



"I sustain myself with the love of family."

— Maya Angelou

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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 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.

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

Visit us online at:



Update your NFAAS today

*Submitted by Amber Kerr
CNIC Family Emergency Preparedness
Program Manager*

Natural disasters, industrial accidents, or terrorist events could cause widespread damage and disrupt emergency and other public services. When a major disaster occurs, the Navy will account for the whereabouts of affected personnel and their families via the Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS).

NFAAS is a web-based tool the Navy uses to account for, assess, manage, and monitor the recovery process of Navy families affected by a catastrophic event. Log-in to NFAAS today to update/verify your information so that we can be there for you if a disaster occurs: <https://navyfamily.navy.mil>.

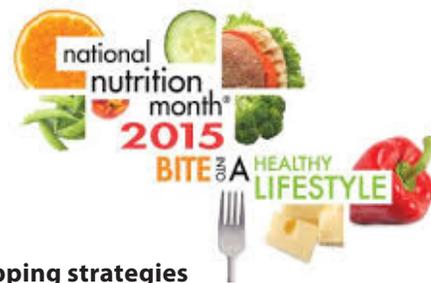


March is National Nutrition Month - 'Bite into a healthy lifestyle'

*Submitted by Nicholas Aures, MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS
Navy Fitness Performance Enhancement Dietitian*

If you have not heard, March is National Nutrition Month, sponsored by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The slogan for National Nutrition Month is "Bite into a healthy lifestyle." Nutrition plays a vital role not only in the performance of physical and mental "on the job" tasks, but also in your overall health. For more information, check out the link here: <http://www.nationalnutrition-month.org/nnm/>.

Just eating right is hard enough, but shopping and preparing foods for a family can seem daunting and even impossible. Check out these eight quick tips that you can follow both at the grocery store and when making meals at home to help ensure that you are on the right nutrition track!



Shopping strategies

1. Stick primarily to the outside perimeter of the grocery store, which focuses on fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, eggs, fresh dairy, and lean meat products.
2. Try to limit the amount of processed foods you buy at the store. Not sure how to do it? Start by evaluating each food item. If it has more than five ingredients on the label, count it as a processed food. Make it a goal that 80 percent of all food items you buy contain five ingredients or less.

**March is National Nutrition Month
- 'Bite into a healthy lifestyle'**

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3. Avoid shopping when you are hungry or before mealtimes, since you are much more likely to buy way more than you need of foods loaded with fat and sugar.
4. Plan your meals ahead of time and create a list of what you need. Purchase foods that can be used for multiple meals throughout the upcoming week.

Mealtime strategies

1. When preparing food, stick to grilling, sautéing, steaming, and roasting methods.
2. Using a small amount of oil (such as canola, peanut, or olive) is a better source of fat than using butter or heavy cream.
3. Try to create a sit-down meal at the dinner table and away from the computer, television, or telephones. If family members are present, try to create a social gathering that will help you slow down your eating and make the food more enjoyable.
4. For both meals and snacks, place food portions in a bowl or on a plate and leave the serving bowls, pots, and other large containers of food somewhere else so you are not tempted to eat more.



VEC offers great resources for new career, employment opportunities

*Submitted by Anthony Stephens
CNIC N91 Transition Assistance Program Analyst*

VEC is now available! If you are currently transitioning, expecting to transition in the near future, or are a veteran, the Veteran's Employment Center (VEC) is an excellent resource for finding your next career or employment opportunities. The VEC is an extension of the [Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\) eBenefits](#) website and offers great job search tools. This easy-to-navigate website links transitioning service members and veterans with employers who are actively seeking applicants with prior military experience. Companies advertising on the VEC web-



site are vetted through the VA. Employers listed are committed to hiring veterans for advertised openings. In addition to its résumé matching features, VEC stands out as a vital employment placement management tool for service members, veterans, and employers. Get started on the pathway to a rewarding career, register with the VEC today!

CREDO workshops, retreats for families

*Submitted by Christianne M. Witten
Chief of Chaplains Office, Special Assistant for Communications*

Chaplains Religious Enrichment Development Operation (CREDO) Mission: To strengthen spiritual well-being and individual resilience through workshops and retreats for Department of the Navy service members, civilians and families.

Since 1971, CREDO has addressed readiness and resiliency issues by offering transformational workshops and retreats specifically designed to inspire hope, strengthen spiritual well-being, and enrich the lives of service members and families. These no-cost programs are designed to build stronger military families, taking into account the unique challenges of deployment and frequent moves during a military career. CREDO workshops and retreats offer a time for personal and spiritual growth and replenishment, away from the pressures of everyday life. Marriage



Enrichment, Family Enrichment, Personal Resiliency, Father-Son, and Mother-Daughter workshops and retreats are some of the most popular program offerings.

Here are a few comments offered by recent CREDO participants:

- "Outstanding weekend. I will definitely recommend this to any Sailor in my command. This retreat shows the military cares about families."
- "It was exactly what my marriage needed, a tune up! Thank you so very much!"
- "Awesome - didn't feel like a military structured event. The resources and tools were invaluable."
- "In 30-plus years in the military, this was the best training I've had. It should be mandatory."

To learn more about CREDO programs and to identify the nearest CREDO center in your area, visit: <http://www.navy.mil/local/crb/CREDO-Map.html>. You can also check out local CREDOs on Facebook.

Employment and Transition Corner

Updated Transition GPS website for service members and families

Wondering what happens if you do not meet Career Readiness Standards (CRS)? Or what the CRSs are and why they're important? Chances are the questions you have about transitioning are shared by many other service members, so to provide answers, Commander, Navy Installations Command Headquarters (CNIC HQ) redesigned their website to help you and your family.

With more than 20 questions and answers tailored to service members' experience, the new [Transition GPS for Service Members](#) page makes it easy for you "to obtain a very detailed explanation of Transition GPS," according to Mike Cheshier, Military Support Section lead at CNIC. And to find documents necessary for attending the workshops, new transition-related videos, and external websites to help you find post-military opportunities, check out the [Resources for Service Members](#) page.

The site also features a [schedules page](#) where you can find the time and dates for Transition GPS workshops, Career Tracks, and Capstone in your area, as well as upcoming job fairs.

"It truly is," Cheshier said, "a valuable resource for all who are involved in Transition."



Initiative connects Fleet and Family programs, Fisher Houses

Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) Fisher House Program Manager Pam Smith and Crystal C. Griffen, LCSW, Counseling, Advocacy, and Prevention (CAP) Program Manager, partnered in an outreach program to connect the Fisher House managers with their local Fleet and Family CAP providers. The formal kick-off for this initiative was held at Fisher House in San Diego on Feb. 2.

Fisher House is a nationwide lodging network which provides extended-stay accommodations at no cost for military family members while their loved ones receive treatment at military and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals. There are 64 Fisher Houses serving 23 military installations and 24 VA facilities.

At the San Diego event, Cynthia Martin, PhD, Navy Region Southwest (NRSW) Regional Counseling and Advocacy Program Supervisor and Vanessa Holm, MFT, provided a comprehensive and informative presentation of services available to families and staff. Her presentation allowed open forum discussion and exchange of information. Peggy Cohen, LCSW, shared ideas for how the Fisher House managers can work with local military installations. Other participants in the discussion included the Director and other staff members from CNIC's Lodging Program as well as staff members from wounded warrior programs serving Sailors and Marines.



CNIC Lodging Program Director Tamara Davis began exploring ways that CNIC and Fisher House could coordinate efforts after visiting the Army Fisher House at Tripler Medical Center in Hawaii. Ms. Davis was impressed by the appearance of the house and its family-friendly atmosphere. "It was great hearing about the

events and volunteer programs offered at the house," she said, adding that cooperative events like the one in San Diego "are valuable and grow relationships across the services by sharing wonderful ideas and best practices which ultimately help us provide stellar care to our families." Capt. Brent Breining CNIC Director, Navy Wounded Warrior-Safe Harbor regularly visits all of the Fisher Houses and was instrumental in bringing stakeholders together in San Diego.



Kenneth Merritt, Lorene Erickson, Josephine Callahan, Pam Smith, Kristin Palmer, Lt. Rebecca Johnson, Jill Thompson, Michael Ybarra.



Vanessa Holm, Pam Smith, Josephine Callahan, Lorene Erickson, Peggy Cohen, Jill Thompson, Kristin Palmer, Michael Ybarra, Tamara Davis, Kenneth Merritt

Returning Warrior Workshops (RWW)

Returning Warrior Workshop Schedule and IA Family Events — www.ia.navy.mil. Click "Resources" then "IA Services."

IA Discussion Group Schedule

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



U.S. Navy Individual Augmentees

[Like us on Facebook.](#)

Military Spouse Employment Program

Looking for telework jobs? Check out this list of companies who specifically offer [telework opportunities](#).



Relocation Tip

A successful move is not a matter of chance. It is the result of planning and hard work. At the center of these efforts is you; the customer. If you expect to have a [good move](#), you must play an active role.



New Spouse Orientation

New Spouse Orientation is offered as an [on-demand course](#) designed to support new Navy spouses. It provides information on benefits, support services, military culture, and resources to help spouses adapt to the military lifestyle.



FAP: Myths, reality and what really matters

*Submitted by Laurie Selby, LCSW-C, CNIC N9
Family Advocacy Program Analyst*

The Family Advocacy Program (FAP) exists to address prevention, identification and reporting, evaluation, intervention, education, and counseling issues for victims and perpetrators of child abuse, neglect, and spouse/intimate partner abuse in military families.

It is the goal of FAP to provide a wide variety of support services for victims and offenders of domestic violence so that service members and families can learn healthier relationship skills and ways to resolve conflict.

In addition to providing crisis support, FAP works to prevent domestic violence through education and awareness programs for all members of the military community. Services include couples counseling, individual counseling, family counseling, stress management, and parenting education and support.

FAP makes a wide range of services readily available, but it takes courage to use them. It can be very difficult to ask for help. There are also many myths that need to be dispelled about what happens when you use FAP services:

Myth #1: If I contact FAP, it will negatively impact my active duty spouse's career.

Reality: Seeking help does not always lead to disciplinary action for a service member. The Family Advocacy Program is the Navy's effort to keep our families safe and healthy and make our communities stronger. Proactive efforts to get help show agreement with, rather than resistance to, the Navy's perspective on this issue. The Department of the Navy takes the position that domestic abuse and child abuse and neglect will not be tolerated. In addition to the pain these actions cause the family, they also diminish military performance, impact readiness and are contrary to military values.

Myth #2: If I report abuse, my partner will get angry and the violence will get worse.

Reality: Many victims face increased risks when they take action to end the violence. That is why victims have options when they decide to seek help. FAP offers unrestricted and restricted reporting options. Restricted reporting means you can explore your options with a Domestic Abuse

Victim Advocate (DAVA) without the command being notified. FAP also provides confidential support (health, legal, housing, financial, safety planning) in most cases. You can explore your options by contacting your local Fleet and Family Support Center or Military OneSource.

Myth #3: I have young children and no job. If I make a report, my active duty spouse will be administratively discharged.

Reality: FAP is a prevention and treatment program, not a punitive process. Commands play a significant role in the prevention of abuse by establishing clear standards for personal behavior, providing early detection of potential problems, and intervening before abuse occurs. Leadership is critical in establishing a climate that promotes prevention by encouraging Sailors and their families to take advantage of services and programs.

Myth #4: If I file an unrestricted report and the Command is notified, nothing will happen. They only care about their service member, and no one will believe me.

Reality: Command leadership is expected to take action for everyone's health and safety. Upholding the Navy's "zero tolerance" policy towards domestic violence is critical to the success of every mission.

Myth #5: I'm active duty, and I'm being abused. If I report, I'll be perceived as weak.

Reality: Shame and fear of exposure are primary deterrents to any victim reporting. The most important thing to do if this situation applies to you is to explore your options. Not only will talking to someone bring you courage, but it will also reassure you that you have done nothing wrong and deserve to feel safe from fear and violence at home.

Myth #6: If I report child abuse, I will lose my kids and we don't live near family who can help us.

Reality: Child maltreatment does not always involve removal of a child from their home. There is a coordinated community response (Child Protective Services, Medical, FAP, etc.) that works to ensure that children are safe in their environment and to give parents the tools for effective parenting. Making a report to protect a child is a moral obligation of everyone in the community.

What is SECO?

Career Exploration

Identify career interests and aptitudes and find information about today's job market and work opportunities, including portable skills and careers, entrepreneurship and top federal employment options.

Comprehensive counseling services are available at no cost to all eligible military spouses through the career center. Staffed by certified career counselors, the career center can help military spouses with creating an action plan targeting education programs, financial aid options, training program resources and credential or licensing information.

Call **800-342-9647** or visit <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/seco> for more information.

Education, Training, and Licensing

Identify education, training and licensing/certification opportunities as well as financial aid resources and scholarships.

The MyCAA Scholarship offers up to \$4,000 of financial assistance to eligible military spouses who are pursuing a license/certification, certificate or associates degree in a portable career field and occupation. Spouses of active duty service members in pay grades E-1 to E-5, W-1 to W-2 and O-1 to O-2 on Title 10 military orders are eligible for the scholarship.

Call **800-342-9647** or visit <https://aiportal.acc.af.mil/mycaa/default.aspx> for more information.



SECO

SPOUSE EDUCATION & CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Career Connections

Connect with corporations, government organizations and non-profits to gain meaningful, long-term, portable employment.

The Military Spouse Employment Partnership connects military spouses to more than 180 partner employers who have pledged to recruit, hire, promote and retain military spouses in portable careers. To help with their introduction, spouses are encouraged to self-identify when contacting or applying with these employment partners.

Visit <https://msejobs.militaryonesource.mil> for more information.

Employment Readiness

Receive face-to-face support at the installation level for topics such as resume writing, interviewing skills, federal employment, job search strategies, dressing for success, job fairs, career assessments and more.

Visit <http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil> and search by program (Spouse Education, Training and Careers) and an installation or postal code to find the closest office.

Regardless of location, spouses can call **800-342-9647** to speak with a certified career counselor or visit <https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil> for information and resources available 24/7.



The Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Program provides expert education and career guidance to military spouses worldwide. Call the SECO Career Center at **800-342-9647** or log on to <https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil>.

LearningCounts™ for SECO

Earn college credit for what you know!

Not all learning takes place in the classroom. The knowledge you acquire through life and work experience is extremely valuable, and may be worth college credit.

LearningCounts for the Department of Defense Spouse Education and Career Opportunities program or SECO is a new initiative to help military spouses earn college-credit for knowledge and expertise gained through life and work experience.

How does it work?

LearningCounts is an easy to use online service that helps you identify college-level learning gained from:

- Volunteer and community service
- Work experience
- Training programs
- Military service
- Independent study

LearningCounts online courses guide you in building an online Learning Portfolio that aligns your knowledge and expertise with college courses. Your Learning Portfolio is then evaluated for college credit.

Is LearningCounts™ right for me?

LearningCounts is a great opportunity if you:

- Are a strong writer or have taken a basic college-level writing course
- Have completed at least one other online course, or have good computer skills and will feel comfortable completing an online course
- Have several years of work, volunteer and/or other life experience in an area that aligns with college coursework – for example: communications, management, information technology, marketing, healthcare, or merchandising.

Why use LearningCounts™?

- **It saves time and money!** Why spend time and money taking a college course when you could build a Learning Portfolio to earn credit for what you know??
- **It's convenient and fits your busy schedule!** LearningCounts online courses can be taken any time and anywhere.



How can I get more information about LearningCounts™?

We're glad you want to know more about the LearningCounts for SECO program. Please contact a SECO career counselor at 800-342-9647.



An online innovation from

