mil/themes/military_children.aspx

Operation Purple® Program

<http://www.operationpurple.org>

Operation: Military Kids (OMK)

<http://www.operationmilitarykids.org>

Deployment Kids

www.deploymentkids.com

Let's Move

<http://www.letsmove.gov/>

Fit Factor

<https://www.navygetfit.com/>

Military Youth on the Move

<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil>

Talk Kit for Military Families

<http://www.timetotalk.org/military>

Military Child Education Coalition

www.militarychild.org

PTA Military Alliance

<http://www.pta.org/4339.htm>

Tutor.com

www.tutor.com/navy

SOAR – Student Online Achievement Resource

www.soarathome.org

SAT/ACT PowerPrep

www.eknowledge.com/CNIC

Sittercity

www.sittercity.com/dod

NEW DoDEA Online Student Pre-Registration System

Save time and pre-register your students online! The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) has launched a new system that gives parents the ability to pre-register their dependents for DoDEA schools in a secure online environment. Parents are required to create an account and password. This allows self-paced access to complete the two main registration forms and submission of the finalized information to the registrar.

A downloadable User Guide is available to get you started and walk you through the entire process. Register today at <https://registration.dodea.edu/>.



IA Discussion Group Schedule

View the Fleet-wide list of classes, support groups and events.

Returning Warrior Workshops (RWW)

Returning Warrior Workshop Schedule & IA Family Events - www.ia.navy.mil/



Respite Care for Enrolled Exceptional Family Members

EFMP Respite Care helps Navy families of children with special needs by providing 40 hours of respite care per month. Ninety seven percent of these services are provided in-home. This program is a partnership between the U.S. Navy and the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRRA) and is specifically designed for families who have children identified as Exceptional Family Members (EFM), category IV or V.

Sponsors stationed at Bremerton, WA, Greater Washington, DC, Jacksonville, FL, Norfolk, VA, or San Diego, CA may be eligible. Sponsors stationed at other Navy bases or on independent assignment are approved for Navy Respite on a case-by-case basis. The program currently has a waiting list, but is meeting the overall Navy child care placement goal of three months or less. There is no cost for eligible families. Visit <http://www.naccrra.org/MilitaryPrograms/NavyEFMP/> or call Child Care Aware at 1-800-424-2246.



Autism Awareness Month

Autism affects 1 in 110 children. Operation Autism is a web-based resource designed and created to support military families that have children with autism. This forum provides a platform to exchange ideas, ask questions and lend mutual support. Learn about practical strategies for classroom success and identify sources of treatment and support on and off base.

Life Journey through Autism: A Guide for Military Families provides tools and access to information services and resources to help families navigate. This guide can be downloaded from [Operation Autism](#); hardcopies are also available at no cost to military families.



TRICARE
Extended Care Health Option (ECHO) provides financial assistance to eligible beneficiaries, based on specific mental or physical disabilities, and offers services and supplies not available through the basic TRICARE program. Family members, once registered, access these additional benefits from ECHO as a supplement to TRICARE. Financial assistance is provided through

a cost-share program, which is monthly and based on the sponsor's pay grade. Financial assistance can be used for a variety of services such as:

- Assistive services (e.g. qualified interpreter).
- In-home respite care services.
- Special Education, including Applied Behavioral Analysis therapy.
- Transportation in limited circumstances.

Families are required to be enrolled in Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) in order to register for ECHO benefits. Contact an EFMP representative to ensure proper enrollment in the EFMP and obtain appropriate ECHO contact information.

[Autism Demonstration Project](#) is designed to augment the services provided by TRICARE and meet the unique challenges faced by families with a child who has an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The project helps provide Educational Interventions for Autism Spectrum Disorders (EIA) for children diagnosed with ASD. The Enhanced Access to Autism Services Demonstration allows eligible beneficiaries to have access to a greater range of these existing evidence-based EIA services through an expanded network of educational intervention providers. Eligibility for the TRICARE Autism Demonstration Project requires enrollment in EFMP.

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. Go to <http://www.jointservicesupport.org>.



Navy Ombudsman Program

Have you ever considered volunteering to be your command's ombudsman? Learn about the Ombudsman Program and the basics of an ombudsman's role at your convenience online. Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC), has introduced the [OBT Orientation On-demand Training](#) which covers the basics of Ombudsman Basic Training (OBT). It takes about 90 minutes to complete. Not only will you learn about what the ombudsman can do for you as a family member; but learning about the responsibilities of a command ombudsman may help you decide if you are ready to volunteer for this position.





Benefits of Volunteerism

Did you know that 73 percent of employers would recruit a candidate with volunteering experience over one without; children with parents that volunteer are 80-90 percent more likely to volunteer as adults and students who volunteer receive higher grades and are less likely to drop out of school? Develop new skills, interact with a new social network and even improve your health. Those facts aside, volunteering just feels good!

April is the official month for Volunteer Recognition. Thanks to all those special individuals who share their time and talent serving others. A vital part of thriving in life is connecting. Take your turn in making a difference and reap the benefits. Get involved by contacting the [Fleet and Family Support Center](#), Navy Marine Corp Relief Society, Chaplain, MWR or Navy Child and Youth Program to learn about volunteer opportunities on base and in surrounding communities.

Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA): National Guard and Reserve Onsite Sales

DeCA National Guard and Reserve Onsite Sales Program provides the commissary benefit to National Guard and Reserve members and their families who live in communities that are not close to an existing commissary. The host commissary works with National Guard and Reserve units with at least 150 members living in and around a

community where Armories or Reserve Centers are located. DeCA works with the local units to select items to offer during the sale. A local unit or Reserve center can call the nearest commissary for information on how to have a sale in their community. For a schedule of upcoming dates and locations, visit the "Guard/ Reserve On-site Sales" section of [DeCA](#).



A Midsummer Knight's Read

As the school year comes to an end, DoD MWR Libraries Summer Reading Program 2011 is gearing up on military installations worldwide.

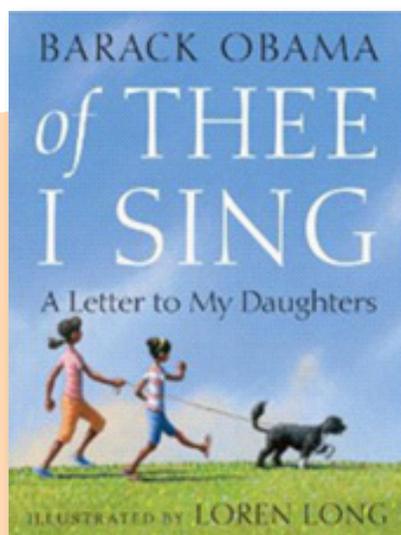
For more information contact your installation library or DoDsumread@navy.mil



Heroes' Legacy Scholarships

The "Heroes' Legacy Scholarships" program honors not only those who have fallen in battle, but all who have died or have become disabled through their active military service since September 11, 2001. The program is open to their dependent unmarried children under age 23. The scholarship grants for this special program are principally underwritten by the author's after tax proceeds from the book "Of Thee I Sing. A Letter to My Daughters" written by President Barack Obama.

Eligibility criteria for the "Heroes' Legacy Scholarships" program are different from the "Scholarships for Military Children" program. The two applicant pools are considered separately. Applicants can apply to either or both programs if they meet the eligibility criteria. Application deadline is May 1, 2011. For more information go to <http://militaryscholar.org/legacy/index.html>.



New Parent Support Home Visitation Program

The New Parent Support Home Visitation Program (NPSHVP) offers education and support to expecting military families or those with young children (infancy to three years old). Home visits are provided by caring professionals with a specialty in child development.

NPSHVP can help you:

- Increase knowledge and understanding of child development.
- Cope with stress related to adding a new member to the family.
- Nurture children to promote growth and development.
- Answer questions about the everyday challenges of parenthood.
- Locate community services and resources that can help expectant parents as well as parents with young children.
- Manage the additional physical and emotional demands of parenting due to separation and deployment of the service member.

Enrolling in the NPSHVP is easy! Contact your local Fleet and Family Support Center and ask for the nearest New Parent Support Program home visitor.



text4baby

Receive a special delivery each week to your mobile device – FREE messages to help you through your pregnancy and your baby's first year. The text messages send moms important reminders about doctor's appointments and vaccines; share tips on nutrition, sleep, and other important topics; and provide referrals to prenatal and infant services.

Text4baby is an educational program of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition. The program is based on an unprecedented partnership that includes more than 400 organizations from the private and public sectors to reach families in their own neighborhoods. It is also a model employed by [Let's Move!](#)



Over There: Stories and Insights From Mothers Who Have Deployed

Dr. Heidi Squier Kraft, a former Navy psychologist whose twins were babies when she headed a combat-stress platoon in Iraq, discusses the unique challenges that mothers face when they deploy. In this CD, mothers from each service branch share their experience and cite the best way to prepare is to learn from others who have already been there.

Hear how they managed goodbyes, what they did to remain close, how they stayed focused on their mission to include what it was like to return home and be a "mom" again and MORE! Go to:

[Over There: Stories and insights from mothers who have deployed](#)



Financial Readiness Before Deployment

Knowing "where the money goes" is the first step toward financial readiness. Establishing a spending plan offers flexibility in making adjustments to meet your financial goals. A spending plan or budget is simply documenting your income and expenses. Prior to deployment is a great time to talk with your spouse to plan and agree to how finances will be handled during deployment.

Knowing and understanding your deployment pay and entitlements is valuable information. Consider developing a savings plan as sometimes more pay may tempt more spending. Proper planning can help reduce stress and protect against financial and emotional difficulties. Find information on preparing your finances before deployment, including calculating your net worth, understanding your income and expenses, protecting your savings, protecting your property, establishing life insurance and more.

Visit [Real Warriors Plan for Financial Readiness Before Deployment](#) or schedule an appointment with a financial counselor at the [Fleet and Family Support Center](#).

TurboTAP: Live Online Learning Events Available NOW!

Start the transition in the comfort of your home! Primarily delivered to demobilizing service members of the National Guard, Reserve, Wounded Warriors and their families, participants learn how to translate military experience into civilian terms, create a financial plan and navigate the federal employment system. Live trainers facilitate sessions where you will be able to connect with other learners going through similar experiences. Accessible where broadband Internet and phone are available. Seats are limited, register today at <http://www.turbotap.org/>

April Sessions

- **Building Better Resumes**
April 5, 8:00pm EST
- **Social Networking and the Job Search**
April 12, 9:00pm EST
- **Job Fair Success Strategies**
April 19, 6:30pm EST
- **The Art of Career Networking**
April 26, 9:00pm EST
- **Acing the Interview**
April 28, 8:00pm EST





Unlock the Silence

April is designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month to educate individuals and communities about resources and prevention. Sexual assault support is just a click, call, or text away. The Department of Defense (DoD) Sexual Assault Prevention Office (SAPRO) in collaboration with Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) launches [Safe Helpline](#). Safe Helpline, a secure, worldwide confidential 24/7 hotline dedicated to providing adult sexual assault victims in the DoD community with crisis intervention, emotional support and referrals.

The Safe Helpline offers three new services through this partnership with RAINN, the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization:

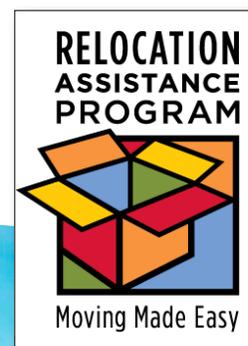
- Hosts the only secure, live, web-based National Sexual Assault Online Hotline.
- Provides anonymous chat capability, which enables victims of sexual assault to reach out to receive help via an instant-messaging type format.
- Operates the National Sexual Assault Hotline, which provides help to victims telephonically through a toll-free number.

All Safe Helpline staff members are trained to respond to military-specific topics, such as restricted and unrestricted reporting, and how to contact relevant military resources. The Safe Helpline is intended to be an anonymous service, you will NOT be asked to provide your name, address, telephone number or e-mail address, at any time. For assistance visit Safe Helpline at <https://www.safehelpline.org/>, call 877-995-5247, or text 55247.

Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) Tip

Military Youth on the Move is an easy-to-use DoD website that reaches out to kids and teens with creative ways to cope with moving. Military Youth on the Move gives kids a safe place to go for information and advice on issues such as adjusting to a new school, saying goodbye to friends, and getting involved in a new community.

The [Military Youth on the Move](#) website is divided into separate sections for elementary, middle, and high school ages. Topics range from the general, such as bullying and divorce, to the specific, like saving money for college and writing a resume.



inTransition

The inTransition program facilitates seamless continuation of care for service members who receive mental health treatment and are facing a transition (e.g. call to active duty, relocation, retirement, etc.). This joint DoD and DCoE (Defense Centers of Excellence) collaboration connects service members with resources and a personal coach, available by phone, to help them with their commitment to care. Coaches can also identify local community resources, support groups, crisis intervention services and other assistance in the new location. For more information visit www.health.mil/inTransition.



Tax Preparation Resources

Military OneSource Tax Filing Services

H&R Block At Home Basic®, through the Military OneSource website and telephonic tax consultations, provides access to a customized version of the basic H&R Block at Home® electronic tax-filing product. There are three service tiers offered: Basic, Deluxe and Premium. **The deluxe and premium tiers have a cost associated.** This customized product allows for free federal filing and state filing (up to three states). Provided by the Department of Defense, H&R Block At Home Basic® is available to active-duty, National Guard, and Reserve service members and their families. Tax consultants are available seven days a week from 7:00 a.m. -11:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST). Contact Military OneSource Tax Hotline at 1-800-730-3802 or go to [Military OneSource Tax Filing Services](http://www.militaryonesource.com/tax).

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program

Navy Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) centers around the world are providing on-site services to assist service members and their family members with free tax advice, tax preparation and return filing by IRS-trained volunteers. VITA services will remain available through April 18, 2011. Some overseas sites, as well as selected sites to assist those returning from a recent deployment, will remain open longer.

To find the nearest VITA center, go to Navy Jag Corps at <http://www.jag.navy.mil/>.

Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

For additional tax questions and/or combat zone information call 1-800-829-1040 or go to [IRS.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for tax information for military members.

