

Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families (SMVF)

Newsletter: October 2026



DEPARTMENT OF
**COMMUNITY &
HUMAN SERVICES**

October is a meaningful month for recognizing the strength, service, and well-being of our military and veteran community. As we observe National Depression and Mental Health Screening Month, Mental Illness Awareness Week, World Mental Health Day, the U.S. Navy Birthday, and the National Day of the Deployed, we are reminded that supporting service members, veterans, and their families includes caring for both their physical and emotional health. This month, we encourage everyone to check in with one another, learn about available mental health resources, and help foster a community where seeking support is viewed as a sign of strength. We also honor those currently deployed, their families who support them from home, and the generations of Sailors who have served our nation.

Upcoming Events:

Military Academies and Programs Expo

Saturday, October 3 | 10 a.m.

[Registration Link](#)

Bridgeway Community Church: Military Support Group

Monday, October 19 | 7 p.m.

[Registration Link](#)

VETS2INDUSTRY 2026

Action Summit

Thursday, October 22 | 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

[Registration Link](#)

Washington Commanders Military Youth Football Clinic

Thursday, October 22 | 6–8 p.m.

[Registration Link](#)

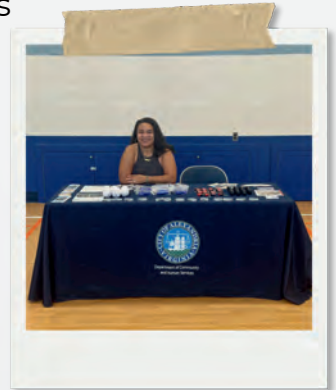


Connecting with Our Military-Connected Families

Back-to-School Night at Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy

This September, I had the opportunity to attend Back-to-School Night at Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy, and work with Rachel Hoover, LPC, NCC, who has a deep connection with the military families at her school. During this event, I connected with parents and caregivers and shared resources available to our Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF) community.

Lyles-Crouch is a Purple Star School, a designation recognizing schools that are committed to supporting military-connected students as they navigate the unique experiences that can come with military life. The school currently serves 80 SMVF children, making this partnership especially meaningful.



Throughout the evening, I spoke with families about resources to support children and caregivers during deployment, family transitions, reintegration, and behavioral health challenges. These conversations also provided an opportunity to remind parents that support does not have to begin during a crisis. Early connection to resources can help families navigate changes before concerns become more difficult to manage.

Carrying the Conversation into October

That message is especially vital during Mental Health Screening Month in October. Early screenings and open conversations help identify concerns early and connect families with the right support.

October also marks National Day of the Deployed (October 26), honoring deployed service members and their families. For children, deployment often brings emotional, behavioral, and routine adjustments.

My evening at Lyles-Crouch was a powerful reminder of why community connections matter. Bringing resources directly into schools ensures our SMVF families know where to turn and never have to navigate deployment or mental health challenges alone.



SMVF Spotlight: Supporting the military family means recognizing that deployment affects children and caregivers, too. If you are working with a service member, veteran, or military dependent, please refer them to SMVF services through our SDA program at the Mark Center.

Military Observances

- **October 6** – Anniversary of the Start of Operation Enduring Freedom/Afghanistan War (2001)
- **October 10** – Mental Illness Awareness Week
- **October 10** – World Mental Health Day
- **October 13** – U.S. Navy Birthday 🚢
- **October 26** – National Day of the Deployed 🇺🇸
- **October 27** – Navy Day

Free SMVF Trainings with CEU Credit

Supporting Hidden Helpers in the Classroom

PsychArmor Training | [Register](#)

This course is designed to increase the awareness and knowledge of professionals on the unique needs, strengths, and challenges faced by military caregiving youth.

Women Veterans Series

PsychArmor Training, .5 CMEs | [Register](#)

This online course is designed to introduce learners to the unique experiences and contributions of women service members and Veterans.

Connecting with the VA

PsychArmor Training, .5 CEUs | [Register](#)

This module is designed for healthcare professionals who treat military service members and military and Veteran-connected patients, wishing to work more effectively to promote patient understanding and culturally-informed care.

Caring for Our Diverse Military Population

[Register](#)

This innovative training program prepares mental health providers to address identified gaps in cultural competency within behavioral health services. The training covers key topics including military cultural humility, intersectionality, diversity in the military, mental health disparities, and culturally responsive treatment practices to improve care and outcomes for the military-connected community.



Scan to learn more about SMVF
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