ABOUT THE CCN NAVIGATOR

GUIDING THE WAY OF THE CCN TO SUPPORT SAILORS

This newsletter provides members of the Cultural Champion Network (CCN) with important and timely information, updates, and resources to carry out their roles in supporting Sailors to help the Navy drive towards a Culture of Excellence (COE). This edition primarily focuses on Substance Misuse. To subscribe, click here. Interested in reading past issues of The CCN Navigator? Click here to download!

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Do you have an idea for The CCN Navigator? We want to hear from you. Email culturalchampions@navy.mil with your feedback and suggestions for content.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ANNOUNCED FOR PHYSICAL FITNESS ASSESSMENT (PFA)

NAVADMIN 264/21 has been announced and contains important program updates for the calendar year 2021 and 2022 PFAs. Highlights include:

- **CY2021 PFA Cycle will be completed without data entry in the Physical Readiness Information Management System (PRIMS) given the delays in PRIMS 2.0 fielding.**
- **A single CY2022 PFA Cycle will be conducted from April 1 to September 30, 2022.**

Will the plank standards change for the CY2022 PFA Cycle?

Based upon preliminary analysis of forearm plank performance at Recruit Training Command, we are considering minor adjustments to the plank standards to include possible gender-specific standards in place of the current gender-neutral standards. Additional data, more representative of Fleet demographics, will be collected from commands’ CY2021 PFA Cycle to validate the tables.

How do commands calculate Physical Readiness Test (PRT) scores without PRIMS 2.0?

Command Fitness Leaders (CFLs) will have to manually calculate the overall PRT score for all Sailors. CFLs will add the earned point values for each event (push-ups and cardio/alternate cardio only) and divide by 2 to get the average point value reflecting the overall PRT score. For more in-depth guidance on how to calculate the PRT scores, refer to the Physical Readiness Guides 5 Conduct of the PRT and 10 How to Conduct CY2021 PFA on the PRP website.

MILITARY LEADERS’ ECONOMIC SECURITY TOOLKIT

Some of our Service members and their families are experiencing economic challenges such as increasingly competitive housing and rental markets, food insecurity, and general financial readiness issues. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated some of these issues. A military family’s economic security is critical to mission readiness and is an issue currently being addressed by the Department of Defense (DoD).

As a result, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin directed the fielding of a new Military Leader’s Economic Security Toolkit to highlight a wide range of resources on housing availability, financial well-being, and food security. The MyNavy Financial Literacy App has additional financial literacy resources and touchpoint courses.
ON YOUR RADAR

DECEMBER OBSERVANCES
December is National Impaired Driving Prevention Month. We encourage all Sailors to make responsible choices. Set limits before you start drinking and have a plan to get home safely.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI)
DEI webinars are monthly opportunities to explore various topics around inclusion and diversity. Interested in attending? Please reach out to ALTN_USN_INCLUSION_AND_DIVERSITY@navy.mil.

Upcoming webinars:
December 8 (1200-1300 EST): Religious Awareness
The December webinar, Religious Awareness, will teach DEI practitioners about the importance of religion as a key factor of identity. Cultivating religious awareness is to understand how religion may impact Sailors and is vital for Sailors to acknowledge, appreciate and show respect for others. Rituals, sacrifices, prayer, and art are just some of the many ways religion is practiced and will be discussed in detail during the webinar. The goal of December’s webinar is to build religious awareness to increase religious tolerance and acceptance by giving DEI Practitioners the strategies and tools necessary to do so within their commands and beyond.

NAVY DRUG AND ALCOHOL DETERRENCE WEBINARS
Navy Drug and Alcohol Deterrence will be hosting webinars discussing drug and alcohol data systems, testing, and prevention during the holiday season. Drug and alcohol program personnel are encouraged to attend the webinars, which will occur each Thursday throughout November and December. Each webinar will focus on a new topic and provide Navy urinalysis program updates as they become available. It will consist of a 30 - 45-minute presentation followed by a 30-minute Q&A session.

16 DEC: Prevention for the Holiday Season (Hemp, CBD, THC and Alcohol)
13 JAN: NDSP to WebDTP/DTP Lite Migration Update
20 JAN: Q&A session with the Fleet (Open Dialogue)
27 JAN: Adjudicating Drug Positives

Visit Navy Drug Detection and Deterrence for the full schedule and information on how to join, or email MILL_NDSP@navy.mil.

BE MINDFUL OF HOLIDAY FOOD CHOICES
BY LCDR MELISSA AMESCUA, REGISTERED DIETITIAN
During the holidays it is important to be mindful of what we eat and the portions we are eating. The abundance of food provided, sweets served, and unhealthy food traditions can send healthy habits in a downward spiral. Here are some tips to ensure your hard-earned healthy habits don’t go flying out the door during the holidays:

1. Focus on maintaining your healthy habits by planning and incorporating exercise into your routine.
2. Follow the 80/20 rule (80% of the time eat the right foods and 20% eat other favorite foods).
3. Try meal planning, bringing a healthy a dish to the party or event, and/or limiting alcohol consumption.
4. Be mindful of how much and how often you indulge. Remember to balance your plate with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.

Incorporating these tips could improve your health and limit unwanted weight gain, while still taking part in the holiday traditions that make up our diverse cultural identities.
BEST PRACTICES IN RESILIENCE BUILDING

BY: LT KATHERINE POULIN, LTJG BREANNE HIRST, NCCS SHARESE BATTEN

Since January of 2021, USS VELLA GULF has been a part of the Navy’s pilot program to determine how best to implement the Expanded Operational Stress Control program, or E-OSC. The leadership and crew put the program to test by implementing it while underway on a “double pump deployment” as part of the Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group.

Through intensive preparation they departed on a deployment to the Fifth Fleet area of responsibility in April 2021, overcoming major material challenges during the first two months of the deployment that kept them sidelined at Naval Station Norfolk. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic forced them to remain in their deployed bubble. According to the executive officer at the time, CDR Robert Ireland, “As one can imagine, this was unpopular (referring to covid restrictions in an emergent maintenance period), but the triad and khaki onboard did everything possible for crew morale during this period. It was a true leadership challenge to keep everyone focused and motivated to get out on deployment. Of course, by this time we had our E-OSC program ramping up, which I believe helped provide the crew an outlet for their stress and frustration.” The leadership team knew their Sailors were industrious and creative; able to lean in and find opportunities to grow despite the challenges. But it went beyond just the triad and khaki. The command Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Committee and Command Resilience Team (CRT) - comprised of sailors from across departments, divisions, and paygrades - contributed with ideas and morale events throughout this period.

Key influencers were selected for the Team Leader and Assistant Team Leader Roles. ENS Breanna Hirst, and NCCS Sherese Batten took over the program and made a commitment to spreading the word and getting their shipmates invested. According to CDR Ireland, “We started off with leadership education seminars for the Wardroom, CPO Mess, and First Classes. This initial education and exposure piece was critical in my mind to getting our leaders onboard with what E-OSC was.” ENS Hirst and NCCS Batten then championed the peer support aspects of the program and overcame some ongoing software problems. “Buddy care really did well on the ship because people knew to ask us when they needed help, so not having a Stress-O-Meter didn’t hold us back from implementing the program,” said NCCS Batten.

For the remainder of the deployment, E-OSC Team Leadership supported the crew’s desire to make the program their own. “We used our training slides and soothing music, which the Sailors found relaxing and fun. This was a really excellent opportunity for young leadership. Most of our Sailors who were involved really put their own creative twist on it. Our feedback shows that most of our Sailors are willing to help others out - and I believe this can be a form of helping yourself out too,” said NCCS Batten.

“I FOUND IT TO BE A GREAT WAY FOR SAILORS AND THE CHAIN OF COMMAND TO DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF STRESS THAT WAS BEING EXPERIENCED AND FIND WAYS TO RELIEVE THE STRESS.”

CDR Matthew Iwanczuk
Executive Officer

The crew of VELLA GULF was so effective at incorporating this program into their culture that the incoming Executive Officer, CDR Matthew Iwanczuk, saw its value right away. He said, “I found it to be a great way for Sailors and the chain of command to determine the level of stress that was being experienced and find ways to relieve the stress.” According to CDR Iwanczuk, ENS Hirst and NCCS Batten, the best advice for Navy commands who are getting their E-OSC program up to speed is to get the training out as much as possible. They found it worked best to advertise the program with smaller groups and through CO/XO announcements. They also encourage commands to get creative and have fun with resilience events!

Building a resilient culture aboard VELLA GULF has been critical to the success of the E-OSC Pilot so far. Leadership buy-in and support from the triad was a big part of the program’s success. “The ambitiousness of VLG’s 2020 and 2021 schedule created unique stressors for Team 72, so the E-OSC initiative came at just the right time. My Crew and I are thankful for the chance to participate in the pilot. It contributed to our ability to persevere, thrive, and meet the mission. We’re confident our experiences will help better prepare future Sailors for the challenges of sea service,” said Commanding Officer CAPT Mike Desmond.
Managing stress with healthy coping mechanisms takes both patience and practice. As temperatures drop, the COVID-19 pandemic continues, daylight hours decrease, and the holidays approach, it may feel as though you have fewer options to turn to for stress relief, self-care, and relaxation. Controllability, one of the Principles of Resilience, is about making choices that help restore a sense of empowerment during rough seas – from emotional responses to problem-solving actions. Review these ideas for responding to holiday and seasonal stress, for 2021 and beyond:

**Check in on your financial health.** As spending increases for many people this season, consider how you can start building new financial habits: set up automatic transfers to your savings account, review what you currently spend the majority of your paycheck on, build a monthly budget, or set a financial goal you’d like to meet by this time next year. One easy way to start practicing adhering to a regular budget? Establish some limits now for your holiday spending. Download the MyNavy Financial Literacy App for additional resources.

**Drink mindfully.** If you plan to drink alcohol this season, take it slow. Keep a glass of water nearby to stay hydrated and consume your drink with food. If you find yourself using alcohol as a way to regulate your emotions, it may be helpful to take the Own Your Limits’ Drinking Habits Quiz.

**Strengthen your relationships.** We all need people to lean on, especially in times of change, stress, and uncertainty. Reach out to individuals in your support network and let them know how much you appreciate them. Schedule regular times to check in with your family or reconnect with a friend you haven’t talked to recently.

Even though seasons change, it is important to ACT all year long. Project 1 Small ACT is here to help you navigate stress and use healthy coping mechanisms for all different kinds of life experiences—the good and the bad. For more tips on how to boost your psychological health, follow us on Facebook and Twitter.