



The Source for Navy News



Captain's Call



Operational Stress Control Serves as Key Resource for Sailors, Families

Preventing and limiting the effects of operational stress on Sailors is a top priority for the U.S. Navy, a priority being met through the Operational Stress Control (OSC) Program.

Established in November 2008, the program seeks to help create an environment where Sailors, commands and their families are able to thrive during stressful operations.

All military services are feeling the strain of war, decreased unit manning, extended deployments, and myriad situations brought on by the country's current economic crisis. These coupled with the normal stresses of household moves, deployments and separations, family issues and job responsibilities, magnify the stress Sailors and their families are experiencing.

The program aims to teach Sailors that asking for help and guidance for stress issues is not a sign of weakness, but is instead a sign of strength. It accomplishes this mission by educating Sailors, families and command leaders to take care of themselves by remaining fit and healthy, to look after one another, and to take action if they see others reacting negatively to stress.

The program is improving awareness of stress related illness as well. A survey taken in 2010 revealed a seven percent increase of awareness among enlisted Sailors, and an 11 percent increase among officers. Sailors are also showing more drive to use positive methods to cope with stress, such as thinking of a plan to solve problems or exercising or playing sports.

There are many tools and resources available to aid Sailors in the management of operational stress:

- Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NEHC) Leader's Guide for Managing Personnel in Distress Web page <http://www-nmcphc.med.navy.mil/lguide/>.
- Military OneSource hot line 1-800-342-9647 and Web site www.militaryonesource.com.
- Navy Suicide Prevention Program web-site: www.suicide.navy.mil.
- Support personnel such as chaplains, medical personnel and mental health professionals can assist leaders in operational stress control functions.

For more information about OSC and its related programs, visit <http://navynavstress.com>

