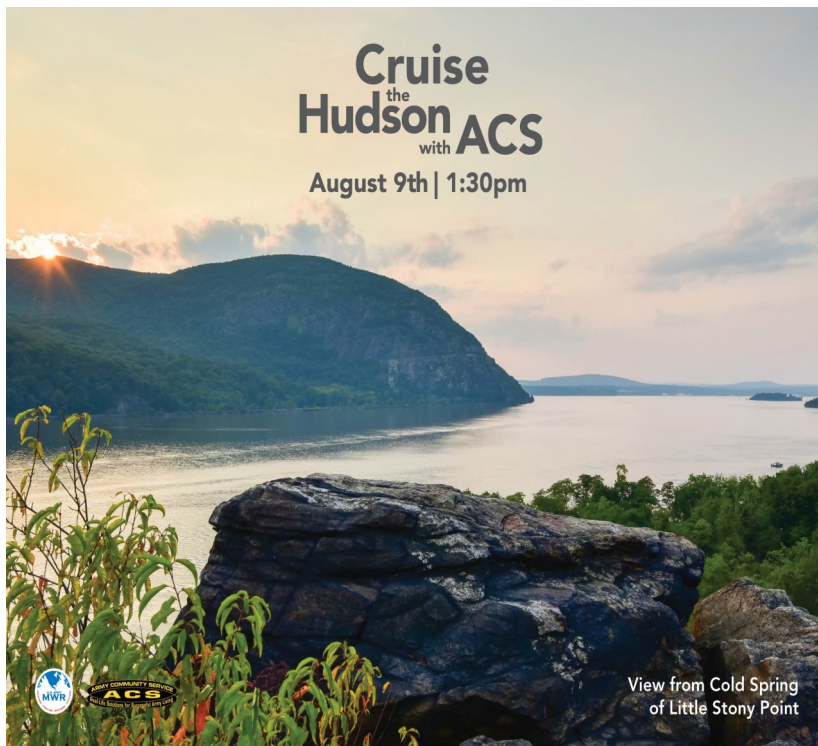


TO THE POINT



New to West Point or even if you aren't so new join us for an afternoon on the water for a Family friendly cruise on the Hudson. Spaces are limited so please register for this outing on the river by calling us at 845-938-3497.

YOUR ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE STAFF

Dr. Joseph Gall	Director, Army Community Service
Catherine Little	FAP Social Worker
Louise Ennesser	Information and Referral
Kathryn Seymour	Relocation Readiness
Vacant	Employment Readiness
Amy Weyhrauch	Financial Readiness/ Army Emergency Relief
Jennifer Partridge	Army Volunteer Corps/AFAP/AFTB
Josephine Toohey	Exceptional Family Member Program
Shelley Ariosto	Family Advocacy Program
Dan Toohey	Sexual Assault Response Coordinator
Raul Lopez	Survivor Outreach Services

ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER

622 Swift Road, West Point, NY 10996

845.938.4621/2519

DSN: 688.4621/2519

FAX: 845.938.3019

<http://www.westpointmwr.com/acs/index.html>



Follow us on:
@westpointacs

facebook

West Point Army Community Service

GOLD STAR MOTHERS AND FAMILY DAY

Since 1936, the last Sunday in September has been designated as Gold Star Mother's Day to recognize and honor those who have lost a son or daughter serving in the United States Armed Forces. In 2009, fallen service members' families were officially recognized and added by presidential proclamation, renaming the observance to Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day. Each year, the president signs a proclamation reaffirming our commitment to honor the individuals "who carry forward the memories of those willing to lay down their lives for the United States and the liberties for which we stand". September 24th, is designated as Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day this year.

For more information on the Army Gold Star Program,
visit the Survivor Outreach Services Program Manager
at Army Community Services, Bldg. 622, West Point.



West Point Army Family Action Plan (AFAP)

AFAP provides the entire Army Family a voice to shape and improve their standards of living and quality of life. Community members identify and prioritize issues that require senior leadership resolution, and these issues are worked until they are successfully resolved. In some cases, issues are deemed unattainable and this is usually due to financial constraints.

While most seem skeptical of its success at first, the program has proven it's efficacy during its more than 30 years in existence. As of this year, AFAP has impacted changes Army-wide, including 128 legislative changes, 186 DoD or Army policy/regulatory changes, and 210 improvements to programs or services/funding. For more information about HQDA AFAP, including success stories visit www.myarmyonesource.com and select AFAP from the Family Programs and Services menu. This page will also now allow you to search active issues currently being worked.

The AFAP process begins locally. A listing of active and completed West Point AFAP issues can be found on the AFAP website,.

<https://westpoint.armymwr.com/programs/army-family-action-plan-afap>.

To ensure that issues are continually being worked, issue updates are provided by West Point agencies at Bi-annual Commander's Steering Committee meetings. The next meeting will be held Thursday, 28 September at 1:00pm in the Commander's Conference Room in Building 681. Members of the West Point community are welcome and encouraged to attend this meeting.

If you have a suggestion about how West Point or the Army can improve your quality of life, you are encouraged to submit an AFAP issue online at www.myarmyonesource.com click on the first tab "Family Programs and Services, then select AFAP IMS. Issues can be submitted at any time via the AFAP website.

For additional information, please contact us at (845) 938-3655.



Make a Difference

**Submit your suggestion to improve
our community and the Army Family!**



If you have a problem you believe affects the readiness & well-being of the West Point local community or Army as a whole, AFAP — is your tool to voice your issue to Army leadership.

Accepted year-round!
myarmyonesource.com

Click on the first tab "Family Programs and Services" - Select AFAP IMS

Call 845.938.3655
westpoint.armymwr.com



The Exceptional Family Member Program



Master a Move for Families with Special Needs

Relocation is part of military life. Every few years you may be required to move, possibly across the country or to another country. Relocating a school-aged child with special education needs includes its own unique preparation. With advanced planning, you can help ensure your child receives the services he or she needs at a new school. Here is a practical checklist of steps to take to ensure a smooth transition for families with special needs.

Tips from The Exceptional Advocate

A newsletter for military families with special needs *June 2017 Newsletter*

Research your new location.

Advanced planning involves researching your new location. The [Exceptional Family Member Program](#) can help you learn about the schools in the area and their special education programs. Other handy resources include [MilitaryINSTALLATIONS](#) to scout out resources at your new installation and community, and [Plan My Move](#), which provides information about your entitlements and benefits, planning tools, and information on education and employment.

Steps to take before your move.

At least 30 days prior to your projected move, notify the school or early intervention agency of your move and request a copy of your child's educational records. Also, obtain your child's most recent transcripts, grade reports and all pertinent medical records. Contact the new school district or early intervention agency for specific information about programs on or near the installation where you will be living. Use the [State, School District and Installation Information](#) section of the [Department of Defense Education Directory for Children with Special Needs](#) to identify the districts in your new location and the [State, Early Intervention Provider and Installation Information](#) section for information about early intervention agencies.

Request a copy of your child's Individualized Education Program.

If your child has special needs and is receiving early intervention or special education services, request a copy of latest Individualized Education Program, or IEP, or Individualized Family Service Plan, including your child's most recent progress report. Also get a copy of your child's most recent eligibility determination report for special education services, and obtain the names of textbooks or other materials that have been effective for your child.

Hand-carry records and provide contact information.

Hand-carry a copy of your child's immunization records and the information you collected about your child's educational program to enroll your child in the local school. Provide the staff at your child's current school with the contact information for the special education staff at your child's new school and sign appropriate releases so the new school can request official copies of your child's records.

Questions about your next move please contact us at 845-938-5655



Wee Read celebrates their second anniversary on 6 July! Thank you to our “wee readers” in the West Point community! Learning something new every day is a key to success and Wee Read makes that happen the first and third Thursdays of each month. Help us celebrate on 6 July, 0900-1000, ACS Resiliency Center, 2nd floor of Building 626 at Buffalo Soldier Field. Wee Read is for children (infants through 4 years of age) and a parent as an opportunity to participate in literacy-related activities. There will be a book (or two) to read and a child-friendly craft activity. Hope to see you there! For more information please call Shelley Ariosto, Family Advocacy Program Manager at (845) 938-3369 or E Mail shelley.j.ariosto.civ@mail.mil

Summer time means time outdoors, sometimes from sun up to sun down. There are a lot of activities on and off post for children and Families, as well as having fun in your neighborhood. To ensure a safe time for all, West Point has a Child Supervision and Curfew Policy available here: <https://westpoint.armymwr.com/application/files/2414/9335/3577/USAGWPPolicyMemo20ChildSupervisionandCurfew.pdf>

If you have any questions regarding this policy please contact the Family Advocacy Program Manager at (845) 938-3369

July is National Ice Cream Month!

By Presidential Proclamation 5219 and Senate Joint Resolution 298, President Ronald Reagan signed this into Public Law on 9 July 1984, stating “...to observe these events with appropriate ceremonies and activities”.

Doing some research to find out more (my source? The International Dairy Foods Association [IDFA] - “Making a Difference for Dairy”), there is an extensive history of the evolution of ice cream.

Beginning with King Solomon (he enjoyed iced drinks) and Alexander the Great (he enjoyed snow flavored with honey), then on to Marco Polo who brought with him from the Far East a recipe similar to sherbet, next up is Charles I (England) who enjoyed “cream ice” and then Catherine diMedici brings France and Italy into the picture by introducing “frozen desserts”.

In the early days of the United States, President George Washington spent approximately \$200.00 for ice cream during the summer of 1790. I wonder if that was with appropriated or non-appropriated funds?

Moving along, in 1851, ice cream manufacturing begins in Baltimore, MD. The rest, as the saying goes, is history!

According to the IDFA, the ice cream industry in the United States contributes more than \$39 billion (billion?!) to the national economy and creates more than 188,000 jobs in communities across the country.

Wait! There's more!!! The International Ice Cream Association (IICA) is the trade organization for manufacturers and distributors of ice cream. (I had no idea! I bet their meetings are fun!) The IICA is a constituent organization of the IDFA. And you thought ice cream was just ice cream!

The top five flavors? According to the IDFA, vanilla, chocolate, cookies and cream, strawberry and mint chocolate chip.

In the month of July - and just so you know, 16 July is National Ice Cream Day - be sure to do your part (per Presidential Proclamation, with respect to history and supporting the people who work in and support the ice cream industry) and enjoy a cup, dish, cone or an entire container of your favorite flavor!

Happy Birthday

Wee Read

Thursday, July 6 / 9-10am

ACS Resiliency Center / Bldg. 626 2nd Floor



Celebrating two years of creativity, fun and reading!

Wee Read provides parents the opportunities to introduce children ages birth through 4 years of age to reading and language development. We invite you to listen and participate in a story with fun-filled activities that promote speech development and learning

For more info, call 845.938.3369
westpoint.armymwr.com



Army Community Service Family Advocacy Program
Invites the West Point Community to

Wee Ones Open Play Group

July 10, 17, 24 & 31 / August 14 & 21 / September 11, 18 & 25
9:30-11am

Youth Center Gymnasium, Building 500

Wee Ones Open Play Group is designed for you to play, learn and make new friends. Plus, Wee Ones will help your little one develop their social, cognitive and motor skills. Simply show up and play!

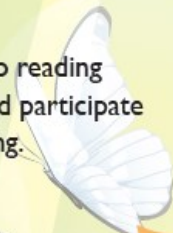


Wee Read

July 6 & 20 / August 3 & 17 / September 7 & 21
9-10am

ACS Resiliency Center, Building 626, Second Floor

Wee Read provides parents the opportunity to introduce their children to reading and language development. Each session, we invite you to listen to a story and participate in fun-filled activities that promote speech development and learning.



Wee Ones Open Play Group and Wee Read invites children birth through four years of age and their parents. There is no charge for participation. Space is limited for Wee Read and registration is required.

Call 845.938.3369/4621

westpoint.armymwr.com



Five Moves To Make The Most Of BRS | Military.com Posted By: JJ Montanaro March 20, 2017

A new military retirement system arrives Jan. 1, 2018, and you might be looking for ways to make the most of it.

The biggest change to retirement benefits since REDUX retirement plan was rolled out in 1986, the Blended Retirement System (BRS), becomes the retirement plan for everyone entering service after December 31, 2017. More than a million current service members will have the option to switch to BRS in 2018, as well.

The Defense Department has rolled out extensive training on the plan, including a webpage with the latest information and a variety of BRS-related resources. I advise you to examine all the details there, but I'll give you five recommendations on how you could set yourself up for success in the new world of BRS:

Take Advantage of Matching Contributions

For years, I've been encouraging my civilian clients with a 401(k) to take advantage of the money their employer is willing to kick into the effort. There's no sense in leaving that type of money on the table, right? With BRS, that message is now relevant to military members, too. The DoD will automatically contribute 1% of monthly basic pay to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) account of members enrolled in BRS. But here's the big news: If service members contribute at least 5% of their own money to their TSP, the DoD will kick in an additional 4%. That's an opportunity you can't afford to miss! Any military member who switches to the BRS is immediately eligible for matching contributions; those that enter the service in 2018 or later will be eligible after two years of service.

Recognize The Military Won't Do All The Heavy Lifting

Whether you're under the old or new system, your financial future falls on your shoulders in the end. If you retire after 20 years of service, BRS provides a cost-of-living-adjusted annuity of 40% of your basic pay. That's a fantastic benefit, but not many people can live off less than half a paycheck, especially when they have to pay for housing and other allowances the military once covered. My point? You'll need to dedicate a portion of your hard-earned pay to retirement savings. At USAA, we think 10-15% is a good place to start.

Consider Adding A Roth IRA To Your Arsenal

Having established that the TSP is a top-of-the-list option as far as a way to save for retirement, it's not the only one. The Roth IRA is another valuable option to consider. If you're eligible, you can contribute up to \$5,500 to a Roth IRA in 2017. Your contribution and all of the growth in the coming years are available tax-free once you've had the account for five years and reached age 59½ — a nice benefit. Another reason to like the Roth is that you can withdraw contributions at any time without taxes or penalties, which can give you additional financial flexibility. I'm not encouraging you to do that, but it's an option.

Remember, You Have Lots of Choices

Do your eyes glaze over at the thought of investing money in accounts where you may have to leave your money untouched for decades to avoid getting hit with taxes and/or penalties? If that's how you feel, remember there are a variety of options outside of IRAs, the TSP or other formal retirement accounts. Even if you decide to invest in a mutual fund, exchange traded fund, government savings bond or other investment in a non-retirement account, you'll still be building for the future. Of course, you may miss out on some tax benefits, but you'll likely have more flexibility and you'll still be fighting the good fight.

Leverage Your Biggest Ally: Time

As I mentioned, we recommend saving 10 to 15% for retirement, but it doesn't have to be that much. What's important is to start immediately. Beginning now, even in a small way, puts the power of time on your side. Plus, you'll have a program you can build on. Over the years, compounding returns can turn a small effort into big results. For example, \$100 per month becomes nearly \$400,000 after 45 years and a 7% average return. And if you start today with \$100, next year you could bump it up to \$150. Each increase puts you in better shape.

There are lots of opinions on BRS but, frankly, it has me excited. As a financial planner, I love that it's getting more military members talking and thinking about the future. Now all that's left is the action. Get started today!

Questions please contact the Financial Readiness Program Manager at 845-938-5839



westpoint.armymwr.com
845.938.5655/0232

Paws for Kids

Exceptional Family Member Program
Presents the American Red Cross

JULY 11 & 18

AUG 1 & 15

SEPT 5 & 17

ALL SESSIONS
ACS, BLDG 622
3:30-5PM



Relocation Readiness: The Next PCS Move

Military families move, on average, every 2-3 years, making them resident experts on all things housing related. Moving is ranked one of the top five stressors of life, and is the normal routine for military personnel and their families. No doubt that moving brings stress to everyone involved, and with the military, the reality of moving comes all too often. When PCS orders arrive, military families begin their roller-coaster ride of emotions. A PCS includes the whole family: service member, spouse, children and pets. Fortunately, there are many resources to help ease the burden for everyone - and also to help cope, empower and entertain. There are always unknowns, but proactive planning eases the stress.

For Service Members and Spouses:

<http://www.move.mil/>

All service members must use move.mil to arrange transportation for their PCS, making it a required resource. Besides being a portal to arrange household goods shipment and unaccompanied baggage, move.mil has a lot of other valuable information like things to know before you go, acronym definitions and housing help. This site will also be used to complete your damage report for reimbursement, if needed.

<http://www.militaryonesource.mil/>

Within the On- and Off- Base Living page, the Military OneSource Moving section offers tips and tricks for a smooth move from packing to unpacking, sponsorship, OCONUS moves, housing and so much more.

<http://www.militarychild.org>

If you have school-age children, MCEC's site is a must visit. Their mission is to ensure the quality of education for all military children. They help with needed information as you transition schools from one location to another. Their SchoolQuest.org initiative allows for parents to compare and note the differences between schools of your losing and gaining station, which helps you to manage your expectations.

For the Military Kids

<http://sesamestreetformilitaryfamilies.org>

From deployments to homecomings and everything in between. Sesame Street for Military Families creates a positive space for your toddler to preschooler understand military life. Their relocation section is especially helpful when a PCS is upcoming by extending free downloadable PDFs, activities and videos to watch.

<http://militarykidsconnect.dcoe.mil?>

The National Center for Telehealth & Technology and Defense Centers of Excellence (DCoE), an extension of the Department of Defense to help school age children understand and connect with others about the unique military lifestyle.

Here are just a few of the many apps (at cost and free) that will keep your military toddler to teen entertained while traveling:

The Big Moving Adventure: (free) Sesame Street for Military Families created this app that chronicles a military move for young ones to play through. Their goal is to make PCSing fun and positive.

Field Trip: (free) as your travel from location to location, have your teen play through Field Trip to learn all about the local history of the area.

Stack the States: (\$2.99) this app tests your child's knowledge of our country making it a wonderful game while on the move. It teaches children state capitals, state shapes, location on the map and so much more.

Sago Mini Road Trip: (Free/\$2.99) While you're on the road, put your little one in the driver's seat with Sago Mini Road Trip. There are no set rules, and it's perfect for toddlers and preschoolers to navigate.

Whether you are facing your first move or just your first move in several years, each one is a new experience. No two moves are ever the same - and there are so many additional things to consider each time. Always remember.....no matter what, be prepared, relax and enjoy the military ride.....it's a once in a lifetime experience.

Questions about your next move please contact us at 845-938-3487