

# PREVENTION IN ACTION

## RESPECT

### RESPECT YOURSELF BY MAINTAINING TOTAL FITNESS

Physical fitness is a key component of military fitness, general health, and well-being. It's often seen as the most important priority for deployability and optimal performance.

Respect yourself by maintaining [Total Force Fitness](#).

#### Physical fitness

Being physically fit, in particular being fit cardiovascularly, reduces your risk for chronic diseases such as heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and cancer. This reduces your risk for premature death—that is, dying before the age of 75.

Proper nutrition is the backbone of any [physical fitness program](#). When viewing nutrition and physical fitness from a health perspective, a good diet plan is essential. The basic formula for weight loss is “calories in is less than calories out.”

Exercise only accounts for a couple hundred calories per session at most. It's important to keep track of the calories you eat and drink because you can't outrun a poor diet.

#### Mental fitness

Mental fitness and physical fitness go hand-in-hand to support both health and performance. Meeting,

## 3 KEYS TO OPTIMAL NUTRITION

### BALANCE

Eat from **all** or **most** of the food groups.

Eat the **right amount** for your activity and performance goals.

Feel **satisfied** and **energized** from your eating plan.

### QUALITY

Focus on **whole foods**, fewer processed foods.

Choose **more plants**—the more colors, the better.

Aim for foods with **naturally occurring nutrients**.



### TIMING

Follow a **regular eating pattern**.

**Avoid** skipping meals or going too long without eating.

Fuel **before, during, and after** exercise.

or exceeding, the 150-minute weekly physical activity milestone [supports mental health](#) in many ways. It can prevent both depression and anxiety, as well as help manage symptoms for people with those conditions. Regular physical activity also improves cognition, or your ability to learn and retain information. This

is especially important for Service members in training environments, school-age children, and older adults, to prevent age-related memory loss.

Mental performance optimization skills, such as goal setting, mindfulness, and positive self-talk, support [physical performance](#). They help keep you focused on the

task at hand, rather than stressing about past or future events, and keep you motivated throughout the task.

#### Social fitness

Physical activity is a great way to improve and maintain social fitness. Participation in group activities, such as competitive sports with your co-workers, can help improve teamwork and communication skills.

Even “individual” sports, such as martial arts, tennis, or golf, require a partner and can be used to foster relationships. There's a reason business is often done on a golf course.

#### Spiritual fitness

This fitness domain means living out spirituality in a personal, meaningful, and purposeful way. Remaining engaged in life's meaning/purpose, hopeful about life/future, making sound moral decisions, engaged in meaningful relationships, able to forgive self and others, remaining respectful of others, and engaged in core values/beliefs.

—*Human Performance Resources by Consortium for Health and Military Performance (CHAMP) at the Uniformed Services University*

#### Make family fitness a top priority

Within family units, being active together helps keep kids engaged and can improve a family bond.

Parental support for kids' activities, including group sports, keeps them motivated to participate, which can go a long way to staying fit, improving cognitive skills, and fighting [childhood obesity](#).

Children who exercise regularly perform better in school. If it's safe and not too far, encourage your kids to ride their bikes or walk to school.

Make sure they set aside time after school to [play outside](#) with friends.

Or encourage kids to get involved in [sports](#) and other [after-school activities](#). This also can help reduce their screen time.

Even better: [Get active with your kids](#). By setting a good example, you stay active while reaching Total Family Fitness.

[Spend time outside](#)—in the yard, gardening, or [walking around the neighborhood](#).

Head to a nearby park or your local pool.

Try camping, fishing, or hiking.

Find a way to volunteer together and give back to your local community.

—*Human Performance Resources by Consortium for Health and Military Performance (CHAMP) at the Uniformed Services University*



# PREVENTION IN ACTION

with Mark Munger  
Southeast Regional Coordinator  
Marine for Life Network



**Q** What is your role in primary prevention?

**A** My role with [Marine for Life](#) is to be a facilitating hub of information so a

transitioning Marine, veteran, or family member can focus on their personal and professional development. I believe it is very important that Marines realize it is okay to ask a question, to potentially admit they need assistance. My role is to link the person to resources that promote protective factors and build skills. Marines are action-oriented, and it's often effective to tell them what to know while also telling them what they can do.

**Q** In your opinion, what skill is the most important to build with our transitioning Marines and veterans to promote success?

**A** I think self-awareness is very important. Marines can begin thinking of their personal development from the very early stages of their time in the Marine Corps. All of the great tools Marines can use to learn more about their military occupational specialty, to increase their Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) score for a potential lateral move, to learn financial management skills . . . not only will Marines prepare for a stronger future potentially in the Marine Corps, at the same time they will build outstanding personal skills for their future beyond the Marine Corps. When Marines have the self-awareness to think about what they want to do with their future, they can then work toward filling skill gaps. Marine & Family Programs Personal and Professional Readiness resources can help Marines map out a plan to close a skill gap. As they move closer to transition, Marines can take advantage of the [Transition Readiness Program](#).

**Q** How important is collaboration in your prevention work?

**A** Collaboration is vital. No one knows all the answers, and everyone is different. We have to approach every Marine, veteran, and family member with a fresh lens. I believe a key to being a quality resource provider is continually growing your knowledge of the resources available. This has been a daily quest for me. I ask questions, make referrals, follow up, and say thank you. It truly provides me a sense of personal satisfaction when I know I have developed a quality relationship. When a Marine I have referred reaches out to that resource, I know they will find what they need. I am also very proud of the collaboration I have had with community information and referral providers. By being available to answer their questions, I have learned a treasure trove of information that can help Marines and their families in times of need.

**Q** How do you build relationships in your area of responsibility (AOR)?

**A** I am very lucky to have multiple installations in my AOR. This allows me to coordinate with the outstanding professionals up and down the East Coast. I reach out to employment, education, and community resources. I am active on LinkedIn where I try to create and share content that can potentially benefit both the active-duty and veteran communities. I am active in the Marine Corps League and other veteran service organizations.

*Prevention in Action interviews individuals in prevention-related positions within Marine Corps Total Force to show how primary prevention is operationalized across the Marine Corps. Efforts to build skills, promote protective factors, and strengthen resilience are ongoing across the fleet.*

## Respect boundaries to ensure relationships remain healthy

Respecting boundaries is critical in building healthy romantic relationships.

### Emotional Boundaries

It's healthy to have different interests and to spend time apart. Both of you should feel free to spend time with other people without having to ask permission. People shouldn't feel pressured to spend all of their time with their partner or say "I love you" before they're ready. Respect each other's emotional pace and personal boundaries.

### Physical Boundaries

Don't rush into a physical relationship if you aren't ready. Openly communicate what level of intimacy you are comfortable with and respect your partner's boundaries. Everyone should be allowed to say "no" and have their wishes respected.

Boundaries are about respect: respect yourself, respect your partner, and respect each other's choices.

For more information about relationships and boundaries, visit [loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org) and [Military OneSource](#).

You can also contact the [Family Advocacy Program](#) or [Community Counseling Program](#) for support, services, and information.

## ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The United States Marine Corps' Marine & Family Programs Division publishes Prevention in Action. **The contents of this newsletter are for informational purposes only.** The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

If you choose to provide us with your email address, we will use it solely to deliver the newsletter. You may opt out of receiving it at any time by responding to the sender.

Email [hqmcprevention@usmc.mil](mailto:hqmcprevention@usmc.mil) to suggest topics or ask questions. September's newsletter topic will be connectedness, and October's topic will be readiness.

*To access hot links in the newsletter, right click on link, copy link, and paste it into a browser window.*

## CHILDREN CAN PRACTICE RESPECT AT SCHOOL

Students will be returning to school soon, and with that return comes preparation, including back-to-school shopping and attending tryouts or practices for sports or other activities. Don't overlook preparing kids for the impact of their actions and words.

Before the big day, have a discussion with your children on what respect means and the different types of respect that they could use in a school setting:

**1. Self-respect:** Take pride in what you do. Speak positively. Work hard and do your best. Ask for help when needed. Look for opportunities to grow from the challenges you face. Say no when you need to.

**2. Respect for others:** Treat others how you want to be treated. Think before you speak or react. Shake hands and smile when meeting someone for the first time. Maintain eye contact while speaking and listening. Listen to understand, not to respond. Show interest and concern. Consider the desire for privacy and others' feelings. Help

others when you can. Display good manners by saying "please" and "thank you." Apologize when you make a mistake. Show value in differences you may have from others including, culture, opinions, likes, and dislikes.

**3. Respect for school:** Follow the rules. Use equipment properly. Help create a positive learning environment. Attend school to learn. Have school pride. Contribute to classroom discussions and group work.

**4. Respect for property:** Take care of common spaces. Be aware of assigned seats on the bus, in the classroom, or in the lunchroom. Be mindful of cubbies/lockers and personal possessions of others (backpacks, books, clothes). Throw away trash. Treat others' property as if it belongs to you.

Remember that showing respect is a reflection of your character. Let others see the good you have to offer, and have a great school year! For information on schools in your area, visit your local [School Liaison Office](#).



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### Everyone can play a role in preventing bullying

Parents, school staff, and other caring adults have a role to play in preventing bullying. They can:

- Help kids understand bullying. Talk about what bullying is and how to stand up to it safely. Tell kids bullying is unacceptable. Make sure kids know how to get help.
- Keep lines of communication open. Check in with kids often.

Listen to them. Know their friends, ask about school, and understand their concerns.

- Encourage kids to do what they love. Special activities, interests, and hobbies can boost confidence, help kids make friends, and protect them from bullying behavior.

- Model how to treat others with kindness and respect.

—stopbullying.gov

### Teach kids to respect money

It is not always easy to talk with your kids about money, but it's important to have age-appropriate conversations. How else will they learn the life lessons and skills they need?

Discussing finances shows that you expect them to behave appropriately with money and see them as capable and responsible.

#### Tips for a Conversation

##### Determine how to answer the question:

"How much money do you make?" Most elementary-aged children are not looking for a dollar amount. They want to know that it is enough money to meet their wants and needs.

**Show them how your money is used to pay family expenses.** Use cash or colorful pieces of paper to illustrate different spending and saving categories.

**Share your history.** Talk about smart and bad financial decisions you have made.

**Learn together.** If you can't answer a question, research the answer together.

#### Introducing Your Child to Money

**Play with money.** Make up games to teach children about money. Match the faces or numbers on coins, talk about the size and color of the coins, or ask your child to "find" the coin.

**Play store.** Have kids pretend to be cashiers to practice counting the total and giving change, or to be shoppers following a budget.

**Allow them to help you in real-life situations.** Have them make choices based on the cost of items or count the correct amount of money to give to the cashier.

#### Activities to Do With Kids

**Give them an allowance.** Introduce the concept of saving, spending, and sharing.

**Practice budgeting.** Give kids jars, piggy banks, or have them make a bank, so they can sort what they want to save up for, spend,

or put into savings. Introduce the concept of setting short-term goals.

**Let them learn from you.** Let them see you doing your own budgeting and bill paying.

**Warn them about outside influencers.** Talk to them about advertising and peer pressure.

**Distinguish between needs and wants.** Discuss the differences. Have them review ads and label items as needs or wants.

**Get a savings plan.** Think about setting up a savings matching plan to incentivize them to save.

**Introduce credit or debit cards.** For older teens, discuss the concept of credit and debit cards. Consider giving them one with limits.

When you teach kids about money from an early age, they will learn life lessons that will carry them through adulthood, including the value of money. Visit your local [Personal Financial Management](#) office for more tips and information about available classes.



**RESPECTING OUR RELATIONSHIPS ENOUGH TO START A TOUGH CONVERSATION**

Watching a friend struggle can be overwhelming and heartbreaking. You want to help, but you're not sure how to, and you are afraid they might be having suicidal thoughts.

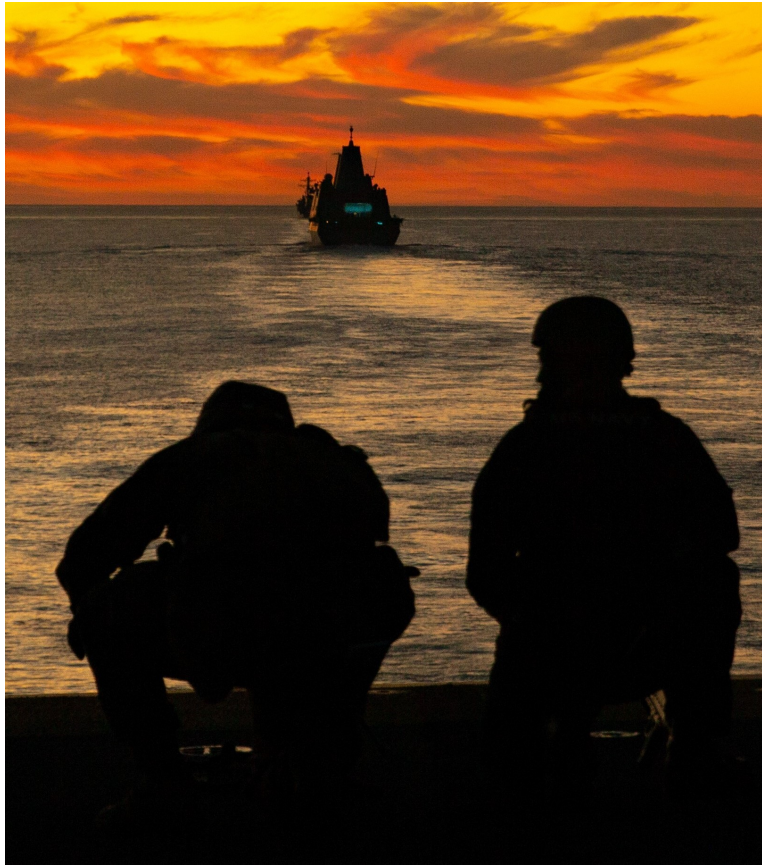
The best way to find out if someone is thinking about suicide is to ask. Here are some ways to get your friend to open up about their thoughts and feelings.

**Initiate the Conversation**

- "You seem distant. What's going on?"
- "I've noticed you seem anxious, and I'm wondering how you're doing."
- "You don't seem like yourself. I'm worried about you, and I'm curious about how you're feeling."

**Keep the Conversation Going**

- "How long have you been feeling like this?"
- "Can you tell me what you think made you begin to feel this way?"
- "Are you having thoughts of hurting yourself?"
- "Are you having thoughts



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of suicide?"

- "What can I do to best support you right now?"
- "What do you think about getting help?"

**Warning Signs**

The friend may not be willing to confirm that he or she is struggling or thinking of suicide, but the following phrases are warning signs of unhealthy

responses to stress:

- Can't stop the pain
- Can't think clearly
- Can't make decisions
- Can't see any way out
- Can't get out of depression
- Can't make the sadness go away
- Can't see the future without pain
- Can't see themselves as worthwhile
- Can't get someone's attention
- Can't seem to get control

**Next Steps If Your Friend Is Suicidal**

Escort your friend to help, whether it be a chaplain, [Community Counseling Program](#), or hospital emergency room

Call for help by dialing either 911 or the Military Crisis Line at 800-273-TALK.

There are ways to assist those that need your help. If you see warnings signs, have an open conversation with your friend using these tools.

For more information, visit your local [Suicide Prevention](#) program office.

**Communicate effectively and respectfully with different generations**

Being respectful of others, being respected, and respecting ourselves helps increase our efficiency, self-esteem, and overall well-being.

Understanding how different generations communicate and adapting to those preferences can foster a positive relationship of mutual respect.

Below are things to keep in mind when communicating with others from a different generation:

- "The Silent Generation" (born before 1945) might prefer

one-on-one, formal communication.

- "Baby Boomers" (born 1946-1964) might prefer spoken communication that explains the "why" of a matter.
- "Generation X" (born 1965-1979) might prefer to use email for correspondence; however, when talking in person they prefer short, informal conversations.
- "Millennials" (born 1980-1995) might prefer to use their phones for texting and email and rarely talk on the phone.



WORDART.COM

- "Generation Z" (born after 1996) might communicate through images and text, and

have been raised with mobile devices being readily available.

[Marine Corps Family Team Building](#) helps you understand why respect is important by gaining a better understanding of what each generation may be saying.

The "Bridging the Generation Gap" class teaches participants the unique characteristics of the many generations that exist today. For more information and course dates, contact your local [Marine Corps Family Team Building Office](#).