

Guide



Sea Service Family Support

Navy League of the United States
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OVERVIEW

FOCUS on Sea Service Family Support

Get Active with the Sea Services!

"The Navy League of the United States is committed to the support of the sea service personnel and their families, particularly through the efforts of the local councils. This guide has been developed to provide councils with materials they can use to involve their membership in positive activities which will enhance the quality of life of all who are an integral part of the service of "family."

GOALS:

To involve your council in active, constructive programs which provide positive ongoing recognition and support of sea service personnel and their families.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CONSIDER

Have a chairman and committee (or more than one as appropriate to your council) in place that will be able to initiate and implement the recommendation guide.

A. Hands on “Family Support”

1. Establish good communications with base commands, ships, recruiters, etc.
 - a) Ascertain needs and priorities
 - b) Inform them of any prospective plans
 - c) Seek cooperation, as appropriate, in execution of plans
2. Adoption of ships, stations, and units
 - a) Check Navy League Operations Manual for information covering adoption
 - b) Maintain a council liaison
3. Specific suggestions for recognition and support
 - a) Present awards to the Sailor of the Year (Quarter)
 - (1) Navy, Marine, Coast Guard
 - (2) Plaque, certificate, gift certificate, savings bond
 - b) Organize pot luck dinners, picnics, seasonal parties (especially geared for children)
 - (1) Particularly important when ships, etc., are deployed
 - c) Invite service person to dinner in your home
 - (1) Especially important at holiday time
 - d) Provide help for holiday food/toy drives
 - (1) Determine needs through Chaplains, Fleet and Family Service Center, Navy Marine Corps Relief, First Class Petty Officer Association (or other)
 - (2) Collect food or give money toward perishables
 - (3) Consider that this need may also exist at other times of year
 - e) Volunteer at Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society, Fleet and Family Service Center, Thrift Shop, Clinics, etc
 - f) Supply sports equipment, games, adult and children’s books, stationery/greeting cards, videos, school supplies
 - g) Provision a base food pantry and/or a short-term lending center of household goods
 - (1) Cots, linens, pots and pans, dishes, flatware
 - (2) Help staff these centers
 - h) Participate in refurbishing a picnic or other recreational area
 - i) Help with the “Toys for Tots” effort
 - j) Check with area USO, if applicable, to see how your council might be helpful
 - (1) Example: One council now plans, prepares and serves an entire meal once a month.
 - (a) USO purchases supplies and advertises the dinner
 - (b) Families of sea service personnel are invited to attend for a “night out”

- k) Sponsor Navy League Sea and League Cadet Units, NJROTC,
- l) Man a NL display including brochures at community functions, such as: craft/art shows, boat/air shows and county fairs
- m) Welcome ships back to port with NL representatives, banners, bands, etc.

B. Fleet and Family Service Centers: These centers are a marvelous resource that have programs and services for the entire family from coordinated crisis response to life skills education to spouse employment and transition assistance to life skills education to spouse employment and transition assistance.

- 1. Familiarize your council with the scope of their programs
- 2. Get to know everything about FFSC and have them know everything about Support/Highline, Navy League Membership applications and Sea and League Cadet literature.
- 3. Ask permission to display brochures on Active Duty Spouse/Family Support/Highline, Navy League Membership applications and Sea and League Cadet literature.
- 4. Participate in special programs the FFSC organizes
 - a) Saluting the Military Spouse for a Family Fun Day
 - (1) Help with having volunteers or donate money for food, prizes, etc.
 - b) Ombudsmen Recognition Day.
 - c) For new families host a “Welcome Aboard” reception
 - d) Volunteer in any way needed
 - e) Have a manned Navy League display with brochures available at special functions
 - f) Ask to have Navy League brochures available at Pre-Retirement Seminars
 - (1) If feasible, a Navy League member should be available to answer questions.
- 5. Work with the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Director (refer to Highline Guide)

C. Ombudsmen (USMC, Key Wives): Ombudsmen are the primary point of contact between commands and families.

- 1. Continue or institute recognition of contributions.
 - a) Ombudsmen Appreciation Day is in September but any convenient time would be appropriate.
 - (1) May participate with commands (sometimes organized by FFSC)
 - (2) Supply corsage, cake, gift certificate, invite as guest for council luncheon or dinner (with spouse), just say “thank you for all you do.”
 - (3) Present guest with Active Duty Spouse Membership in Navy League
 - b) Pay costs for telephone or printing used for the job.

D. Active Duty Spouse: Active Duty Spouse interaction spills over into all areas of concern.

- 1. Navy League membership is \$20.
 - a) Enables spouse to become better informed about issues related to sea services
 - b) Brings family concerns to the attention of the council
 - c) Familiarizes the active duty husband or wife with the Navy League
- 2. Present Navy League memberships to spouses of:
 - a) Service Speakers
 - b) Award Winners
 - c) Base, ship, and unit leadership
- 3. Membership may be given by council members to active duty spouses they meet through church, school, work, and in their neighborhood

4. Active Duty Spouse Brochures could be put in commissionaires, exchanges, clinics
 - a) Secure permission first

- E. Plan some events with nearby Navy League Councils or other community groups such as Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, TROA, and FRA
 1. Expands resources
 2. Involves more people
 3. Spreads the Navy League message

- F. Scholarships/Financial Assistance: Councils are encouraged to continue, institute, or expand scholarship programs.
 1. Consider financial help for an active duty spouse as well as children of sea service personnel (or instead of)
 2. Consider help for an Associate Degree or qualifying vocational programs
 - a) There are many credible certificate programs that could greatly enhance a family's life.
 - b) Consider financial assistance other than, or in addition to, tuition
 - (1) Transportation, books, day care, for example

- G. Highline Program: This program is designed to assist sea service personnel leaving the service to achieve a successful transition.
 1. Available to all regardless of rate rank or time in service.
 2. Complements Fleet and Family Service Center's and Transition Assistance Programs
 3. A detailed Highline Guide is available from Navy League Headquarters

- H. Legislative Issues: It is important to bring issues relating to sea service personnel and their families to the attention of the legislators
 1. Regular updates to councils can generate e-mails, faxes, and concise letters to congressman and committee chairpersons as well as local newspapers
 2. Check the Navy League Website for most up-to-date information on current issues and suggested action

- I. Public Relations: Public Relations is a most important function to improve awareness of Navy League and all it encompasses (See attached Press Release Sample)
 1. Council members do not necessarily know all that can be accomplished under the Navy League umbrella.
 - a. Make sure your council is continually informed about your plans and programs.
 - b. Encourage participation by members.
 2. Publicize special sea service recognition and family events in your local newspaper as well as your newsletter.
 3. More specific Public Relations information is available from Navy League.

CONCLUSION

Support of sea service personnel and their families is a top priority of the Navy League. The active participation of councils in this effort is an important representation of the Navy League's commitment to this priority.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

This is a sample press release for you to re-type and fill in the information in parentheses. If you prefer, you may use this sample as an original release by whiting out the information in parentheses and writing or typing over the white-out space.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: **(Name)**
(telephone number)

(Date)

NAVY LEAGUE COUNCIL SPONSORS EVENT TO HONOR THE SEA SERVICES

(City, State) The **(name of council)** Council of The Navy League of the United States wants to remind Americans of the heroic work performed every day by members of our nation's sea services: the United States Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and U. S.-flag Merchant Marine. Whether it is quelling foreign aggression, serving as part of a peacekeeping mission in Bosnia, stopping drug shipments by sea, or keeping America supplied with consumer goods and raw materials, today's sea services are working harder than ever to protect American interests worldwide, despite severe budget cutbacks.

America's active and reserve forces are on station, 365 days a year, protecting our nation's security and economic well-being. If you know someone who currently serves in America's Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard or Merchant Marine, let them know how much their sacrifice means to all U.S. citizens.

Sacrifices do not end with sea service personnel putting their lives on the line to protect our livelihood. Spouses and family members of sea service personnel also make sacrifices each day. For as long as one is deployed, which could be up to six months, spouses and family members must continue on alone.

(MORE)

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The **(name of council)** is planning to hold a (benefit, dinner, reception, party, etc.) to honor sea service personnel and their families. For more information or to make a reservation, please call (name and phone #).

To join the Navy League or for more information, contact **(name & telephone number)**.

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