



Family Connection



In this Issue...

August Holidays and Observances:

DoD to Begin Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account

Kings Bay FFSC Celebrates & Informs

USNCC Finishing Pilot Program II, FFSP Adds to TAP Curriculum

Military Families Participate in Annual Family Café

Team Navy Wins Big at 2023 Warrior Games Challenge

Your Virtual FFSC Webinar Schedule

Visit us online at:



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 Fleet and Family Support Program, cnic.ffsp.fct@navy.mil.

Back to School: Start the Year off Right

BY KYLIE MALLORY-HALTER, LCSW, NEW PARENT SUPPORT ANALYST

We have all been there. You made the long drive, your household goods finally arrived (only a few weeks late...), and you even managed to unpack a few boxes. Maybe you met the new neighbors, and maybe you or your spouse has checked into the new command. But we all know what is coming up next: It is back to school time. Whether it is pre-k, second grade or high school, this can be both an exciting and stressful time for our military kids.

The schedule and routine might be different. There are new teachers and classmates and new rules to learn and follow. And while all children get those back-to-school butterflies, there can be unique challenges for our military children.

So what can you do to help support your children during this big transition? Here are a few tips to start the school year:

Help set expectations. The unknown is scary (for kids and adults alike!), so try to give kids as much information as possible about their new school or day care. Find out if you can tour the building or meet the teachers before the first day. Some schools and districts host an open house before the school year starts, which is a great way to start on the right foot.

Empathize and acknowledge feelings. It is important to acknowledge children's feelings and show that you understand them. Reassure them that it is OK to feel sad, scared or even angry when there is a big life transition.

For older kids, share a story about a time you felt nervous starting something new. Talk about how you dealt with the change and help them think of things they might do to cope. For little ones, take time to help them feel comfortable with new caregivers. Do this by letting your child sit on your lap while you talk with and get to know a new caregiver, and invite the caregiver to hand your child a toy or other object. Make sure that new caregivers know your child's preferences and what makes them feel safe.



Routine, routine, routine. Routines help everyone feel more in control and confident because they know what to expect. When a new duty station means new routines, it is a great opportunity to have a family meeting. Sit down together and talk about what the new routine will look like. Get input from older children and let them have some choice about what the new routine will be. For younger children, use picture charts to show routines like waking up, eating breakfast, and getting dressed.

Keep the conversation going. Even if you are someone who loves to check something off a to-do list, helping your kids adjust to a new school or day care is not a one-and-done task. Be sure to keep checking in and ask how things are going. Dinner time is an opportunity for the family to sit together and check in with each other. Your commute time to and from school is another chance to ask about their day. For young children, do not be afraid to set up a conference with the teacher or ask a new day care provider how they are doing during the day.

continued on next page

ATTENTION READERS: Make *Family Connections* Interactive! Share your questions, comments, good news stories, useful resources and articles you have written or found helpful. As space allows, we will include them in future newsletters OR release on social media. Submit to cnic.ffsp.fct@navy.mil

continued from page 1

Ask for help. You might read this and think, "I've done all those things, and nothing is helping." Maybe you are dealing with some challenging behaviors at home, tantrums at every drop-off or even school refusal.

It is time to call in reinforcements. No matter where you are located, there are resources available to help you and your family through this transition. [Military One Source](#) is a great place to start with many articles and guides, as well as nonmedical counseling and specialty consultations. There are also great resources at your local [Fleet & Family Support Center](#), including nonmedical counseling services and the New Parent Support Program for parents with children ages newborn to three.

Finally, do not forget to use your [School Liaison Program](#), which helps military families with education-related matters including transition support, alternative school support and referrals.

While change can be challenging, it can also bring new opportunities. The chance to meet new people, try new things, learn flexibility and develop resiliency are valuable skills that serve our children in the future and help them become more successful adults. When you are packing that first day of school lunch, or prepping those day care bottles, remember that back to school is one more step in the direction of a happy and healthy adulthood.

Kings Bay FFSC Celebrates & Informs



Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia, hosted its 2nd Annual Independence Day Block Party at the end of June. Service members and their families enjoyed food, entertainment, and games while installation entities provided support and outreach tables to deliver information and resources to all who attended. The installation's Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) table brought the fun with the FFSC Spinning Wheel. Participants spun the wheel and answered questions about the center's programs. If they answered correctly, they were able to submit their name to win a prize. Pictured from left to right: Julie Corey, Felipe Gonzalez, Ashley Landry, Kathlene Ladd, Dyanna Morgan, Kim Nethery, Trai Murray, Cassandra Larson, and Anali Aguilar

DoD to Begin Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account

BY FRAN JACKSON, AFC®, MBA, FFSP PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Did you know the Department of Defense (DoD) intends to allow service members the opportunity to contribute to a Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (DCFSA) in 2024?

That's right, service members can contribute up to \$5,000 per family annually (\$2,500 if married and filing separate tax returns) of pretax income into a DCFSA. DCFSA pays for dependent care expenses for children under 13 or dependent adults who can't care for themselves.

A DCFSA will allow service members to set aside pretax income to pay for child care-related expenses for children under 13, such as preschool, day care, summer day camp, and other eligible dependent care expenses and expenses for spouses and other dependents who are mentally or physically incapable of self-care, regardless of age. DoD will not charge an administrative fee to service members who choose to participate.

WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW?

The DoD aims to make these benefits available from November through December 2023, during the open enrollment season. If the program is not ready to be implemented by then, there will be a special enrollment period for service members to contribute in the 2024 tax year.

IF YOU HAVE CHILDREN OF ELIGIBLE OR ELIGIBLE DEPENDENTS, SHOULD YOU ENROLL IN DCFSA?

Service members should make informed decisions based on their needs to determine if they should take advantage of this benefit. You can receive education and training from your nearest Fleet and Family Support Center's (FFSC) personal financial manager to ensure you understand this benefit and the financial and tax consequences of participating. For more information, visit <https://www.fsafeds.com/explore/dcfsa>.

HAS DOD FINALIZED THE DECISION TO OFFER DCFSA FOR SERVICE MEMBERS?

As of July 2023, DCFSA is an initiative, and DoD has not finalized the decisions to implement the program.

To find your nearest FFSC, visit [FFSC Directory \(navy.mil\)](https://navy.mil/ffsc).

August Holidays and Observances:

- Immunization Awareness Month
- August 1 – Air Force Day
- August 4 – Coast Guard Day
- August 7 – Purple Heart Day
- August 29 – Marine Corps Reserve Birthday
- August 26 – Women's Equality Day

USNCC Finishing Pilot Program II, FFSP Adds to TAP Curriculum

BY TIMOTHY MCGOUGH, COMMANDER, NAVY INSTALLATIONS COMMAND

Many enlisted Sailors join the Navy for the college tuition benefits it offers when they transfer out of the service. Now they can get a head start on their educational voyage with the United States Naval Community College (USNCC).

According to Dr. Ashley Gleiman, Ph.D., USNCC academic administrator, the community college is working towards finishing up its Pilot II programs and will reach initial operating capability in autumn.

"USNCC programs include associate degrees in military studies, nuclear engineering technology, cybersecurity, organizational leadership and aviation maintenance (including an uncrewed systems track)," said Gleiman. "We recently signed two partner institutions for its Maritime Logistics program and we intend to have the Data Analytics program identified and accepting applications by the end of the fiscal year."

The USNCC's establishment is a result of the Secretary of the Navy's 2018 Education for Seapower study findings. The purpose of the study was to assess whether naval education institutions were keeping pace with rapid changes in society, geopolitics and technology.

The USNCC education opportunities will prepare service members both for the needs of today and the challenges of tomorrow that are critical to the Navy's success. They are also collaborating with Fleet and Family Support Centers (FFSCs) to get the word out about the program's benefits through the Transition Assistance Program (TAP).

"The USNCC connection to TAP has more to do with how the information is shared with service members at the FFSCs," said Anthony Stevens, military readiness section supervisor, Fleet and Family Support Program. "The education offered through the USNCC can enhance a young service member's critical thinking abilities and increase their development to be a better Sailor."

Unfortunately, junior enlisted Sailors in particular often transition out with only the skills and education they obtained from their Navy Enlisted Classification.

"When they have little time in rate, their background is at a novice level at best. They really aren't transition or employment ready," said Stevens. "Getting information on USNCC during their TAP sessions, and at TAP centers they could decide to stay Navy and transition later when they are more prepared."



Presently, the USNCC is open and funded for active duty enlisted Sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and Coast Guard Reservists only. Students do not pay for books or materials.

"All active-duty enlisted service members in the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Coast Guard Reserve are eligible to apply for admission. Admission to USNCC is a selective process," said Gleiman. "You will be considered against candidates based on the needs of the naval services with priority consideration extended to junior service members with no previously earned college degrees. Service members who have previously earned college degrees may be considered for admission into certificate programs."

Other factors may include a service member's:

- Rating or Military Occupational Specialty.
- Prior educational experience.
- Space availability and demand for a selected degree program.

Admission consideration is dependent upon continued approval from a service member's command and separation date (EAOS/ EAS) must be no sooner than three months from the course start date.

USNCC currently has 2,000 students enrolled and more than 500 students expected to start class throughout Summer 2023.

For more information on the USNCC, visit [Frequently Asked Questions About the USNCC](#) or keep up to date on USNCC news and updates by following us on your favorite social media platforms: [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#).

Team Navy Wins Big at 2023 Warrior Games Challenge

Navy Wounded Warrior organized and trained Team Navy for the 2023 Department of Defense Warrior Games Challenge, held at Naval Air Station (NAS) North Island in Coronado, California, from June 2-12.

This intraservice competition highlighted the exceptional physical skills and mental toughness of seriously wounded, ill, and injured active-duty and veteran service members across the U.S. Armed Forces.

Team Navy, composed of 31 Sailors and three Coast Guardsmen on active and veteran status, competed in 11 sports along with athletes representing the Army; Marines; Air Force, inclusive of Space Force; and U.S. Special Operations Command.

Navy athletes brought home 29 Gold, 31 Silver and 22 Bronze medals. More importantly, they set personal records, surmounted challenges, and formed new friendships with other service members who have similar life experiences to their own.

Team Navy is part of Navy Wounded Warrior's adaptive athletics program, which is open to service members and veterans in the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard with serious, noncombat or combat-related injuries and physical or psychological illnesses. Recovering service members rebuild their strength and endurance while also drawing inspiration from their teammates. Sports also help build self-esteem, lower stress levels and invite service members to rejoin a team environment.

Participation in Navy Wounded Warrior is voluntary and requires self-referral or referral from a command, chaplain, medical team, peer, or other for enrollment determination.

For more information on Navy Wounded Warrior or to begin the enrollment determination process call 855-NAVY-WWP (855-628-9997) or e-mail via navywoundedwarrior.fct@navy.mil.



Military Families Participate in Annual Family Café

The 25th Annual Family Café, the largest cross-disability event in the nation, took place in Orlando, Florida, from June 9-11. More than 13,000 people attended the event, and it is estimated that 1,000 to 1,500 of them were affiliated with the military including twelve Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) case liaisons, who serve military families in Florida.

The Annual Family Café hosted 190 exhibitors and microenterprises owned and operated by individuals with disabilities.

The EFMP case liaisons, school liaisons, and Military OneSource manned a booth in the exhibit hall to share information with military-affiliated families and network with professionals who serve individuals and families with disabilities. They connected with many active-duty families from all branches of service to answer questions about the Individualized Education Program and 504 plans, relocation, EFMP enrollment, transition from active duty and TRICARE.



In addition to the exhibit hall, there were more than 200 individual breakout sessions where participants could receive training and information on the following topics: Advocacy, Assistive Technology, Birth to Age Five, Dads, Disaster Preparedness, Employment, Mental Health, Military Families, Recreation, Smart Money and Youth. As part of the Military Track, EFMP case liaisons and school liaisons provided six different training sessions.

The case liaisons also had the opportunity to attend the Governor's Summit on Disabilities, keynote sessions, and training sessions to equip them with knowledge and information to better serve military families.

Being able to participate in an event of this magnitude was very impactful to all.

One attendee said, "Aside from all of the information and resources that were available, it was inspiring to see a setting where no matter the disability, everyone was accepted. If someone shouted out during a keynote or a presentation, everyone in the room understood, and it was OK. The individual or the family didn't feel like they stood out or were judged. It was a safe place filled with unspoken understanding. It was beautiful."

For information about EFMP services in your community, contact your local [Fleet and Family Support Center](#).

Spring 2023

applocker.navy.mil



Apps & Caps



Great Apps for New Sailors!

Need Mobile Support?

MyNavy has an app for that!

Joining the Navy is a big step. At MyNavy HR, we make it easier for you to focus on your new Navy career and mission. One way we do that is by providing apps that give you the resources you need, anytime and anywhere, on your mobile device.

Navy apps are available by visiting or downloading the Navy App Locker. There you will find more than 80 apps designed for Sailors. Apps offer many resources important to new Sailors, including access to your military benefits, career development resources and counselors, advancement exams and prep, rate training manuals (RTMs), fitness trackers, uniform regulations and tutorials, FAQs, training materials, and even duty station guides.



Visit the Navy App Locker (applocker.navy.mil) and get the apps you need today!

Essential Apps to Get You Started



30+ MWR Apps

Interactive guides to Navy installations worldwide. Apps include maps, schedules, resources, recreation guides, and more. There are more than 30 great MWR apps available.



MyNavy Uniforms

Provides a complete visual guide to OPNAV uniform regulations with specific instructions and grooming regulations, as well as COVID-19 updates.



My Military OneSource

A mobile gateway to MilLife Benefits, resources and information, as well as live access to experts who support Sailors as they transition into the Navy.



US Navy App Locker

The Navy's app store provides convenient access to dozens of essential apps to ease your transition into the Navy

Have an idea for an app? Contact MyNavy HR IT Solutions via the App Locker! Many of our best app ideas are from Sailors, for Sailors.

Apps & Caps

Sailor Favorites



Navy PFA

288000+ Downloads

As the Navy resumes the physical fitness assessments put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Official Navy PFA app is more crucial than ever in our Sailors' efforts to stay fighting fit. As user L.L. says, "It helped so much when I needed to know where I stood with Navy standards." The app's PFA Calculator helps Sailors measure their physical abilities against Navy standards and provides instructional videos to make sure Sailors are exercising safely and effectively.

MORE OFFICIAL NAVY PFA FEEDBACK

"This app is perfect for calculating PRT scores and reading all the guides. Works perfectly, no glitches. It's a very helpful app." - K.A.



PMK-EE

213000+ Downloads

The Professional Military Knowledge Eligibility Exam is the must-have app for Sailors on the go who want to advance their Navy careers. Sailors can conveniently prepare for and take exams and have their certificates transmitted with the click of a button, anytime and anywhere. The app allows Sailors to save their progress so they can return to it anytime their busy schedule allows. "This app was easy to install and use," says Sailor L.B. "Having the PMK-EE at my fingertips was great since I always have my phone handy."

MORE PMK-EE FEEDBACK

"I got all my stuff done in a couple of days and sent in my certificate. I saved a lot of time not using the ship's internet." - L.G.



NavyCOOL

142000+ Downloads

Thousands of Sailors have discovered that there is no better place to find career tools than in Navy COOL. The app provides Sailors and others with a set of credentialing and career tools to help them make informed professional development decisions from enlistment to retirement and beyond. New recruits have found Navy COOL particularly useful. "This app is something every young man and woman going into the Navy needs," says user B.H.

MORE NavyCOOL FEEDBACK

"Super effort to bring COOL to the Fleet! Professionalism in an app! What could be easier?" - G.M.

Benefits, Education and Support



MilEd Benefits.

A comprehensive guide to your military education benefits and resources.



MyNavy Financial Literacy

Helps Sailors achieve personal financial goals and meet the Navy's financial literacy education requirements.



MyNavy Family

Provides for the various needs of the modern military family and includes COVID-19 and other health crisis related content.



CLERC

Introduces Sailors to more than 80 world cultures and languages. Includes language training, culture cards, and much more!



Ships & Aircraft Training

Interactive flashcards for users to visually identify more than 100 naval ships, aircraft and equipment. Includes facts and trivia questions.



US Military Rank & Reference

A score-based sortable reference to review different rank insignia across all Military Services.



US Navy Ratings & Reference

A score-based sortable reference to review different rating insignia across the US Navy.



Warrior Toughness

Provides guided exercises and worksheets to teach Sailors techniques that allow them to perform at their peak in challenging circumstances.

Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release and unlimited distribution.



MyNavy Family Mobile Application

Updated 2023

An official U.S. Navy mobile application produced by MyNavy HR IT Solutions



What is the MyNavy Family app?

The MyNavy Family application combines authoritative information from a wide range of websites into a single convenient application for Navy families. New resources and links continue to be added.

In addition to a wealth of useful content, the app offers several features:

Military Installation Search

Find information about every military installation around the world, including contact information, base map, programs, and services, plus an overview of its mission.

MyNavy Career Center

Get help and information from this 24/7 resource with an in-app ability to call or send an email to a customer service representative.

Emergency Contacts

Access websites and phone numbers for immediate support from a range of organizations, such as National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, Sexual Assault Crisis Support, National Domestic Violence Hotline, and others.

Content Sharing

Share information by using other mobile device applications, such as email, SMS text, and iMessage.

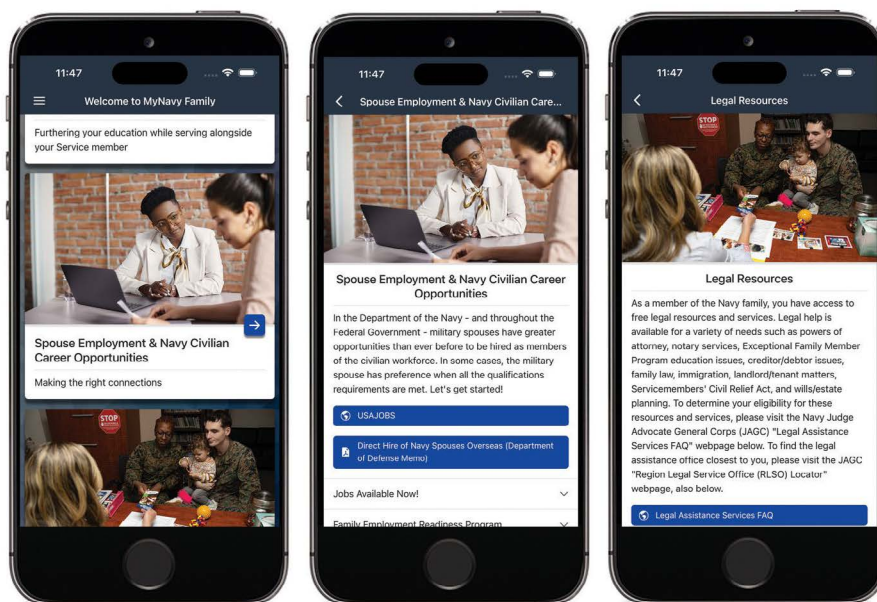
Feedback

Provide input about the app content and use.

TOPICS OF INTEREST

The app offers a wide variety of topics within the following categories:

- ✓ New Spouse
- ✓ Mentorship & Networking
- ✓ Adult Education
- ✓ Spouse Employment & Navy Civilian Career Opportunities
- ✓ Legal Resources
- ✓ Family Financial Planning
- ✓ Parenthood
- ✓ Special Needs Family Support
- ✓ Moving & Relocation
- ✓ Service Member Deployment
- ✓ Emotional Support Services
- ✓ Healthy Living, Recreation, Lodging, Shopping & Travel
- ✓ Family Emergencies
- ✓ Transition & Retirement
- ✓ Parents & Family Members of Sailors
- ✓ Survivor Resources



Google Play App Store: Click [HERE](#) to download app.

Apple iTunes App Store: Click [HERE](#) to download app.



MyNAVYHR
IT Solutions
PMW 240

Learn more & download the app here: applocker.navy.mil

Distribution Statement A:
Approved for public release and unlimited distribution.

YOUR *Virtual* FFSC WEBINAR SCHEDULE



August 2023

We are all more organized in different areas of our life, but luckily FFSC has Subject Matter Experts that can provide you more tips and tricks to help tackle the areas that need improving. Spouses are encouraged to attend all of these trainings. Be sure to pass this flyer on.

How to register:

Step #1: Make a free account at [MyNavyFamily.com](https://learning.zeiders.refineddata.com) (NMCI use <https://learning.zeiders.refineddata.com> at least one day before the webinar. Follow the on-screen instructions to create a new account. Be sure to enter your time zone!!

Step #2: Click on “Live Webinars” at the top of the page to view the full list of offerings.

Step #3: Click on the title of a session to view the information and description.

Step #4: Click on “Register Now” to register for the course.

You will get reminder emails with your personalized link.



The CNIC LMS
has comprehensive resources for Navy spouses and family members such as New Spouse Orientation, the Navy Family eHandbook, and the Navy Spouse library.

The Role of Resilience in Suicide Prevention

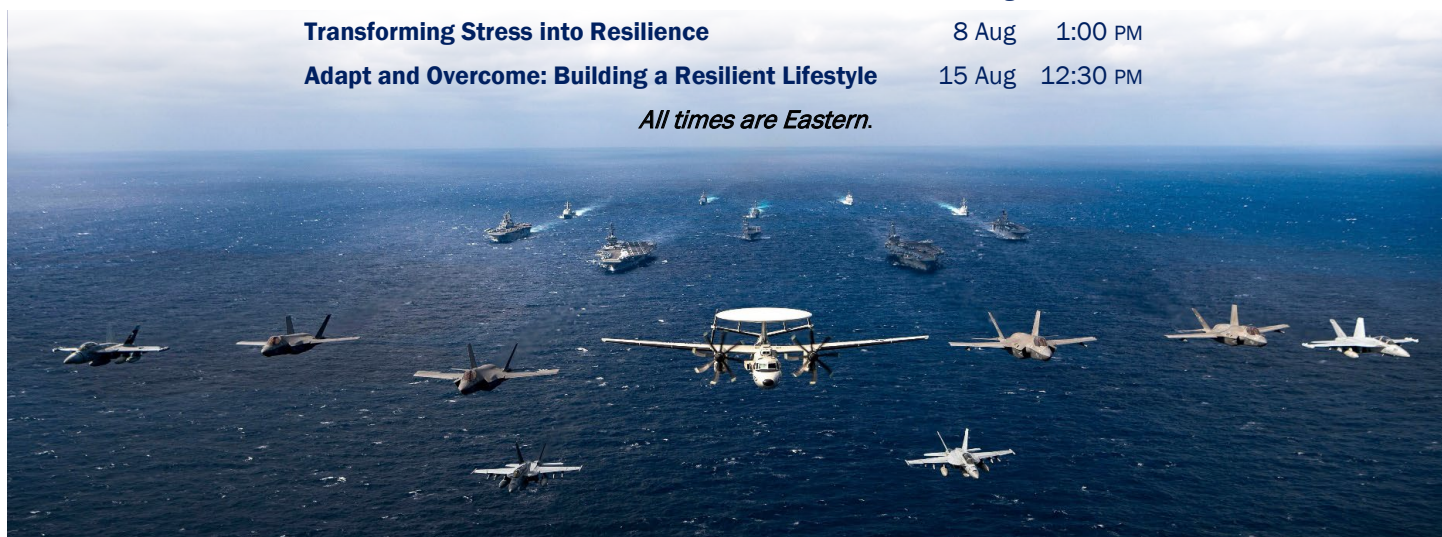
"Every death by suicide is a tragedy that impacts our people, our military units and our readiness. That's why we remain committed to a comprehensive and integrated approach to suicide prevention."

Lloyd Austin
Secretary of Defense

Learn how resilience can help anyone adapt and overcome stress and adversity.

Youth Suicide Prevention	2 Aug	1:00 PM
Transforming Stress into Resilience	8 Aug	1:00 PM
Adapt and Overcome: Building a Resilient Lifestyle	15 Aug	12:30 PM

All times are Eastern.



August 2023

Deployment

Tuesday, August 8th

4:00 PM ET IA Deployment 101

Employment

Friday, August 4th

9:00 AM ET USAJobs 2023

Wednesday, August 9th

1:00 PM ET Job Search Strategies

1:00 PM ET Winning Interview Techniques

Wednesday, August 16th

1:00 PM ET Job Search Strategies

Thursday, August 17th

9:00 AM ET Resume Writing and Cover Letters Simplified

12:00 PM ET Acing the Interview

Wednesday, August 23rd

11:00 AM ET Social Media and Your Job Search

Finances

Tuesday, August 1st

1:00 PM ET Credit...What's the Big Deal?

Thursday, August 3rd

1:00 PM ET Car Buying

Friday, August 4th

12:00 PM ET Car Buying Strategies

Tuesday, August 8th

12:00 PM ET Saving and Investing 101

1:00 PM ET Navy Retirement...Is it Enough?

Monday, August 14th

1:00 PM ET Unlocking Opportunities: The Ticket to Work Program for SSDI Recipients

Thursday, August 17th

1:00 PM ET Consumer Awareness

Tuesday, August 22nd

2:00 PM ET Quarterly CFS Forum

Life Skills

Tuesday, August 1st

4:00 PM ET Mind Body Mental Fitness Module 4: Flexibility

Wednesday, August 2nd

1:00 PM ET Youth Suicide Prevention

Thursday, August 3rd

11:00 AM ET Improving Workplace Relationships

Tuesday, August 8th

10:00 AM ET Understanding Anger

1:00 PM ET Transforming Stress into Resilience

4:00 PM ET Mind Body Mental Fitness Module 5: Problem Solving

Tuesday, August 15th

10:00 AM ET Stress Management

10:00 AM ET Temper Taming: The Healthy Way of Dealing with Anger

12:30 PM ET Adapt and Overcome: Building a Resilient Lifestyle

4:00 PM ET Mind Body Mental Fitness Module 6: Connection

Wednesday, August 16th

12:30 PM ET The Basics of Special Education and IEPs

Monday, August 21st

10:30 AM ET Preventing and Responding to Intimate Partner Violence

Tuesday, August 22nd

11:00 AM ET EFAC - Emergency Family Assistance Center

1:00 PM ET Mind Body Mental Fitness Module 1: Stress Resilience

Wednesday, August 23rd

1:00 PM ET Mind Body Mental Fitness Module 6: Connection

Tuesday, August 29th

11:00 AM ET How to Protect the Next Generation

1:00 PM ET Mind Body Mental Fitness Module 2: Mindfulness and Meditation

Wednesday, August 30th

11:00 AM ET Military Spouse Orientation

Thursday, August 31st

11:00 AM ET EFAC - Emergency Family Assistance Center

2:00 PM ET Caring for Parents and Adult Family Members

Parenting

Thursday, August 17th

1:00 PM ET What About the Kids?

Relocation

Tuesday, August 1st

1:00 PM ET Smooth Move

1:00 PM ET Smooth Move: Overseas

Wednesday, August 23rd

11:00 AM ET Sponsor Training

Transition

Thursday, August 3rd

11:00 AM ET Skillbridge

Thursday, August 17th

12:00 PM ET So You've Signed Up for TAP, Now What?

Thursday, August 24th

11:00 AM ET Skillbridge