

YOUR DEPLOYMENT REINTEGRATION GUIDE

HOMEFRONT

2019

Your Soldier's home from deployment.

KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT

Reflections from the homefront:

AN ARMY SPOUSE CONFRONTS

DEPLOYMENT'S CHALLENGES

Got Stress?

**MEDITATE
BREATHE
EXERCISE**

Where to go

**WHEN YOUR MIND
DOESN'T
DEPLOY**

Hey teens, we've got you covered too! p.40



MEDICAL AND DENTAL
for the Guard and Reserve

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H O M E F R O N T

2020

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YELLOW RIBBON REINTEGRATION PROGRAM

®
*For Those Who Serve and Those Who Support*SM

Your Comprehensive Event Search.

GIVING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY THE CHANCE TO BE A PART OF THE ACTION.



Service Component

All Components

Deployment Phase

All Deployment Phases

Find & Register for Events

+EventPLUS

yellowribbonevents.org



AT EASE...

Here at the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP), we strive to address the challenges facing Reserve Component (RC) Service members and their families by connecting them with resources where they live and providing a network to support their unique circumstances.

YRRP recognizes the instrumental role RC families play in supporting their Service member while they are deployed, as well as the sacrifice and hardship which comes with being a parent, a partner, a family member, or a friend. It is for this reason that YRRP continually strives to shine a light on resources, information, benefits, and entitlements that military families and their loved ones can use to address the challenges brought on by mobilization.

This deployment magazine serves as an extension of our program, providing you with information and resources you may need while your loved one is deployed.

National Guard and Reserve Service members are the backbone of our nation's military, comprising nearly half of our total force. We have relied on them to offset strains within the active duty force in support of combat missions abroad and will continue to rely on them in the years to come. Nearly one million Guard members and Reservists have deployed since September 11, 2001, supporting combat operations, security, and humanitarian missions around the world and ensuring our safety when unforeseen disasters and emergencies occur.

YRRP is continually evolving to address the changing needs of a dynamic and diverse military community. These past 10 years demonstrate its critical and enduring nature. This program remains committed to maintaining the readiness of RC members, their families, and their communities to enhance the capacity and lethality of our nation's military force.

We also encourage you to attend a Yellow Ribbon post-deployment event when your loved one returns; you'll be able to network with other families experiencing similar challenges, interact with a variety of service provider representatives (Veterans Affairs, TRICARE®, etc.), and spend quality time reconnecting after mobilization.

We are proud to support those who serve, and we are proud to support you.



https://www.yellowribbon.mil/url/_GXJZ_Dnvu5AMRHqfoB02Q

We would like your feedback, please complete our survey, scan the QR code to begin.

Peter W. Toelle

Executive Director
Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program
Office of the Secretary of Defense



AFTER THE GOODBYES...

Weathering the Emotional Cycle of **DEPLOYMENT**

Deployment is hard – for Soldiers and their loved ones. A storm of emotions might confront you after your Soldier says goodbye. Rest assured, it's not just you.

In fact, researchers have identified five emotional stages that Soldiers and families may experience during and after a military deployment. By gaining a better understanding of the Emotional Cycle of Deployment and the feelings associated with each stage, you may be better equipped to develop coping strategies.

Three different stages occur during the deployment. While everyone's experiences are unique, you may find that you can relate to some of the common feelings that follow.

EMOTIONAL DISORGANIZATION

After the goodbye hugs, family members face a new normal. You may feel a sense of relief that the departure date is no longer looming. Without your Soldier around, you may also feel a freedom to ignore routine. Feeling guilty for enjoying that freedom is also common, especially if your Soldier is beginning a challenging or potentially dangerous deployment.

During this stage, you may also look ahead with dread at the growing to-do list and your increased responsibilities. Numbness, restlessness, and, at times, loneliness are common responses. It may be difficult to concentrate or sleep. In short, this period can be a roller coaster of emotions.

Remember that children typically take cues from adults, watching to see how they should feel and react to this new change in the family dynamic. Do your best to take care of yourself during this time!

RECOVERY AND STABILIZATION

Recovery and Stabilization marks the stage where you and your family begin to settle into a routine. Coping with changes in the family dynamic can be both positive and challenging.

At this point, children may feel a range of difficult emotions including anger, sadness, or general anxiety, which can lead to behavior changes. They may struggle with sleep disturbances, eating difficulties, and academic slumps. Knowing that their caregiver is coping and able to care for them can help ease their worries and get them back into their everyday lives.

During this time, don't be surprised to discover (or be reminded of) the depth of your independence, abilities, and strength. This can be one of the unexpected benefits of the military lifestyle!

POSITIVES

You may

- Enjoy your newfound responsibilities
- Have a sense of independence and confidence
- Be relieved that the family is functioning well

CHALLENGES

You may

- Find it difficult accepting changes
- Feel stressed, depressed, and have difficulty getting things done
- Feel unsupported and worried about how you will make it through

WHO CAN YOU TURN TO DURING DEPLOYMENT?

Military OneSource offers Soldiers and their families confidential counseling options and much more.

Visit www.militaryonesource.mil/deployment or call 1-800-342-9647.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is a DoD effort to promote the well-being of National Guard and Reserve members, their families, and communities by connecting them with resources throughout the deployment cycle.

Visit www.yellowribbon.mil to learn more.

ANTICIPATION OF RETURN

The Anticipation of Return stage begins when you're notified of a return date. The countdown begins, leaving the whole family excited and full of energy! Still, waiting family members may also feel apprehensive, nervous, and perhaps even irritable.

After missing your Soldier for so long, it's hard to imagine having such conflicting feelings. You may worry that he or she will be different after the deployment or that your newfound independence will vanish once your Soldier steps through the front door. How will your Soldier react to the household decisions and changes you've made in his or her absence?

Remember that your Soldier may also experience excitement and apprehension during this stage. Sometimes the Soldier has limited opportunity to prepare to come home. He or she has the challenge of remaining mission-focused, often until just a couple of days before the return.

Children may feel anxiety about the deployed Soldier's return. It's critical to discuss plans for the return with everyone involved to set realistic expectations.

You're almost to the finish line, and your Soldier will be home before you know it. Take some time out from homecoming preparations to relax and reflect with pride on how far you've come! ★

Coping with **DEPLOYMENT** **STRESS**

A HOMEFRONT GUIDE

During deployment, many military families may experience increased levels of stress and anxiety. Not only do they miss the companionship of their Soldier, but they also deal with new struggles such as infrequent communication, worries about their Soldier's safety, and the uncertainty of handling household or childcare issues alone. These struggles can put serious stress on military families during deployment.

STRESS AND YOUR BODY

It's not just in your head; stress can cause changes to your body that you can actually feel and see. That's because your body changes when you're exposed to ongoing stressors that you don't think you can handle. What might surprise you is just how big of a negative impact stress can have, even if the stress is just perceived.



Stress — particularly prolonged stress — can:

- Weaken your immune system
- Diminish your energy
- Lower your ability to concentrate
- Impact your mood

STRESS-BUSTING STRATEGIES

The good news is that, once you recognize your stress, you can take steps to minimize it.

Write in a Journal

Keep track of the times you feel stressed in a journal. Note the source of stress, how it made you feel, and what you did in response. Also, record whether the way you dealt with the situation helped you feel less stressed. This will help you identify common stressors in your life and how you deal with them.

Move Your Body

Exercise can improve your quality of sleep and increase immune system functioning. Exercise can also increase

endorphin production in your body, which triggers a positive feeling in the body and reduces stress.

Talk to a Friend

A strong network of social support can help you cope with and even alleviate stress. Simple conversations may provide different perspectives, in addition to an opportunity to vent frustrations, which may lead to a sense of community. Remember, you are not alone.

Simplify

Make your daily life easier by establishing a schedule and streamlining everyday routines. Consider things that can help free up time and make your life a little simpler. Try to find positive ways to help you through the tough days.

Limit Worry to a Specific Time of Day

Allot yourself time to worry each day. During this time, allow yourself to think worrisome or stressful thoughts. Do your best not to think about these negative thoughts during any other part of the day.



Relax Your Body and Slow Your Breathing

Concentrated breathing, meditation, yoga, or other relaxation tools can help reduce your stress response. Getting into a regular routine will help the effects seep into your everyday life. Check out page 26 for more information on relaxation techniques.

For more information on stress-reduction, visit the YRRP website at www.yellowribbon.mil/cms/event-handout under Address Your Stress. ★

DID YOU KNOW?

Not all stress has negative effects. A moderate amount of stress keeps us sharp, alert, and energized. It can drive us to perform heroic acts, ace a job interview, reach a personal goal, or make a positive life change.



WELCOME HOME: ADJUSTING TO A NEW NORMAL

Your Soldier is home! It's time to congratulate yourself and your family on a job well done. While the separation is now over and this is generally a very exciting time, reintegration may bring about unique challenges. At times, the reunion road may feel rocky. Don't worry — this is completely normal.

The **Emotional Cycle of Deployment** may continue for months following a deployment. Knowing this may help you remember to be patient. Like it or not, the deployment journey continues!

“ Why do I feel guilty even though I did the right thing according to procedure? ”

RETURN ADJUSTMENT AND RENEGOTIATION

This stage is generally filled with joy, but it may also be stressful for the family and the returning Soldier.

Reality typically sets in soon after your Soldier returns. Adjustments may need

to be made to your routine and lifestyle now that the deployment is over. Initially, you may experience what feels like a loss of your independence.

It's important to communicate openly during this time and share what you're feeling. To facilitate a successful reunion, remember to take it slowly. Get to know each other again, and remember that reuniting isn't a fleeting moment, it's a process.

Don't hesitate to seek professional services, if needed. Professionals who are trained in this area can help you reconnect.

REINTEGRATION AND STABILIZATION

During this stage, a new normal will be established. Renegotiating the household tasks and duties will aid in developing a sense of normalcy. You're working together again. And best of all, after such a long time apart, you're likely cherishing one another's presence.

In some cases, however, the path to stabilization may be more difficult. There may be signs that your Soldier is experiencing more than the expected reintegration challenges.

PTSD is a disorder that may develop in people who have experienced a shocking, scary, or dangerous event.

“ Why do I feel sadness from what I witnessed?”

It's natural to experience stress symptoms after such an event. However, when the symptoms last more than a month, seriously impact one's ability to function, and aren't due to substance use or medical illness, they might be PTSD.

PTSD is often accompanied by other mental health challenges, like depression or substance abuse. It's important to note that some people with PTSD don't exhibit symptoms for weeks or months.

The symptoms of PTSD are numerous and range from mild to severe. Some include:

- Flashbacks
- Nightmares
- Easily startled
- Tense or “on edge”

- Difficulty sleeping
- Angry outbursts
- Distorted feelings like guilt or blame
- Loss of interest in enjoyable activities

ATTENDING POST-DEPLOYMENT EVENTS

Post-deployment military unit events offer families the chance to gather with others who have shared similar experiences. This can make it a safe environment to ask questions, share fears or concerns, and learn from others who have navigated multiple deployments and reunions.

These events also offer a time to celebrate, have fun, and be appreciated. ★



A unit-based, chaplain-led program which assists commanders in building individual resiliency by strengthening the Army Family.

strongbonds.jointservicesupport.org

If you're concerned that your Soldier may be experiencing PTSD, the following resources may help you find help and cope with your Soldier's symptoms.

National Center for PTSD

www.ptsd.va.gov/gethelp/index.asp

PTSD and TBI Resource Guide

www.yellowribbon.mil/cms/ptsd-and-tbi-resource-guide

Veterans Crisis Line website

www.veteranscrisisline.net
or call: 1-800-273-8255

inTransition

www.pdhealth.mil/resource-center/intransition
or call: 800-424-7877

AboutFace

www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/AboutFace

Psychological Health Center of Excellence (PHCoE)

www.pdhealth.mil/clinical-guidance/clinical-conditions/posttraumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd

Health.mil

health.mil/military-health-topics/conditions-and-treatments/mental-health/post-traumatic-stress-disorder

BrainlineMilitary

www.brainline.org/military-veterans

Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center

dvbic.dcoe.mil



*Your Soldier is now safely home,
and that is reason to celebrate.*

What to Expect:

REINTEGRATING POST-DEPLOYMENT

Chances are you've imagined your Soldier's homecoming day for most of your separation. This is a special and exciting time for everyone! While reuniting can feel wonderful, readjusting to the everyday routine may be challenging. Knowing what to expect can help.

SET REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Face it — things might be different when your Soldier returns. Change is inevitable after a long separation. You, your Soldier, and other family members may be affected by changes the reintegration brings.

On the homefront, roles may have shifted to account for the missing family member.

Children may act out anxieties and behave differently. The Soldier may have trouble transitioning back to domestic responsibilities.

As you renegotiate your new normal, set realistic expectations and give yourselves some time to adjust. It will help when you hit a bump in the road.

ENJOY YOUR TIME TOGETHER...

Find simple ways you and your Soldier can relax together and don't feel pressure to make up for lost time. Whether you're tackling a home project, cooking meals together, sharing a hobby, playing a game, or just enjoying a quiet evening, try to savor these moments and remind your Soldier how much you enjoy

sharing this time. Take time to laugh, have fun, and enjoy simple dates. After all, it's the absence from each other that needs nurturing, not the activity.

...BUT GIVE EACH OTHER SPACE

As you adapt to your new normal, remember that everyone's preference for alone time is different. You may have become more independent, and you've

likely been doing what you wanted during personal time. Now that you're together, you may need to schedule alone time in order to meet your personal needs while you adjust.

COMMUNICATE

Even though it may be hard, make an effort to talk about the feelings you're experiencing. This may help reestablish your connection.



REINTEGRATING CAN BE CHALLENGING.

Know that you aren't alone. Seek out these resources for help.

MILITARY ONESOURCE

The Military OneSource website at www.militaryonesource.mil has great information, and you can contact them anytime 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can talk to a live consultant to be connected with resources in your local area.

VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)

Veterans Affairs is also an important resource available to Soldiers and their spouses for counseling. Vet Centers can help with employment issues, education, housing, and more. Visit the VA website at www.va.gov.

TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TRANSITION: GPS)

The Department of Defense sponsors Transition Assistance Program: Goals, Plans, Success (Transition: GPS) that provides job assistance and separation counseling services for Soldiers and their families during the transition from active service.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Numerous non-governmental organizations and Veterans Service Organizations are available to help military families.

CHAPLAIN OR FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Unit chaplains and faith-based organizations can connect you to resources and programs and provide insight on reintegration issues.

Reevaluating Family Roles and Responsibilities

When a Soldier is deployed, everyone in the family adapts in some way to his or her absence. Over the course of deployment, family members create new routines and new methods for managing household chores. Everyone in the family experiences something different after a deployment, and each member of the family faces an adjustment. Try to recognize the perspectives of each family member.

Discuss roles and responsibilities in the household, and ease into a routine gradually.

During the deployment, both of you shouldered important responsibilities independently and experienced unique journeys apart from one another. Soldiers may want to talk about their deployment experiences, might find their experiences

difficult to discuss, or may not want to talk about them at all. Avoid pushing your Soldier to talk about deployment experiences, but try to be open to the discussion if the time comes.

BE PATIENT

No matter the length of the deployment, adjustments at home may be needed. These adjustments may not happen quickly — reconnecting takes time! Keep communicating and be patient.

RETURNING SOLDIERS

Soldiers returning from deployment may experience a number of worries and concerns. They may face major life decisions such as changes in their career, lifestyle, or education plans.



Returning Soldiers may also find it difficult to adjust back to home life, which may include feelings that they are no longer needed if their family members successfully managed during their absence. Soldiers may also miss the structure and camaraderie they experienced while deployed. Culture shock can occur for returning Soldiers from the change in surroundings, living conditions, and daily routine.

SPOUSES OR ADULT FAMILY MEMBERS

Partners and family members may have become more independent and confident during the deployment. They may have taken on new responsibilities, made new decisions, and set new schedules and routines. They

may be proud of these accomplishments and content with their new habits.

On the other hand, some family members may be upset with the burden placed on them during deployment. Therefore, they may be expecting immediate help and support from the returning Soldier. The Soldier, however, may be unable or not ready to provide help immediately. Knowing and understanding this ahead of time may help prevent disruptions in the household.

CHILDREN

A deployment may seem like a lifetime to a child. Children may have adjusted to the Soldier's absence. They may need time to adjust to having their Soldier home again.

WHAT IS THE HOUSEHOLD TASK?

Before Deployment:
Who did it?

During Deployment:
Who does it now?

After Deployment:
What would be ideal?



ARMY FEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Supporting families of deployed Guardsmen and Reservists with fee assistance.

Find out more at childcareaware.org



REACHING OUT IS A SIGN OF STRENGTH.

It is good to create an environment where your child feels comfortable sharing their feelings.

REAL WARRIORS CAMPAIGN

Their mission: help build resilience, facilitate recovery, and support reintegration of returning Service members, veterans, and their families. Call or live chat with health professionals at Psychological Health Resource Center (www.realwarriors.net/guardreserve/treatment/psychological-health-resource-center). Visit www.realwarriors.net for more information about the Real Warriors Campaign.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION'S (SAMHSA) NATIONAL HELPLINE

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

TTY: 1-800-487-4889

Website: www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline

This helpline gives 24-hour free and confidential treatment referrals and information about mental and/or substance use disorders, prevention, and recovery.

inTRANSITION

800-424-7877 (United States)

800-424-4685 (International)

Website: www.pdhealth.mil/resource-center/intransition

inTransition is a free, confidential program that offers specialized coaching and assistance for those who need access to mental health care when returning from deployment, relocating, or during other military transitions.



No matter the length of the deployment, adjustments at home may be needed. These adjustments may not happen quickly – reconnecting takes time! Keep communicating and be patient.

Children may not immediately respond to the returning Soldier in the same way they respond to the person who has been taking care of them during the deployment. In fact, it is common for young children to be hesitant to accept their newly returned Soldier, which can be hurtful to that Soldier. Soldiers may feel jealous of the close relationship between the child and the at-home caregiver. Reintegrating with children takes time and patience. During this time, it's best to

allow each child to warm up on his or her own time and not force interactions.

Tell the children how much you missed them and how proud you are of them. Encourage children to share their feelings and the changes they experienced while you were gone. It is good to create an environment where your child feels comfortable sharing their feelings. ★

DEPLOYMENT STRONG



**Turn to Military OneSource to help you master deployment –
from shipping out to coming home and beyond.**

Military OneSource and your local installation are here to help service members and families stay “Deployment Strong” at every turn. Get important information, documents, tools and non-medical support to thrive through deployment.

The Plan My Deployment Tool

This online tool offers resources, information and more including:

- Tasks & Considerations lists
- Important documents and forms
- Financial guidance including combat pay
- Ways to stay connected and keep relationships strong
- <https://PlanMyDeployment.MilitaryOneSource.mil>

Support for Military Families

Call or contact Military OneSource at any time. Master deployment with help on: careers, personal health and wellness, financial counseling, homework help and more. Check Military OneSource online for all the services we offer.

Free Confidential Non-Medical Counseling

Connect to counseling through Military OneSource:

- By telephone, secure online chat, video or face-to-face.
- Talk to us about stress, relationships parenting, grief, separation and more

Face-to-face sessions are also available through the Military and Family Life Counseling Program at installations worldwide.

MILITARY
ONESOURCE

DEPLOYMENT
STRONG

Stay Deployment Strong. Contact Military OneSource 24/7,
or visit your local Military and Family Support Center.
800-342-9647 | www.MilitaryOneSource.mil





MORAL INJURY

“

“There Was No
Right Answer”:
Supporting
Those Who Must
Face Difficult
Decisions

Emergency Preparedness and Response

- For information on emergency preparedness and response, visit the CDC website at <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/index.asp> provides information

Whether your Service member is deployed in support of combat operations or humanitarian assistance, the deployment, and subsequent reintegration, can be challenging. Should your Service member have deployment experiences that make him or her question his or her moral beliefs in the goodness of humanity, a higher power, societal institutions, and/or the military's ability to be a force for good, then reintegration may even be more difficult.

For many individuals, experiences that call one's moral beliefs into question can be resolved with the help of loved ones' encouragement and community support. For others, however, overcoming such challenges may require more than what loved ones and community support can offer. Your Service member needs to be

able to recognize and understand the struggle he or she is experiencing in order to effectively take steps to overcome the challenges he or she is facing. With that in mind, this article describes the concept of Moral Injury, general signs and symptoms, and supportive behaviors that may benefit your Service member.

Moral Injury - What Causes It?

Moral injury, according to researchers Litz and colleagues (2009), is defined as "the lasting psychological, biological, spiritual, behavioral, and social impact of perpetrating, failing to prevent, or bearing witness to acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations."

In the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic, Service members who serve in a humanitarian assistance support role may be challenged as a result of being asked to complete their mission. This could involve sitting vigil with infected individuals as their health fails, trying to help patients remotely connect with loved ones to say their goodbyes, or watching as scarce medical resources are rationed. It could also involve witnessing the shift in

Physical Health

- For information on how to manage self-quarantine, visit the World Health Organization website at www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-emergencies/coronavirus-covid-19

medical decision-making from doing all you can for each patient to weighing the benefits of life-saving techniques against the costs of potentially infecting others. Each of these examples could represent a significant challenge to one's moral beliefs.

Potential Symptoms

Family members and other important people in a Service member's life may notice significant changes in behavior upon reintegration which could include the following:

- Withdrawal and disconnection,
- Problems communicating about inner experience,
- Problems expressing caring feelings,
- Problems feeling good in situations that used to bring pleasure,
 - Poor self-care, and
 - Self-handicapping.

Such changes in behavior can be indicators that the Service member is avoiding or concealing his or her most recent deployment experiences and not processing them in a helpful, healthy way.

Most people demonstrate resiliency in the face of emergencies, crises, and disasters. However, it is also common for individuals to experience emotional and psychological distress from these types of events, and trauma can result. If your Service member is shaken by a morally injurious experience and displays any of the symptoms mentioned above, know that healing is possible. While there is no quick fix and healing is a process, goodness is reclaimable, and forgiveness and repair can occur.



Trying to Help – Perspective Taking and Some Warnings

• As is the case with many life challenges, and regardless of the circumstances, few people like to admit they are struggling with some aspect of their life. Think for a moment about your own life – how often have you admitted to another person that you were struggling? Consider, for example, challenges that you may be having with a romantic partner, a child, a co-worker or boss, or your finances. Did you discuss these struggles with another person? For those who struggle with acknowledging challenges, it may be helpful and empowering for them to consider the following: (1) you are not alone; (2) you can get better at acknowledging your struggle; and (3) there are plenty of reasons to try to improve, including the potential for reduced stress, increased social support, and decreased stigma associated with admitting you are imperfect and may need help sometimes. When your Service member returns home, remember that he or she may or may not have experienced things that caused him or her to rethink some of his or her core moral beliefs. Understand that your Service member may struggle to admit to being challenged in this way, just as you may struggle to admit to your own challenges.

• There is no one support strategy that works best for everyone. In addition, unintended consequences, such as increased isolation, may result from well-meaning but misdirected support behaviors. Consider, for example, whether you are prepared to listen to and emotionally handle the many different types of situations that your Service member may have been exposed to before encouraging him or her to share his or her experiences with you. Is there a limit to your compassion for those who struggle with what they have done, failed to do, witnessed, or been the target of? If so, be aware that offering a listening ear may backfire if you end up responding to your Service member's morally challenging

disclosures with harsh judgment, impatience, and/or a lack of compassion.

• Offering overwhelming attention, love, and care or being unavailable could result in additional problems for your Service member. Demonstrating any of these extremes could negatively impact your relationship. As such, you should consider support behaviors that are within your comfort level and ability to manage and ensure the strategy you select is a good fit for you and your Service member. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, continue to assess with your Service member whether you both feel your efforts are in line with what your Service member needs and your efforts are helpful.

• Build a communication plan with your Service member that honors both of your preferences and attempts to meet each other's needs. For instance, you may agree to the following: (1) it is ok to struggle and to admit to struggling, (2) it is ok for all involved to have changed as a result of the deployment, (3) it is not ok to become abusive or demeaning to each other, (4) it is not ok to expect more of others than you expect of yourself.

• Consider what signs you could look for to determine if your support is helping or being received well by your Service member. Remember, loved ones and community support cannot always provide the level of help your Service member may need. Consider reaching out to a trained professional if you notice that your Service member's symptoms do not improve with the help of loved ones and community support

COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESOURCES

MENTAL HEALTH AND STRESS

• For general tips, visit the American Psychological Association website at www.apa.org/practice/programs/dmhi/research-information/pandemics

• For information on how to manage stress and anxiety, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html

Family Support

• For information that can be useful to military families, visit the Military Family Organization website at www.militaryfamily.org/what-military-families-need-to-know-about-covid-19/

• For helpful links and resources for parents, visit the Thrive website at <https://thrive.psu.edu/> and the Child Mind Institute website at <https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/>

• For resources and activities for families (especially those with younger children), visit the Sesame Street website at <https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/health-emergencies/>

• Visit the Sesame Street website at <https://sesamestreetformilitaryfamilies.org/> for information to support military families

• For resources and recommendations on how to proactively keep children safe, visit the Darkness to Light website at www.dzl.org/protecting-children-during-a-crisis-resources/

Share facts about COVID-19

Know the facts about coronavirus (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

FACT
1

Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.

Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.

FACT
2

For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low.

Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

FACT
3

Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.

For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.

FACT
4

There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- When in public, wear a cloth face covering that covers your mouth and nose.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

FACT
5

You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms, which can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

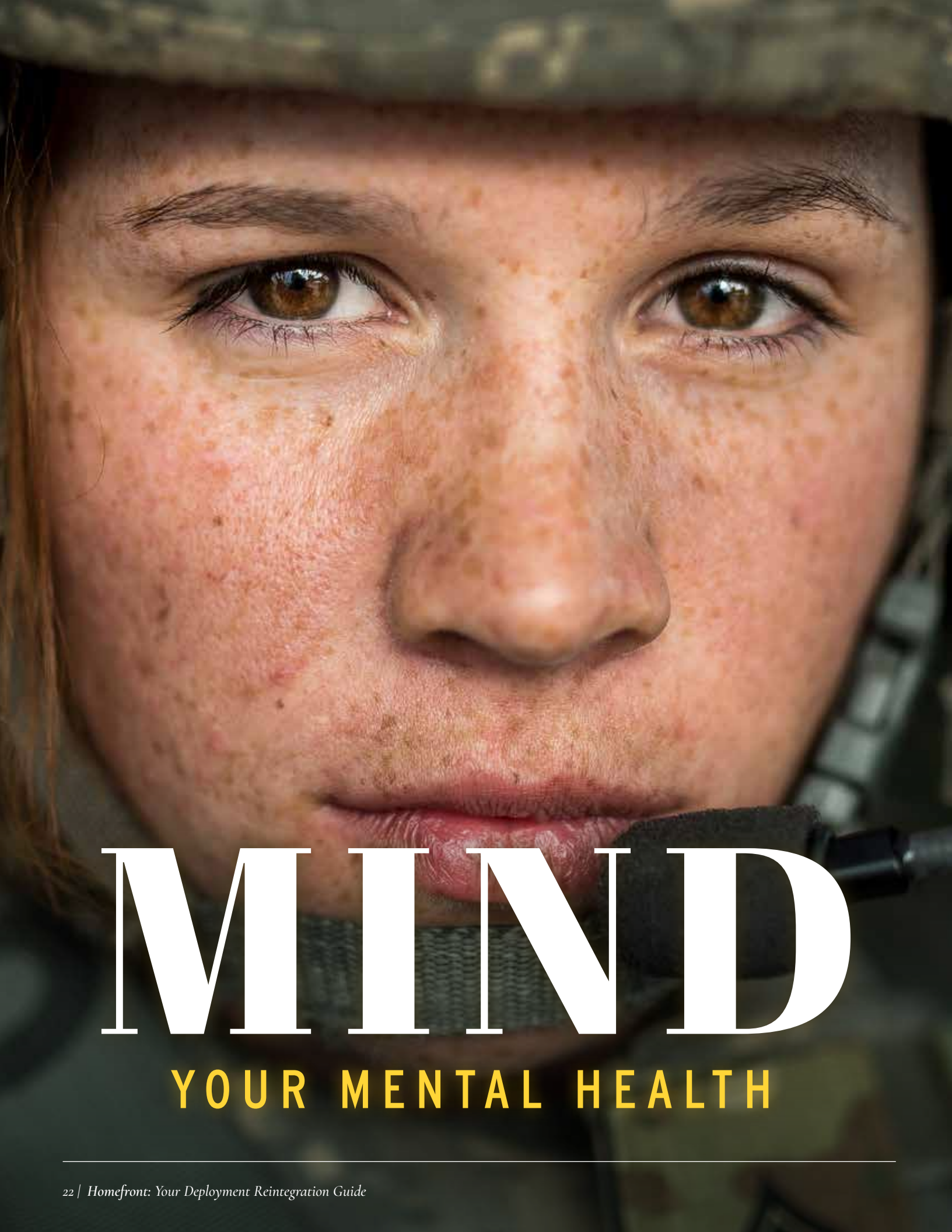
Seek medical attention immediately if you or someone you love has emergency warning signs, including:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or not able to be woken
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)



MIND

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

The pain is real but so is
HOPE

You have competing responsibilities in your life, including work, family, friends, and social commitments. With so much to balance, it can be easy to lose perspective and neglect yourself. A lack of life balance may be even more pronounced if you must assume more than your typical share of responsibilities during a deployment. Carving out space in your life for a little “self-care” and “me time” may take a concerted effort, but it could pay dividends for your psychological well-being.

Mental health involves bringing balance to your life — mind, body, and spirit. Just like with physical health, you may be able to improve your mental health with practice.

Tuning in to how you feel and how you take care of yourself is a great first step. Are you getting enough sleep, exercise, and down time? If not, consider what small tweaks you can make in your daily life to tend to your overall well-being.

***Mental health involves bringing balance
to your life – mind, body, and spirit.***

TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

- Eat well
- Exercise regularly
- Be kind to yourself
- Volunteer or show love to others
- Practice de-stressing techniques
- Get adequate sleep
- Connect with friends and family

Still, sometimes lifestyle changes aren't enough. If mental health issues interfere with your daily life, it's important to seek help. Signs of mental distress might include feeling anxious, worried, depressed, or unhappy. You may also notice changes in your weight, appetite, sleep, or substance use habits.

There are many resources you can turn to if you want to talk or learn about what mental health care options are available for you and your family. Remember, reaching out is a sign of strength.

SEEKING MENTAL HEALTH CARE

As a Soldier or a family member, your physical and mental health care is valued

and covered by your military benefits. If you need mental health care, seek it. Treatment works and recovery is possible.

- **TRICARE** provides mental health services for you and your dependent family members during times of stress, depression, grief, anxiety, or mental health crisis. TRICARE covers medically and psychologically necessary mental health and substance use disorder care. You can learn more about covered treatments at www.tricare.mil/CoveredServices/Mental/Treatments.
- **The Military & Family Life Counseling (MFLC) Program** supports Service members, their families, and survivors with non-medical counseling worldwide.



Proactively supporting wounded, ill, and/or injured Service members in their recovery and reintegration or transition to civilian life.

warriorcare.dodlive.mil

Trained to work with the military community, counselors provide short-term, face-to-face couple or group counseling services. If you're facing something that a counselor can't address, you'll receive a referral for medical counseling services in your community through a military treatment facility or TRICARE. For more information, contact your installation's Military and Family Support Center, visit www.militaryonesource.mil/military-and-family-life-counseling, or call 1-800-342-9647.

- **Military OneSource** counselors are available for free, short-term, confidential, non-medical counseling services for a wide range of issues from marital conflicts and stress management to coping with a loss and deployments. Sessions take place in person, over the phone, or via secure video or online chat. Service members and their immediate family members are entitled to 12 sessions per issue and will be referred to other resources if additional support is necessary. For more information, visit www.militaryonesource.mil or call 1-800-342-9647.
- **Psychological Health Center of Excellence (PHCoE)** aims to improve the lives of Service members, veterans, and their families by advancing excellence in psychological health care, readiness, and prevention of psychological health disorders. The Psychological Health Resource Center is available 24/7 at 866-966-1020. You may also live chat at www.realwarriors.net/livechat.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

"Pain is real, but so is hope."

If you or someone you know has suicidal thoughts, get help immediately.

If you need mental health care, seek it.
Treatment works and
recovery is possible.

Military Crisis Line: Call the Military Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and press 1, text 838255, or confidentially chat online at www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat with a Military Crisis Line counselor. Hundreds of men and women in the military call every day and start to get back on track.

Real Warriors Live Chat: A trained health resource consultant is ready to talk, listen, and provide the guidance and resources you

seek — confidentially, 24/7. Call 1-800-273-8255 or login to Real Warriors Live Chat at www.realwarriors.net.

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: If you're in suicidal crisis, call 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255) or TTY: 1-800-799-4889. This hotline is a 24-hour, toll-free suicide prevention service available to anyone. You will be routed to the closest possible crisis center in your area. Your call is free and confidential. ★



Army Reserve Family Programs provides a single gateway to responsive Family Crisis Assistance.

www.usar.army.mil/ARFP/



ARMY RESERVE FAMILY PROGRAMS
Connecting Soldiers • Families • Communities

Relax

You've Got This!

One approach for managing stress involves calming your body down. Once calm, you can approach your stressors differently. This will help you think more clearly and rationally, as opposed to thinking emotionally. Creating a wellness practice that includes elements of meditation, breathing exercises, and yoga will help you to clear your mind and relax your body.

Note: Remember to consult with your primary healthcare provider before engaging in any new exercise regimen. You and your provider can determine what exercise is best for you and your current condition.

1. Meditation Techniques

The numerous health benefits of meditation can include relief from anxiety and stress, as well as promoting mental health. It can help you improve your outlook on life and even improve your sleep. You don't need special equipment to meditate – it's available to everyone, free of charge! There are many styles and techniques of meditation. You can use the following online resources to help get you started:

- This Mayo Clinic instructional video offers a guided meditation session to help you relax. Visit the Mayo Clinic Meditation Video website at www.mayoclinic.org/meditation/vid-20084741.

- The McMaster University Guided Relaxation CD includes free MP3 audio tracks for diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, autogenic training, and guided imagery. Visit the McMaster University Guided Relaxation CD website at campusmentalhealth.ca/resource/mcmaster-guided-relaxation-cd/.

2. Breathing Exercises

Diaphragmatic Breathing: This may be practiced seated, standing, or lying down. Take the posture that feels most comfortable and remember to wear clothing that isn't constrictive in the waist. Place your hands on your abdomen just below your navel.

Now, slowly, count to three (count out loud one...two...three...); inhale through the nose; feel the nostrils open, not pulling toward each other; and feel the belly expand into your hands first, followed by the chest gently expanding. As you exhale, breathe through the mouth and slowly count to three. Continue to breathe in this way at your own pace. Count with the inhale, one...two...three..., feel the belly expand, and exhale through the mouth, one...two...three, and feel the navel gently draw back toward the spine as you release the breath.

Continue for about 30 seconds up to several minutes. Gradually increase your time with each session. On your next exhale, release that breath and allow your breathing to return to its natural rhythm and pace.



3. Yoga

Developing and maintaining a regular yoga practice can provide physical and mental health benefits. You can develop strength, flexibility, and harmony in mind and body.

Increasingly, yoga studios are offering classes tailored to the unique needs of returning Service members and the military community. Resources for locating yoga teachers or for finding studios that serve the military community include the following:

- **Warriors at Ease** brings the healing power of yoga and meditation to military communities around the world, especially those affected by combat stress, post-traumatic stress disorder, and trauma. Find a yoga teacher and resources to support you and your family during and after deployment. The Warriors at Ease website is available at warriorsatease.org.

- **Veterans Yoga Project** offers classes for veterans, Service members, and their families and allies. Classes are taught by Registered Yoga Teachers who have received additional training from Veterans Yoga Project. A searchable directory of classes and teachers is available on their website: www.veteransyogaproject.org.
- **Yoga for Vets** is an organization that consists of more than 500 yoga studios and gyms around the country that have committed to giving four free yoga classes to veterans. Founder Paul Zipes, a yoga teacher and veteran of the U.S. Navy, says offering free classes gives veterans a real chance to fall in love with yoga. The Yoga for Vets website is available at www.yogaforvets.org. ★

JUST

RESOURCES FOR BREATHING EXERCISES

- **The Breathing Book** by Donna Farhi is comprehensive and includes information to help develop a customized practice to fit your personal conditions.
- The Glo website at www.glo.com offers meditation, yoga, deep relaxation, and breathing classes of varying lengths. Breathwork will be labeled “pranayama.” Monthly subscription rates are involved (this is the Netflix of mind-body wellness).

BREATHE

HOW TO CONNECT WITH A RESPONDER

Call

1-800-273-8255

and Press 1

Chat

Connect online

Text

838255

Support for deaf and hard of hearing

1-800-799-4889



This free support is

- Confidential
- Available every day, 24/7

And serves

- ★ All Veterans
- ★ All Service members
- ★ National Guard and Reserve
- Their family members and friends

A black and white photograph of two soldiers in camouflage uniforms. The soldier on the left is looking at a computer monitor, with his hand resting on his chin in a thoughtful pose. The soldier on the right is looking off to the side, also in a thoughtful pose. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

YOU EARNED IT.

EXPLORING YOUR EDUCATION BENEFITS

Guard and Reserve members characteristically bring strong leadership and diverse skillsets to the civilian workplace. Yet many struggle with translating those skills into meaningful work. It could be a matter of knowing how to best document them in a resume, or how to shine in an interview. Or it may be that some additional education is needed. Earning a certificate or degree in your field of choice could enhance your job prospects or advance your current career.

You may be eligible for one or more of the many education benefits offered by the military in gratitude for your service. Take time to explore your options regarding financial assistance, degree programs, and career guidance. Here, you'll find a handful of programs that can put you on a path to higher learning.

DANTES

The Defense Activity for Non Traditional Education Support (DANTES) is a DoD organization created to help Service members pursue their educational goals and earn a degree or certification while continuing to serve their country. The organization provides a variety of benefits including career guidance materials, informational videos, certificate programs, and credit-by-examination programs. DANTES offers distance learning programs, military evaluation programs, Service member Opportunity Colleges (SOC), and the Troops to Teachers Program.

More information

- Visit the DANTES website at www.dantes.doded.mil.

FEDERAL TUITION ASSISTANCE (TA) PROGRAM

The Federal TA Program is a federally funded program that provides up to \$4,500 per fiscal year in financial support to assist Service members with the cost of secondary education. There are differing specifications for each specific branch of service.

More information

- Visit the Tuition Assistance Program webpage on the Military.com website at <http://bit.ly/mil-tuition-assistance>
- Contact Education Officer for Service Branch

ARMY TUITION ASSISTANCE (TA)

Army Tuition Assistance (TA) provides financial assistance for voluntary off-duty education programs in support of a Soldier's professional and personal self-development goals.

There are some restrictions regarding who can use Army Tuition Assistance, as well as what courses qualify.

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You may be eligible for one or more of the many education benefits offered by the military in gratitude for your service.

VETERANS AFFAIRS EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The VA Education Programs are entitlement programs managed by the VA. Many veterans and Service members are eligible for more than one education benefit program. Basic assistance for the Guard and Reserve is provided through:

- Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty (MGIB-AD)
- Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR)
- Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP)
- Post-9/11 GI Bill



Set your sights on success.

Online tutoring and homework help for U.S. military and their families provided 24/7 at no cost by the U.S. Department of Defense and Coast Guard Mutual Assistance.

tutor.com



MONTGOMERY GI BILL- ACTIVE DUTY

The Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty program generally requires active duty members to enroll and pay \$100 per month for 12 months. Active duty members are entitled to receive a monthly education benefit once they have completed a minimum service obligation of at least two years of active duty. Service members must also have a high school diploma or equivalency certificate to be eligible. This program provides up to 36 months of education benefits paid directly to the student.

MONTGOMERY GI BILL- SELECTED RESERVE

The Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve program is available to



**Promoting state-of-the-science care from point-of-injury
to reintegration for service members, veterans, and their families.**

reservists actively drilling with a six-year obligation in the Selected Reserve or National Guard. To be eligible, you must have completed high school, basic training, and advanced training. This program provides up to 36 months of education benefits paid directly to the student. The monthly full-time student payment rate is \$362 multiplied by the 36-month limit.

RESERVE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Reserve Educational Assistance Program generally requires at least 90 consecutive days of service and provides up to 36 months of education benefits paid directly to the student. The amount of payment is determined by the number of days you were activated. If you were

activated for over 90 days but less than a year, you get 50 percent of the full-time rate; if you were activated for over a year but less than two years, you get 75 percent of the full-time rate, and if you were activated for two or more years, you get 100 percent of the full-time rate.

This benefit can't be used with any other VA educational benefits.

More information

- Visit the Education and Training webpage on the VA website at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill
- 1-888 GI BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551)
- Visit the VA website at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/handouts_forms.asp ★

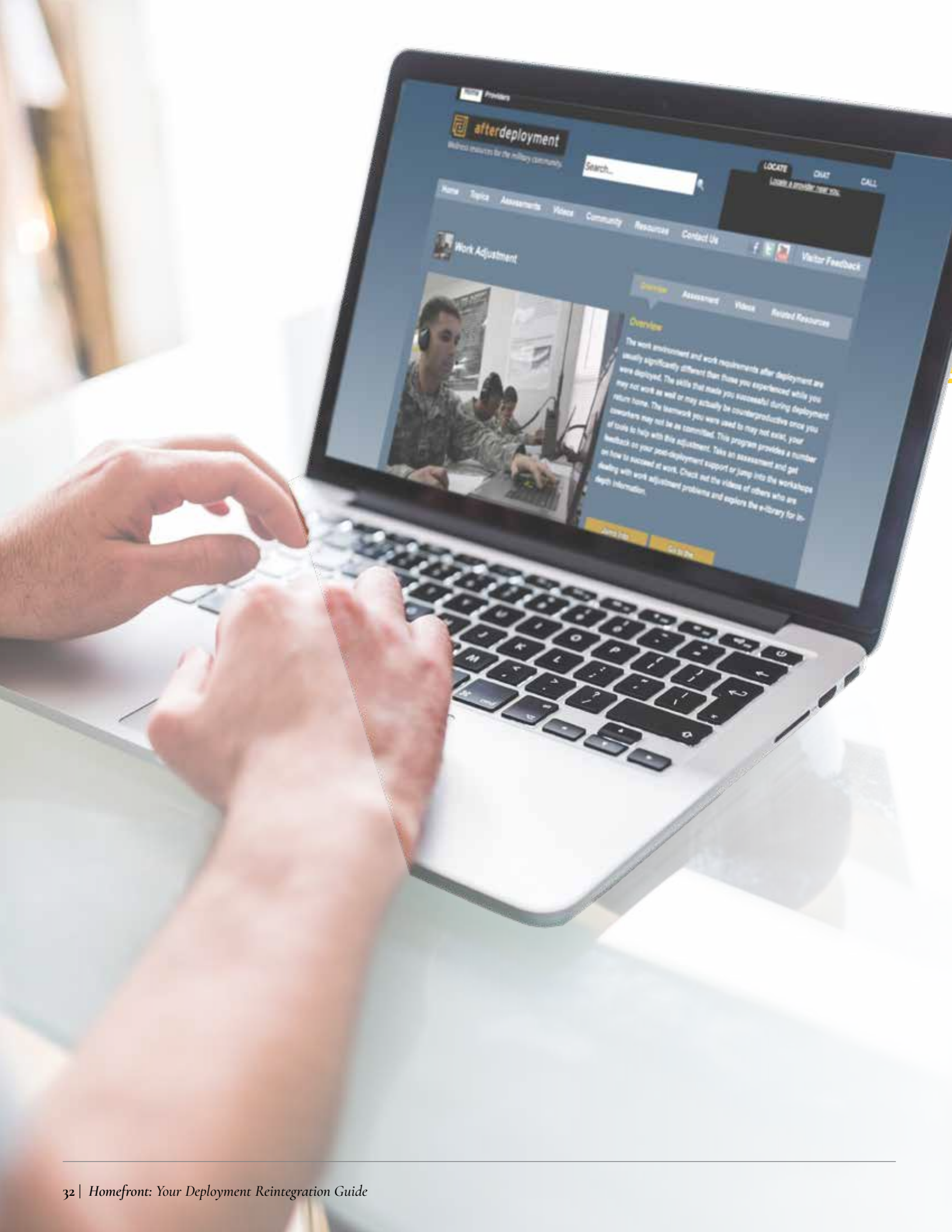
GI BILL

Read *Understanding the Post-9/11 GI Bill* on the Military.com website at bit.ly/post911-gibill

Resources under the heading "Helpful GI Bill Related Links":

- A Post-9/11 GI Bill calculator
- GI Bill fact sheets
- A Yellow Ribbon Program overview
- The Military Education blog





GET AN EDGE

in the **WORKFORCE** with **ONLINE TOOLS**

From adjusting to post-deployment work challenges to searching for a job that best suits your skills, online employment tools can be valuable resources for all kinds of career-related issues. You can work on your resume, network, look for jobs, and perfect your interview skills. These websites will guide you through the process.

CAREER EXPLORATION & INTEREST PROFILER

Website: www.careeronestop.org/ExploreCareers/explore-careers.aspx

With Career One Stop's "Explore Careers" feature you can find wage information, employment trends, and skills needed for almost any occupation. This feature can also help you learn the different tasks and activities associated with a specific job, what types of tools and technology you will use on the job, and the education and training required. Take an interest assessment to identify careers that fit your interests, a skills assessment to determine what careers you are already qualified for, or a value assessment to learn what careers match your beliefs.

INTERVIEWING

Website: www.gcflernfree.org/interviewingskills/

GCFLearnFree.org provides an overview of the different types of interviews, how to prepare for an interview, what to do

during an interview, and how to follow up after an interview. Take the interactive quiz to help you assess if you're interview ready.

RESUME BUILDER

Website: www.theladders.com/resume-builder/

The Ladders' resume builder helps you build a resume from scratch starting with where to place your name and

personal information. This template will help you simplify the process of documenting your job titles, skills, accomplishments, employment history, and education history.

NETWORKING

Website: www.linkedin.com


LinkedIn can help you build your professional social network. The site

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

FIND HELP & TREATMENT

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

1-800-273-8255 (TALK)
TTY: 1-800-799-4889

 Chat with a professional
Need to talk to someone?

NATIONAL HELPLINE

1-800-662-HELP (4357)
TTY: 1-800-487-4889

Seeking treatment options?

Disaster Distress Helpline

1-800-985-5990
TTY: 1-800-846-8517

Experienced a natural or human-caused disaster?

www.samhsa.gov

“

**Online
employment
tools can
be valuable
resources for all
kinds of career-
related issues.**

also gives you tips for completing your online profile, including making suggestions for what skills you may want to list.

JOB SEARCH

Website: www.monster.com

With blogs, templates, and other resources relating to job searching, Monster.com is a one-stop shop for career resources.

MILITARY SKILLS TRANSLATION

Website: [www.onetonline.org/
crosswalk/MOC/](http://www.onetonline.org/crosswalk/MOC/)

The O*NET OnLine Military Crosswalk Search allows you to find civilian career information associated

with your Military Occupational Classification. If you're interested in a civilian career similar to your military job, you will find related occupations as well as wages and employment trends associated with those civilian occupations. Enter your title or code to generate a list of tasks and work activities you may have participated in, tools and technology you may have utilized, and knowledge, skills, and abilities you may have gained.

NETWORKING

Website: www.rallypoint.com

Rally Point lets you network with others connected to the military community. The site makes it easy to identify those you already know and makes suggestions for other contacts to help extend your professional network.



TROOPS TO TEACHERS

Website: proudtoserveagain.com

The Troops to Teachers (TTT) program helps current and former military members transition into second careers as K-12 teachers upon separation from military service. The program is free and provides counseling, referrals, job assistance, and financial aid, when eligible. ★



The Red Cross has served more than 1 million military families since 9/11.



VA



**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

VA Vet Centers

www.vetcenter.va.gov



DEPLOYMENT DOLLARS

Managing Money Now May Save You Money Later

“

Taking the time to discuss your options and making a plan will help inform your decision.

During deployment, you may earn extra pay for family separation, hazardous duty, or special duty pay. Will you spend it, pay off debt, or boost your savings?

How you choose to budget deployment money is a personal decision. However, taking the time to discuss your options and making a plan will help inform your decision. If you are married, planning may help you and your spouse approach deployment finances as a team.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

When preparing your budget, compare the percentages below with your actual spending in these categories. Doing so might help you save money in some areas and allocate more to others. The following percentages are just guidelines.

FINANCIAL CHECKLISTS



DURING DEPLOYMENT

- Check your LES online:
 - Entitlements commenced - Hostile Fire, Family Separation, Hardship Duty
 - Cease of Federal income tax withholding
 - Accumulation of combat zone leave days
 - Current allotments (e.g., TSP, SDP, bills)
- Check lump sum payments:
 - Enlistment and re-enlistment bonuses
 - Accumulated back pay

AFTER DEPLOYMENT

- Check your LES (combat zone benefits stopped)
- Reinstate insurance (if you suspended it)
- Adjust spending plan to new income
- Resist the urge to splurge

Handout available for download on the YRRP website at www.yellowribbon.mil/cms/event-handout

Fixed Expenses

Items in this category are those you pay in the same general amounts each period.

- Pay Yourself First* (10%-15%)
- Housing & Utilities (20%-45%)
- Insurance (2%-10%)
- Savings & Investments (0%-10%)
- Taxes (8%-10%)

* Place priority on taking care of your future self financially and set aside funds from each pay period for long term goals, like retirement, an emergency fund, or a house.

Variable and Periodic Expenses

Items in this category are those you decide what and how much to pay.

- Clothing (1%-10%)
- Credit Payments (0%-15%)
- Entertainment/Vacation (2%-5%)
- Food (12%-30%)
- Gifts and Contributions (1%-10%)
- Medical (2%-8%)
- Personal/Miscellaneous (2%-5%)
- Transportation (5%-20%)

Taking the time to discuss your options and making a plan will help you and your spouse approach deployment finances as a team.

MANAGE YOUR INCOME

EXAMPLES OF EXPENSES (FIXED, VARIABLE, AND PERIODIC)

- **Charities/Donations (Variable):** Religious organizations, educational institutions, special charities
- **Child/Elder Care (Variable):** Cost of care, babysitting fees, diapers
- **Clothing (Variable and Periodic):** Alterations/repairs, dry cleaning, laundry, new purchases, uniforms
- **Education (Variable and Periodic):** Books (electronic and hard copy), college funds for children, magazine and newspaper subscriptions, tuition
- **Food (Variable):** Alcoholic beverages, groceries, lunch money, eating out, nutritional supplements

- **Gifts (Periodic):** Anniversaries, birthdays, holidays
- **Health Care/Non-insurance covered (Fixed or Periodic):** Deductibles, office visit co-pays, over-the-counter drugs/vitamins, prescriptions
- **Housing (Fixed and Variable):** Home improvements, maintenance, mortgage payment, new furniture, property taxes, rent, repairs
- **Insurance (Fixed):** Auto, disability, home, life, health (including vision and dental), rental, umbrella, liability
- **Loans (Fixed or Variable):** Student loans, home equity line of credit, credit cards, personal
- **Personal Care (Variable):** Barber, hairdresser, manicure/pedicure, massage, toiletries
- **Pets (Variable and Periodic):** food, grooming, medical
- **Recreation (Variable):** Gym membership/fees, movies, rented movies, sporting events, vacation

- **Retirement (Fixed):** Employer-based account, IRAs, non-work account
- **Savings/Investments (Fixed):** Certificate of deposits, emergency fund, mutual funds, regular savings, stocks/bonds, U.S. savings bonds, taxes (additional)
- **Transportation (Fixed, Variable, and Periodic):** Auto loan payment, bus pass, gasoline, license tag, maintenance/repair, parking pass, registration fee, savings for next car, toll pass
- **Utilities (Fixed or Variable):** Cable, gas, internet, oil, sewer, telephone/cell phone, trash, water
- **Miscellaneous (Variable and Periodic):** Lottery tickets, postage, special big ticket item, tobacco products

Another strategy for allocation is the 50-30-20 rule. According to this strategy, 50 percent of your income should go to needs, 30 percent of your income should go to wants, 20 percent of your income should go to savings and debt reduction.

WWW.YELLOWRIBBON.MIL/CMS/FINANCIAL-RESOURCE-GUIDE



ONLINE RESOURCES

Military OneSource

www.militaryonesource.mil

Retirement

militarypay.defense.gov

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

www.tsp.gov/index.shtml

Uniformed Services Savings Deposit Program (SDP)

[www.dfas.mil/militarymembers/
payentitlements/sdp.html](http://www.dfas.mil/militarymembers/payentitlements/sdp.html)

Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)

[www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/provide/
sbp.html](http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/provide/sbp.html)

Budgeting & Saving

www.mint.com

Credit Reporting

www.annualcreditreport.com

VA Guaranteed Home Loan Program

www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans

Financial Education

www.smartaboutmoney.org
www.credit.org

Service Members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI), Family Service Members' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI), & Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI)

www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/

PERSONAL FINANCIAL COUNSELING

Personal financial counseling is available through Military OneSource. Confidential, short-term counseling is offered in-person, online, or over the phone at 1-800-342-9647. A counselor can assist you with basic budgeting, money management, and debt.

Installation Financial Readiness Management Programs and the Military and Family Life Counseling Programs are also options for Soldiers. Visit www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil and select Personal Financial Management Services or Family Center from the drop-down menu to find a program near you. ★



H.E.R.O.E.S. Care is an affiliation of program partners working together to provide support to military families in the communities where they live.

[Register for a
Hometown Support Volunteer](#)

[Request for
Financial Assistance](#)

visit heroescare.org



TEEN TIPS FOR REINTEGRATION

“

Remember that the same source of stress can affect people in different ways.

You may think of stress as a bad thing, a problem that needs to be resolved. However, sometimes stress can be an uncomfortable challenge that motivates you to do better. A healthy amount of stress can make you stronger, more confident, and better able to handle new challenges.

When you're faced with a challenge or problem that's overwhelming, lasts for a long time, or happens too often stress can cause physical or mental harm.

Remember that the same source of stress can affect people in different ways.

EMOTIONAL CYCLE OF DEPLOYMENT

Even though all families are different, military families may face similar challenges when someone is deployed. The picture on page 43 shows the Emotional Cycle of Deployment. It includes the stage when the family is getting ready for a Soldier to leave, the time when a Soldier is gone, and the occasion when a Soldier returns from deployment.

As you gear up for your Soldier's homecoming, you and other members of your family may be feeling a lot of emotions. You may feel thrilled about



“

As you gear up for your Soldier's homecoming, you and other members of your family may be feeling a lot of emotions.

reuniting, but also feel worried that your returning Soldier may cause disruption in the household. These are normal thoughts for families who go through deployments.

COPING WITH STRESS

When you try to hide or ignore your stress, it can end up affecting your mind and your body. It might make you feel cranky, short-tempered, or depressed, and may give you headaches, stomach aches, or trouble sleeping.

One way to release stress is to work on breath control. This is almost like the 9-1-1 of stress management, and it can be used

in all kinds of situations. This strategy involves getting control of your breath, which helps to settle your body, thoughts, and feelings. To try it, sit comfortably in a chair with your back straight so you can breathe in a long deep breath. If you want to close your eyes you can or just gaze softly with your eyes looking down at the floor. Take in a long deep breath, and as you do, count to yourself – one, two, three – and then exhale counting to yourself – one, two, three. You can put your hand on your belly; notice how your hand moves as your belly expands as you inhale – one, two, three. Notice your hand again as you exhale and your belly gets smaller.

Breathing techniques are just one way to deal with stress. There are so many others you might try.

JOYS AND CHALLENGES OF REINTEGRATION

Each family's experiences are unique, but you may notice some of these joys and challenges in the months after homecoming.

These are some of the feelings other teens have shared about going through reintegration, along with some stress management tips.

Ideas for Managing Stress

- Breathe!
- Eat well
- Exercise
- Get enough sleep
- Write in a journal
- Talk with friends

Joys:

- Soldier is safe
- Family is together
- No more worrying or missing the Soldier
- At-home caregiver is not so distracted and overwhelmed
- Fewer responsibilities

Challenges:

- Soldier feels different and unfamiliar
- Soldier is irritable and angry
- Parents fight
- Soldier wants to be the boss
- Routine is disrupted again

EXPRESS YOURSELF

Consider writing a letter to your deployed Soldier who will soon be returning home. The goal is to describe 1) how you have changed since he or she has been gone; 2) how the family has changed during the deployment; and 3) what you expect will change again when he or she comes home.

By planning ahead like this, all of your family members can be thinking about ways to handle these changes instead of getting overwhelmed by them. ★

Dear _____,

We're all so excited about you coming home. I want your return to go as smoothly for our family as possible, so I've outlined a few things that might be important for us to talk about.

Ways I've changed since you've been away:

Things that have been different at home while you've been gone:

Things that will probably change again when you come home:

Ways I plan to help things go smoothly:





The
Emotional Cycle
of Deployment

**ANTICIPATION OF DEPARTURE/DETACHMENT
& WITHDRAWAL**

Everyone is usually nervous and worried. Your parent who is leaving may be “checked out” and thinking about the mission. Your at-home parent may be distracted and stressed.

EMOTIONAL DISORGANIZATION

Everyone at home figures out new routines. You and your family may miss your deployed parent, worry about his or her safety, or feel overwhelmed.

RECOVERY & STABILIZATION

Everyone at home settles into the new routine and gets used to your deployed parent’s absence.

**ANTICIPATION OF RETURN/RETURN ADJUSTMENT
& RENEGOTIATION**

You and your family may experience excitement stress, anticipation, or worry about new changes. It may take some time for you to figure each other out again.

REINTEGRATION & STABILIZATION

This is the “new-new normal.” Everyone adjusts to changes and settles in again.

**PROGRAMS FOR TEENS
AND KIDS**

Our Military Kids is a program specific to National Guard and Reserve families. The program provides grants for military kids to enroll in activities such as sports, dance, and art to help them combat the stress of deployment. Visit ourmilitarykids.org.

The YMCA partners with the Armed Services YMCA and the Department of Defense, offering memberships and respite child care services to eligible military families and personnel to give them extra support during deployments.

Operation Hero, funded by the ASYMCA, offers free after-school tutoring and activities for children whose parent is deployed.

The FOCUS program stands for Families OverComing Under Stress. It’s a multi-week personalized program designed for military kids and their parents to help them better communicate and handle the stresses of military life. It is offered for free at most military bases.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Tutor.com
- Military Kids Connect:
militarykidsconnect.dcoe.mil
- BGCA-Military Youth Outreach
- 4-H
- Anchored for Life:
www.anchored4life.com

If any of these resources sound like a good fit for you or your family, let your parents know about them!

YOU'RE NOT ALONE


USAJOBS[®]



National Guard & Reserves

If you're a member of the National Guard, or are willing and able to join the National Guard, you may be eligible to apply for federal jobs located within a National Guard unit.

How do I know a job is open to National Guard & Reserves?

In the job announcement look for the **This job is open to** section. When a job is open to **National Guard & Reserves**, or those willing to join, you'll see this icon:  There may be other groups listed that can also apply.

In search you can also select the **National Guard** filter. Your results will display all jobs open to the National Guard, reserves, and those willing to join.

To find out more about eligibility and other requirements, visit www.usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/unique-hiring-paths/national-guard



YOUR RIGHTS UNDER USERRA

THE UNIFORMED SERVICES EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT

USERRA protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services, and applicants to the uniformed services.

REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

You have the right to be reemployed in your civilian job if you leave that job to perform service in the uniformed service and:

- ☆ you ensure that your employer receives advance written or verbal notice of your service;
- ☆ you have five years or less of cumulative service in the uniformed services while with that particular employer;
- ☆ you return to work or apply for reemployment in a timely manner after conclusion of service; and
- ☆ you have not been separated from service with a disqualifying discharge or under other than honorable conditions.

If you are eligible to be reemployed, you must be restored to the job and benefits you would have attained if you had not been absent due to military service or, in some cases, a comparable job.

RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION

If you:

- ☆ are a past or present member of the uniformed service;
- ☆ have applied for membership in the uniformed service; or
- ☆ are obligated to serve in the uniformed service;

then an employer may not deny you:

- ☆ initial employment;
- ☆ reemployment;
- ☆ retention in employment;
- ☆ promotion; or
- ☆ any benefit of employment

because of this status.

In addition, an employer may not retaliate against anyone assisting in the enforcement of USERRA rights, including testifying or making a statement in connection with a proceeding under USERRA, even if that person has no service connection.

HEALTH INSURANCE PROTECTION

- ☆ If you leave your job to perform military service, you have the right to elect to continue your existing employer-based health plan coverage for you and your dependents for up to 24 months while in the military.
- ☆ Even if you don't elect to continue coverage during your military service, you have the right to be reinstated in your employer's health plan when you are reemployed, generally without any waiting periods or exclusions (e.g., pre-existing condition exclusions) except for service-connected illnesses or injuries.

ENFORCEMENT

- ☆ The U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) is authorized to investigate and resolve complaints of USERRA violations.
- ☆ For assistance in filing a complaint, or for any other information on USERRA, contact VETS at **1-866-4-USA-DOL** or visit its website at <http://www.dol.gov/vets>. An interactive online USERRA Advisor can be viewed at <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/userra.htm>.
- ☆ If you file a complaint with VETS and VETS is unable to resolve it, you may request that your case be referred to the Department of Justice or the Office of Special Counsel, as applicable, for representation.
- ☆ You may also bypass the VETS process and bring a civil action against an employer for violations of USERRA.

The rights listed here may vary depending on the circumstances. The text of this notice was prepared by VETS, and may be viewed on the internet at this address: <http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/poster.htm>. Federal law requires employers to notify employees of their rights under USERRA, and employers may meet this requirement by displaying the text of this notice where they customarily place notices for employees.



U.S. Department of Labor
1-866-487-2365



U.S. Department of Justice



Office of Special Counsel



1-800-336-4590

Publication Date — April 2017



Defense Health Agency

**Public Health
Immunization Healthcare Division
Serving**



The DHA-IHD has four Region Vaccine Safety Hubs (RVSH) and 17 Immunization Healthcare Specialists strategically located around the world to assist with all of your immunization needs. See the following for the contact information of the DHA-IHD personnel assigned to your location (both CONUS and OCONUS):

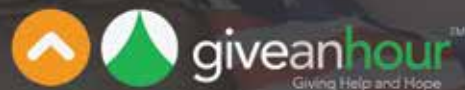
IHD offers 24/7 vaccine-related clinical consultation: 877-GET-VACC, Option 1 DSN 761-4245
www.health.mil/vaccines

Give an Hour is Proud to Serve US Army Reservists and their Families



We Provide No Cost, Confidential Counseling. In Person/Phone/Video

Learn more at giveanhour.org
<https://giveanhour.org/coronavirus-resources/>



VOLUNTEER TO HELP MILITARY MEMBERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY!



I AM. ARE YOU?



I AM. ARE YOU AWARE?

Joining ESGR gives you the opportunity to:

- Travel
- Get free training
- Experience what it's like to be on military planes and ships
 - Meet employers
- Officially be part of the Department of Defense



I AM. ARE YOU PART OF THE COMMUNITY?

ESGR supports more than one million National Guard and Reserve Service members across the nation.

**SUPPORT THEM BY
JOINING US!**



I AM. ARE YOU INSPIRED?

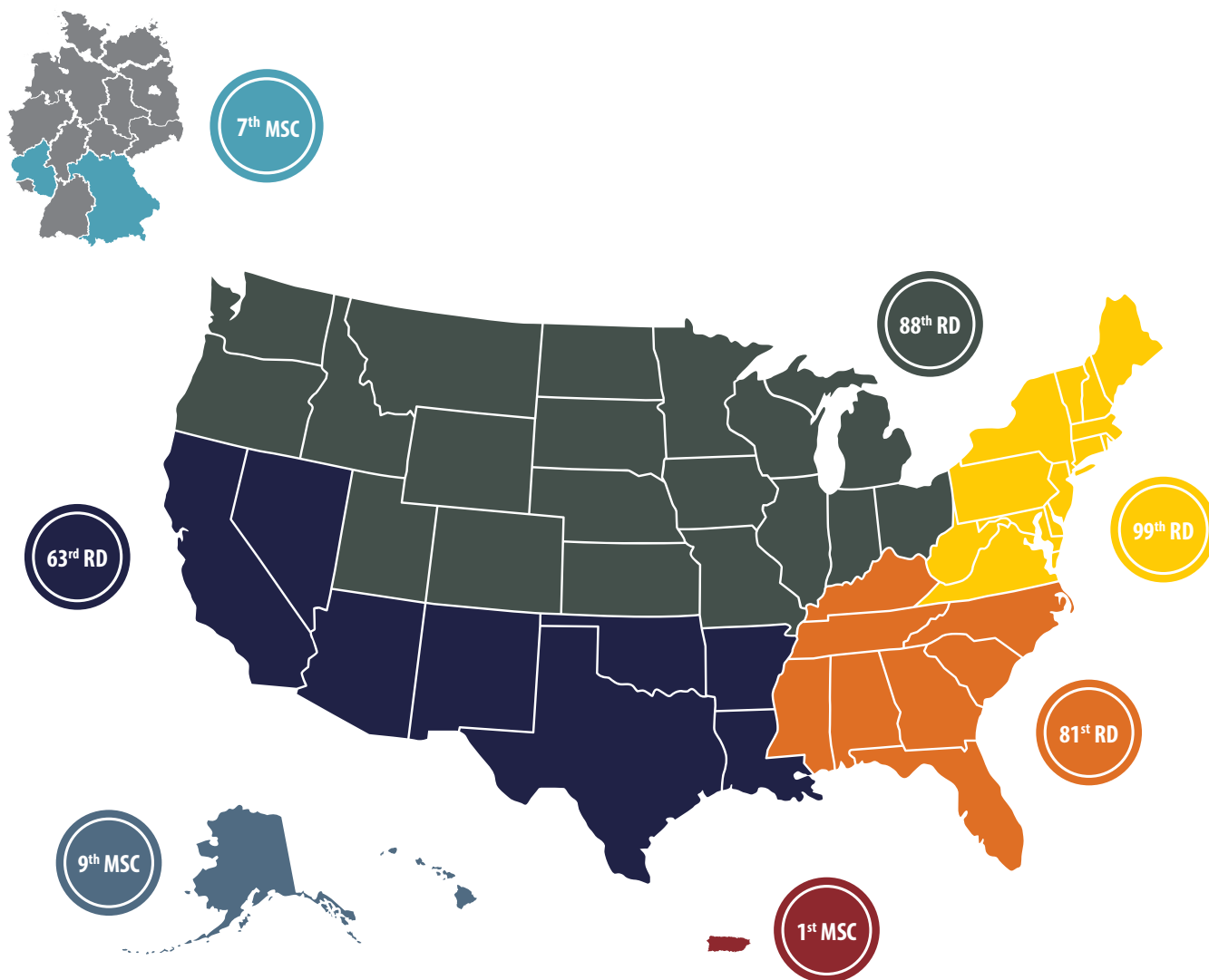
With compassion, professionalism, and courage, National Guard and Reserve members serve around the world to ensure our freedom.

Our volunteers serve with the same ideals. **You could too!**

I AM WITH ESGR! ARE YOU?
Join us today! ESGR.mil/volunteers

FAMILY PROGRAM DIRECTORS

OFTS Commands	Phone	Email
1 st Mission Support Command	787-707-4082	elsa.f.cortes.civ@mail.mil
7 th Mission Support Command	+49-0611-143-528-0264	danielle.r.hanson.civ@mail.mil
9 th Mission Support Command	808-438-1600, ext. 3191	kevin.j.gilbert4.civ@mail.mil
63 rd Readiness Division	650-526-9630	sandra.y.henry.civ@mail.mil
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If you would like additional copies of this magazine or if there is anyone you would like this magazine to be sent to, please contact the Family Programs Director for your region listed above.