

PARENTS' GUIDE *to the* CIVIL AIR PATROL CADET PROGRAM



en Español
capmembers.com/padres



The CAP Core Values

- ★ INTEGRITY
- ★ VOLUNTEER SERVICE
- ★ EXCELLENCE
- ★ RESPECT

The Cadet Oath

"I pledge that I will serve faithfully in the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program and that I will attend meetings regularly, participate actively in unit activities, obey my officers, wear my uniform properly and advance my education and training rapidly to prepare myself to be of service to my community, state and nation."



THANK YOU for supporting your son's or daughter's membership in the Civil Air Patrol's Cadet Program.

Through their experiences as CAP cadets, young people develop into responsible citizens and become tomorrow's aerospace leaders.

CAP is the volunteer, nonprofit auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. Its three missions are to develop its cadets, educate Americans on the importance of aviation and space, and perform life-saving, humanitarian missions.

This guide provides an overview of the Cadet Program. To learn more, visit capmembers.com/parents, or speak with your local squadron commander.

Overview of the Cadet Program

To fulfill its goal of developing young people into responsible citizens and aerospace leaders, the Cadet Program is organized around five program elements.

As cadets participate in these five elements, they advance through a series of achievements, earning honors and increased responsibilities along the way.

For more information about how cadets progress in CAP, see the “Stripes to Diamonds” page at capcadets.com.



Cadets learn to lead and conquer challenges as a team.

Leadership

CAP introduces cadets to Air Force perspectives on leadership through classroom instruction, mentoring and hands-on learning. First, cadets learn to follow, but as they progress, they learn how to lead small teams, manage projects, think independently and develop leadership skills they can use in adult life.



*Where's the best place to study aerospace?
The cockpit.*

Aerospace

CAP inspires in youth a love of aviation, space and technology. Cadets study the fundamentals of aerospace science in the classroom, and experience flight first-hand in CAP aircraft. Summer activities allow cadets to explore aerospace career opportunities.



Being a cadet means getting yourself into shape and growing stronger.

Fitness

CAP encourages cadets to develop a lifelong habit of regular exercise. The Cadet Program promotes fitness through calisthenics, hiking, rappelling, volleyball, competitions and other activities.



Cadets don't just honor America, they solidify their character.

Character

CAP challenges cadets to live their Core Values. Through character forums, cadets discuss ethical issues relevant to teens. Chaplains often lead the discussions, but the forums are not religious meetings. CAP also encourages cadets to promote a drug free ethic in their schools and communities.



Summer activities are for making new friends and experiencing aerospace up-close.

Activities

CAP offers weekend and summer activities that allow cadets to fly, learn to lead, explore aerospace careers, assist in CAP's emergency services missions and make friends. During the Cadet Program's activities element, cadets have fun while applying what they have learned

Cadet Activities

Weekly Squadron Meetings

Most squadrons meet weekly for two and one-half hours. When dropping off and picking up your son or daughter, please make a special effort to be on time.

While cadets are expected to participate actively in CAP, none of the meetings or events is mandatory. Of course, CAP believes that doing well in school is a cadet's first responsibility.

If your son or daughter is unable to attend a weekly meeting or other activity, please let the squadron commander know in advance.

Weekend & Summer Activities

There are many weekend and summer activities available to cadets at the local, state and national levels. Some activities have special eligibility requirements.

All cadets are encouraged to attend an encampment, where they can develop new leadership skills and explore aerospace careers. Most states host an annual summer encampment on a nearby military base. Encampments are overnight activities, typically one week's duration.

Go to capcadets.com for details about encampments and national cadet activities.



At the academically-rigorous Civic Leadership Academy, cadets study the federal government and explore careers in the public service.



Many cadets receive their first flight in an airplane, thanks to CAP.

Flying

CAP's volunteer pilots share their love of flying with cadets. Through orientation flights in powered aircraft and gliders, cadets experience flight first-hand.

While aloft, cadets handle the controls during the noncritical stages of the flight. CAP's pilots are licensed by the FAA, follow a syllabus for each flight, and ensure the flight is conducted safely.

Cadets may also receive orientation flights in military aircraft. Orientation flights are free to cadets. For more information, go to capmembers.com/flying.

Preparing for Bright Futures

To help cadets plan for an exciting future, CAP offers college and flight scholarships on a competitive basis.

While they are not obligated to join the military, cadets who enlist in the Air Force can enter at a level higher than other recruits (E-3) if they earned the Mitchell Award as a cadet.

The service academies and ROTC also look favorably on CAP experience. About 8% of Air Force Academy cadets are former CAP cadets. The Air Force Academy's Preparatory School sets aside at least one slot for CAP cadets annually.

See capmembers.com/scholarships.

Cadet Membership



Wearing the Air Force uniform challenges cadets to a set high standards for themselves.

Membership Dues

Cadets' annual dues vary depending on their location. Additionally, cadets may be charged fees to cover meal and lodging costs at special activities.

Because CAP is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization, membership dues, donations and other CAP-related expenses may be tax deductible.

Member Kit

Shortly after joining CAP, each cadet will receive a Member Kit in the mail. The Member Kit includes cadet textbooks, mini-posters and other resources to help cadets get started in CAP.

Uniforms

CAP promotes teamwork and high standards of personal conduct by having cadets wear a uniform.

New cadets may request a uniform through the Cadet Uniform Program (depending on availability of funds). See capmembers.com/newcadets for details.

Adult Supervision

CAP takes its responsibility to safeguard youth very seriously. The adults who interact with cadets (known as CAP senior members) have been fingerprinted and screened by the FBI. Senior members supervise all cadet activities. During overnight activities, at least two senior members are present.

CAP does not tolerate sexual abuse, physical abuse, hazing or the use of exercise as punishment. All activities emphasize safety.

As part of their leadership training, advanced cadets mentor and lead new cadets under the guidance of senior members.

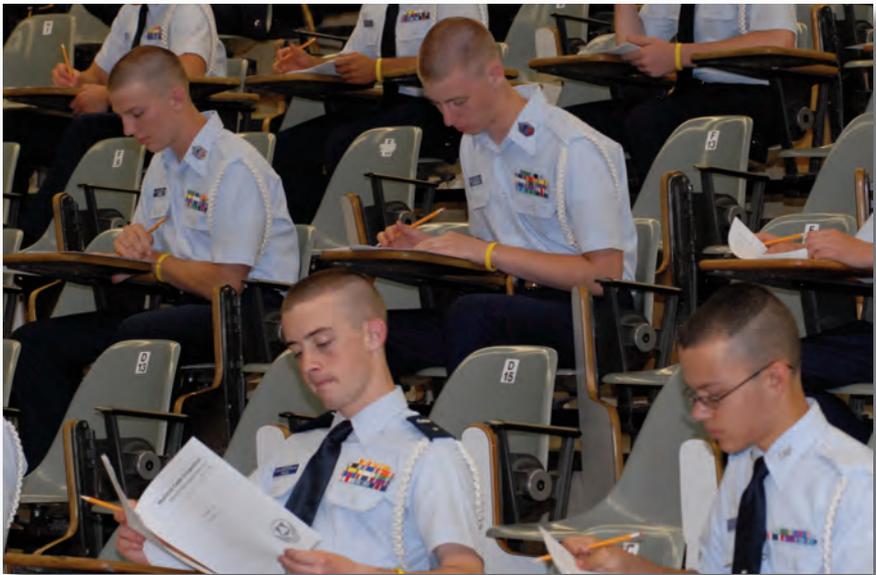
Advancement

Cadets advance at their own pace through self-study and group study.

To progress, cadets must actively participate, pass written and performance tests and show they are ready to accept increased responsibilities.

If a commander believes a cadet is not ready to advance, he or she may retain them at their current level and counsel them to help them improve.

Cadets who earn the Mitchell Award may compete for scholarships. See capmembers.com/scholarships. Cadets who earn the Earhart Award may apply for the International Air Cadet Exchange. See ncsas.com for details.



Cadets must study and pass tests to advance in their program. Moreover, the self-discipline they develop often leads to better grades at school.

Partnering with Parents

An Invitation to Participate

Parents are welcome to observe all CAP activities. There are no secret meetings.

CAP can always use more adult volunteers. If you are willing to serve occasionally as a chaperone or driver, consider joining as a Cadet Sponsor Member.

If you are interested in participating more fully in CAP's emergency services, aerospace education or cadet program missions, consider joining as a Senior Member.

See capmembers.com/parents for membership information.

Parents' Committee

Parents can support the cadets in their local squadron without officially joining CAP by serving on a parents' committee. Some of the ways parents can help include:

- asking area businesses to make financial or in-kind donations;
- organizing a carpool system;
- planning an awards night or pot luck dinner;
- helping the squadron connect with other local civic groups;
- serving as a guest speaker; or
- spreading the news about CAP and helping recruit new members.

Open Communication

CAP wants to maintain open and ongoing communication with parents. Your son's or daughter's squadron commander will provide you with a phone roster listing the adults who work with cadets, as well as a calendar of events.

Cadets' Responsibilities

The Cadet Program is designed to instill in cadets a sense of personal responsibility and self-discipline. Cadets - *not their parents* - are responsible for preparing their uniform, planning ahead to juggle school and other obligations, and signing up for special events.

Addressing Concerns

As a parent, any time you have a question or concern, please contact the local squadron commander. CAP takes parents' concerns very seriously. If local leaders are unable to resolve an issue to your satisfaction, your wing (state) leaders will gladly address your concerns. See capmembers.com/parents for contact information.

Testimonials

"I liked the rappelling. I did something I thought I couldn't do!"

CADET LYDIA JUDGE
Maryland



"One of the big things [about being a cadet officer] is learning to think on a higher level."

CADET EVAN TODD
Ohio



"I joined just so I could get the CAP drivers' license so I could drive the kids, but two years later, I'm a full-fledged active member."

1ST LT MELANIE NIEDFELDT
Utah



"What really helped me become an Air Force fighter pilot was the discipline and leadership training I experienced in CAP."

CAPT. JEFF PIXLEY, USAF
California

"The feeling of being up in the air and looking down, of being in control of the plane, if only for a moment, is absolutely amazing!"

CADET PAIGE BARDEN
Michigan



"I made my first solo flight at a CAP encampment."

ASTRONAUT ERIC BOE
Texas

INTEGRITY ★ VOLUNTEER SERVICE ★ EXCELLENCE ★ RESPECT

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To the parents of: