



LIFELINK

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October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month: Navy Family Advocacy Program Offers Help, Resources

By Mr. Perry Christiansen

Navy Family Readiness Programs Policy Lead

One in five adult women.

One in seven adult men.

Those numbers represent how many people report having experienced severe physical violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime, according to the **Centers for Disease Control (CDC)**. Domestic violence is defined as violent or aggressive behavior within the home, typically involving the violent abuse of a spouse or partner. It can also be a pattern of behaviors used by one partner to maintain power and control over another partner in an intimate relationship. Domestic violence is prevalent, devastating and it is preventable.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and the **Navy Family Advocacy Program's (FAP)** goal is to prevent domestic violence by encouraging people to examine their own behaviors and to learn and practice healthier behaviors. FAP is sometimes seen as "what happens after abuse occurs." What people don't always realize is that we are there to help before a crisis.

Professional services of licensed counselors are available free of charge at **Fleet and Family Support Centers (FFSC)**. These are available to active duty and their family members – even Sailors who are unmarried can have couple's counseling with their partners.

A variety of courses that teach healthy relationship skills are also available at FFSCs. These include anger management and conflict resolution. These courses are also free.

Even with prevention efforts, sometimes abuse occurs. If abuse happens, FAP works to ensure the safety of victims. Victims must



have access to appropriate avenues for safety, care and support. The FAP staff understands it is critical that victims are not re-victimized due to inadequate or harmful interventions, and they are trained to respond to incidents of abuse and neglect, support victims, and offer prevention and treatment. In addition, FAP staff members can help military families overcome the effects of violence and improve behavior patterns.

Domestic violence harms individuals, ruins families and undermines our entire Navy community. Make sure you know the resources available to help before a crisis occurs. Make sure your shipmates know them, too. Spread the message that domestic abuse is not compatible with our Navy values, and it will not be tolerated.

If you think you may be a victim of domestic abuse, contact the **National Domestic Violence Hotline** at 1-800-799-SAFE or visit your installation FFSC for information on available resources.



Lifelink Spotlight

Recruit Training Command Promotes Healthy Lifestyle Choices

By Alan Nunn,

Recruit Training Command Public Affairs

Small changes are making a big difference in the health and well-being of Recruit Training Command (RTC) Sailors. Command leadership is emphasizing the importance of engaging in healthy behaviors, utilizing leave time and spending quality time with family.

To reduce staff reliance on caffeine, the leadership worked with the Navy Exchange to remove energy drinks and increase healthy snack options in vending machines. New food and drink guidelines and information displays were introduced in the galleys.

Earlier this year, the command established a Blue H Health Promotion Committee to track risky health behaviors and promote a culture of good health. The Blue H Health Promotion Committee consists of various pre-existing elements within the command, such as the command fitness leader, the drug and alcohol program adviser, safety officer and others.

Multiple in-house assessments showed RTC staff were experiencing high levels of psychological stress related to long working hours as well as interpersonal and emotional challenges of training recruits. Early results from a Navy and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment (HRA) begun in January 2019 revealed two-thirds of staff had reported sleep impairments and more than half were not eating the recommended daily amounts of fruits and vegetables.

More than half of RTC staff members have taken the HRA and while it still early in the data collection cycle, the command has gotten out front to help them 'live longer, live stronger' — the tagline adopted by RTC Blue H Committee.



U.S. Navy Courtesy Photo

Plan of the Week Notes

Below are sample Plan of the Week notes aligning with topics covered by the *Every Sailor, Every Day* campaign during the month of October:

1. October is Women's Health Month. While women and men have many of the same health issues, women may be affected differently than men. And, some conditions are unique to women. The 2019 Women's Health Month theme is "Healthy, Ready, Here." More information can be found on the Military Health System website at <https://go.usa.gov/xV5uf>.
2. Taking time to appreciate the people in your life, the things you have and what you have accomplished – practicing gratitude – is an important step in maintaining psychological, emotional and physical wellbeing. Creating a gratitude board is 1 Small ACT to cultivate active gratitude. Learn more on the NavyNavStress blog at <https://navstress.wordpress.com/2019/08/26/the-gratitude-board-1-small-act-for-cultivating-active-gratitude/>
3. Flu season is on its way, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone six months of age and older. While how well the vaccine works can vary, the flu vaccine is the best way to protect against flu. Flu vaccine prevents millions of illnesses and flu-related doctor's visits each year, and prevents tens of thousands of hospital visits. Learn more at <https://go.usa.gov/xV5J4>.
4. Since 2009, the Real Warriors Campaign has stood with the military community, empowering service members, veterans and their families with 24/7 resources to manage the symptoms of psychological health concerns. Learn how you can use the campaign's resources to break down barriers to psychological health care and spread the word that reaching out is a sign of strength. Learn more at <https://www.realwarriors.net/personal-stories>.
5. For many people, autumn events like Halloween are fun times to dress up in costumes, go trick-or-treating, attend parties and eat yummy treats. These events are also opportunities to provide nutritious snacks, get physical activity and focus on safety. Children and unattended youth are at the highest risk for danger. Safely enjoy the holiday with information from the Navy and Marine Corps Public Safety Center at <https://go.usa.gov/xV5J3>.

News and Resources

Taking Control of Your Mental Health: Tips for Talking with Your Health Care Provider
[National Institute for Mental Health](#)

How (and Why) to Develop a Self-Care Plan
[NavyNavStress](#)

Technology's Role in Suicide Prevention
[American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)

Planning for the Worst: A Commander's Guide to Suicide Postvention
[Psychological Health Center of Excellence](#)

SAMHSA's Annual Mental Health, Substance Abuse Data Provide Roadmap for Action
[SAMHSA](#)

Retrain the Brain to Manage Chronic Pain
[Health.mil](#)

The Military Suicide Research Consortium Studies the Full Spectrum of Suicide in the Military
[Psychological Health Center of Excellence](#)

Human Performance Resources by Champ Helps Warfighters and Families
[Human Performance Resources by Champ](#)

Seven Tools that Reinforce Psychological Health
[Real Warriors](#)

Practice Self Care with Healthy Boundaries
[NavyNavStress](#)

Current and Upcoming Events

SPC Training Webinars

October 10, 8AM CDT
October 24, Noon CDT
November 7, 6PM CDT
[Register here](#)

Take Back Day is Oct. 26: Safe Prescription Disposal Saves Lives

By Navy Drug Detection and Deterrence (OPNAV N170DD)

On Saturday, Oct. 26, Sailors and civilians alike will be able to participate in Prescription Drug Take Back Day, a biannual opportunity to safely and responsibly dispose of unused, expired and unwanted prescription medications. Proper disposal of prescription medications keeps yourself and your family members safe. During times of increased stress, ensuring that lethal means— including certain prescription drugs— are out of reach can help prevent suicide and save lives.



Substances and Suicide Risk

In 2017, drug use — often prescription drugs taken in potentially lethal doses — preceded over half of **Navy suicide attempts**, and alcohol use preceded nearly a third. Acute alcohol intoxication increases suicide risk by intensifying psychological distress, narrowing focus towards only the most intense emotions and increasing impulsive behaviors. Chronic substance misuse also has long-term effects, including decreased social, psychological and emotional well-being.

Recognizing the Signs

Strong relationships with friends and family are protective factors in times of adversity, enabling early detection of **warning signs of suicide** and intervention. Signs may include talking about hurting oneself, feeling hopeless, being a burden or experiencing unbearable pain. Behaviors may include more frequent or excessive drinking, misuse of substances and sudden mood changes or rage. Social withdrawal or giving away prized possessions are other signs.

If you notice changes in a friend or shipmate, ACT (Ask Care Treat). Ask directly, "Are you thinking about killing yourself?" Show that you care by listening without judgment. Help connect them with treatment as soon as possible by taking them to the nearest chaplain, medical provider or leader. In an emergency, call 911.

Reaching Out for Help

Help is always available. **Navy chaplains** provide confidential support and can never be compelled to share information with a Sailor's command, medical provider or other party without the Sailor's permission. Sailors can also seek help from the nearest medical provider or reach out to Military OneSource at 1-800-342-9647 for free and confidential non-medical counseling. The **Military Crisis Line** also provides free and confidential support 24/7 via live chat on their website, by phone at 1-800-273-8255 or text at 838255.

Disposing of unused or expired medications ensures they are out of reach at times of increased stress or crisis. Your local military treatment facility (MTF) may offer safe and anonymous prescription drug drop-boxes, or you can dispose at home by emptying contents into a sealable bag, filling it with an undesirable substance like kitty litter or used coffee grounds and throwing the bag in the trash. It is crucial to identify irresponsible drinking patterns or drug misuse early. Reach out to your local DAPA for help with a substance use issue.

To learn more about the upcoming Prescription Drug Take Back Day, visit deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/.