

# 5 Ways Command Leaders Can Prevent Child Abuse

To ensure the best possible future for our children, it is essential for every leader to share positive parenting resources as well as report suspected child abuse and neglect.

## 1. Share parenting resources

Military parents in your unit need to know they have your support. Parenting is a tough job, and all parents need help at some point. It is important to share the resources and support programs available to help prevent certain stressors from leading to child abuse and neglect:

### **New Parent Support Program**

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/benefits/new-parent-support-program/>

### **New MilParent Specialty Consultation**

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/benefits/new-milparent-consultations/>

### **Military Parent Resource Center**

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/parenting/new-parents/military-parent-resource-center/>

### **Thrive**

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/parenting/children-youth-teens/thrive-online-program-for-military-parents/>

## 2. Support parents

Support parents in your unit – especially single parents – by being flexible with child care needs. Know the resources available to service members, which may include MilitaryChildCare.com, child care solutions through Military OneSource and Child Care Aware® of America.

## 3. Educate yourself

You can do your part to keep military children safe by learning the signs of child abuse and neglect:

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/relationships/prevent-violence-abuse/child-abuse-prevention-month/>.

*The Family Advocacy Program is congressionally mandated and is a key element of the War Department's coordinated response for preventing and responding to reports of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse in military families.*

## 4. Reach out to caregivers

Commanders and leaders can guide caregivers by helping them:

- Provide a safe location for their children to foster nourishing, developmentally appropriate relationships.
- Learn the importance of monitoring screen time for young children and media use for older children.
- Understand their own triggers and risk factors as the caregiver and seek support or professional help to create protective factors.

### **Connect with important resources:**

#### **Immediate crisis support**

Call 911 or military law enforcement if a child is in immediate danger.

#### **Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline**

Call 800-422-4453

<https://www.childhelp.org/>

#### **Local support**

Family Advocacy Program office via MilitaryINSTALLATIONS

<https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/search?program-service=32/view-by=ALL>

## 5. Join forces to prevent child abuse and neglect

Coordinate with other command leaders and departments throughout your installation to provide consistent and easily accessible awareness and prevention education about child abuse and neglect, including resources and support.

**MILITARY  
ONE SOURCE**

If you believe a child is at risk of abuse or is being abused, call 911, your local child welfare services or your closest Family Advocacy Program at <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/tools/domestic-abuse-victim-advocate-locator/>.

The Family Advocacy Program supports service members, their families and intimate partners through prevention and response of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse.