



## STRONG KIDS, READY FOR THE FUTURE

### BLUF

In 1992, the Secretary of the Navy via the Navy's Drug Demand Reduction Task Force established the Drug Education for Youth (DEFY) program. Fully, integrated with the President's National Drug Control Strategy, and fully funded through the Office of the Secretary of Defense, DEFY has been a cornerstone for drug demand reduction for military family members and adult mentoring involvement. DEFY provides drug education, conflict resolution, team building exercises, and life skills for youth between the ages of 9 and 12.

### WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?

- **Commanding Officers/Officers in Charge** Sponsors the local DEFY Program in accordance with SECNAVINST 5355.3 series. Provide visible and active support of the local program to include coordinating logistics support and facilities, participating in the end-year graduation ceremony and other activities, reviewing and endorsing reports and other documentation prepared by the local program coordinator, and visiting during program year.
- **Youth** 9-to-12 year old family members of Active, Reserve, and Retired military members, National Guard, DoD Civilians, Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) employees, and DoD Contractors are eligible to participate.
- **Junior Staff Members (JSM)** 13-to-17 year old family members of Active, Reserve and Retired military members, National Guard, DoD Civilians, Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) employees, and DoD Contractors are eligible to participate as assistants to adult staff and as a liaison between the youth and adult staff.
- **Adult Staff/Mentors** Active, Reserve and Retire military members, National Guard, DoD Civilians, Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) employees, and DoD Contractors are eligible to participate as staff and mentors to youth and provide direct and indirect support to the local DEFY Program.

### KEY POINTS

- DEFY is a substance misuse prevention and comprehensive life skills program that deters "at-risk" behaviors by developing positive social skills and giving youth the tools they need to resist drugs, alcohol, and other negative behaviors.
- DEFY is not an intervention program. Any youth that is suspected of substance misuse will be removed from the program and their parent/guardian will be informed.
- DEFY is yearlong program that commences with a structured five-day residential or eight-day non-residential environment conducted during the summer, followed by monthly mentoring events.
- DEFY is 100% voluntary.
- Mentoring is the backbone of the DEFY Program. Mentors do not replace parents, but provide youths interaction with positive adult role models.
- DEFY is educational and fun at the same time.



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Photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class John Suits, DVIDs



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### How is DEFY funded and who funds the local programs?

The Drug Education For Youth (DEFY) program is 100% funded by the Office of the Secretary of Defense – Counter Narcotics (OSD-CN) Central Transfer Account annual budget. No local funding is required.

### What is special about DEFY?

Unlike most drug education programs, DEFY combines elements from many different youth programs, including physical fitness, educational trips, self-esteem and peer leadership development, decision-making, drug resistance, and a formal graduation. We believe this intensive approach is the most effective way to influence positive attitudes in youth. More importantly, DEFY offers a yearlong program that emphasizes small group mentoring/role modeling, special events, and workshops which continue to build on the lessons throughout the program year. DEFY is also unique in that it utilizes existing military and community facilities and resources.

### What does it cost the parent/guardian?

There is no cost to the parent/guardian for their child to participate in any DEFY activities. Each child receives a youth workbook, T-shirts, a ball cap, a backpack, meals and two snacks per day. Participants are required to wear closed toe and heel shoes because of physical activities.

### Do you accommodate special needs children?

Every effort is made to accommodate special needs children based on local program resources and capabilities.

**For more information about the DEFY program  
and to contact the local program coordinator in your area:**

**CALL: (901) 874-3300**

**VISIT:** <https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Support-Services/Culture-Resilience/Drug-Alcohol-Deterrence/Drug-Education/>

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