

Talking to Service Members About Their Financial Upbringing

Generational, cultural and family norms can influence how service members approach their finances.

Service members may even have some habits and perceptions about money that no longer fit the reality of their current financial situation. By discussing influences and upbringing with service members, you can encourage their self-analysis and a renewed perspective, if necessary.

These types of financial conversations can often be especially difficult to start. Try opening with a casual “icebreaker,” like this exercise:

Tell your service member to pretend they won the lottery. Then ask them to think about the first three things they’d do with the money. Share your response as well and discuss your reasonings.

Resources

- The Office of Financial Readiness: <https://finred.usalearning.gov/>
- “Know the Importance of Financial Literacy, Stability” article: <https://finred.usalearning.gov/Money/FinancialLiteracy>
- “How to Raise Financially Responsible Children” article: <https://medium.com/@dodfinred/how-to-raise-financially-responsible-children-df6fbbd94897>

How to Continue the Conversation

- “Who first taught you how to manage money?”
- “Did you grow up with any concerns about money? Did you talk to anyone about it?”
- “Growing up, did you family talk about money?”
- “How did you earn money growing up?”
- “How old were you when you got your first job? Tell me about it.”
- “Who did you look up to financially when you were younger?”

Personal financial managers and counselors can help continue the conversation. Share this contact information for your local PFM or PFC:



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