

January 2009

For additional Information on OMK and how County OMK Teams can be involved, visit:

<http://www.four-h.purdue.edu/omk/>

Or contact:

- **Judy Hauser at 765-494-9516 or jhauser@purdue.edu**
- **Steve McKinley at 765-494-8435 or mckinles@purdue.edu**

The purpose of The Bugle is to keep you updated on events, activities and information related to Indiana OMK and methods to support children and youth of military families.

We encourage you to share your success stories, suggestions and reports on military-related activities in your county. Submit stories and photos to Judy or Steve and they will be included in future editions of The Bugle.

Share The Bugle with other County OMK Team members and community supporters. They may be working with programs that can be adapted for use with military children.



Layout of The Bugle by Sharon Ingerson

The Bugle

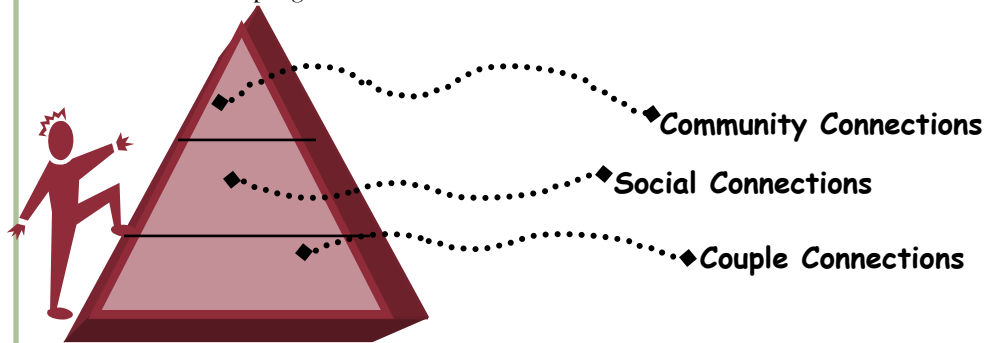


Understanding & Supporting Our Military Families

Indiana's military presence consists primarily of National Guard and Reserve Components. Deployments affect not only the soldier, but his or her family as well. Life style changes, fears and loneliness are just a few of the struggles that are experienced. However families that cope well with these struggles can learn new skills and gain a greater sense of self confidence and self sufficiency. Some of the key research findings are that about half of the spouses and children coped well during deployments and those that coped highest with the separation exhibited the following qualities:

- ♥ strong marriages ♥ close friendships ♥ good parenting skills
- ♥ comfort in seeking community support services
- ♥ participation in Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) and Children's programs

The Family Resilience Pyramid named below, illustrates the importance of supportive connections in coping well:



The research clearly shows that the more help (connections) military families receive from family, friends and relatives; the better they are able to cope with the challenges of military deployment and reunion back into the community.

Thanks to the many volunteer community groups, OMK has delivered over 3,000 Hero Packs to the children of Indiana military families during the last 15 months!



HOW TO HELP

Military Family Research Institute (MFRI) here at Purdue has created a series of “How to Help” brochures with practical information for medical professionals, teachers, employers, day care providers and community individuals and organizations. Practical applications listed as “How to Help” as a Family Friend and Neighbor are as follows:

Before deployment

- Let the soon-to-be-deployed service member and their family know you are available to assist during the deployment and what ways you can help.
- Set up concrete support, like offering to watch the children once a month or take the pet one day a week. These gestures are appreciated and they allow the family to do some pre-planning and potentially head off a crisis situation.

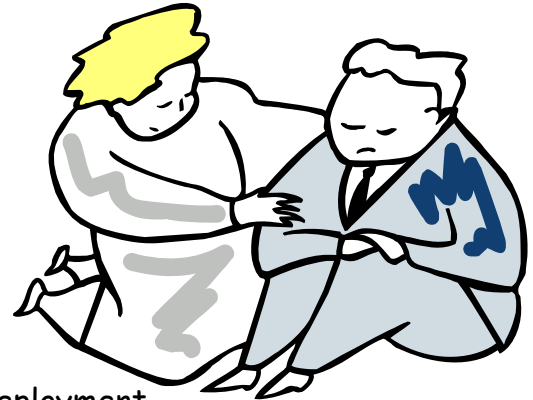
During deployment

- Assist whenever possible with tasks such as yard work or car maintenance. Families with young children or elderly parents often find tasks such as mowing, raking leaves, and snow removal difficult to arrange or complete in a way that does not put children’s safety at risk.
- Send a care package or letter to the deployed military member.



- Offer to go along on a trip to the zoo or park to be a helpful extra set of hands for the children.
- Take care when discussing your personal ideas and political thoughts. Military members serve no matter what the political landscape is.

- Remember that most deployments are long and the family is just as likely to need your support six months into the deployment as they do when the military member first deploys.

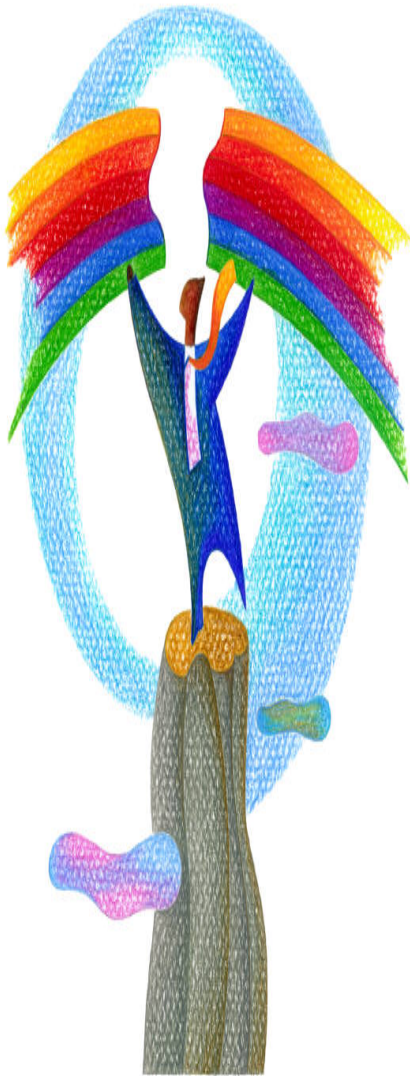


Post-deployment

- Don’t push the service member to discuss what they did or what happened during their deployment. Let this discussion happen when the military member is ready.
- Let the military member and family know you appreciated the service and sacrifice they have made.
- If you are an extended family member, discuss visits with the returning service member and their family. Although everyone wants to see their loved one, if a spouse or children are involved, competing for attention can be counterproductive and stressful.

Even if you do not have a military member in your neighborhood or in your family, there is much you can do to support military families. There are many volunteer organizations that support military families. Working with these organizations is one way you can help. Participating in an effort with your friends, family and neighbors from across the state and country can help to ease the effects of the sacrifices these service members and their families make every day.

For additional information and/or copies of the “How to Help” flyers, contact Sheri Dunn-Ramsay at 765-496-6045 or through email at: sheridr@purdue.edu



Looking For the Rainbows After Life's Storms

Unfortunately many people experience one or more traumatic events during their lifetime. We frequently hear about bad car accidents, natural disasters, shootings, child abuse, and military conflicts. Most people struggle through these tragedies with periods of thinking again and again about what happened, having trouble sleeping, experiencing nightmares, and feeling dazed. Gradually these normal struggles subside and trauma victims go on to live healthy, productive lives.

We also know from research, however, that up to 20% of service members involved in combat may exhibit mild to severe symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). These symptoms may include:

- ◆ Anxiety and panic
- ◆ Irritability and anger
- ◆ Loss of interest in activities or people
- ◆ Problem alcohol or drug use to cope with stress reactions.

If you or someone you know is struggling with PTSD contact Joyce Hampton, Child & Youth Military & Family Life Consultant at 1-317-605-9575 or through her email at: joyce.k.hampton@mhn.com for additional information and referral to local resources.

The following quote summarizes well the research that has been done on people who live long, healthy, and productive lives in spite of many disappointments and losses along the way:

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life.

The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitudes we will embrace for that day.

We cannot change the past...we cannot change the fact that people act in a certain way.

The only thing we can do is play on the one thing we have, and that is our attitude...

I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it.

— Charles Swindoll



Passport to Success

This unique program assists children in building skills such as teamwork, problem solving and communication. The goal is to create a fun environment where kids can develop the skills that make it easier to adjust to the unique challenges of the military lifestyle. Designed around a vacation theme, children travel to different “islands” to participate in different activities while having an opportunity to learn and practice new skills.

MFRI is looking for energetic and experienced people to assist with the implementation of this program in Indiana. Extension educators and volunteers would be great facilitators and or community contacts. The program will be held April 4, 5,

18, 19, 25, 26 and May 2,3 in Indianapolis, New Albany, Muncie, Fort Wayne, Evansville, and Jasper.

The program facilitator will be an experienced education/social service provider who has worked with youth between 3 to 17 years of age. This person will be responsible for facilitating military youth program activities. Facilitators will be required to work at least 2 sessions of the program and a stipend will be paid for each session worked (including training program).

The program volunteer will work with a cross-section of youth between 3 to 17 years of age. This person will assist with military youth program activities. This is a volunteer position.

A more comprehensive job description is available at: www.cfs.purdue.edu/mfri

Each person will need to successfully complete a criminal history background check in order to participate in the program.

Each person will receive specialized training in the program and curriculum and most of this training will be done via technology with only one on-site training prior to the event.

Please feel free to contact Kathy Broniarczyk : kbroniar@purdue.edu or Judy Hauser for additional information.



Military Kids

NEED YOU!!!



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