

# PREVENTION IN ACTION

## FAMILIES

### DISCOVERING YOUR FAMILY'S VALUES

Families can use different tools and techniques to identify and develop their family values. They all involve listening, asking questions, and reflecting.

#### Within your family, ask yourselves:

- Why do we engage in certain traditions/ behaviors/rituals?
- What do we do as a family in difficult situations?
- How does our family make choices?
- How does each family member want the family to make choices, and how do they want to handle difficult situations?
- What traditions/rituals/behaviors does each family member want the family to engage in?

#### Then reflect:

- What do you like about the answers?
- What are the most meaningful answers?
- Which reflect what you find important?
- Which give you the most meaning?

Those that are the most important and give the most meaning are generally your family values.



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Parents and children will all have their own answers to these questions.

Everyone has an important perspective.

It may take children a longer time to think of the words they want to use as they answer

the questions.

Being patient while you and your family have these discussions and not judging each other are important actions to keep the conversation safe and productive.

### Create a 'No Bully Zone' in Your Home

Bullying happens when others seek to harm or intimidate another person. Parents, schools, communities, and children play an important role in educating others and raising awareness for bullying prevention.

There are many ways you can create a "No Bully Zone" at home:

- Model how to treat others with respect, appreciation, and kindness.
- Communicate often and listen to each other. Learn about each other's day and know the friends your children interact with.
- Do things you love! Special activities and hobbies can help increase confidence and positive interactions in the home.
- Talk about bullying and what signs to look for.
- Ensure you and your children know how and where to get help if you feel threatened or bullied.
- Help instead of hurt. Words can hurt, so be cautious of what you say to others.

Remember, anyone can be a bully. Practice safe ways to stand up to bullying and create a supportive and positive environment at home.



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Contact your local [Family Advocacy Program](#) or the [Community Counseling Program](#) for support and resources.

You can also receive guidance from Military OneSource by visiting [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil) or [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov).

**RESOLVE CONFLICTS IN A POSITIVE, HEALTHY WAY**

Conflict is a normal and healthy part of every relationship, including romantic partnerships and parent-child relationships.

Well-managed conflict can promote growth, intimacy, and trust in a relationship.

Unresolved conflict, poor communication, and unhealthy interactions can chip away at the foundation of a relationship.

Here are some guidelines for resolving a conflict fairly:

**Do not avoid it.** Avoiding the issue will not make it go away. Pick a time and a place to discuss the problem. Leaving the issue unresolved only ensures that you will have to deal with it again.

**Talk to each other.** If you have a problem, take it directly to the person involved instead of talking to friends and family. Inviting well-meaning friends and family into your relationship problems can sometimes complicate matters. Alternatively, it is important to know when you need additional support. If the problem is overwhelming or not improving, ask for help.

**Be kind to each other.** Name-calling, yelling, and belittling do not resolve an issue. These behaviors detract from the problem and will often escalate an argument and damage a relationship.

**Take a breather.** If you are too upset to talk about an issue, it is



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OK to table it. Ask for a few minutes to gather your thoughts. Anger impacts our ability to effectively problem-solve and make good decisions. Just make sure to revisit the topic once you are calm.

**Respect others' feelings.** If the person you are in conflict with needs to take a breather, that's OK. It is important that you give the person space to calm down regardless of your desire to resolve an issue in the moment. Do not follow the person if he or she needs to walk away – respect boundaries.

**Listen and clarify.** Listen to each other's point of view. Often, what we think a person is saying is not what the person is trying to communicate. Clarify that what you are hearing is what the other person is trying to say.

It is not about winning. Do not get hung up on who is right or wrong. The goal of conflict resolution is not to be right; it is to successfully resolve a problem and move past the issue.

**Build relationship skills**

Whether you are looking for classes to make your relationship stronger or counseling services to speak with an expert, Marine Corps Community Services offers

programs that can help.

The "Married and Loving It" class covers communication, conflict resolution, and financial management. The "Within My Reach" class focuses on healthy communication, making a relationship last, and healthy decision-making. To learn more about these classes or counseling services, contact your local [Family Advocacy Program](#).

The "Real Relationships" class helps you identify the hallmarks of meaningful relationships and build skills to strengthen them.

[Marine Corps Family Team Building](#) also offers LifeSkills courses on a variety of topics that can strengthen families.

[Families Overcoming Under Stress \(FOCUS\)](#) offers training designed to strengthen couples and families. It builds on current strengths and teaches practical skills related to the challenges of military life, including stress, injury, and other transitions.

**Use I Statements to Share Your Feelings During a Conflict**

Using I statements allows you to pose your expectation, point, frustration, or idea without making it about the other person.

Instead of "You never clean up after yourself," try "I feel frustrated **when** the house is a wreck **because** I am too tired to clean up after work." Instead of "You never make curfew," try "I feel scared **when** you aren't home on time **because** I worry something has happened to you."

"I feel \_\_\_\_\_ **when** \_\_\_\_\_ **because** I \_\_\_\_\_."

FEELING

BEHAVIOR

EFFECT

**ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER**

The United States Marine Corps' Marine & Family Programs Division publishes Prevention in Action.

The contents of this quarterly newsletter are for informational purposes only and not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

Visit [usmc-mccs.org/prevention](http://usmc-mccs.org/prevention) or click on the QR code to sign up for our mailing list or view past issues. Your email address will be used solely to deliver the newsletter.



Opt out at any time by responding to the sender.

To suggest topics or questions, email [hqmcprevention@usmc.mil](mailto:hqmcprevention@usmc.mil) to suggest topics or ask questions.

To access hot links, right-click on link, copy link, and paste it into a browser window.

## ART THERAPY CAN HELP YOU COPE WITH CHALLENGES

Coping with emotions is a life skill that helps us adapt to challenges.

Tapping into your creative side is a great, fun resource for healthy emotional expression. You don't have to be an artist to do so!

Creativity is expressed in many forms like visual art (e.g., drawing, painting), writing, cooking, or dancing.

In visual art, images describe inner feelings and thoughts. When using art to express intense emotions, we experience catharsis, an emotional release that provides relief and reduces stress to better cope with our challenges.

We may face certain struggles that require the support of mental health professionals.

An art therapist is a licensed counseling professional, also trained to use specific visual art processes, to promote insight, coping skills, and overall mental health well-being for all populations and ages.

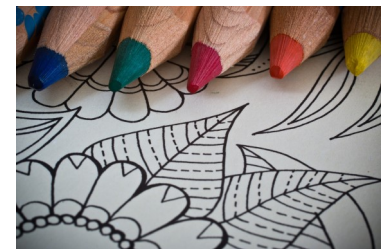
Whether making art alone, with your family, in the community, or with an art therapist, creative coping can help you "draw" your way to better health and readiness.



### Creative coping tips for families:

- Have fun and use your imagination.
- Use items you have at home for art projects: magazines, paper towel rolls, milk cartons, etc.
- Create a collage about your feelings or a favorite place with magazine clippings
- Attend classes and workshops offered at your installation's arts & crafts center.
- Visit your local art supply store for materials and art classes; many are free or offer military discounts
- Find local military-friendly art organizations for free or low-cost family art opportunities.

Need an art therapist? Visit the Art Therapy Credentials Board [website](#) and click on the "Find an Art Therapist" link.



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Contact your local [Family Advocacy Program](#) for more information and support.

## Check on Your Overall Financial Health with DoD Assessment Tool

We go to our doctor for yearly check-ups, but how often do we check our financial health?

In response to Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin's concern for the economic security of all Service Members, the Department of Defense's Office of Financial Readiness created the Financial Well-Being Assessment (FWBA).

Available to all Service Members and their family members, the easy-to-use self-assessment consists of 12 simple questions.

Based on the Service Member's score, the FWBA suggests resources that will enable Marines to evaluate and improve their current financial



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well-being and plan for the future.

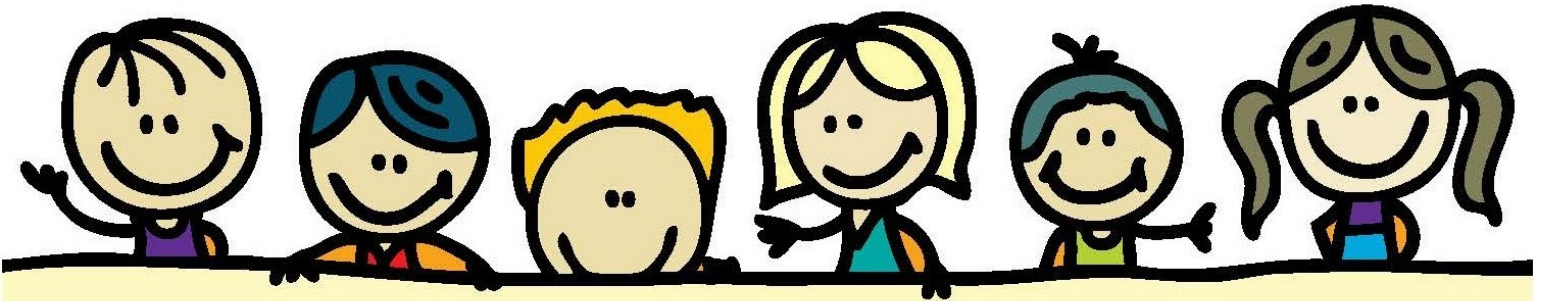
Service Members are encouraged to take the assessment once a year or whenever their financial situation changes (e.g., get married, have a baby, buy a house).

Answers are anonymous and the assessment does not track data. After completing the self-assessment, Marines can contact the [Personal Financial Management Program](#) to develop strategies to manage their financial matters.

Marines can access the assessment through their local installation PFM, their unit CFS, or the [FWBA website](#).

**ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILDREN TO DEVELOP COPING SKILLS**

Encourage your kids to learn how to cope with their emotions and manage their stress. Demonstrate the appropriate skills to your children to model acceptable expressions of emotions. To work well in most situations, each skill should be practiced for at least one minute. After that, if it's not working, move on to another option. Feel free to add your own ideas to the list, and keep it handy for when the need arises.



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|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Stomp your feet      | Take several deep breaths | Have your hand held                      |
| Do jumping jacks     | Draw a picture            | Wrap yourself in a blanket               |
| Run laps outside     | Call a family member      | Write in a journal                       |
| Scream into a pillow | Mold clay                 | Run water on your hands                  |
| Rip paper            | Get a hug                 | Hug a stuffed animal                     |
| Do chores            | Lie down                  | Chat with a friend                       |
| Snap bubble wrap     | Take a bath               | Listen to music                          |
| Play a sport         | Think of a peaceful place | Make a bracelet with beads               |
| Punch a pillow       | Talk to a friend          | Rub a worry stone                        |
| Bounce a ball        | Make a collage            | Doodle with pencils, markers, or crayons |
| Pace                 | Go for a walk             |  |
| Read a book          | Color a picture           |  |
| Get a backrub        |                           |  |
| Take a shower        |                           |  |