



The Military Spouse Coach®

Support, strategies and solutions for career and life

Deployment Resources

New Book Helps Children through Deployment

"Deployment Journal for Kids," a new book to be released July 1, gives children a special place to record feelings and events during a loved one's military deployment. The book was written by Rachel Robertson, an early childhood educator and military mom. The companion website for the book at <http://www.deploymentkids.com> offers time zone and distance calculators, games, and tips for children on getting through the deployment.

Combat Stress Wearing Away at Soldiers Marriages, Divorce Rates up Sharply

The number of active-duty Soldiers getting divorced has soared since the Iraq war began. The stress of combat, long separations, repeated deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq, and difficulty readjusting to family life are key reasons, Army officials say. For more details visit: <http://www.armytimes.com/story.php?f=1-292925-902154.php>

Post Deployment Family Resources

The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) produced a Facts for Families #89 "Coming Home: Adjustments for Military Families," in response to the emotional needs of returning members of the military. This fact sheet is available free of charge in English and Spanish at <http://www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/89.htm>. Another fact sheet specifically relevant to military families is # 88 "Military Families," which provides a starting point to foster dialog. AACAP's entire Facts for Families series is available free of charge on their website at: <http://www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/index.htm>.



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Group Helps Pets through Deployments

Some deploying Soldiers do not have family or friends to depend on to care for their pets when they deploy. Deploying Soldiers with pets now have a program called "Guardian Angels for Soldiers' Pets" to care for their non-human family members. The nonprofit organization is based in Hot Springs, AR, but group members will work with deploying Soldiers in other states. Potential foster pets must be current on their vaccinations and owners must provide a copy of veterinary records. Pets should also be spayed or neutered. Volunteer caregivers will help reduce owners' stress by sending photos of the pets to their deployed "parents" via email or regular mail. For further information, visit

<http://www.guardianangelsforsoldierspet.org/>

Deployed Childcare Assistance Program

During an interview at the Association of the United States Army winter symposium, Secretary of the Army Francis Harvey spoke about a campaign he is leading to raise money for the Deployed Childcare Assistance Program (DCAP). The plan calls for private businesses to donate funds to pay for services like emergency childcare, extended childcare at on-post facilities and summer camp for special needs children. The idea for the not-for-profit program developed when a meeting with soldier support groups at Fort Campbell, KY revealed care subsidized by the Army was insufficient to meet needs of spouses and others caring for the children of deployed troops. InSitech, Inc., a not-for-profit partnership, donated \$10,000 and agreed to manage charitable donations from businesses for the program. A pilot program is currently running at Fort Campbell. Other programs are planned for this summer at Fort Hood, TX and Fort Drum, NY.



Deployment Cycle Support Assists Deployed Personnel and Families

The Deployment Cycle Support (DCS) program is a process to assist deployed Soldiers and Department of Army Civilians and their families experience a successful return and reunion into their pre-deployment environment. DCS has the goal of attempting to reduce or eliminate stressors that contribute to domestic violence, post traumatic stress, and other stressors attributed to deployment. Phase I of the process begins in theater and continues at demobilizations sites and home stations (Phases II and III). Family members receive information on reunion and health care, individual assessments by unit leadership, and the opportunity to participate in follow-up assistance. There is a DCS website at:

<http://www.armyg1.army.mil/hr/dcs.asp> with reference and support materials for meeting DCS requirements. Military OneSource, at <http://www.militaryonesource.com>, and the Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) are also available to support returning Soldiers and Civilians and their families.

Survey Report on the Effects of Multiple Deployments on Military Families

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) recently published a report entitled "The Cycles of Deployment," addressing results of a new survey which shows service members and their families are experiencing increased levels of anxiety, fatigue, and stress as a result of multiple and extended deployments, as well as heavy reliance on National Guard and Reserve troops. Among the report's findings: nearly half the

respondents indicated they have used or would use counseling services; two-thirds of responding families did not have contact with their unit or unit network volunteer during the critical pre-deployment stage; 17% of those who completed the survey indicated no family support was available from pre-deployment through the deployment to post-deployment phase; and military families expressed concern over their reunion with their deployed family member. The survey was conducted between April and September 2005. For more information, or to download a copy of the report, go to: www.nmfa.org/cyclesofdeployment.



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Legal Preparation for Deployment

Getting legal affairs in order before departure will reduce stress during and after deployment. Among recommended actions to take before deployment are: prepare/update your will; grant Power of Attorney to your spouse, a close relative or a good friend; and make sure your family members all have their Military ID Cards. For more information on being legally prepared for deployment, visit [http://web50.military.com/cgi-bin/outlog.cgi?url=http%3A//www.military.com/NewContent/0%2C13190%2CDeployment Active Legal%2C00.html&code=mrtxt.nl](http://web50.military.com/cgi-bin/outlog.cgi?url=http%3A//www.military.com/NewContent/0%2C13190%2CDeployment%20Active%20Legal%2C00.html&code=mrtxt.nl)

Kids of Deployed Military Parents Need Consistency

A psychology professor at the University of South Carolina, who has published research on family separation issues since 1987, says his work shows that children whose parents are deployed do better the more consistent their environment is. A child's situation is more easily controlled when the child is under school age. A school-age child's environment is more challenging to manage. Teenagers require great sensitivity because they tend not to talk to their parents about their problems, and they have access to information and an ability to grasp what they see on CNN or in other news sources better than younger children. The professor's research shows that most families with a parent deployed see long-lasting effects of the separation. These consequences may be both good and bad. Military children are often more outgoing and independent than their peers. Research during the Persian Gulf War in 1991 pointed out that children's behavior often changed for the worse during the deployed parent's re-entry into the family. For more information on this research, see: http://www.dod.mil/news/Apr2006/20060428_4961.html. For counseling assistance, visit www.militaryonesource.com or call 1-800-342-9647, 24 hours a day.



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Group Helps Deployed Soldiers' Children

According to Salute Our Services, more than 115,000 children have at least one parent deployed in the war on terrorism, not including children affected by routine deployments. Salute Our Services supports service members in all service branches and their families with financial grants.

The goal of the financial assistance is to keep children of deployed Soldiers involved in activities they enjoy. For more information, visit their website at <http://www.saluteourervices.org/skins/sos/display.aspx>.

CNN Webpage Links to Deployment Resources

The website of the cable news network CNN, www.CNN.com, provides access to many helpful resources for military members and their families during deployments. The webpage "Coming Home: Families and War" is available at: <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2006/coming.home/resources/>. Topics addressed include:

Returning from Deployment; Reunion with Family, Returning to the Workforce; Mental and Physical Health, and Returning Disabled.

Sesame Street DVD Packets Available to Help Families during Deployment

Sesame Street DVD packets, which include a Parent/Caregiver magazine, a child activity poster, and a DVD entitled "Talk, Listen, Connect: Helping Families during Military Deployment," are available now through Military OneSource at www.militaryonesource.com. The DVD is intended for children ages 2-5 years. The kits are bilingual, and will help military families and their young children cope with feelings, challenges, and concerns experienced through the phases of deployment: pre-deployment, deployment, and homecoming.



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New Guide Helps Military Children with Deployment

The Strategic Outreach for All Reserves (SOFAR) has published a guide to help parents, teachers, and other care-providing adults assist military children experiencing the deployment of a loved one. Although written with Guard and Reserve children in mind, the information provided would be helpful to others dealing with the deployment experience. The pamphlet can be accessed at www.sofarusa.org, then click on "Resources & Downloads," and then click on "For the Families of Military Personnel."

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