

Vermont Air National Guard Family Readiness & Support Services

Deployment Support Programs

The following programs and services support members and their families during separations due to deployments and remote tours.

AIR FORCE AID SOCIETY

Financial assistance is provided when there is a demonstrated need for funds such as emergency travel, burial assistance, urgent health and welfare needs such as food and shelter. For information and assistance contact the Family Readiness & Support Services or The American Red Cross - Armed Forces Emergency Services www.redcross.org/afas/index.html

AMERICAN LEGION <http://www.legion.org/>

The American Legion has a 24-hour nationwide toll-free telephone number, 1-800-504-4098, for service-members and their family members to call for assistance. Calls are referred to The American Legion department, or state, in which the call originated. Departments relay the collected information to a local American Legion post. The local post then contacts the service-member or family to see how assistance can be provided locally.

CALLING CARDS

Free \$20 value Calling Cards, sponsored by the Air Force Aid Society and the VFW, and are offered to all personnel going on contingency TDYs for 30 days or longer. These must be issued to the military member.

CONTACT CALLS DURING DEPLOYMENT

The Family Readiness Group makes phone calls to waiting families throughout the separation period to see how family members are coping with the separation and provide assistance when there are special needs or concerns.

CONNECTIONS

During times of deployment and separation we may find ourselves and our children affected by the intensity of our emotions. Although this is a common experience, it is still difficult to handle. The Connections program offers an opportunity to explore these intense or painful thoughts and feelings in a supportive environment. Connections involve the use of various art materials and specially designed art directives. No artistic talent is necessary to benefit from this program. Activities may include: drawing, painting, collage, clay work, creative journaling, mask making, and more!

The mission of **Connections** is to promote effective communication, healthy expression of emotions, and methods of coping with stress.

KIDS' CORNER

Kid's Corner is for children ages 3-12 facing the deployment of a family member. This group is designed to help children use art to express their feelings in healthy way, adjust to the changes brought on by deployment, and feel less isolated through interacting with their peers. Art tasks and discussion are age appropriate for each group. Groups may be scheduled for children ages 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

FAMILY FOCUS

Family Focus is an excellent secondary group for parents and children who have participated in other Connections groups. This is a chance for you to work together to further enrich your family life. Art, games, and discussion are used to promote the sharing of ideas and feelings, effective communication, and family cohesiveness. This group is recommended for children 6 and up.

PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Parent Support Groups are aimed to increase understanding of children's adjustment to change and separation and what parents and educators can do to help them. Topics may also include using rewards and consequences to increase desired behaviors, effective parenting strategies, and stress management for parents. This group will also provide an opportunity for caregivers to share ideas, learn from others, and establish a network of support.

TEEN CIRCLE

Teen Circle is for young adults ages 13-18 facing the deployment of a family member. This group focuses on issues specific to teenagers and involves the creation and manipulation of images to increase communication, self-awareness, and self-esteem. The group setting encourages the participants to support and connect with each other.

E-MAIL FOR SPOUSES

If you do not have E-mail capability from home and your spouse is on a TDY or remote assignment...don't fret. Just give us a call and we'll make an appointment to set up a free Hotmail account for you at the Family Readiness Office.

FAMILY READINESS GROUPS (FRG)

The Family Readiness Group is an outreach effort of the Family Readiness & Support Service Center that uses volunteer spouses in each unit to help address concerns of the families of deployed members. Most squadrons have one or more Point of Contacts and they coordinate things such as monthly newsletters, holiday activities, care package preparation and much more! They provide a communication link between the Commanding Officer and family members. Trained as Information and Referral specialists, they provide information to families regarding, but not limited to, Command/Air National Guard policies, deployment schedules and assistance to spouses when the service-member is deployed. To locate your Point of Contact, check with your squadron commander, first sergeant, or call the family readiness center.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Don't let the pay fluctuations caused by your deployment catch you by surprise. The Family Readiness Center can help you develop your budget and provide resources for getting organized.

GIVE PARENTS A BREAK

This program provides free programs for children 6 months to 12 years for families whose sponsor is TDY for more than 30 days or on a remote tour. Please contact your unit commander or family readiness coordinator to schedule a program. We can look at different options for location and time. Reservations are required and immunizations must be current.

HEARTS APART SUPPORT GROUPS

The Hearts Apart Support Group provides a forum for the spouses and family members whose sponsor is TDY for more than 30 days, deployed or remote tour members (and members on remote tours) to get together and enjoy common activities or to just meet and talk.

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL (I&R)

The I&R program provides a service to Service Members and their families by which they can learn what is offered by the Family Readiness Center, Air National Guard and local community about how to access the information and services they want or need. Typically, in response to a direct request, I&R offers basic information such as organization names, telephone numbers, addresses, and/or physical accessibility. Some of the information available relates to local military and civilian community services such as education, life-enrichment, and therapeutic services. Callers may remain anonymous, if so desired. The Family Readiness Center is the place to go when you need to know!

LENDING LIBRARY

The Lending Library provides information and materials surrounding all aspects of military life, which include family readiness, separation, deployment, and reunion. You will find books, videos, and websites, and many other resources to assist you with your search for information.

LETTER WRITING KITS

If you are separated from a family member due to deployment, feel free to come by and get one of our letter writing kits that include stationary, post cards, greeting cards, stamps, and parent/child note exchanges.

MOBILIZATION SUPPORT PACKETS

These highly informative Mobilization Support Packets are available at the Family Readiness Center. They include information and instruction on how to access support services, children's programs, and deployment-related resources.

MORALE CALL PROGRAM

In this program, families of deployed and remote tour members can call from the Family Readiness & Support Service Office to the deployed/remote location...free of charge! Eligible members are allowed 3 15 minute phone calls per week.

PRE-DEPLOYMENT BRIEFING:

This is an informative briefing to help activated military members and spouses prepare for separation due. Families will be advised of the many resources available during the separation period.

READINESS EMERGENCY SLEEPING TOOL (REST):

Do you have a child or loved one who can't bear the thought of being without you? Come in to the Family Support Center and get your well-deserved REST. We'll take a digital picture of you and transfer it onto a pillowcase so you'll be right there when they go to sleep.

UNITED SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS (USO)

Patriot Guardian Financial Assistance Program

www.usonewengland.org

Financial grants are available to deployed and active duty service members. For further information call 617-720-4949 or the Family Readiness Center.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

The VFW's Military Assistance Program (MAP) strives to enhance the quality of life for members of the armed forces and their families by identifying critical needs and providing emergency financial aid. MAP has forged partnership with a variety of service providers, including Savings4themilitary.com and vetjobs.com, which are aimed at providing the transitioning service member with relocation and employment assistance. For more information, call the MAP office at (816) 756-3390, ext. 211; Fax: (816) 968-1199 or e-mail: map@vfw.org

VIDEO PHONE

Do you have a spouse that is TDY/on a remote assignment and would like to see them before they get back? We have video-telephone capability to many installations around the world. Please call us to make an appointment...your time is our time.

WELCOME HOME AND REUNION BRIEFING:

As a family member of an active *Guard* member who is coming home, you are probably both excited and nervous about the homecoming. The purpose of this program is to help ease the transition back into your home and relationships after the deployment, and to discuss typical homecoming reactions.