



July-September 2020

Online Training Opportunities

NWW Family Programs continues to seek ways to provide information and resources to enrollees, caregivers and families. Through partnerships with the Navy Safe Harbor Foundation and Families OverComing Under Stress (FOCUS), a TeleFOCUS event was held in June to share ways for building resilience at home, particularly during these times of isolation and social distancing. FOCUS professionals discussed the impact of stress on families, the need to prioritize healthy routines, effective communications, and how to promote family closeness. Managing negative thoughts and learning to build in “pauses” to replace those thoughts with positive ones is an important skill to practice. Suggestions on how to prioritize healthy habits include:

- **Maintain routines.**
- **Allow flexibility.**
- **Harness teamwork.**
- **Have a family meeting.**
- **Communicate clear expectations.**
- **Create transitional bridges in the schedule.**

Finally, try some of the Family Fun at Home suggestions offered by FOCUS to build resilience and promote family cohesiveness, which are listed on the last page of this newsletter. If you missed this online meeting and would like to participate in future events, please email susan.hieb@navy.mil.



Communication Skills Webinar

Need to improve your communication skills? Do you get frustrated that conversations do not go as planned? Even if you think you are an effective communicator, expect to learn new skills from the Challenging Communications webinar, posted on the Navy Safe Harbor Foundation website at <https://safeharborfoundation.org/resources/challenging-conversations>. This program, presented by Virginia Beeson, BSN, MSN, NEA-BC, mirrors the popular education session that she delivered to caregivers who attended the February Caregiver Event in Alexandria, Virginia. Listen at your convenience and feel free to post questions online.



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Caregiver Shout-Outs Honor Contributions of NWW Spouses

Navy Wounded Warrior honored the contributions and sacrifices of NWW spouses on the Navy Wounded Warrior Facebook page (www.facebook.com/navywoundedwarrior) during the week of May 8 in celebration of Military Spouse Appreciation Day. Eighteen NWW enrollees wrote about how their spouses supported their rehabilitation and recovery. These posts reached more than 31,000 people.

From Machinist's Mate 2nd Class John Timothy Pascual: "Couples that are 'meant to be' are the ones who go through everything that is meant to tear them apart and come out even stronger than they were before. It doesn't get easier. You just get stronger."

From Rear Adm. Kyle Cozad: "She's never missed a physical therapy appointment – and has been my inspiration on every hard day, pushing me through my 'new normal.' She has epitomized the unassuming role that our military caregivers step into – they don't ask for this role, but they step up, absent recognition and compensation. They are heroes in every sense of the word."



Rear Adm. Kyle Kozad and his wife, Amy, participate in a Wounded Warrior Project Soldier Ride onboard Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida, on Feb. 7, 2020.



NWW Enrollee Spotlight

Navy Wounded Warrior Enrollee Shares PTSD Journey

By Shannon Revelle, CNIC Fleet and Family Readiness Marketing

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- June is PTSD awareness month and to bring awareness, Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Tiffany Hamilton shares her personal story.

Post-traumatic stress disorder is a mental health disorder that develops after experiencing or witnessing a life-threatening event, like combat, a natural disaster, a car accident, or sexual assault.

“These invisible wounds present unique challenges for those affected but we are here to assist recovering service members navigate these uncharted waters,” said Lisa Sexauer, director of Commander, Navy Installations Command’s Navy Wounded Warrior Program. “More importantly, we assist them with mapping out a plan for their future which is critical to alleviating the stress of the unknown.”

Diagnosed with PTSD in 2017, Hamilton enrolled in the Navy Wounded Warrior Program. She credits the program for its instrumental and life-changing effect in her recovery process.

“When I was diagnosed, I was in a dark place both mentally and physically,” Hamilton recalled. “I was extremely nervous about my transition, especially being a single mom and a full-time student. I know, without a doubt, I would not have come this far in my recovery process without the assistance from the Navy Wounded Warrior Program. I continue to advocate for our Navy Wounded Warrior Program and I have personally referred 10 Sailors to receive tailored support.”

Through the program, CNIC assigns enrollees recovery care coordinators to help wounded ill and injured service members, their caregivers and their families navigate the recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration process.

“My recovery care coordinator continually followed up on me and did not allow me to fall through the cracks and isolate myself,” Hamilton said. “I am a natural planner and the comprehensive recovery plan provided by my recovery care coordinator was very beneficial and allowed me to track my progress. My RCC also mentally encouraged me through some really tough times.”

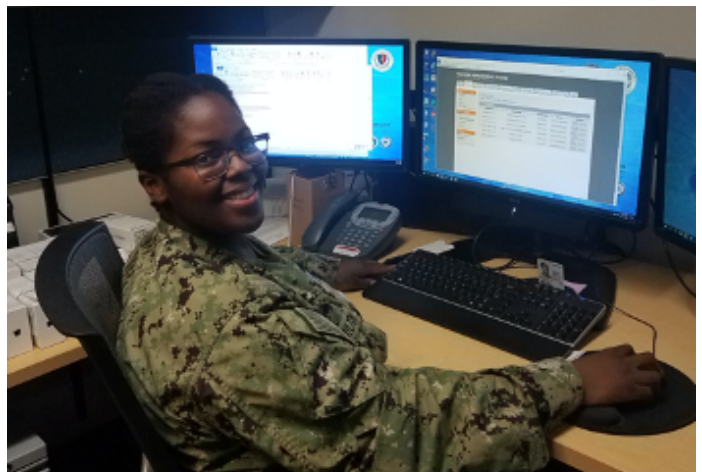
Along with the development of a comprehensive recovery plan, recovery care coordinators identify resources needed to achieve goals, such as assistive technology, education, employment or housing.

“My recovery care coordinator connected me with valuable resources, such as Operation Homefront and this was one of my greatest blessings,” said Hamilton. “In obtaining transitional housing, I was able to prepare me and my son for our future in ways that I never could have imagined. I am now on my way to a healthy transition from the Navy and I will be attending college classes at Azusa Pacific University in pursuit of employment in the medical field.”

“Thank you to the Navy Wounded Warrior staff for all of their dedication and countless hours researching, following up, contacting, connecting, and assisting wounded warriors.”

NWW has enrolled nearly 1,300 service members with a primary diagnosis of PTSD and that number does not account for those who are coping with a secondary diagnosis of PTSD.

“Our regional non-medical care management teams work with wounded warriors and their families to identify their goals and develop plans to achieve them, and we view these efforts as essential as the medical aspect of the service member’s recovery,” said Sexauer. “IT2 Hamilton’s story is a great example of how, with the right assistance, success is possible. Bravo Zulu to IT2 and her case management team for meeting the challenge.”



Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Tiffany Hamilton, assigned to Naval Medical Center San Diego, sits at her desk where she troubleshoots telecommunications issues and provides customer service for NMCS.



Jon Stewart shakes hands with NWW athlete Chris Deike at the 2017 Warrior Games in Chicago, Illinois.

Jon Stewart Connects with Wounded Warrior Athletes via Video Chat

In the wake of the 2020 DoD Warrior Games cancellation, comedian Jon Stewart, who has hosted the games since 2016, expressed a desire to connect with all the warrior athletes to encourage them to “stay the course.” The Marine Corps logistics and planning team for the 2020 DoD Warrior Games facilitated a video conference, and Team Navy virtually met with Stewart on June 19. The simple act of reuniting the Navy’s warrior athletes proved uplifting and further reinforced the impact of the program on service members throughout their recovery and reintegration to civilian life.

The Sailors and Coast Guardsmen on the call included past participants and those who are new to adaptive athletics. The stories shared highlighted the benefits of participating in adaptive sports through the Navy Wounded Warrior Program and the Warrior Games as a way to meet people coping with and overcoming similar significant life challenges. More importantly, the conversation spotlighted the life-changing impact of being a part of what has become “family” for many. The encouragement shared among those on the call and the concluding “call me if you need anything” demonstrated the resiliency and strength of our Navy and Coast Guard wounded warriors as individuals and as a team. Many participants had no prior competitive sports experience or even any interest in sports. In fact, they often reflected on their reservations with trying anything sport-related, and yet Team Navy has enriched their lives beyond measure.

For more information about the Navy Wounded Warrior Adaptive Sports Program, visit our website at <https://www.navywoundedwarrior.com/>, send us an email at Navywoundedwarrior.fct@navy.mil or reach out to your local regional case management staff.



Navy Wounded Warrior enrollees pose for a group photo while participating in the January 2020 Adaptive Sports Camp held on Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme, California.



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Resources



Navy MWR at Home: Stay connected with Navy MWR at Home by checking out the resources collected at <https://www.navymwr.org/navy-mwr-at-home/>. The categories include cooking, entertainment, MWR Esports, FFSC, fitness, kids, library, Navy Housing, recreation, virtual travel, and Navy Wounded Warrior.



FOCUS recommends the following resources:

- **Mindfulness and Meditation** – Tulane University School of Social Work offers a series of meditation videos including Body Scan Meditation, Mindfulness Meditation, Primordial Sound Meditation, Loving Kindness Meditation, Sound Bath Meditation. The videos are available at <https://selfcaretips.tulane.edu/meditate/>.
- **Kids in the House** – Information for kids of all ages and all topics. Search more than 9,000 parenting videos at <https://www.kidsinthehouse.com/>.
- **Child Mind and COVID-19** – Interactive resources and daily tips catered around the COVID climate. Child Mind Institute also offers telehealth evaluations and treatment for ADHD, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, autism spectrum disorders, and learning disorders. Visit <https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/> for more information.



- **Smiling Mind** offers a free meditation app for all ages at <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/>.



- **Worry Tree** is a free online app to help you take control of your worries. Visit <https://worry-tree.com/> for more information.



Family Fun at Home

- Play board games
- Make slime (find recipes [google.com](https://www.google.com))
- Indoor picnic
- Sock war
- Cook a meal together
- Go for a walk
- Plan a vacation
- Create a new holiday and its traditions
- Use conversation cards
- Color together
- Build something together
- Work on a Lego project
- Make crafts together
- Play “I Spy”
- Work on a jigsaw puzzle
- Start a Saturday morning tradition
- Make breakfast for dinner
- Look at old photos
- Start a family journal
- Draw a family tree
- Read together
- Family movie night
- Lie on a blanket and look at the stars
- Go “camping” in the living room (or backyard)
- Volunteer as a family
- Make s’mores
- Do artwork for grandparents or the elderly
- Put on a puppet show
- Make a collage
- Learn to knit or crochet
- Create a recipe
- Play marbles
- Write a book as a family
- Build a dollhouse
- Paint together as a family
- Make handprints on a tablecloth for grandparents’ gifts
- Have a family dance party
- Bake a special treat
- Have an indoor obstacle course
- Write letters to people in assisted living
- Have a family science project
- Make sock puppets
- Start a family band
- Tell ‘round robin’ stories
- Go for a family bike ride
- Make temporary tattoos
- Call friends from other bases
- Try kids’ yoga (from YouTube)
- Play dress up
- Build castles or tunnels using appliance boxes
- Have a pillow fight
- Play ‘Minute to Win It’ games (see [google.com](https://www.google.com))
- Work on a family scrapbook or memory book
- Play a family game of charades
- Tabletop ping pong
- Make jewelry or art
- Bake cookies
- Play balloon volleyball
- Play with playdough as a family
- Call grandparents
- Design a family crest
- Have an indoor scavenger hunt
- Make your own post cards
- Build an indoor tent
- Read to your child
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