

THE AFAP STORY

AFAP began in the 1980s through the efforts of Army spouses who wanted to improve the standard of living for their families.

The idea grew until it was formally adopted at the first Headquarters, Department of the Army planning conference in July 1983.

The Army Family Action Plan was established in 1984 and continues the grass roots process begun by Army spouses.

AFAP SUCCESSES

In the 29 years AFAP has been operating, **691** issues have been adopted into the HQDA AFAP and have resulted in the following:

- **128** changes to legislation
- **179** changes to Department of Defense and/or Army Policy
- **200** improvements to programs and services
- Currently there are **93** active issues at the DA level
- One of the 93, **Issue # 674** Originated at TAD

YOU HAVE A VOICE

CURRENT

AFAP issue # 674

Strong Bonds Program for Deployed Department of Army Civilians (DACs) and Family Members

- a. Status.** Active
- b. Entered.** AFAP XXVII, Feb 11
- c. Final action.** No (Updated 10 Jan 12)
- d. Subject area.** Employment
- e. Scope.** Department of Army Civilians (DACs) are not authorized to utilize the Strong Bonds program. DACs are being deployed into Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) and combat zones. As a result, deployed DACs and their Families undergo many of the same stresses and have similar relationship issues related to long-term separations and difficult experiences as Soldiers and their Families. Permitting the use of the Strong Bonds program will allow deployed civilians and their Families the benefits of creating strong support groups, building resilient relationships, and promoting healthy Families

Update 3/15/12 1. Feb 12, Legislative proposal was submitted for FY14B Unified Legislative and Budgetary (ULB) cycle to give Service Chiefs authority to approve funding for deploying Civilian employees and their immediate Family members to attend Strong Bonds or other chaplain-led relationship building events prior to and following deployment. 2. ULB Business Case specifies that "Service Chiefs will have final authority to approve use of funding for this purpose and authorize expenditures within their service. Other services will pay if their employee/service members attend Army Strong Bonds events."

Check out the Family Readiness website for updates at

www.tad.usace.afpims.mil/Contact/FamilyReadiness

For more information on AFAP, contact
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at a time!



AFAP is a grass roots program that gives everyone in the Army the opportunity to influence Army quality of life and standard of living. It lets Soldiers, Family members, retirees and Department of the Army Civilians voice what is and isn't working and make suggestions for resolution.

BUILDING STRONG®

THE ARMY FAMILY ACTION PLAN

AFAP is a year round, Army- wide program whose purpose is improving Army quality of life. Through AFAP, all members of the Army, Soldiers, Family members, retirees, surviving spouses and Department of the Army Civilians have a forum to raise issues and voice concerns to Army leadership.

These voices are given the opportunity to influence Army quality of life and standard of living. AFAP issues come up at all levels. They might concern a local community or relate to problems that have Army-wide impact. In fact, many issues resolved through the AFAP process go beyond the Army and impact all branches of military service.

AFAP gives Soldiers, retirees, Department of the Army Civilians, and their Families the opportunity to let Army leadership know what is working, what isn't working, and give them ideas on how to fix it. Issues may be submitted through your AFAP Program Manager (PM) at any time. The AFAP PM will provide assistance in writing up the issues to ensure they are written properly and follow AFAP guidelines.

Keep in mind recommendations should be cost effective, realistic, relevant, and doable. The process of improvement begins at the local level, where delegates examine the issues, determine whether the issues need to be fixed and determine the scope.

If issues impact only the local community, they are resolved locally. If they have a broader scope, they are prioritized and sent forward in the AFAP cycle. About 95% of AFAP issues are retained and worked at the local level and result in on-going community improvements. Issues not retained at the local level may go on to the Corps HQ AFAP, Major Army Command AFAP, the HQ Department of the Army AFAP, or even higher.

IS MY ISSUE AN AFAP ISSUE?

Does your issue:

- Relate to a well-being concern within the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army, or the Corps of Engineers?
- Present a realistic solution or creative alternative?
- Have a broad impact on Civilians or Soldiers and their families?
- Appear attainable after considering current political and resource climates?
- Fall within the area of control for the Corps of Engineers or the Department of Defense to influence or make a change?

AFAP ISSUE POSSIBILITIES

- If it's a program or service, we can improve it
- If it's a policy or regulation, we can change it
- If it's a law, we can amend it
- If there's a low-cost solution, we can pursue it

ISSUE SUBMISSIONS SHOULD CONTAIN

ISSUE: A short summary of the issue you are interested in.

SCOPE: Any information you can provide about the issue that identifies the problem, provides facts or additional supporting information, and states why the issue is important.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Try to identify the end product that will resolve the issue. Limit your response to three or fewer recommendations. The recommendations should pertain to the exact issue submitted.

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL SUBMITTING ISSUE

DAYTIME TELEPHONE NUMBER

AFAP ISSUE SUBMISSION TIPS

Be specific: the more details you provide, the better your issue can be addressed.

It is not mandatory to provide your contact information, but it makes it easier to get clarification if more details are needed.

All issues are considered. However, it may take time for the results of your issue to be seen. You may always follow up on an issue with your AFAP Program Manager.

