



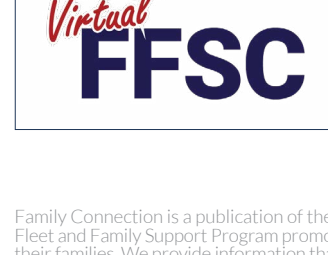
As we prepare for a new year, December is a great time to focus on family. The term "resilience" refers to a family's capacity to overcome adversity and move forward successfully.



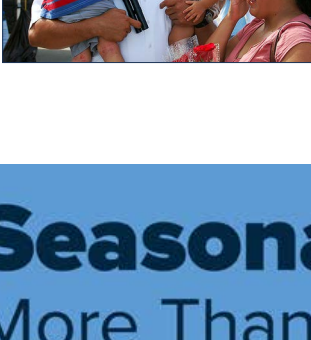
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FedEx and the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation are working together to bring the true spirit of Christmas to U.S. Troops through the Trees for Troops® program.



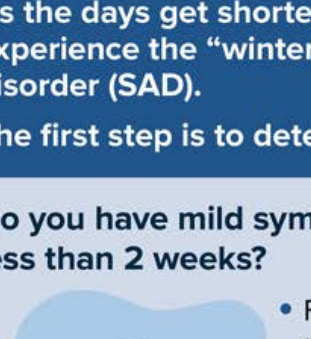
To raise awareness about sexual violence, Naval Air Station Pensacola's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response staff members and victim advocates painted



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See the full list of webinars available on [www.MynavyFamily.com](http://www.MynavyFamily.com). This month's topics include employment, Parenting, Finance, Life Skills, Relocation and Transition.



Family self-esteem gives unity to the family as they have developed mutual concerns, characteristics, and interests. This does not eliminate individual self-esteem; rather, they build on each other

Family Connection is a publication of the Fleet and Family Support Program. The Navy's Fleet and Family Support Program promotes the self-resilience 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.

## Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD): More Than the Winter Blues

As the days get shorter and there is less daylight, you may start to feel sad. While many people experience the "winter blues," some people may have a type of depression called seasonal affective disorder (SAD). The first step is to determine how much your symptoms interfere with your daily life.

**Do you have mild symptoms that have lasted less than 2 weeks?**

- Feeling down but still able to take care of yourself and others
- Having some trouble sleeping
- Having less energy than usual but still able to do your job, schoolwork, or housework

**These activities can make you feel better:**

- Doing something you enjoy
- Going outside in the sunlight
- Spending time with family and friends
- Eating healthy and avoiding foods with lots of sugar

If these activities do not help or your symptoms are getting worse, talk to a health care provider.

**Do you have more severe symptoms that have lasted more than 2 weeks?**

- Social withdrawal
- Oversleeping
- Gaining weight
- Craving foods with lots of sugar like cakes, candies, and cookies

**Seek professional help:**

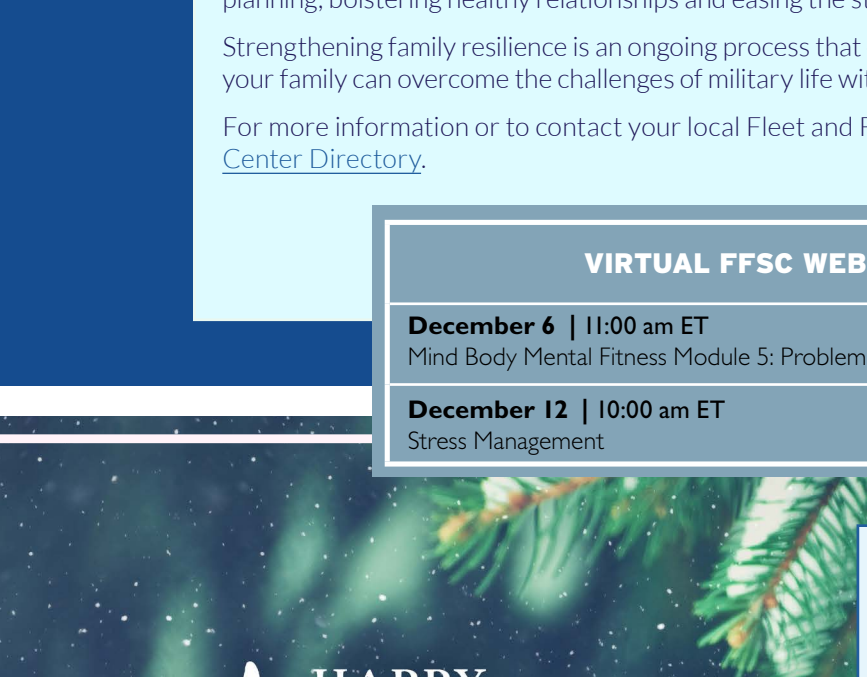
- Light therapy
- Psychotherapy (talk therapy)
- Medications
- Vitamin D supplements

For help finding treatment, visit [nimh.nih.gov/findhelp](http://nimh.nih.gov/findhelp). If you or someone you know is in immediate distress or is thinking about hurting themselves, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 or chat at [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org).



[nimh.nih.gov/sad](http://nimh.nih.gov/sad)

## Family Resiliency Month: Tips on Building Strong Resilient Families



**BY LEE ANNA BELTON, LICSW, LCSW, LCSW-C, COUNSELING, ADVOCACY AND PREVENTION ANALYST**

As we prepare for a new year, December is a great time to focus on family. The term "resilience" refers to a family's capacity to overcome adversity and move forward successfully. A resilient family is one that is able to keep going strong or even get better in the face of adversity. Although military families tend to be among the most resilient communities, here are some ways to enhance your resiliency:

Open communication. Encourage candid and transparent dialogue among family members including the expression of emotions, concerns and experiences about life in the military. Ensure that every member of the family feels heard and understood.

Cultivate a support network. Promote relationships among military families. During difficult times, these relationships can provide a sense of community and a support network.

Self-care. Promote the practice of self-care among all family members. This includes engaging in activities that bring you pleasure and are relaxing, being physically active, and getting proper nutrition and sufficient rest.

Set realistic expectations. Recognize that difficulties may arise and experiencing challenging moments is normal. Establishing reasonable expectations helps manage disappointment and frustration.

Celebrate achievements. Recognize and honor all accomplishments, big and small. This can strengthen the family's bond and encourage perseverance through tough times.

Emergency planning. Prepare for unforeseen circumstances so family members will feel less anxious and more prepared.

Seek professional help. If you or your family members need help, don't be afraid to reach out to your Fleet and Family Support Center or other support services such as Military OneSource. Help is available in many areas, such as financial planning, bolstering healthy relationships and easing the stress of deployment.

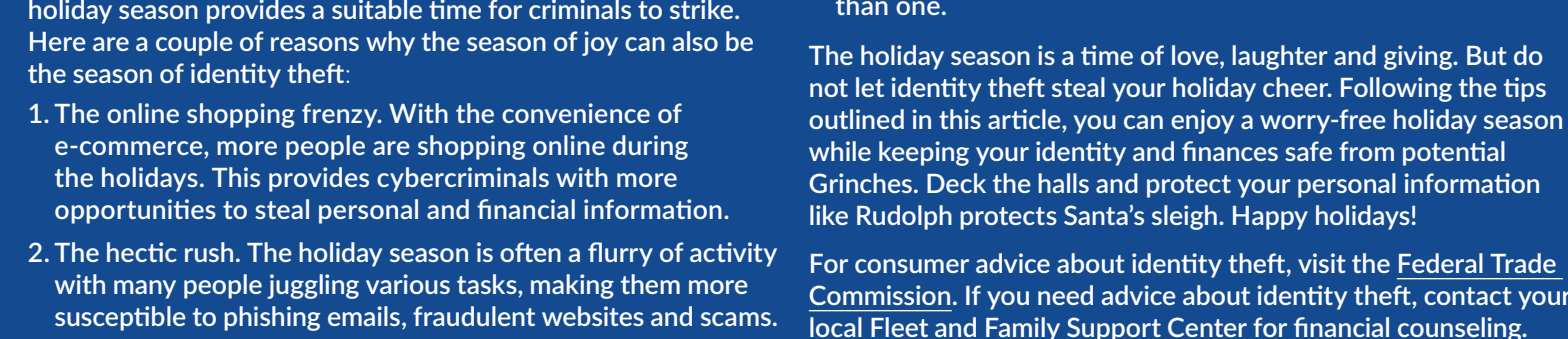
Strengthening family resilience is an ongoing process that calls for everyone's participation. By applying these guidelines, your family can overcome the challenges of military life with strength and cohesion.

For more information or to contact your local Fleet and Family Support Center, visit the [Fleet and Family Support Center Directory](http://Fleet and Family Support Center Directory).

VIRTUAL FFSC WEBINARS TO HELP BUILD RESILIENCY			
<b>December 6</b>   11:00 am ET	Mind Body Mental Fitness Module 5: Problem Solving	<b>December 6</b>   2:00 pm ET	Stress Management
<b>December 12</b>   10:00 am ET	Stress Management	<b>December 13</b>   11:00 am ET	Mind Body Mental Fitness Module 6: Connection

## December Holidays and Observances:

- Dec. 7 – Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (1941)
- Dec. 7-15 – Chanukah
- Dec. 13 – U.S. National Guard Birthday
- Dec. 21 – Winter solstice
- Dec. 25 – Christmas
- Dec. 26-Jan. 1 – Kwanzaa



## Special Delivery: Trees For Troops

FedEx and the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation are working together to bring the true spirit of Christmas to U.S. Troops through the Trees for Troops® program. This year FedEx Freight will deliver around 15,500 farm-grown Christmas trees to military families stationed at 84 bases across the country. The program has delivered more than 277,000 Christmas trees to military families in all branches of the military since 2005.



"Trees for Troops is a very rewarding program to everyone involved," said Wendy Richardson, Christmas SPIRIT Foundation Chair. "It is such an honor to have the opportunity to say thank you to our troops and help ensure military families have the kind of joyful, traditional Christmas memories that we would wish for America's heroes."

Bases should receive trees during the first two weeks of December. To find out if your base will receive trees this holiday season, visit the [Trees for Troops website or Facebook page](http://Trees for Troops website or Facebook page).

## Don't Let Identity Theft Steal Your Holiday Cheer

**FRAN JACKSON, AFC®, MBA, CNIC PERSONAL FINANCIAL MANAGER PROGRAM ANALYST**

As the aroma of gingerbread and eggnog fills the air and the sound of carols echoes around us, the holiday season is undeniably here. However, amidst the happiness and joy, there is also an unfortunate rise in identity theft incidents. Scammers and cybercriminals become more active during this time of year, preying on unsuspecting individuals. In this article, we'll explore the risks of identity theft during the holiday season and provide tips to protect yourself and your finances.

- Being cautious of phishing scams. Phishing emails and text messages are standard tools for identity theft. Beware of unexpected messages, especially those that ask for personal or financial information. Check twice before you click.
- Using strong, unique passwords. Regularly update your passwords and use a combination of letters, numbers and symbols. Do not use the same password across multiple accounts. Use a password manager to securely store passwords.
- Enabling two-factor authentication (2FA). Whenever possible, enable 2FA for your online accounts. This adds an extra layer of security by requiring you to provide a second verification method in addition to your password. Two is always better than one.

### THE HOLIDAY SEASON AND IDENTITY THEFT

Identity theft is like the Grinch that steals Christmas, and the holiday season provides a suitable time for criminals to strike. Here are a couple of reasons why the season of joy can also be the season of identity theft:

- The online shopping frenzy. With the convenience of e-commerce, more people are shopping online during the holidays. This provides cybercriminals with more opportunities to steal personal and financial information.
- The hectic rush. The holiday season is often a flurry of activity with many people juggling various tasks, making them more susceptible to phishing emails, fraudulent websites and scams.

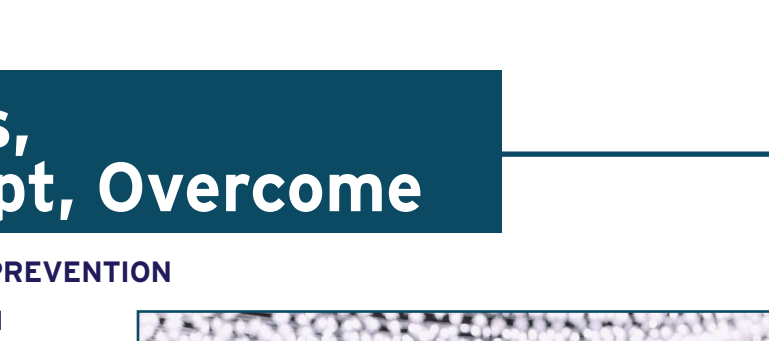
The holiday season is a time of love, laughter and giving. But do not let identity theft steal your holiday cheer. Following the tips outlined in this article, you can enjoy a worry-free holiday season while keeping your identity and finances safe from potential Grinches. Deck the halls and protect your personal information like Rudolph protects Santa's sleigh. Happy holidays!

For consumer advice about identity theft, visit the [Federal Trade Commission](http://Federal Trade Commission). If you need advice about identity theft, contact your local Fleet and Family Support Center for financial counseling.

### PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM IDENTITY THEFT

During the holiday season, it is crucial to take extra care of protecting your identity. With increased online shopping, the risk of falling prey to identity theft is higher. Strategies to help you stay safe during this potentially vulnerable time include:

- Securing your online transactions. Stay safe from scams by carefully examining email addresses and website URLs. It is crucial to exercise caution when dealing with scammers who may attempt to deceive you using counterfeit websites or email addresses that closely resemble legitimate ones. Be watchful for any spelling variations or suspicious email addresses, regardless of whether the email seems to originate from a reputable company. Ensure your safety by verifying the sender's authenticity before disclosing personal or sensitive information.



Be cautious of unsolicited messages that ask for payment or urge immediate action. For online purchases, use a credit card to protect against fraud. Never send money to someone you do not know or give them access to your bank account.

### VIRTUAL FFSC WEBINARS TO HELP YOU MEET YOUR FINANCIAL GOALS IN THE NEW YEAR

<b>December 5</b>   2:30 pm ET	Better Understanding Banking and Other Financial Institutions
<b>December 11</b>   2:30 pm ET	Understanding TSP
<b>December 12</b>   9:00 am ET	Developing Your Spending Plan

## Family Self-Esteem: Building Safety, Resiliency In Children

**GINNI KERPAN, LCSW, NAVAL STATION GREAT LAKES FLEET AND FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER**

Family self-esteem gives unity to the family as they have developed mutual concerns, characteristics, and interests. This does not eliminate individual self-esteem; rather, they build on each other.

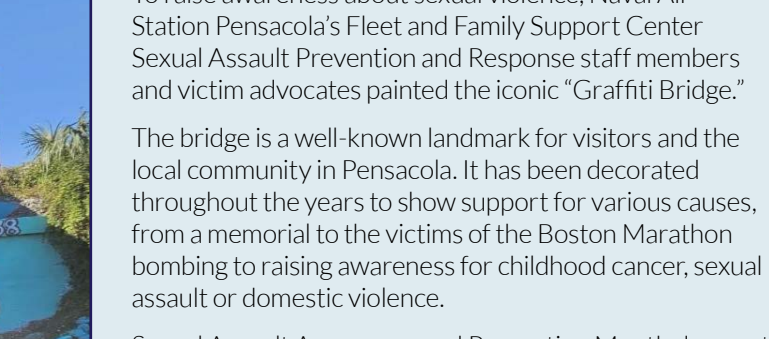
- Parents cultivate their marriage. It is hard to build family pride when the parents are having problems; children can sense it. You must make time for yourselves as a couple. Your closeness shows itself in a hundred little ways.
- Parents have their own friends who provide support and an adult social life.
- Appreciate the family heritage, share pictures and stories and keep cultural traditions.
- Make time to have fun together.
- Keep family traditions for holidays, birthdays, weddings and other occasions. These rituals do not need to be fancy. Introduce new rituals that can become part of the ongoing traditions in the future.
- Parents need to bolster their own self-esteem. Do not be caught feeling good about yourself only when your children like you or approve of what you are doing. This can lead to parents giving into children, which can create behavioral and discipline issues. Parents who do not nurture their own self-esteem can become overly involved parents or detached children. Neither promotes self-esteem in children.

"To feel good as a group, each person must feel cherished," said Robert Beavers, M.D., author of "Successful Families."

Also, according to Brian K. Barber, Ph.D., Brigham Young University, "Parents need to build communication and a sense of family identity as early as possible; that way, when stressful transitions arise or unforeseen circumstances occur, there's already a secure foundation to draw on."

How does one instill a sense of family self-esteem in your home? How do you build family resiliency? Here are several traits that can foster these abilities:

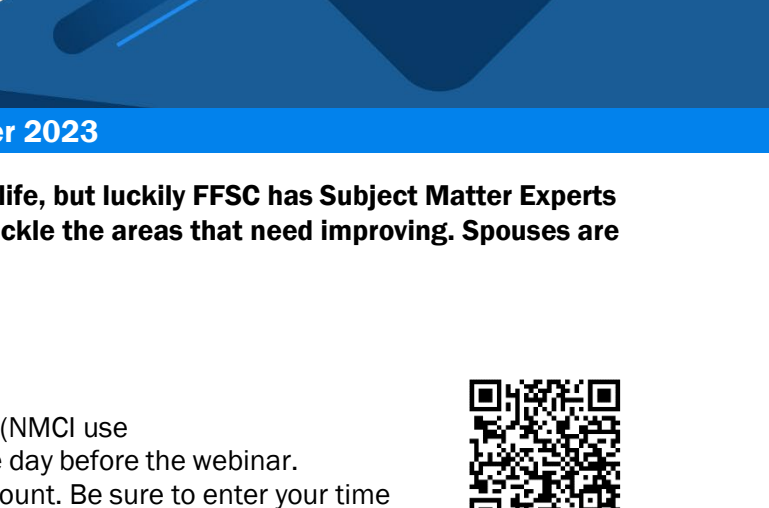
- Family members treasure their home. It is a house that is comfortable and joyous to come to. You want to bring friends home, and you cultivate hospitality. It is not about the silver and the china.
- Parents are organized. They use calendars, know priorities and share the housework. Chaotic living environment promotes chaotic relationships.
- Good food is available. This creates a sense of abundance and feeling cared for. After school or after work snacks promotes nurturing just as family mealtime does. Do not let electronic devices replace family conversations at the dinner table.
- Focus on strengths and avoid excessive criticism. Honest criticism needs to be balanced with good judgment and timing.
- Family members believe in each other, in good times and bad. When you stand up for each other, each person knows they matter in the family and the world.
- Parents and children respect each other as individuals. You do not have to be exactly alike. You support the uniqueness of each person.
- Family members are affectionate. Do not be afraid to show affection in words, deeds, hugs, notes of encouragement and even silly pet names.



## Beat The Holiday Blues, Use These Tips To Adapt, Overcome

**BY J.L. KEPINS PH.D., MED, INTEGRATED PRIMARY PREVENTION**

The holiday season is a time for taking a break, slowing down and reconnecting with friends and loved ones. The holidays can also be a time of stress for many as they battle crowds in shopping centers and prepare for gatherings, work parties or school events. Whether it is crowds, events, families, or the weather, the American Psychological Association reports that 44% of women and 31% of men report an increase in stress during the holiday season.



This stress is often felt in the Navy community, where duty stations and deployments can separate Sailors from their families for long periods of time.

Stress and anxiety over the holidays, coupled with sadness of separation or feelings of loneliness and changes to daily routines, can all combine to create a general feeling of depression this time of year known as the "holiday blues." Some symptoms of the holiday blues include:

- Situational sadness
- Fatigue
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Trouble concentrating

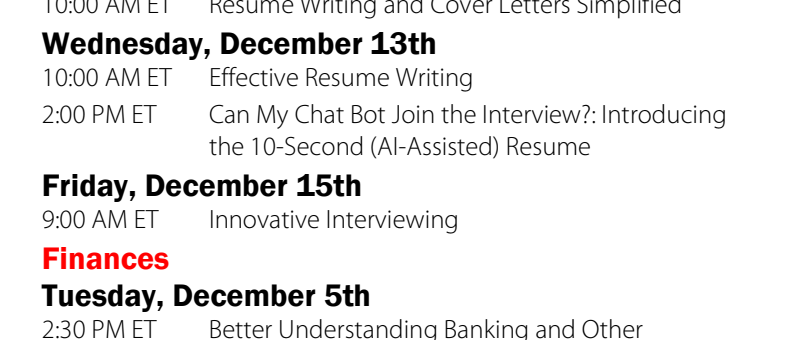
The good news is that the holiday blues, generally, only last as long as the holidays. However, here are some tips to help you cope with the blues this holiday season:

- Get plenty of sleep, try to stick to your normal routine and always make sure to have some time for yourself to relax.
- Do not overexert yourself and do not be afraid to say "No." It is okay not to attend every get-together or to stay away from people and events that add to your stress.
- Get some exercise, even if it is just a short walk.
- Avoid eating or drinking in excess, and if you are feeling down, perhaps avoid alcohol entirely.

Finally, if you are struggling with your local or depression, reach out to trusted friends and family, engage with resources at your local Fleet and Family Services Center or your local crisis hotline.

If you or your family members need someone to talk to, visit your installation's Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC). To find your local FFSC, visit the [FFSC Directory](http://FFSC Directory).

## SAPR Team Paints 'Graffiti Bridge'



**BY ANAly POWERS, SUPERVISORY SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE COORDINATOR**

To raise awareness about sexual violence, Naval Air Station Pensacola's Fleet and Family Support Center Sexual Assault Prevention and Response staff members and victim advocates painted the iconic "Graffiti Bridge."

The bridge is a well-known landmark for visitors and the local community in Pensacola. It has been decorated throughout the years to show support for various causes, from a memorial to the victims of the Boston Marathon bombing to raising awareness for childhood cancer, sexual assault or domestic violence.

Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month does not just happen in April. Painting the bridge reminds people that there is always help available. In addition, as October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, it is important to combat the myth that if you are in an intimate relationship with someone you cannot be sexually assaulted. Sexual assault and domestic violence happen in all types of relationships, and together, we can make a difference and stop them both.

## YOUR Virtual FFSC WEBINAR SCHEDULE

December 2023	
<b>Deployment</b>	<b>Life Skills</b>
<b>Tuesday, December 5th</b> 1:00 PM ET Supporting Children Through Deployment	<b>Tuesday, December 5th</b> 10:00 AM ET Understanding Anger 4:00 PM ET Effective Workplace Communication
<b>Wednesday, December 6th</b> 5:30 PM ET Planning for Deployment	<b>Wednesday, December 6th</b> 10:00 AM ET Reporting and Responding to FAP Incidents 2:00 PM ET Stress Management
<b>Tuesday, December 12th</b> 1:00 PM ET Reach Out and Touch Holiday Edition	<b>Thursday, December 7th</b> 1:30 PM ET Preventing and Responding to Intimate Partner Violence
<b>Employment</b>	<b>Tuesday, December 12th</b> 10:00 AM ET Stress Management 11:00 AM ET Suicide Prevention 4:00 PM ET Responding to Conflict: Strategies for Improved Communication
<b>Tuesday, December 12th</b> 10:00 AM ET Resume Writing and Cover Letters Simplified	<b>Wednesday, December 13th</b> 11:00 AM ET Mind Body Mental Fitness Module 6: Connection 12:30 PM ET The Nuts and Bolts of the Exceptional Family Member Program 2:00 PM ET Anger Management 2:00 PM ET What is a FAP Victim Advocate?
<b>Wednesday, December 13th</b> 10:00 AM ET Effective Resume Writing 2:00 PM ET Can My Chat Bot Join the Interview?: Introducing the 10-Second (AI-Assisted) Resume	<b>Thursday, December 14th</b> 2:00 PM ET Teen Dating Violence Prevention
<b>Friday, December 15th</b> 9:00 AM ET Innovative Interviewing	<b>Relocation</b>
<b>Finances</b>	<b>Thursday, December 7th</b> 1:00 PM ET 5-Step Move: Overseas
<b>Tuesday, December 5th</b> 2:30 PM ET Better Understanding Banking and Other Financial Institutions	<b>Wednesday, December 13th</b> 12:00 PM ET Sponsorship Training
<b>Monday, December 11th</b> 2:30 PM ET Understanding TSP	
<b>Tuesday, December 12th</b> 9:00 AM ET Developing Your Spending Plan	
<b>1:00 PM ET Now I'm the Landlord</b>	
<b>Parenting</b>	
<b>Monday, December 4th</b> 1:00 PM ET The Power of Positive Parenting	
<b>Monday, December 11th</b> 1:00 PM ET What About the Kids?	
1:00 PM ET Music Together for Children with Special Needs	
<b>Monday, December 18th</b> 1:00 PM ET Co-Parenting: Working with Domestic Violence Families	
<b>1:00 pm ET</b> The Power of Positive Parenting	
<b>5 Dec</b> 1:00 pm ET Supporting Children Through Deployment	
<b>11 Dec</b> 1:00 pm ET What About the Kids?	
<b>11 Dec</b> 1:00 pm ET Music Together for Children with Special Needs	
<b>14 Dec</b> 2:00 pm ET Teen Dating Violence Prevention	

