

DoD Award Winners Named

The Department of Defense’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (DoD SAPRO) recently presented its Promoting Excellence in Prevention Award to the team that developed and implemented “Real Relationships,” a healthy relationships course. Members include Marine & Family Programs Division Prevention Manager Christine Heit; Behavioral Programs Branch’s Felicia Garland-Jackson and Francine Jarrett; Personal & Professional Readiness Branch’s Rebecca Baldwin-Dunn and Shandra Hardy; Christina Chavez of Marine Forces Command; and CDR Kermit Jones of Marine Forces Reserve.

DoD SAPRO named Yiralys Suarez the Marine Corps’ Liz Blanc Sexual Assault Response Coordinator of the Year. Suarez has served 2D MARDIV and then Camp Johnson/MCCSSS. Her command recognized her as an enthusiastic, proficient, professional, and trusted staff officer and confidant.

Resources to Help Manage Change

Significant life changes—getting married, having a baby, getting a divorce, losing a family member, moving across the country or abroad, leaving active-duty service, etc.—are stressful. What resources are available to help mitigate that stress? Resources include chaplains, Operational Stress Control and Readiness (OSCAR) team members, the [Community Counseling Program \(CCP\)](#), [Family Advocacy Program \(FAP\)](#), [New Parent Support Program](#), [Marine for Life Network](#), [Military and Family Life Counselors \(MFLCs\)](#), [Navy Marine Corps Relief Society](#), [Personal Financial Management Program](#), and [Transition Readiness Program](#).

The Consortium for Health and Military Performance offers a [podcast series](#) titled “PCS Survival Guide” that can apply to other changes.

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The United States Marine Corps’ Marine & Family Programs Division publishes Prevention in Action. **The contents are for informational purposes only** and not intended to be a substitute for professional financial advice, medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

Email hqmcprevention@usmc.mil to suggest topics or ask questions. June’s topic will be resilience, and July’s topic will be peer-to-peer support.

To access hot links in newsletter: right click on link, copy link location, and paste link into a new browser window.

MARINE FOR LIFE HELPS MARINES CHANGE CAREERS

Marine For Life Network (M4L) connects transitioning Marines and their families to education resources, job opportunities, and other veterans services that aid in their career and life goals outside of military service.

Here’s a recent success story from our Kansas City M4L Representative GySgt Jameson Emling, who helped a Marine secure an engineering job with a six-figure salary prior to leaving the Marine Corps.

GySgt Emling met with a transitioning Marine, SSgt Matt Nisely, on 27 November, GySgt Emling met SSgt Nisely to go over his résumé and strategy for an upcoming job interview.

GySgt Emling also leveraged his local network to make sure key stakeholders within the company reviewed the Marine’s résumé. After being told that the company put a higher priority on leadership ability, GySgt Emling coached



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the transitioning Marine on how to effectively translate his Marine Corps leadership experience to the corporate world.

On 3 December, SSgt Nisely was offered a position at Abbott Laboratories, a Fortune 100 company. Currently on terminal leave, he is excited to start his next career and is grateful to GySgt Emling and the M4L Network.

What can we learn from SSgt Nisely’s success?

1. Connect to the M4L Network early in your EAS transition. It can expand your network with connections to Marine-friendly employers, career training, and veteran support resources. The best way to connect with your

local M4L representatives is to complete the form at marineforlife.org.

2. Prepare for interviews. Here are some of our favorite interview-prep articles:

- [How to Prepare for an Interview](#)
- [10 Interview Questions You Must Be Prepared to Answer](#)
- [You Should Ask Questions During an Interview Too!](#)

3. Sign up for a free one-year job seeker account with LinkedIn and join the M4L Network’s groups. Still searching for more in-depth help with networking? Contact your installation’s [Transition Readiness](#) staff and join the [Marine for Life Network](#) by completing the form. You can also follow the M4L Network on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.

PRACTICE SELF-CARE

The Practice Self-care feature focuses on self-care techniques that Service members, civilians, veterans, and Families find helpful. Stress is a regular part of everyday life, and all of us can benefit from learning techniques to manage it and including time in our schedules for self-care.

Col Joseph Raftery, Chief of Staff
Marine & Family Programs Division,
Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC)

Lisa Eaffaldano, Assistant Branch Head
Prevention and Clinical Services,
Behavioral Programs Branch, HQMC

What: I enjoy tying flies and fly fishing, reading, and listening to podcasts that foster inspiration.



How It Helps: Being outdoors and fly fishing is calming and relaxing. Tying flies requires concentration and an ability to focus on small details so I stay present in the moment. It gives me a sense of achievement and gratitude whenever a fish is landed on a fly I tied. Reading and listening to podcasts helps me unwind after a long day.

What: I do my best to eat healthy and walk regularly. I also like to play with my pets, spend time with those I care about, read, scroll mindlessly on social media, travel, drink Starbucks, cook, have weekly date nights, and focus on work.

How It Helps: All of these things help me decompress, stay focused and balanced, and content. I tend to be a low stress, laid back person, but I make time for self-care every day: it keeps my patience levels high and helps me feel my best physically.

CHANGE YOUR SLEEP ROUTINE TO IMPROVE OVERALL WELLNESS

To make an immediate positive impact on your performance or improve your physical or mental well-being, the very first thing you should consider changing is the amount and quality of your sleep.

Sleep is a biological need that impacts every area of human functioning. Without enough sleep, everything suffers: cognitive functioning, emotional well-being, basic biological functions like the immune system, and every performance metric you can track.

Unfortunately, two thirds of adults are chronically sleep deprived (getting less than the recommended 7-8 hours of sleep per night).

According to research, there are

disastrous effects from getting less than eight hours a night.

One of the most interesting ones is the “accuracy of performance self-appraisal.” Essentially, when you are chronically sleep deprived, you are unable to accurately judge the quality of your performance. You may think you have adapted to the lack of sleep, but you actually haven’t.

What can you do about it?

Examine your own beliefs and values concerning sleep. What beliefs/values do you have that get in the way of prioritizing your sleep? What beliefs/values can you leverage to prioritize sleep better?

Look at your schedule. What are the realistic barriers that you face



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Semper Fit Health Promotion staff at fitness centers on Marine Corps installations can give you resources on improving sleep.

when it comes to getting eight hours of sleep every night? What are the things that you do at night that are non-essential and cause you to procrastinate going to

sleep? Try to eliminate the non-essential activities and plan to mitigate obstacles.

Practice regularity and routine.

Pick and stick to the same bedtime and “wake time” for every day of the week. This helps program your brain and body systems to start “shutting down” and “waking up” at the appropriate times.

A routine is shown to improve the amount of sleep (avoiding procrastination of going to bed) and the quality of your sleep (promotes restorative REM sleep).

Practice good sleep hygiene habits—keep it dark, keep it cool, keep it quiet. Start by leaving your phone in a different room at night.

—U.S. Army

Help your kids say good-bye and plan for your family’s next move

Being part of the military community, you know it’s important to be prepared for change.

Preparing your children for a move will make it easier for them to adjust. Some tips:

- **Alert your kids to the move ASAP.** Like you, they need time to adjust to the idea of moving and time to say goodbye to their friends.
- **Listen to your kids.** Your children may have lots of questions or may need some space during this transition. Answer their questions as best you can. Be patient with them and yourself.
- **Let your kids help.** Teens may be able to search online for new houses, scout out their new school, or find fun things to do on the new installation. Kids can help pack or at least pack their own stuff or favorite items.
- **Reassure your children.** Tell them that you love them, and that you will adjust together. Stay upbeat and tell them new adventures await. Remind them you’re a military strong family!
- **Celebrate your kids’ favorite things.** Before the move, make sure you get some good family time in going to their favorite parks, eateries, recreation spots, and other places. Have them take something to their new home.
- **Look ahead.** Spend time with your children researching their new school, area parks, and base activities. Make it fun.
- **Plan your move.** Use [your installation’s relocation assistance program](#) to help you plan, transition your kids to their new school, or get information to reduce the stress of moving.

OCONUS/International? [Click here for options.](#)

HELPING KIDS ADJUST TO NEW HOME, SCHOOL

- **Request a sponsor.** The [Sponsorship Program](#) connects you with someone at your new location to help ease the transition for inbound service members, civilians, and family members. You can request one through your new unit, which will try to match you with a sponsor with similar rank and family status.
- **Check out the Youth Sponsorship Program.** Many installations give kids the chance to meet a new friend and become acquainted with their new installation. Where available, they can exchange emails, talk on the phone, or chat online. Visit [MilitaryINSTALLATIONS](#) and click on Youth Services and your new installation. Families may also want to visit [Military Kids Connect](#), an online community for military children and youth that offers games, videos and links to teen-led installation tours.
- **Consult with your installation’s school liaison.** The liaisons work with schools to minimize the negative consequences of transitions and inform schools about issues related to military youth. Find your installation’s school liaison contact info on [MilitaryINSTALLATIONS](#) by searching for “School Liaison Office/Community Schools” under Programs or Services.
- **Remain patient with your kids.** If they weren’t nervous before, they may be now that you’ve moved and they’re facing a new school, neighborhood, and friends. Listen, support, and

The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Easterseals released a series of videos on these topics:

- [Stress Management Tips for Teens](#)
- [Supporting Stress and Discipline for Young Children](#)
- [How to Develop Resilience in Children](#)

be there for your kids during this period.

- **Smooth your children’s entry into school.** The military helps you ease what could be one of the biggest stressors for your kids – a new school. All 50 states have agreed to help military families ensure their children can enroll in needed classes, play sports, and graduate on time. It’s called the [Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children](#), and here’s how it can help:
 - **Enrolling is easier.** Unofficial records from your old school allows your students to enroll before the official transcript arrives. You also get 30 days to get any needed immunizations.
 - **Getting key classes.** Your children will get placed in appropriate required classes, advanced placement, and special needs programs while awaiting evaluation.
 - **Playing sports and other extracurricular activities right away.** If your child is eligible, the new school will facilitate participation in extracurricular activities even if application deadlines or tryouts have passed.
 - **Graduating.** There will be no delays as a result of the move in terms of your high schooler’s graduation.

GET HELP NAVIGATING THE CHANGES THAT COME WITH HAVING A BABY

Having a child changes every aspect of the parents' lives, but you don't have to navigate the challenges alone.

Set realistic expectations and adjust your mindset. While there might be no avoiding the stress and challenges that come with parenthood, adjusting [how you think about those challenges](#) can make them more manageable and increase your resilience.

Keep in mind that it will be difficult and that's normal! You and your partner might disagree or fight, and that's common, too. It's also normal to feel confused, unsure, and even out of control.

Accepting difficult or uncomfortable emotions can often make them easier to manage, so remember this might be one of the toughest adjustments you'll go through—and avoid negative judgments on your reactions. If you're concerned about your mental well-being, contact your healthcare provider.

Be prepared. You certainly won't be able to learn everything about raising an infant right away (or ever). But taking some time to be prepared with basic knowledge about infant care will help you get through the adjustment. Also, get acquainted with [Marine Corps Order 5000.12F](#) to learn about the guidelines for your (or your partner's) [parental leave](#).

Make small changes where you can. While



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you might not be able to avoid sleep deprivation or any of the above challenges, make small adjustments in your daily routine where you can to help support your well-being. For example, consider short [strategic naps](#) (even those lasting 20 minutes) to help combat sleep debt. And try adjusting your [couple-sleep setup](#) so you and your partner are maximizing your rest when you get it. Make [smart snacking choices](#) and be sure to keep nutritious foods in the house over less ideal food choices. Make time for serious and purposeful discussions with your partner about finances, [sex](#), and plans for returning to work

Get help. It's important that your support system is intact and ready to go to keep you afloat while you adapt to parenthood. Those supporting you not only can help relieve some

of your stress through tactical help (child care, laundry, cooking, etc.), but your community, healthcare providers, friends, and even online connections can help you get valuable info to keep yourself and your baby healthy.

The [New Parent Support Program](#) (NPSP) is a professional team of social workers, counselors, and registered nurses who provide education and support to Marine families who are expecting a child or raising children 5 years old or younger.

Whether you would like to better prepare for your new bundle of joy, socialize with other parents with children the same age as yours, or have questions/needs related to parenting an infant or young child, the NPSP can help. Baby Boot Camp helps expectant parents, typically in their final trimester, enhance their knowledge and skills to prepare for their new little one.

Sticking with a budget after having a baby can be challenging. If you don't already have one, now is the time to establish a budget to allocate money and keep track of the additional and reoccurring expenses that can quickly add up with a child.

Request a meeting in person or virtually with your Command Financial Specialist (CFS) or installation [Personal Financial Manager](#) for assistance.

Change spending habits and reduce stress

Money issues can be a major source of stress for many people, including military families. Service members identify financial issues as one of their top concerns.

The key to reducing expenses in order to save is relatively easy: Spend less. But many people have a hard time changing their spending habits. Try these tactics:

Track your spending daily.

[Create a budget](#) and use it to track what comes in (income), what goes out (expenses), and what's left over (your savings) each month. It takes some effort to set up a budget, but once it's done, it's easy to update. And make a [financial plan](#) for your family to help create security for every stage of life.

Reduce some spending. Once you have a solid understanding of

your spending habits, it's time to act. Simple and small changes can really add up. For example, [before making a purchase](#), ask if the item will be on sale soon. Use coupons, buy in bulk (check the price per unit to find the least expensive option), and evaluate monthly subscriptions (for music, movies, etc.).

Figure out a plan for paying off your debts. There are several [strategies to managing debt](#); some involving professional help and others [you can do yourself](#). For example, consider paying down debts with the highest interest rates first.

Hold a family meeting. Discuss your financial dreams, how you and your partner will make money decisions, and who will manage money matters in your family. Even



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if one of you takes charge, have regular check-ins so you're both on the same page.

Set up an emergency fund.

Ideally, you want to have at least six months' worth of your income set aside for emergencies.

Use your resources. Contact your local [Personal Financial Management](#) program for assistance. Military OneSource also offers [free financial counseling](#) in person and over the phone or video chat.

—Consortium for Health and Military Performance

CHANGE YOUR WORKOUT, EATING, AND SLEEPING HABITS

Healthy eating, exercise, and good sleep are all part of the path to better wellness. Professionally trained [Semper Fit Health Promotion](#) staff are available at fitness centers on installations to help you achieve your fitness goals, help you get better sleep, and create nutrition plans.

QUIT SMOKING

Tobacco use is the largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the U.S., increasing your risks of lung disease, cancer, and heart attacks. Ready to quit? Contact your Semper Fit Health Promotion office to register for the [Operation Tobacco-Free Marine](#) tobacco cessation workshop.