



So your child joined Civil Air Patrol....

For them this means squadron meetings, orientation flights, ground team missions, cadet competitions...the list goes on. But what does it mean for you? Most parents have a lot of questions when their child joins CAP. Hopefully this quick guide will give you some answers...

What is the Cadet Program?

The Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program is designed to help mold cadets into aerospace leaders in the community following a military model that emphasizes Air Force traditions and values. There are five key program elements that make up the cadet program.



Leadership CAP uses classroom instruction, self-study, hands-on opportunities and mentorship as instruments of instruction in Air Force perspectives on leadership. When cadets join CAP they first learn to follow. As they progress through the cadet program, they have opportunities to lead their fellow cadets, manage projects, instruct classes, and act as mentors themselves. Through the CAP program, cadets learn leadership skills they can apply in their everyday life.

Aerospace The CAP Cadet Program inspires in youth a love of aviation, space, and technology through classroom instruction and hands on learning. Aerospace opportunities include model rocketry, orientation flights, Aerospace Excellence Programs, and summer programs.

Fitness The CAP fitness program works to develop in cadets a habit of regular exercise. In addition to monthly physical training at the squadron, cadets also participate in cadet competitions, leadership activities, volleyball, hiking, and other weekend activities.

Character CAP develops in cadets a commitment to the CAP Core values and an ability to think critically about moral and ethical issues. CAP uses mentoring programs, character development discussions, and activities that promote a drug free ethic to develop character in cadets.

Activities The CAP Cadet Program provides cadets with opportunities to use their leadership skills, explore aerospace opportunities, and assist with CAP emergency services missions through activities outside of the weekly squadron meetings.

What types of activities will your child be participating in?

Weekly Squadron Meetings The squadron meets weekly on Thursday nights from 1900 to 2130 (7:00 pm to 9:30 pm). During the weekly meetings, cadets participate in leadership, aerospace education, character development, emergency services, and DDR (Drug Demand Reduction) classes and activities, as well as physical fitness and drill training. Activities during meetings are meant to promote the five elements of the cadet

program and help your cadet to move through the program by giving them training required for promotion and providing them with opportunities to lead within the squadron.

Weekend Activities CAP has a wide variety of opportunities for your child to participate in outside of the weekly meetings. During the meetings cadets are told about opportunities to participate in the squadron or the Maryland Wing. Cadets can choose from a variety of opportunities including honor guard or color guard; cadet leadership training; Cadet Advisory Council, Emergency Services SAREXes, FTXs, or missions; aerospace training; orientation flights; community service opportunities; and many more.

Orientation Flights Your cadet can participate in five powered and five glider orientation flights that give them the opportunity to get hands-on experience in a single engine or non-powered plane.

Emergency Services Your cadet may choose to participate in Emergency Services, where they may be participating in search and rescue missions, disaster relief, downed aircraft searches, and other missions to support the Air Force. Cadets can join the ground team, work at mission base, or work on the flight line. Much of the ES training occurs on weekends, but the team may be called out at any time, and, with parent permission, cadets can participate in this important mission of CAP.

Encampment and NCSAs During the summer, there are many opportunities for your child to grow as a cadet. By attending a week-long Encampment, cadets learn valuable leadership skills and explore aerospace opportunities. After attending an Encampment, cadets are also able to apply for and attend a variety of Special Activities that focus on different aspects of the Cadet Program to advance their training and leadership skills.



What types of responsibilities will your child have in the Cadet Program?

Participation One of the most important things your cadet can do to be successful in Civil Air Patrol is participate actively in activities. This means attending weekly meetings, as well as weekend activities to try to further their cadet career. The more your cadet invests into the program, the more they will get out of it.

Communication Cadets will be expected to be in regular contact with their chain of command. When they first join, that means responding to e-mails or call downs from their training officer or flight sergeant in a timely manner. Additionally, that means that when they need testing or a review board, or when they want to participate in an activity, they need to be proactive in communicating that up their chain of command. In the same way, if they cannot attend a meeting or activity, they need to communicate that up the chain as well.

Online Testing Many of the tests that your cadet needs to take in order to promote and gain rank are online in the E-Services Testing system. It will be their responsibility to take time outside of the meetings to take online leadership and aerospace courses.

Uniform One of the hardest things for many cadets is to maintain a consistently proper uniform. In their first weeks of training at the squadron, they will learn how to maintain a proper uniform. From that point on, they will be expected to have patches sewn on correctly, uniforms neatly pressed, and boots shined.

How can you support your cadet in the CAP Cadet Program?

As an involved parent, we know how important it is to you that your cadet succeed. In the CAP Cadet Program, we try to promote cadet self-responsibility. At the same time, however, we understand that your cadet is still growing up and may need a push sometimes. You, as a parent, can help us promote self-responsibility by encouraging and supporting your cadet at home in a variety of ways.

Transportation Many cadets are unable to drive themselves to meetings and activities. As their primary means of transportation, we ask that you ensure that your cadets are on time or early to every activity so that they can get the full benefit of their training.

Communication We understand that many cadets are not used to having to regularly check their e-mail or respond to phone calls, since they often have previously had no real reason to do so. Gently reminding them about their call downs or e-mails can help them maintain communication with their chain of command.

Uniform Many cadets are unable to sew or iron their own uniforms. They receive training at the meetings that tells them how their uniform should look on a daily basis. Parents can help cadets by following these guidelines in sewing on patches and ironing creases properly when asked to do so by their cadets.

Opportunities Encourage your cadet to participate actively in activities outside of meetings. Often, this is where cadets find their niche and make friends. Additionally, they may get opportunities to lead and grow in a way that can benefit them and the squadron in the long term.

Promotion and Award Ceremonies When your cadet gains rank or receives an award, it is a big deal, and we at the squadron recognize that with a ceremony at the end of the fourth meeting of the month. Parents are encouraged to attend promotion and award ceremonies to show their cadet

support.

Parent Members Some parents find that they grow to appreciate what the Civil Air Patrol stands for. We welcome parents to attend meetings and become members so you can become more active in the squadron and help contribute to your cadet's success.



For more information visit: http://capmembers.com/cadet_programs/parents/

If you have any questions, feel free to contact our Recruiting and Retention Officer:
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