

WHY IS THIS A COUNSELOR ISSUE?

Considering military enlistment is an awesome and grave decision facing high school students at an impressionable age. Making an informed decision requires students to consider a wide range of issues and resources specific to that choice. School counselors play a key role in helping students make informed decisions.

Frequently, however, the person who most often speaks to students about this decision is a military recruiter. Why? The military spends more than \$4 billion annually on recruiting and employs over 27,000 recruiters.

Military recruiters have one goal—getting recruits for the military. School counselors are objective, much better informed on post high school options than military recruiters, and bound by ASCA and ACA ethics to serve the students' interest.

Military service is significantly different from other post high school options. It often requires students to risk life and serious injury.

Counselors can play a critical role in guiding students to resources now available that help them understand military recruitment strategies, weigh their options and think through this decision in a way that serves their best interests and needs.

KNOW YOUR DISTRICT'S POLICIES

- What is the District's policy on the ASVAB test (Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery)? This test is used by the military as a significant recruiting tool, but offered to schools as a vocational test. Students should be aware that they are not required to take this test, and/or give their test scores to military recruiters. In order to protect student privacy, counselors should carefully select Option 8 if their school gives ASVAB. Under Option 8, the military scores the test but the results are forwarded to schools, not to recruiters.
- How does your district provide opt out forms to all students so they can exercise their student privacy rights and prevent the military from getting their name, address and phone number from the school? Students who do not sign an opt out form often receive unwanted phone calls and visits from military recruiters.



Protecting the privacy of students under the age of 18 is the responsibility of the school district and its employees.

Young people under 18 are not allowed to sign contracts, buy alcohol or vote, yet recruiters are in Philadelphia schools, often unsupervised, appealing directly to students to enlist in the military.

HOW COUNSELORS CAN HELP

- According to the No Child Left Behind Act, high school students can prevent the military from accessing their private contact information for recruitment purposes by signing an opt out form. Counselors can access the form in the student section on this website:
www.phila.k12.pa.us/
- Ensure that balanced information about the military is available in your school's career center, library or cafeteria.
- Counselors could include information and speakers on alternatives to the military at school career fairs.

Inform students of their rights:

- Students should learn how to finance college without joining the military.
- Students should know they are not required to take the ASVAB test or to give their test scores to recruiters.
- Students should know they can cancel any signed agreement in the Delayed Enlisted Program before reporting to active duty, without any consequences.