

The Army Family Readiness Handbook



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716541/TVT	20-1047	<i>Another Family</i> (Army Family Support Group)
710652/TVT	20-1048	<i>Getting Back Together</i> (Homecoming and Reunion)
710653/TVT	20-1049	<i>Ongoing Readiness and Financial Planning</i> (Ongoing Readiness)
710654/TVT	20-1050	<i>Coping with Military Separations</i> (Ongoing Readiness)
710655/TVT	20-1051	<i>Family Assistance Center</i> (Family Assistance Center)

The point of contact is DSN 795-7772 or (717) 895-7772.

The Army Family Readiness Handbook

**Family Deployment Readiness for
the Active Army, the Army National Guard, and the Army Reserve**

Phase I Development

Project Manager

David H. Price

Editor

Susanna Hornig, Ph.D.

Resources for Educating About Deployment and You

**Texas Agricultural Extension Service
The Texas A&M University System
in cooperation with
The United States Army
Community and Family Support Center**

1994

This training material was developed at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, under contract with the Department of Army and the Cooperative Extension System of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This document is largely edited from a handbook produced by the 25th Infantry Division at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. Advice on current social work practice, as well as stress and coping, was provided by Jo Knox, Ph.D., School of Social Work, The University of Texas at Arlington. Materials originated within the Hawaii National Guard's Family Action Program and advice provided by LTC(P) Dan Fischer, Family Program Coordinator, 410th Engineer Brigade (USAR) were applied throughout in order to ensure the Handbook's applicability to the Total Army.

Man has two supreme loyalties - to country and to family So long as their families are safe, they will defend their country, believing that by their sacrifice they are safeguarding their families also. But even the bonds of patriotism, discipline, and comradeship are loosened when the family itself is threatened.

William Tecumseh Sherman
General, United States Army
1864

A partnership exists between the Army and Army families. The Army's unique missions, concept of service, and lifestyle of its members - all affect the nature of this partnership. Towards the goal of building a strong partnership, the Army remains committed to assuring adequate support to families in order to promote wellness, to develop a sense of community, and to strengthen the mutually reinforcing bonds between the Army and its families.

John A. Wickham, Jr.
General, United States Army
1983

About This Book

Today's Army leadership recognizes that family readiness is inseparable from general military preparedness. More soldiers have families than ever before, and these include increasing numbers of single-parent families and families in which both husband and wife are soldiers. Soldiers who know their families are being well taken care of perform better under the stress of separation for training or combat. And families whose needs are met during deployment will be in a better position to welcome and support their returning soldiers.

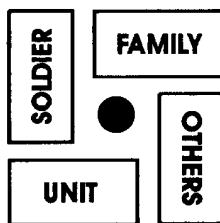
The materials in this handbook are based in part on those developed for the successful family support program of the 25th Infantry Division (Light) at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. The activities of this "Tropic Lighting" division consistently involve training for combat. In addition, because of their island home, the families of "Tropic Lighting" soldiers are often some distance from family and friends. These factors made the development of an effective family support program especially important. Additionally, the experience of the Hawaii National Guard Family Action Program provided some background for this handbook.

So the materials in this book are not just for active Army installations. All of the information is designed to be equally useful for Army National Guard and Reserve units.

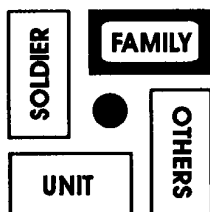
The handbook is organized into five chapters:

- Chapter 1 provides an overview of the role of family support activities in establishing and maintaining deployment readiness, and outlines a "wellness model" for family assistance planning. It is intended primarily for military units and their leaders, but is useful background for everyone.
- Chapter 2 explains how a volunteer-based Family Support Group (FSG) program - a key component of deployment-related family services - might be organized. Both military unit personnel and volunteer FSG family-member leaders who are involved in FSG program development will find this chapter a good place to start.
- Chapter 3 includes resources and reference materials for volunteer leaders and Army facilitators of ongoing FSG programs. Materials are included on developing ideas for FSG activities, maintaining telephone contact with FSG members, publishing an FSG newsletter and working with volunteers.
- Chapter 4 provides material on planning for and coping with family separations. This chapter also includes a Family Readiness Workbook for deploying soldiers and their spouses to complete together, either in an FSG workshop or as part of a predeployment soldier and family-member briefing conducted by Army personnel.
- Chapter 5 provides information for Army personnel who have responsibility for providing family support and assistance during deployment. The chapter includes suggestions for predeployment briefing content relevant to both emotional and practical preparation, and discusses the special roles of the Rear Detachment Commander and Family Assistance Officer. The chapter closes with a Final Readiness Review.

By the heading for each major section of the five chapters, you will find a special symbol that looks like this:



The purpose of this symbol is to indicate the group or groups that are most likely to be interested in the content of that particular section: family members, military units and their leaders, individual soldiers, and other key participants in the Total Army Family Program. Others include, but are not limited to: Army Community Service, Reserve Component Family Program Coordinators, staff agencies with responsibilities involving Army families, and chaplains. Each of these members of the Total Army Family Program team has a role in enhancing family wellness and preparedness. Those groups most likely to be particularly interested in each section are indicated by a highlighted box. For example, material especially for family members will have this symbol:



Other team-member groups (those whose boxes are not highlighted) may also find the material useful, however.

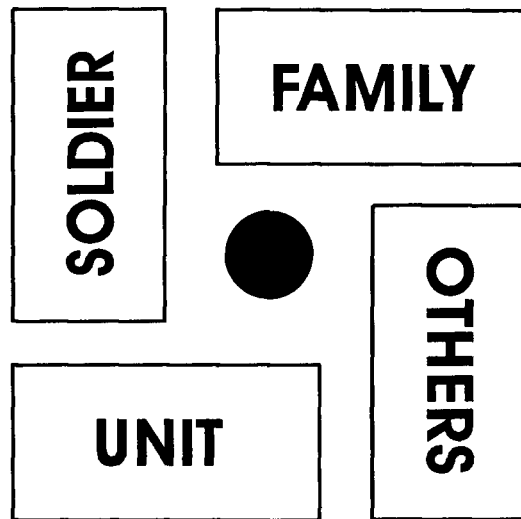
Throughout this handbook, Desert Storm Updates that summarize lessons learned during the Persian Gulf conflict offer additional information based on the recent experiences of Army units and families. Important tips and general legal limits on family support actions are also highlighted.

This handbook was developed as part of a multimedia training resource library that should be available at installation Army Community Service offices and at Army National Guard and Army Reserve Family Program Coordinator offices. The handbook is intended as general background material for all participants in the Total Army Family Program. It was written with today's and tomorrow's Army in mind.

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1. Command Leadership and Family Support

Information for commanders and other leaders on the Army's stake in family support and how command involvement can help insure success

- Why Be Prepared?
- The Army's Stake in Family Health
- Ongoing Family Support
- A Wellness Model
- Welcoming New Personnel
- Backgrounder: Caring Is Not Enough

A vital part of maintaining combat readiness is maintaining individual readiness. The importance of family support and family preparedness to the overall goal of total readiness - and, ultimately, to the outcome of a mission - cannot be overemphasized.

Deployment exercises keep our military forces at the highest state of preparedness possible. Our military is faced with the ever-present challenge of updating and modifying existing weaponry and tactics to meet the always-changing nature of warfare. We need these exercises to find out just how well prepared we are, to maintain our readiness and to exhibit to would-be aggressors our ability and willingness to counter any foreign incursions across our own or allied borders.

Deployment may be as short as an overnight alert or as long as an unaccompanied overseas tour. In between there may be many field training exercises that can last for weeks. Deployments may be to undetermined locations and for undetermined periods of time.

The number of times an individual soldier is deployed varies with the nature of his or her unit. Certain types of support units, for example, may deploy 20 to 30 times within a year, while other units may take part in as few as two major deployments and a few additional training deployments during the same period.

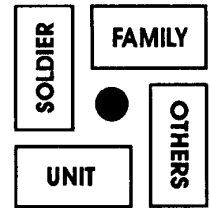
Deployment is often announced, so soldiers may know that they will be going on deployment months in advance. They may also know the specific location and length of time. However, given the nature of our world today (with conflicts possible at any moment in the Persian Gulf, Central America, Asia and other locations), the possibility for unannounced deployment does exist. Our way of life and the everyday freedoms we take for granted are ours only as long as we remain prepared militarily to resist those who would take them from us.

But today's Army is a married Army. Over one-half of our soldiers are married, and most have their families living with them. In an active-duty unit, the desire to lead a normal family life often comes into sharp conflict with the requirements of military service. Deployment is the best example of this conflict. Deployment means separation from the family. And stress due to family separation can prove harmful to the soldier and the unit.

Studies by the Walter Reed Institute and others have shown that family problems lead to troubled soldiers and poor military performance during deployment - whether for actual combat or field training exercises. Needless to say, no commander would want his or her flank covered by a soldier who is worried about the family back home.

Furthermore, soldiers suffering from stress are more likely to suffer mental and emotional breakdowns during military conflicts. For every four soldiers wounded or killed in a conflict, there is one that suffers a breakdown. Studies also show that soldiers can cope with stress better if they know that their families are being cared for during their absence.

Why Be Prepared?



This means that a system of family support and assistance must be in place prior to deployment. It means that the unit commander must make sure that each soldier, along with packing his or her individual weapon and equipment, has left behind a family well prepared for separation.

Among the benefits to the unit of family support and assistance programs are these:

- Soldiers who are mentally and emotionally present during combat and training, able to concentrate fully on the mission, and
- Sustained manpower to accomplish the mission, with less likelihood of casualties and less chance that a soldier will have to leave the field to fill out a form or be sent back to post because a family task was neglected.

Following a deployment, the Rear Detachment Commander (RDC), if one has been appointed, is perhaps the first to feel the effects of family readiness or its lack. If the family is not ready, the RDC is likely to spend a lot of time putting out fires within 24 hours after the soldier leaves. Such crises can range from moving a family into new quarters to helping a spouse start a car that is past due for servicing.

If families are as well prepared as they can be prior to deployment, the RDC can spend time and energy on real emergencies and on activities that improve the quality of life for the family during the soldier's absence.

Family readiness also means that the soldier can leave for deployment with the peace of mind that comes from knowing that he or she has done everything possible to provide for family needs during separation. It is the same peace of mind soldiers experience when they are certain that their duffel bags contain everything needed on deployment. This means less stress for both soldiers and family members and a better chance that the soldier will return from deployment in good health.

Finally, the level of family readiness at deployment has a direct effect on the quality of family life during the homecoming period. Fitting back into the family after an extended deployment has its own stress factors. Coming back to a family that is angry, or one that has suffered unnecessary hardship during separation, will create even more family problems.

The chance of coming home to a loving family is increased if the family has been fully prepared prior to deployment. It is difficult to imagine a spouse looking forward to the homecoming of a soldier who has either deliberately confiscated his or her ID card (an illegal act) or who had forgotten to renew the ID or to provide for financial needs.

In addition, family readiness means that family members will suffer less stress due to deployment. They will be better prepared to cope with whatever stress does result from the soldier's absence. And life is likely to be less stressful if the spouse has all the information needed to take care of emergencies.

Family members will feel loved and cared for if they know that the soldier has done everything he or she could to ensure their welfare. This helps ensure the soldier's coming home to a warm welcome.

When family readiness is treated as a family affair and all family members are included in the process, it can also promote togetherness. Setting aside time periodically to update family records and to communicate about family goals can contribute to closeness.

If the family has worked together to maintain family readiness as an ongoing activity, they will have time when deployment is announced to psychologically prepare each other and their children for the separation. There will be time to talk about feelings, alleviate fears and plan activities that will help maintain the soldier's presence in the family and help the spouse use the separation time constructively.

Family readiness is everybody's business - everyone benefits from the family being prepared. It follows that family support and family readiness should carry the full endorsement of the command, the soldier and the family.

The Army's relationship with the service member's family has evolved slowly for more than two centuries. Until the Vietnam conflict, the Army's philosophy toward the family could be summed up by the witticism, "If the Army wanted you to have a family, it would have issued you one." However, with the deployment of units to the Dominican Republic and to Vietnam, the Army recognized a greater responsibility to Army families.

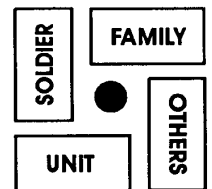
The Army realized family problems in the United States seriously influenced the performance of soldiers in Vietnam, and the resultant Army Community Services program was the first of many Army responses to this challenge.

On August 15, 1983, the Army Chief of Staff specified a philosophy toward the family in the Army Family White Paper:

A partnership exists between the Army and Army families. The army's unique missions, concept of service and lifestyle of its members -all affect the nature of this partnership. Towards the goal of building a strong partnership, the Army remains committed to assuring adequate support to families in order to promote wellness; to develop a sense of community; and to strengthen the mutually reinforcing bonds between the Army and its families.

The basis of this statement is the understanding that the Army is an institution, not an occupation. Members take an oath of service to the Nation and the Army, rather than simply accept a job. As an institution, the Army has moral and ethical obligations to those who serve and to their families; they, correspondingly, have responsibilities to the Army. This relationship creates a partnership based on the constants of human behavior and our American traditions that blend the responsibility of each individual for his/her own welfare and the obligations of the society to its members.

The Army's Stake in Family Health



Our unique mission and lifestyle affect this partnership in ways rarely found in our society. Since we are in the readiness business, we are concerned not only with the number of people in the force, but also with their degree of commitment - their willingness to not only train, but also to deploy and, if necessary, to fight - their acceptance of the unlimited liability contract. The need for reciprocity of this commitment is the basis of the partnership between the Army and the Army Family.

As a result, adequacy of support must be based on this unique partnership. The Army will never have all the resources it needs. Therefore, we must balance our dollars spent for family programs with those spent to discharge our moral responsibilities to give our soldiers the equipment, training and leadership they need to have the best chance for survival (from a family perspective) and victory (from a societal perspective) on the battlefield; emotionally, mentally and physically. This is why we have targeted "Wellness" and "Sense of Community" as the major thrusts of our efforts.

In promoting family wellness, we must also find ways to transfer the skills, experiences, attitudes and ethical strengths of the many healthy Army families. Despite the pressures, the vast majority of families manage and grow through their involvement with Army life. We know that most Army families find military lifestyle exciting; enjoy the opportunities for travel and cultural interaction; and most importantly, have positive feelings about the Army and its place in our society. While the needs of families experiencing stress must be considered, we must promote the positive aspects of Army families as our primary goal.

The strength of a community lies in the contributions and talents of its members. If the right elements are together in the right environment, the end product is often greater than what would otherwise be expected from the elements functioning independently.

Our concept of the Army-Family community is such a relationship. The family is linked to the unit by the service member and those unit programs in which the family wishes to participate. The family and unit are linked also by common community activities. Our goal is to increase the bond between the family unit and the Army community - create a sense of interdependence.

In fostering interdependence between the family and the Army, we are again looking at the Army as an institution. The Army has a responsibility to its members and the members have a responsibility to the Army and each other. If for the greater good resources must be used now for modernization or other programs, Army families, communities and the chain of command must through their own efforts insure that the reciprocity of commitment remains. It is not a we/they situation, it is us - US as in U.S. Army.

John A. Wickham, Jr.
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

The three critical elements in this philosophy are partnership, wellness and a sense of community.

Partnership. A partnership has to exist between the Army as an institution and the individuals who are part of it - soldiers, civilians, retirees and family members. The term partnership expresses the cohesion of the Army and members of Army families based on mutual understanding of the mission and commitment to each other. It includes the needs for independence and dependence between the two partners within a model in which the Army serves as an institution rather than a job or work place. Partnership is a reciprocal relationship built on moral and ethical responsibilities, as well as on statutory and regulatory requirements.

Wellness. The term wellness highlights our concern for developing those strengths, skills, aptitudes and attitudes that contribute to wholeness and health in body, mind and spirit. In the past, most of our plans, programs and policies focused on basic needs or on correcting dysfunctions. Our concentration now and in the future is to capitalize on what is working well by drawing on the characteristics of our many healthy families and transmitting these characteristics to those needing assistance.

Sense of community. A sense of community is the center of the partnership, with all members offered the challenge and opportunity to work together for the common good. When viewed in this light, it means each member of the Army community has a special responsibility to make it a better place in which to live and work - a concerted move toward an Army of excellence.

The final goal is the creation of an environment in which the total Army family, individually and as a unit, can become the finest force the world has yet known. This underlying philosophy is based on the concept that a better family environment would attract (recruit), inspire (make ready) and retain the best talent our nation has to offer. These "three R's" are the bottom-line goals: recruitment, readiness and retention of the best.

These goals are designed to serve as management tools for the planning and programming necessary to move the Army into the future in the most effective way. Since the Army is people, these human goals support the other Army goals and form the foundation for helping the individuals associated with the Army to achieve their full potential. A crucial component of this effort is the objective of fostering wholesome families and communities.

Once the philosophical basis of the relationship between the Army and the Army family was established by the Army Family White Paper of 1983, the Family Action Plan was a logical consequence. Along with other Army goals, the plan seeks to implement the broad philosophical concepts stated in the White Paper and provides a comprehensive way to direct current and future efforts on behalf of Army families within the scope of available resources.

To further emphasize the importance of families to the Army, 1984 was declared the "Year of the Army Family." This declaration further cemented the Army's institutional commitment to its families and provided the additional incentive needed to bring about change.

The Year of the Army Family expanded the scope of the Army family beyond the traditional idea of parents and children. The "family" became all soldiers, single and married, plus associated Guard, Reserves, civilians and retirees. In keeping with this philosophy, the Army Family Action Plan includes items supporting all these dimensions of the redefined Army family.

Much progress was made in the years following the original publication of the Army Family Action Plan:

- For the first time, resources were programmed specifically for a variety of family programs such as family member employment, consumer affairs and financial management, family services, family research and child care center construction. A General Officer Steering Committee was instituted to review progress, redirect resources and identify additional family issues.
- In an unprecedented Army-wide effort to determine family needs and review the implementation of the Family Action Plan in the field, the Chief of Staff directed that a worldwide special Inspector General inspection be conducted. The results of that inspection have been incorporated into the Army Family Action Plan.
- The Army reinforced its commitment to its families by establishing the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center. The Army Family Action Plan and the Center continued the momentum of the Year of the Army Family and ensured the institutional survival of family programs and policies.
- Significant new funds were requested for family programs, and Congress was supportive with authorizations and appropriations. In addition, the existence of the Community and Family Support Center improved the management of Army family programs.
- Each year Army family members and key Army leaders meet at the Army Family Action Planning Conference. This key annual event addresses current issues of importance to the Army and its families. The issues are incorporated for action into the Army's annual Family Action Plan.

Major commands and installations are responding to the needs of the total Army family with commitments of their own. Resources are now requested specifically for family programs. Installations are also redirecting existing resources to support a variety of family programs for which funds are not yet available. Notable among these are the establishment of family fitness programs and outreach initiatives designated to answer the needs of junior enlisted families.

The National Guard Bureau and the Office of the Chief of Army Reserve also recognize and address family needs. A Family Program Manager serves at the Bureau, and a coordinator is assigned to every state headquarters. The Army Reserve employs a Community and Family Support Officer in the Office of the Chief and coordinators in the major commands.

Most importantly, family members themselves are responding to the needs of the Army community in the true spirit of partnership. Nowhere has this been more evident than in the formation of Family Support Groups (FSGs) throughout the country. These groups emphasize self-help and mutual support to families and soldiers during and after deployment.

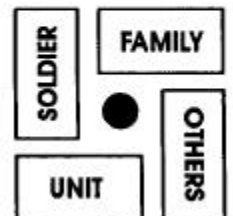
Another aspect of the Army's commitment to the total Army family is the Army Quality of Life Program. Quality of life is a broad concept that includes the degree to which the common human needs of an individual or family are satisfied. The Quality of Life Program is a collective body of policies, programs and actions that acknowledge the Army's obligation to provide for the needs, in both living and duty environments, of the Army community. The goal is to foster commitment to service and encourage personal readiness to fulfill military requirements. The Quality of Life Program applies to both military and civilian personnel.

The primary objective of the Army Quality of Life Program is to promote the development of the military group cohesiveness that is essential to combat effectiveness. The secondary objective is to assist in attracting, positively motivating and retaining high-quality individuals. These objectives are accomplished by policies and programs that show the Army "takes care of its own" by providing a military community with a way of life in which the health, general welfare, and spiritual and moral needs of its members and their family members are met. Such provisions free soldiers to concentrate on mission performance, promote their personal identification with the military community and foster their loyalty and dedication to service. Readiness is the fundamental principle and goal of the Quality of Life Program.

In no other profession is family separation faced so frequently as it is in military service. This is the reason for the old, anonymous saying, "A marriage that can survive a tour of military service is one that will endure all of life's battles."

These separations take many forms. They can range from a soldier going on a hardship tour or field training exercise to a partial or full mobilization of our country's military resources. Separations can be individual or unit based. No matter which type of separation is involved, a stressful and at times traumatic situation is created for all members of the family unit.

Ongoing Family Support



The stress of separation can disrupt normal family functioning. Findings by the Walter Reed Army Institute and other behavioral scientists show that family problems lead to troubled soldiers. This can have serious adverse effects on military performance, resulting in reduced readiness to fight, psychological problems or even physical injuries. The soldier performs better when he or she is confident that family members can cope with the stress of separation and have access to supportive resources.

The military chain of command is responsible for identifying and addressing the problems of soldiers and families within their command, especially those arising from frequent family separations. The chain of command can establish an atmosphere that encourages healthy family functioning by expressing and demonstrating care and concern. Promoting family-member involvement in the form of an institutionalized FSG program is one method commanders can use to establish this atmosphere within their command.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: The Need for FSGs

Discussion: Family separation creates psychological stress for both the deploying soldier and the family left behind. Soldiers who feel their families can manage without them are better able to concentrate on mission tasks. Commanders demonstrate compassionate concern for their soldiers when they actively participate in FSGs as part of unit predeployment readiness. During deployments, FSGs assist the rear detachment in sustaining families of deployed soldiers by exchanging support and transmitting accurate information between families and the RDC.

Lessons: FSGs play a central role in sustaining families by providing social and emotional support before, during and after family separations. FSGs need unit support before deployment and rear detachment support while forces are deployed.

FSGs give confidence to soldiers that their dependents will cope in their absence and remove family feelings of isolation and anxiety.

FSGs benefit the command by helping to sustain morale. The Army would be well advised to keep plans for family support institutions in a state of readiness just like the plans for troop support and equipment maintenance. During peacetime, the justification for continuing Army family support mechanisms is ultimately to maintain high levels of deployment readiness for a family-based, married, military organization. During wartime deployments, the justification for family support shifts to maintaining morale of soldiers and their will to fight.

Chapters 2 and 3 of this handbook provide extensive information on FSG development; Chapter 4 tells how to prepare for deployment separations; Chapter 5 provides additional resources for use by Army personnel involved in deployment and family assistance activities; and information of special interest to commanders and other leaders is included in the remainder of this chapter. However, both the material itself and the ongoing family support activities it is intended to encourage need to be monitored, evaluated and adjusted on a continuous basis. This requires ongoing command-level involvement.

Careful early preparation is one of the keys to successful Army family support efforts. The other key is ongoing reevaluation of these efforts. Needs are never static, especially with the constant personnel changes in the military environment. So, for example, although initial goals and objectives are essential to get Family Support Groups organized and functional, these goals and the activities and roles of all participants, both unit and FSG, must be periodically reevaluated and appropriate changes made.

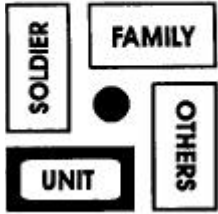
An ongoing evaluation on the most effective ways to prepare soldiers and family members for deployment is crucial to the quality of the predeployment briefings. If care does not go into monitoring how pertinent the readiness information disseminated actually is, the chances of success and cooperation are diminished.

Further, evaluation of FSG effectiveness and the quality of readiness information cannot take place independently of evaluation of the unit's total family support plan for deployment. Therefore, input must be obtained from FSG volunteers, family members, soldiers, the chain of command, the Rear Detachment Commander and the key community staff involved.

Family support personnel must also receive training on an ongoing basis. An example of such training is a precommand course for company commanders, first sergeants and their spouses initiated in 1987. The course covered subjects such as building a viable Family Support Group, working with family and community agencies, dealing with a family crisis and organizing the rear detachment operation.

In the final analysis, however, it is the duty of commanders at all levels to make sure that an effective system for family support and assistance is in place and operating on an ongoing basis. The "wellness model" in the next section provides a conceptual framework for thinking about the effectiveness of a family support program.

A Wellness Model



This section is intended to provide commanders with a framework for looking at families from a wellness concept. The model for assessment that is described assumes that all families are healthy, growth-oriented systems that will normally change over time. This model assumes that since families are essentially healthy and growth oriented, the function of family services in the military is twofold:

- To affirm a family's strengths and assist in developing them further, and
- To assist the family in successfully navigating roadblocks and overcoming distracters to its maturing process.

The conceptual model presented here can serve as a data-gathering tool, as a tool for developing new family services such as family advocacy and as an evaluation tool to help determine what family services are being offered to which families and how effective those services are in meeting family needs.

The six-stage model is based on observation of a traditional family circle. However, it does not exclude single-parent families nor blended families. These families experience the same stages of development. In single-parent and blended families the stages are interrupted by death or divorce, and they may add or repeat stages with remarriage. Many families can be in more than one stage at any given time.

For each stage, the important developmental tasks (challenges each family must meet) will be described, typical family strengths will be indicated, and possible roadblocks and distracters to healthy family functioning will be listed. In addition, the example of a hypothetical Army family will be used to clarify the characteristics of each stage. The six stages are:

Stage I	Premarriage
Stage II	Marriage - to Childbirth
Stage III	Family - to Child Adolescence
Stage IV	Family - Children in Adolescence
Stage V	Family- at Child Launching
Stage VI	Marriage - After Child Rearing

The analysis, design, development, delivery and evaluation of family services in a military or civilian community can be enhanced by using this six-stage model of the life cycle of the family as the foundation of this effort. The conclusion of this section will address the application of the six-stage developmental model in assessing family services and programs in specific locations. Each local installation or Reserve Component organization may also want to design its own methods for using the model.

Foundations

As stated earlier in this chapter, today's Army is a married Army. In contrast to the prevolunteer Army, in which two-thirds of the soldiers were either single or not living with families, over one-half of today's soldiers are married and most have families living with them.

Army policy has been responsive to changing family needs. In the past, when the number of accompanying families was relatively few, Army programs and services could be selective and reactive in nature. As the number of Army families has increased, the number and variety of family resources has also increased. But the goal of many of these family programs has been to identify problems in families and then to provide remedies helpful to family members.

With the advent of the wellness concept of the family, it is clear that a new tool is needed to assess, plan and coordinate family services. Rather than focus on family illness, thinking in terms of wellness gives focus to the health and strengths of the family. The wellness concept is based on assumptions and produces conclusions that are fundamentally different from those of a "treatment" view of family services:

- From a wellness concept, all families have a propensity for healthy growth as they travel through time.
- There are distracters or roadblocks that may get in the way of families, slowing their journey or interfering with their wellness.
- Institutions providing family services must be in the roadblock-removing business, that is, the business of assisting families to navigate obstacles that get in the way of their wellness journey.

Consequently, a new conceptual framework is indicated for assessing family services. This new way of looking at family services must be congruent with the wellness concept and it will be different from that suggested by a "treatment" model.

According to the wellness model, at each stage of the six stages in the development process there are three basic issues that must be addressed by those providing family assistance. The issues are these:

- What resources and programs are required to increase the strengths of a couple in each stage?
- What resources and programs are available or can be developed to assist couples in accomplishing the tasks specific to each stage?
- What resources and programs are available or can be developed to assist the couple in navigating possible roadblocks or distracters?

Stage I: Premarriage. Stage I is a time of transition when an individual begins the process of separating himself or herself from the family in which he or she grew up.

The *task* of this stage is letting go of emotional and physical dependency on parents. The person, having learned individual skills in work and social interactions, prepares to make a commitment to a prospective marital partner in an intimate relationship.

Stages of Growth

Strengths include the ability to tolerate separation from home, the ability to learn new tasks, a desire to make a relationship commitment, and idealism and hope for success in marriage.

Distracters include all those factors that keep the individual too closely tied to the parental family or create such an abrupt separation from the parents that the process cannot take place smoothly. Additional distracters are conditions that might prevent a couple's exploration of the different values and expectations they bring to a committed relationship. Distracters at this stage often include conflicts between personal and family values, couple separation, lack of joint decision-making skills and unrealistic expectations of marriage.

The family of Art and Alice began when both met in Advanced Individual Training. Art joined the Army because he wanted to get away from the conflicts in his family, while Alice wanted to learn skills that would give her a chance for independence and a better economic future than her parents had had. After a whirlwind courtship Art and Alice decided to marry.

Art, however, was stationed in Germany and Alice stateside. They began married life apart. Alice left the Army at the birth of their first child. The family eventually had two more children, and the years were punctuated by several additional moves, by school and training, and by promotions for Art. Both Art and Alice agreed that as their children reached adolescence, the level of family stress increased. They experienced many distracters to their sense of family well-being. The family's later decisions surrounding Art's retirement reflected challenges faced by many military families.

Art and Alice faced difficult decisions regarding the timing of their marriage. Both had a sense that the romance of their whirlwind courtship had blinded them to many of their differences. Alice's family, for example, wanted her to postpone marriage until she was able to support herself, and Art's visits home were often more brief than necessary because disagreements always erupted after the first day.

Stage II: Marriage - to Childbirth. The primary *task* of this stage, which lasts until the birth of the first child, is the consolidation of the marital relationship. This means that the couple is able to work out normal differences in background and expectations and is able to derive primary emotional satisfaction from the marital relationship. The couple becomes a separate unit from their families of origin, yet each is included in the family of the other.

The couple's *strengths* may include intimacy, time to work on the relationship, openness to discovery with respect to each other, positive examples of marriage in parental families and the willingness of in-laws to accept and encourage the new couple.

Distracters are anything that may prevent the individual from investing appropriate energy in the new marriage: lengthy separations, difficulty in communicating at a distance, lack of information concerning an aspect of the relationship (financial, social, sexual and so on), a crisis in one of the parental families, adjustment problems with in-laws, spouse abuse.

Art and Alice had little time for a honeymoon since Art returned to Germany so

shortly after the wedding. Over the next months, the couple attempted to communicate long distance on important aspects of their life together. However, some decisions Alice simply had to make herself. Also, she did not tell Art about the difficulty she had with his mother. She hoped things would get better when Art returned home.

Stage III: Family - Childbirth to Child Adolescence. Stage III's main *task* is that the family master the skills of parenting roles. While maintaining the foundation of the marital bond, the family must include a new generation, provide nurturing for dependent children and make available an appropriate learning environment for all family members.

Possible *strengths* of the military family at Stage III may include an increasing familiarity with resources within the military community (health care, child care and so on), an orientation toward learning and the helpfulness of family members.

Distracters and roadblocks are whatever prevents a couple from providing a child with the nurturing care of the family. These may include an unplanned pregnancy, health problems of the mother or the child, difficulty in learning parental roles appropriate to providing nurturing and discipline for preteenage children, financial burdens, difficulty maintaining contact with grandparents and difficulty giving enough time and energy to the marital relationship.

Alice's pregnancy occurred within the time frame the couple had planned. When they told their families the good news, they noticed increased interest on the part of the prospective grandparents. However, Alice experienced a difficult pregnancy and premature delivery. The separation of Art and Alice from their newborn son during his hospital stay was stressful. When the baby went home, both Art and Alice were anxious over his health and their parenting skills. The arrival of their next two children seemed much easier in comparison to that of the first.

Stage IV: Family- Children in Adolescence. Stage IV is a time when learning increased flexibility so that the children may become independent is the primary *task* of family members. Family rules and boundaries need to be adjustable, allowing teenagers the freedom to move in and out of the family. During this stage, parents may fear that their teenagers will not turn out all right and that the parents will be blamed for it.

Additional stress occurs on installations when parents fear their teenagers will be caught in some violation of regulations or laws that will reflect adversely on the family. Often, parents redouble their efforts at this point to "perfect" the teenager before it is "too late."

Teenagers, on their part, fear they will never be given a chance for independence. They may feel restricted or smothered. Both parent and teenager may fear that the teenager will not leave the family as a fully functional young adult. Differing ideas on appropriate behavior and discipline for adolescents often cause conflict in the relationship between the parents.

Stage IV military families may have the following *strengths*: education and skills from

living in varied locations and cultures; social skills for functioning in new environments; sense of family identity as a result of shared moves and experiences; and pride in the soldier's accomplishments. They may also draw on models within the military community for both young men and young women as they gain new levels of responsibility and recognition, as well as models for limits and consequences.

Distracters and roadblocks include whatever hinders a teenager's growing independence. These may include parental difficulties in setting appropriate limits for their teenagers; teenagers' difficulties in gaining increased responsibility and freedom and in sustaining peer relationships; and special problems such as substance abuse, sexual abuse, incest, unwanted pregnancy, school problems, and conflict or distance in the parents' relationship.

When Art and Alice's son and two daughters entered the teen years, the couple was aware that family life seemed much more complicated. They worried about the children's grades and about how responsible the teenagers were in driving and dating. They did not want to seem naive about the teenagers' possible use of drugs or alcohol or about their sexual activity, yet they did not want to seem untrusting by bringing these issues up. The family experienced a major crisis when their son was injured in an automobile accident following a dance.

Stage V: Family - at Child Launching. Stage V is characterized by the experience of loss as parents let go of their parental roles and prepare to establish adult-to-adult relationships with their children. Children also give up their dependent role. With the loss of these roles comes an increase in time and energy available for other pursuits. Children invest in peer groups, work or education and eventually choose a marriage partner. Parents must make choices to reapportion their energy in new work, new interests and perhaps in the new roles of in-laws and grandparents. Of primary importance is the strength of the marriage and the ability of the parents to reinvest energy in their own relationship.

The primary *task* of Stage V is to shift energy from parent-child relationships back to the marital relationship in order to allow adult children to leave home. The *strengths* of this stage may include the desire of the couple to increase their own enjoyment and let go of the work of the previous stage; relative economic stability; and increased time and energy for individual interests.

Distracters at this stage often involve the couple's relationships. Common distracters are illness or death in the grandparental generation; too early or delayed departure of children from the home; distance or conflict between the couple themselves; and depression or illness resulting from anticipated departure.

Art and Alice faced serious decisions as Art approached 17 years of service. These involved the timing and location of retirement, decisions on a second

career, Alice's plans to return to school and work, and assisting their young adult children with college. Another family crisis occurred when their 17-year-old daughter announced that she wished to leave school to marry a young soldier on orders to Germany.

Stage VI: Marriage - After Child Rearing. In Stage VI the family is once more composed primarily of husband and wife. Relationships to children are significant but not primary.

Resolution of loss is the *task* of this stage. The key is how the couple gets on with their lives in a way that has meaning for them. *Strengths* of Stage VI families may include skills and experience acquired over time, wisdom gained from acceptance, perspective derived from experience and the availability of increased leisure time.

Distracters and roadblocks at this stage include those things that prevent a couple from feeling satisfaction with their new role as a couple in the older generation. Distracters may include the inability of a parent to let go of an adult child; the inability of an adult child to function without parental support; out-of-touch partners experiencing the pain and loneliness of their marriage; loss of parents' dreams of success for their children; and loss of health on the part of either spouse.

The last stage of the family can be a time when the experiences of all the previous stages - the pain and joy, the holding on and letting go -culminate in a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment for the couple and their entire family. Stage VI is a new beginning to an old journey for two partners who live out the health and wellness of the family life cycle.

Art and Alice will be able to plan together for Art's retirement. This included buying into Alice's brother's business and moving to Alice's home town near a military base. Their middle daughter returned home for a period of time after college before finding a job. The couple was able to plan and enjoy frequent vacations and trips to visit grandchildren. After Art suffered a mild stroke, the couple became more focused on home and their hobby of gardening. They welcomed visits from children, grandchildren and friends.

Just as families move through developmental stages, the Army, in providing services to families, has moved through several stages to the present. In the past, when service for Army families was not emphasized, the family had to adjust to and fulfill the needs of the service member. As the emphasis on Army families grew dramatically, delivery of services became a main thrust of the Army. Families were provided with a variety of programs and services intended to ensure quality of life for the family member. This stage was very successful and enabled the Army to move to its present position.

Conclusion

However, it seems that the proliferation of services to family, based on past necessity, had now begun to create difficulties. Commanders did not have a clear perspective on what services were available and for whom. Additionally, there was no tool for commanders to use to identify services available to families or to assess the effectiveness of these programs. A new tool was needed to insure targeted and effective delivery of services to Army families.

A metaphor of the dilemma might be to compare those providing family services to rainmakers. They fly over cloud after cloud dropping crystals and making the rain fall. There are many clouds and many rainmakers.

The problem with being a rainmaker is that the rainmakers really do not know how effectively the soil is being watered until they land their craft and examine the ground. Only on inspection of the target zone are they able to determine how effective their work has been. Rainmakers have high hopes of how well the rain project is going, assuming that all ground is moist and fertile for growth. Inspection may show this to be true in some areas; however, there may also be some land left desert while other areas are flooded.

The Army has used the six-stage family developmental model as a tool to assess the distribution of the "rainfall." Both deserts and flooded areas have been identified, along with well-watered areas. The one recommendation that has been almost unanimous is that the process should be continued.

Since the requirement for specialized family-oriented programs was initially identified after publication of the original Army Family Action Plan, programs tailored to the needs of the families being served have been developed on many active Army installations and in National Guard armories and Reserve centers. Efforts continue in this direction to assure the availability of family-oriented programs to the entire Army.

The developmental model can be used as a tool for commanders in other ways, depending on the unique characteristics of each organization, the families being served, the people providing services and the command's goals in the area of family life.

The chaplain, as the representative of faith, brings ministry to the family through ritual religious education and pastoral care that informs and gives substance to the ritual. Through ministry, the chaplain helps to ease the transition from one phase of the life cycle to another. The chaplain also celebrates tasks met and assists the family in moving on to the next phase of development.

Maintaining family wellness through a program of family support begins by seeing to it that new personnel and their families are integrated into the community as smoothly as possible. Joining a new unit represents a critical transition period for individual soldiers and their families. Creation of a receptive atmosphere and establishment of a sense of belonging are paramount for newly assigned personnel and their immediate families. This section describes a battalion-level sponsorship program in which assigned sponsors assist new members (officers, NCOs and enlisted soldiers) in acclimating to the new work and community environment, easing stress and anxiety normally associated with these moves.

An active, well-planned sponsorship program covering all aspects of joining a new battalion and a new community can contribute greatly to a healthy command climate and, in turn, to mission preparedness. Sponsorship is more than transmitting needed information: A properly managed program can reveal - and more importantly, resolve - potential problems that otherwise may cause unnecessary hardships to new arrivals.

A well-administered program will assist commanders and supervisors to ensure that newly assigned soldiers understand standards of performance, conduct and appearance in anticipation of any conflict with the arrival's perceptions and expectations. Conversely, a poorly managed program only creates the impression of command apathy toward new arrivals.

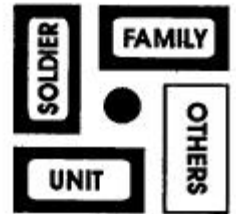
Soldiers must never feel unwanted for they are the sole reason why leaders exist! Soldiers, sponsors, commanders and supervisors must realize that sponsorship is a program we all have an obligation to support.

Policies and procedures for a typical *active* Army battalion sponsorship program follow. These can be modified for adoption by other levels of command or to suit local conditions. Reserve Component units will find it necessary to significantly modify these procedures; however, the principles remain the same.

All officers, warrant officers and enlisted members in grades E-5 and above should have sponsors appointed upon notification of their assignment. Married personnel, regardless of rank, should also have an appointed sponsor at this time.

The **Battalion Commander** should personally welcome all officers, warrant officers, NCOs and enlisted personnel on arrival. Officers, warrant officers and NCOs (E-5 and above) should be scheduled for an introductory interview by the Battalion S-1. All E-4's and below should be welcomed by the Battalion Commander within five working days of arrival at a weekly Welcome Briefing. The Commander may also add a personal note to each welcome letter to be sent to incoming officer and warrant officer personnel.

Welcoming New Personnel



Sponsorship

The **Battalion Command Sergeant Major** (CSM) should personally welcome all NCOs and enlisted personnel on arrival. NCOs (E-5 and above) should be scheduled for an entrance call with the CSM. All E-4s and below should be welcomed by the CSM within five working days of arrival in conjunction with the Battalion Commander's welcome.

The CSM can also insure that all NCOs and enlisted personnel are briefed on necessary areas such as the following:

- Unit mission and operational requirements
- Use of the chain of command
- Standards of conduct
- Standards of appearance (including uniform and haircut standards)
- Weight control program
- Promotion policy
- Schools program
- Battalion pass/leave policy
- Responsibilities of NCOs
- NCO professional development program (NCOPD)
- Personnel and equipment accountability, maintenance and training
- Family Support Group program

The **Battalion S-1** should monitor the overall battalion sponsorship program and maintain all related records. Other duties may include:

- Providing Welcome Packets to sponsors;
- Scheduling all E-5 and above personnel to meet with the Battalion Commander;
- Monitoring the requirement for Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System processing;
- Monitoring the requirement for Family Care Plans;
- Appointing officer or warrant officer sponsors within three working days of receipt of notification of assignment;
- Requesting original command welcome letters from officer sponsors prior to dispatching to the Battalion Commander to add a personal note; and
- Guaranteeing attendance of all newly assigned personnel in grades E-4 and below at the weekly Welcome Briefing conducted by the Battalion Commander and the CSM, informing companies if rescheduling is necessary.

Company Commanders should initiate programs to guarantee sponsors who are responsible, enthusiastic and adequately trained to perform to the highest standards as representatives of the command. They should seek volunteers who have potential in the above areas to be trained as sponsors on a recurring basis. Their other sponsorship duties may include:

- Appointing an NCO or enlisted sponsor in writing within three working days after receiving notification of a new arrival;
- Insuring that the sponsor is in the same grade or higher than the incoming member, in the same marital status and military specialty (when possible), familiar with the local military/civilian area, and not in receipt of reassignment instructions nor scheduled for temporary duty or leave during the time it takes the newly arrived member to be processed;
- Forwarding completed sponsor appointment forms to the Battalion S-1; and
- Counseling the sponsor on the joint responsibility to the commander and to the incoming individual.

LIMIT

Sponsors must understand that promise of payment of financial obligation in the newly assigned service member's name or expenditures of personal funds are not to be made unless a Power of Attorney specifying what actions the sponsor is authorized to undertake has been provided.

The Company Commander should send a command welcome letter to all incoming personnel within five working days after receiving the assignment notification alert. For NCOs and enlisted personnel, it is recommended the command welcome letter be prepared by company executive officers. The command welcome letter may include:

- A brief history of the battalion,
- The unit's location and telephone number,
- The individual's tentative duty assignment, and
- The name and address of the appointed sponsor.

Assigned sponsors must be given ample time during duty hours to accomplish their sponsorship tasks, and progress made by the sponsor in settling the new soldier must be monitored.

All newly assigned personnel should be briefed within five duty days after their arrival on areas such as:

- Unit mission, history and organization
- Chain of command and open door policy
- Company policies and performance expectations
- Training program
- Standards of conduct, appearance, military courtesy, good order and discipline
- Uniform regulations
- Work schedule
- Promotion policies/rating schemes
- EO program
- Leave policies
- Family Support Group program
- Community and Chaplaincy programs
- Predeployment readiness

In cases involving sole or in-service parents, the service member should be counseled on his or her obligation to prepare a Family Care Plan, regardless of rank. Unannounced arrivals should be handled as expeditiously as possible within the general program guidelines. Arrangements for courtesy calls and Welcome Briefings by the Battalion Commander and CSM for all newly arrived personnel should be coordinated with the Battalion S-1 and CSM.

The responsibility of the sponsor can be summarized in a form letter over the signature of the commander. This sponsor assignment form should include the name, rank and SSN of the incoming person and the name of the unit to which he or she is currently assigned. Specific sponsor duties that should be listed may include:

- Forwarding a welcome letter to the sponsored person within five days of receipt of the sponsor assignment and providing battalion Personnel and Administration Center (PAC) with a copy;
- Assisting the individual in every way possible to prepare for the reassignment, including promptly responding to any requests for information;
- Getting the individual on arrival at the airport and escorting him or her to their temporary accommodations (be sure the sponsor has the flight number and arrival time);
- Accompanying the individual during in-processing;

- Acquainting the individual with the surrounding area and commonly used facilities;
- Introducing the individual to members of his or her new organization;
- Giving all personnel with families a copy of relevant dependent travel regulations; and
- Sponsoring the individual as the sponsor would want to be sponsored.

The sponsor should understand that his or her primary responsibility is to ensure that the transition of the newly assigned individual is as smooth and problem-free as possible. Responsibilities as a sponsor should take precedence over all other duties unless the sponsor has been released. The sponsor should be urged to remember that his or her role is part of the key to the success of the Army Sponsorship Program.

The sponsor should be sure to mention specific laws peculiar to the geographic area and the military community and any other pertinent information that might be of help. It is better to give too much information than too little. The sponsor is the first contact the soldier and his or her family will have in their new location, and every effort to extend a warm welcome should be made.

The sponsor should notify the battalion PAC when contact has been made with the person being sponsored. If contact has not been established within a reasonable period of time, he or she should contact them for assistance.

Semiannual chain of command visits to family residences are another excellent opportunity to show soldiers and their families that Army leadership is concerned about their welfare and make sure they are aware of the services and programs available to them. Visits should be scheduled with the soldier at a time advantageous to the family. Consideration should be given to commanders' being accompanied by their spouses. Visits might be limited to 15 minutes unless questions or problems are identified by the soldier or family members. Chain of command visits are a logical extension of the initial welcome of the sponsorship program.

The next section of this chapter provides tips for effective sponsorship. These can be duplicated for distribution to sponsors at the time sponsorship assignments are made.

Tips for Sponsors
by Linda Powell

Don't write a long, detailed letter.

- Be brief! Even though you possess a wealth of knowledge, keep it simple.
 - Include telephone numbers: work, home and Autovon.
 - Send brochures, literature, maps, a welcome pamphlet from Army Community Service (ACS) and information from the local Chamber of Commerce.
 - Save time and energy; use a tape recorder. Write or call to make certain your newcomer has one. You may want to send successive recordings, which add a warm, personal touch to sponsorship.

Find out if you are sponsoring someone with a family.

- Do they have children? What are their ages? Send information on schools, including preschools and day cares.
- Are there any pets? Inform them about any special quarantine requirements and the cost.
- Are there any special needs involving family, such as disabilities, special education needs, special requirements for the spouse?
- Make temporary living arrangements for them so they will have a place to stay upon arrival

Don't paint an entirely rosy picture.

- List inconveniences and problems they may encounter, such as traffic problems, lines at the commissary, cost of living, housing and so on.
- Give good advice on how to handle problems and inconveniences. List the best times for commissary and PX shopping; mention the number of other service exchange stores and commissaries available.
- Be sure to remind them to submit a change of address early.

Greet them personally.

- Meet them at the airport.
- Help with baggage pickup (arrange for a duty vehicle).
- Drive them to their temporary residence.
- Plan to pick them up, especially the soldier, to assist with in-processing.
- Show them that you care, but when your help is no longer needed, leave them alone to enjoy their first day in their new location.
- Give them your phone number in case they need your assistance.

- Leave a list of unit and emergency numbers with them.
- If there are children involved, offer to sit with them or arrange for a sitter while the parents take care of the numerous tasks associated with settling in.
- Often the spouse must sit in the car while the soldier in-processes. Make arrangements for the spouse to stay in your house or in the temporary quarters, whichever would be more convenient.

It's always nice if the spouse of the sponsor can write to the spouse of the person being sponsored. Subjects such as children, schools, shopping, churches, quarters, child care, activities on post, and so on can be addressed. This also adds a personal touch and makes the incoming spouse feel like a part of the battalion.

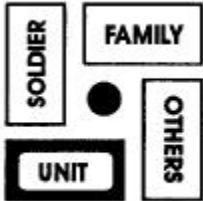
Involve the family.

- The soldier will become acclimated quickly to his or her unit. It's also important for spouses of other unit soldiers to become aware of and acquainted with the newly arrived spouse. Children can also gain new friends quickly from among unit families, which will help them settle into their new environment.
- Consider having some families from your unit gather in your home with the newcomers as the honored guests.
- The spouses of other soldiers in the unit may want to sponsor a get-together, which will help the newly arrived spouse to get acquainted.
- Introduce the family to the Family Support Group (FSG). Suggest that the FSG contact person visit the family to explain the benefits of the group.

Finally, be a good sponsor. It will help everyone in the long run.

Backgrounder: Caring Is Not Enough

by Larry H. Ingraham,
LTC, MSC



Over the past six years my colleagues and I at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research have interviewed thousands of soldiers in more than a hundred companies and batteries as part of our evaluation of the Unit Manning System. The data is clear: The chief influence of cohort potential is leader behavior. Units in which leaders behave like they value people and express concern for their welfare score high on measures of cohesion; conversely, units with leaders who are relatively unconcerned about people score low on the cohesion measures. A leader who lacks concern easily wreaks havoc on the unit.

When we talk to leaders, however, none admit to being unfeeling or uncaring. All know the importance of taking care of their people. We have no reason to doubt their sincerity; they genuinely feel that they care. Unfortunately they, too, often assume their intentions and heartfelt personal concerns are enough and obvious to other members of the unit. Too often they are not. Too often the perceptions of troops in the unit are the opposite of what the leader says and feels. This paper is a speech I will never be invited to give to Army leaders -officers and NCOs - who say they care but then bring misery to their subordinates.

Ladies and gentlemen: Rank and position are conferred from above, but leadership is confirmed from below. Your selection as an Army leader is evidence the Army has confidence in you, but this is the easy vote. In combat a silent vote of confidence is taken on every order. The same holds for training, but the returns take longer to count. Now you win the second, more difficult and really important vote of confidence. You say you do not wish to be liked, only respected, but too often you confuse respect with fear. You often appear uncertain of your authority and fearful you will not be respected. Therefore you set out to prove who is in charge.

In combat especially, but in training as well, you are totally dependent upon your subordinates. You can succeed only to the degree you are willing to join them first, and then lead them by their consent - because they trust you and believe in you. You talk about "my outfit," be it a battalion, company, battery, platoon, or squad, but it is not just yours. It is their unit, too. They were there before you and will remain after you. You are only on loan to the unit. You have been appointed and given the charge of helping them make it the most effective Army unit possible.

Communications are always problematic in organizations. You listen for what you want to hear and can never know enough. Again, your success depends on your subordinates. If you are any good at all, your subordinates will not shield you from the unpleasant.

When they do it is because they are fearful. They have tested your courage to hear the truth, and found you wanting. Also, they want to please; they want to handle problems themselves and not bother you with "trivial" details. Too often, however, what they see as trivial will be crucially important to your understanding. Unless you have worked extremely hard to gain their trust, unless they share your vision of what is really important, you will have the information you need in a form you can use.

On the subject of communications, let me note that few know how to talk to soldiers. You substitute the "general officer shuffle" for meaningful communication. I am sure you recognize the shuffle: "Hi-there-where-ya-from?" (to be friendly); "How's-the-training?" (professional interest); "How's-the-chow-you-married-got-any-personal-problems?" (personal concern); "Good talkin' to ya." Sadly, you probably learned this patter from watching general officers work the crowd, who in turn probably learned it from politicians or the movies.

If you really understand that you are totally dependent on the troops, I commend to you the examples of Generals Bradley and Ridgeway who knew they did not know, and knew that the troops had knowledge they needed. Bradley, even as a corps commander, had no problem joining soldiers in their foxholes; Ridgeway always asked in so many words from each private, "What do you know that I need to know, right now?" Instead of the shuffle let me suggest some alternate questions:

- *How much of your training time have we wasted today?*
- *Are your leaders teaching you anything new?*
- *How often do you stand around doing nothing until late afternoon, and then have to work after chow ?*
- *Do you know what you are expected to accomplish today? To what standard? By when ?*
- *When will you know what you have to do tomorrow?*
- *Who deserves an award in this outfit?*
- *Is discipline fair in this unit?*
- *What is your wife's biggest gripe about your work?*
- *If you could make one change in this outfit to make life better for the troops, what would it be?*

When the troops get nervous at your questions and begin looking out the corners of their eyes for their sergeant or officer, or when the NCOs start grumbling that you're butting into "Sergeants' Business," then you know you do not yet have sufficient trust built up to bear the truth. This is called negative feedback. When your subordinate leaders pester you to come visit their outfit to see their latest innovation or to ask some more tough questions, it is called positive feedback. The quality of feedback you receive is completely in your hands.

My next point is that coaching is not mentoring. You coach one level below, but mentor two levels down. That means colonels mentor captains, and lieutenant colonels mentor lieutenants, and first sergeants and captains mentor squad leaders. The purpose of mentoring is to provide the junior with a glimpse of the context in which the superior makes decisions. This is crucial if, as our doctrine proposes, leaders at all levels grasp and implement the intent of those two levels removed.

Mentoring is not instruction from the platform, briefings or SOPs. It is not shooting the bull like one of the guys. It is talking quietly and informally about the Army, about important professional concerns - the essence of our profession. It might

involve suggested readings or even a written report, but the tone is always informal, the critique always gentle and the result always affirming. We talk a lot about mentoring, but few of us manage it at all because we confuse mentoring (setting context) with coaching (giving instructions).

You have repeatedly heard that families are important. They are, but we are often unclear as to why. Yes, common decency requires we attend to families; happy families make happy soldiers, and all that. Yes, we recruit soldiers, but retain families; therefore, families are important. All these reasons are true. The real reason families are important, however, is that healthy families keep soldiers alive on the battlefield. My scientific colleagues have established that stress is cumulative. Soldiers who go into battle stressed with personal and family problems are at greater risk for panic, poor judgment, despair and apathy in combat. Soldiers with family problems who break in battle also have lower odds for recovery.

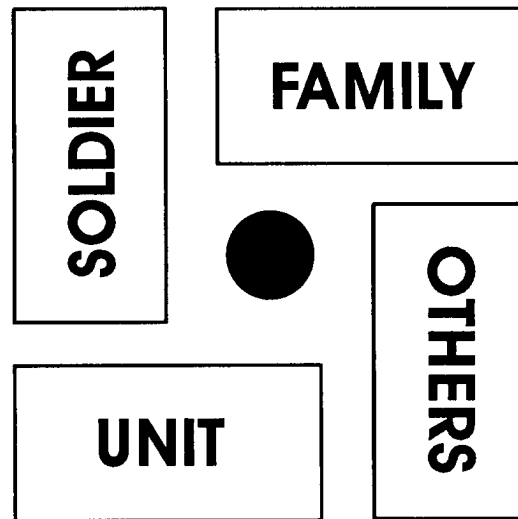
We have known for a long time that troubled families produce troubled soldiers who create troubles in their units. However, the evidence is now clear that troubled units produce troubled soldiers who then create troubles in their families.

The causal chain is really a circle. We can pretty accurately assess the morale in our units in two ways: We can ask soldiers, or we can ask their families. They mirror each other.

I suggest, therefore, that you attend carefully to families in assessing your combat readiness. If you dare, judge your units by the degree of informal family participation. Families, especially wives, participate in group activities because they want to, not because they are ordered or "tasked" to attend.

I close with a golden rule of command. Consider how you would feel if you were bound by the same rules you impose on your soldiers. When you see barracks organized like basic training with tape on the floor for each piece of furniture, how would you feel if somebody were to organize your living room? How would you feel if your next commander changed the tapes? Then the next commander comes along and changes them back? We do this to soldiers in the barracks all the time, for no better reason than to prove to them (and ourselves) who is in charge.

In the name of pride, you sweat our troops to get increasing percentages of maximum scores on the PT test, or make them buff floors until they shine like shaving mirrors. Whose pride? You intend to improve morale, but the troops hate it. They do it in the hopes you will someday catch on and join the unit. You confuse what you do with the result you intend. Your soldiers really do want you to succeed because they want the unit to succeed. Their lives depend on the unit. So does yours. As their appointed leader you have great power to create misery and little power to reduce it, for you will be blind to its existence - unless you vigorously seek it out. What you intend is too often quite opposite of what you get. Your soldiers can only see what you do. They cannot know how you feel, or even your intentions to do good on their behalf. Your only hope is to concentrate on trust, communication, feedback, mentoring and families. Use your power wisely; the troops are watching and silently voting every day.



2. Starting a Family Support Group Program

Responsibilities and activities of a typical Family Support Group (FSG) program for those leading or facilitating FSG development, especially those starting new programs

- Are You Ready?
- What Is a Family Support Group?
- A Successful Start
- Organization
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Summary
- Backgrounder: One Command's Experience
- Family Support Group Questionnaire

Many deployments are announced in advance. This knowledge can, and sometimes does, lead to complacency. It leaves the soldier with a false sense of security - the feeling that there is always time to take care of family needs before he or she deploys.

The high percentage of announced deployments may tend to blind soldiers, families and the chain of command to the real need for an ongoing, effective family support system - one that provides for the needs of the family while the soldier is away but also emphasizes the need for total family readiness.

But the possibility remains that the phone could ring in the middle of the night with orders for the soldier to be ready to take off to an undisclosed destination for an unknown length of time. Or the soldier could wake up to a situation that leaves no time to prepare.

Just suppose it's 3:25 a.m. on Christmas Day. The phone rings. The message is short. The soldier hangs up the phone and calls the next person in the alert chain to pass on the word. Fifteen minutes later he or she is out of the driveway with all military gear in the back seat of the car. The soldier's spouse rolls over and goes back to sleep thinking, "Another stupid practice alert!"

However, for the spouse, the uncertainty of when that phone might ring and the chance of the soldier really going on a mission causes all kinds of hidden fears to surface. The "What if?" question produces a great deal of stress.

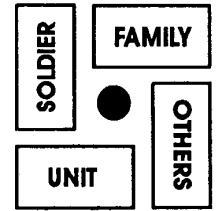
Perhaps, the night before, things had not been exactly as this couple had planned at home: dinner had burned, they squabbled with each other and with the kids. Being on alert status, even when it is not the real thing, creates its own anxieties - the pressure creates emotional stress.

The soldier drives away from his or her quarters, promising to make it up to their spouse when they get back. As the spouse drifts off to sleep he or she decides that "we will kiss and make up" when the soldier returns home that evening.

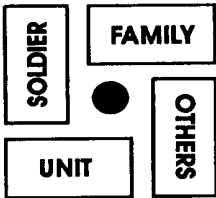
But what if it were not a practice alert? What if it were the real thing? Would this soldier's family be prepared? Did he or she leave home in a good frame of mind? Do both the soldier and the spouse have a handle on the family's financial situation? Are both satisfied that all household problems have been taken care of? Can emergency situations be handled by the spouse? Does he or she know how and where to get help? Would this couple be able to spend those last precious hours secure in the knowledge that both have done everything they could to be ready for this moment, physically, emotionally and mentally?

Family support programs are designed to make sure that these questions can be answered "yes" as often as possible. Family Support Groups (FSGs) can be key components of these programs.

Are You Ready?



What Is a Family Support Group?



Many different types of support groups exist within the Army community. For the purpose of this handbook, an FSG is a company- or battalion-affiliated organization of officers, enlisted soldiers and family members that uses volunteers to provide social and emotional support, outreach services and information to family members prior to, during and in the immediate aftermath of family separations (deployments, extended tours of duty and field training exercises).

The purpose of an FSG is to ease the strain and possible traumatic stress associated with military separation for both family and soldier. The main objective of FSGs is to enable a unit's family members to establish and operate a system through which they can effectively gather information, solve problems and maintain a system of mutual support. FSGs have the potential for improving a unit's readiness.

FSGs include volunteers and program participants. FSG volunteers are appointed representatives or committee members responsible for a variety of FSG projects and activities. A volunteer may be a family member or an active-duty soldier; many are spouses of married soldiers. Program participants are recipients of FSG services who, for example, attend the classes, seminars and social events that may be sponsored by volunteers.

For the family member, a unit's FSG is an effective way of gaining information and support during deployment. Through successful FSG efforts, many spouses have developed a more positive attitude toward themselves, the deployment and the Army. Involvement in FSG activities may result in acquiring valuable new skills.

For the soldier, it is reassuring to know that family members will receive reliable and friendly support when the soldier is called away. This can contribute to a consistent level of performance in the unit, increase the effectiveness of training and insure a psychological readiness to fight.

For the command, a unit FSG increases the level of group confidence, commitment and predictability among soldiers and improves training. The FSG can enhance unit togetherness and increase unit readiness by institutionalizing self-help and helping family members identify with the unit.

FSGs can help the unit prevent problems within families that impact adversely on soldier performance or reduce unit strength through attrition. This frees up the unit commander's time and conserves other resources (psychological, social and budgetary). Through the assistance of FSGs, detractors from the military mission can be reduced.

For the military and civilian communities, an FSG program can help to forestall serious family problems that would place greater demand on community service agencies, such as family violence, alcoholism or drug abuse within the family, adolescent problems and delinquency, child abuse and broken family units. FSGs are in a position to supply information and referral to family members about military or civilian community resources and opportunities and can help families develop self-reliance by sharing coping skills.

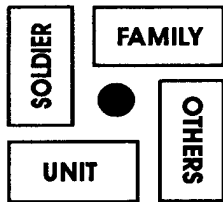
The FSG can contribute to other Army family programs that enhance the overall quality of community life, such as sponsorship of newly arrived families on post, improved child-care resources, outreach programs for off-post and geographically separated families, prevention of social-psychological isolation among junior enlisted families, rumor control and support of family members experiencing temporary feelings of stress during deployment.

For the Army, a successful unit FSG program, combined with effective community resources, will make spouses, especially younger ones, feel that they are truly a part of the Army family. That, coupled with a training program that challenges the soldier, makes an unbeatable combination that will assure success in the all-important mission of retaining high-quality service members.

The goals of an FSG program include:

- Becoming an essential part of a military unit's family support system through activities such as unit activity day, unit family briefings, family meals in the dining facility and so on;
- Reducing social isolation among family members, especially in the junior enlisted ranks;
- Enabling the members to provide each other with close, personal, mutual support;
- Assisting members to gather important information and access to resources more efficiently and effectively;
- Facilitating and establishing a real sense of community among soldiers and their family members; and
- Enhancing the military member's feelings of belonging, control, self-reliance and self-esteem.

A Successful Start



This section describes how to get an FSG program started. First steps, possible initial goals, military linkages and factors important to FSG success are discussed.

FSGs may be established at any level of command but are usually found at the battalion or company level. Unit representatives and family members should decide whether such activities as meetings and newsletters are best managed at the battalion or the company level.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Formation of FSGs

Discussion: Commanders recognize the need to sustain the stability of families when soldiers are deployed. Their personal commitment and the support of their staffs are important ingredients in the formation of FSGs.

Lessons: FSGs can be formed quickly during mobilization or deployment preparations, but they work much better if they are ongoing activities established prior to deployment. These preorganized FSGs are held in a state of readiness.

- Units should participate in the process of establishing FSGs, but the ultimate effectiveness of a group lies in the strengths of the families themselves, the FSG's training, the imagination of FSG leaders and the initiative of FSG volunteers.
- FSGs are most effective at battalion and company levels. They work best when NCO, junior enlisted or junior officer spouses with energy, interest and natural leadership abilities are motivated to serve in leadership roles. These spouses are seen as more readily able to understand the economic and life-style problems of soldiers and their spouses.
- During major deployments, especially those involving activation of Reserve Component forces, there is a need for family support for those who do not fit the normal FSG criteria. These include guardians of children whose parents have deployed and active and reserve families of all services who have temporarily moved from military installations and rear detachments. Family support for this category should be "purple suited," accommodating the needs of all military families regardless of active/reserve or service affiliation.

Initially a steering committee might be formed at the battalion level. Membership on this committee should include, but not be limited to, the battalion commander, a senior NCO, a member of the battalion staff, the chaplain, and the military and family members representing each subordinate unit, that is, the company or separate detachment within the battalion. The steering committee might eventually become the battalion FSG management committee. Its initial tasks could include these:

- To identify, integrate and establish mutual goals for the FSG;
- To establish benchmarks for charting the progress and development of the FSG;
- To inform staff of the subordinate unit and the battalion about the purpose, function and structure of the FSG;
- To recruit volunteers to develop committees to address the goals and needs of the FSG as identified at the meetings (see Chapter 3 of this handbook for information on the management of volunteers);
- To provide advice and assistance to companies developing FSGs;
- To provide volunteers with specific job descriptions;
- To seek training for volunteers in areas such as communication skills, crisis intervention, problem solving, use of available resources, newsletter production and so on;
- To provide rewards and unit recognition for volunteers;
- To provide facility support for volunteers to effectively carry out their duties; and
- To serve as a vehicle for information sharing through participation in an FSG forum (composed of representatives from all FSGs on post), an FSG council or other similar organization at the installation level.

The goals of the FSGs must incorporate the needs of both the military organization and the family members. In setting goals the partnership between the Army and its families must be stressed.

To maximize attendance, it may be necessary to plan two meetings with identical agendas - one in the morning and one in the evening-announcing the date, time and place of each meeting and including provisions for child care.

At these meetings, the purpose, structure and goals of the FSG program should be highlighted. Input from the attendees should be encouraged through surveys, evaluation questionnaires, brainstorming sessions and so on to identify and prioritize the needs of FSG members.

Publicize FSG meetings at formations, staff meetings, spouses' coffee groups, by flyers and so on. Incentives to reward attendance may include time off from duty for active duty soldiers if family members attend the meeting, competition among units to promote participation, or a free morning following the meeting. Notices can be followed up with telephone calls using the unit roster.

A successful FSG program requires ongoing close cooperation with the affiliated military units. Four key linkages are described in the next section: the relationship between the FSG and the unit commander; information exchange between the FSG and military unit representatives; the use of unit facilities by the FSG; and the link between FSGs and installation community assistance resources.

Linkages

First of all, each FSG functions with the express support of its unit commander. Without the active backing of the commander, an FSG may not develop effectively. An FSG's authority flows primarily from the commander's willingness to support volunteers. This support calls for regular meetings with FSG representatives. However, this function does not require much time on the part of a commander.

The commander needs to have full knowledge of planned FSG activities and easy access to FSG representatives in order to provide guidance and to offer unit resources and facilities to the FSG and to create a climate of caring for family members and recognition for FSG volunteers.

Secondly, military units are important sources of information for FSGs. The converse is also true. It is important that FSG representatives and the military unit representatives, such as command sergeants major, first sergeants, company commanders, executive officers, noncommissioned officers and chaplains, develop appropriate working relationships in order to establish an efficient information exchange system.

The exchange of information between an FSG and its affiliated military unit can, on occasion, be a sensitive matter. Therefore, it is of vital importance that FSGs and military units establish careful methods of control over the exchange of information.

Thirdly, unit facilities must be available to the FSG. Access to a meeting place within the unit is an important asset for an FSG at company and battalion levels. Unit day rooms, conference rooms, lawns, dining facilities and learning centers, as well as chapels, theaters and other military facilities, are the most accessible and acceptable meeting places, depending on the size and function of the group.

Access to unit reproduction capabilities for FSG newsletters and flyers, mailing privileges for FSG materials, and use of unit telephone and audiovisual equipment can greatly assist FSG communication and family awareness.

Unit support of FSG activities through providing space for parties, refreshments and babysitting services and through fund-raising efforts by soldiers can be a basis for positive bonding between the unit and the families for an FSG at the company level and, at times, across an entire battalion.

Finally, the FSG and community assistance resources should work closely together. In the active Army, each installation has agencies dedicated to the needs of Army families that can support the aims of the unit FSG. Army Community Services (ACS) and the Family Support Division can be of assistance in facilitating training of FSG volunteers and linking FSGs to installation services such as chaplains, doctors and other professionals.

Reserve Component FSGs may access resources available in the civilian communities in which they live and work. Such contacts are encouraged and may be made easier by initiating contact through the State Family Program Office of the National Guard, the local National Guard Armory or the local Army Reserve Center for Army Reservists.

FSGs at the unit level should be encouraged to make effective use of community resources on behalf of their family members and broaden their ties to the military community, while retaining a primary affiliation with the deploying unit and its membership.

Careful and early preparation and ongoing reevaluation are the keys to success in unit deployment family support efforts that include FSGs. The emphasis in this section is on preparation; the need for ongoing reevaluation of the family support system has been discussed in Chapter 1.

To be effective, the family support plan must be developed and in place prior to a deployment or extended training exercise. If time does not permit development of an ideal plan, identify whatever services the unit can realistically offer and make them available to soldiers and their families. Don't promise what you cannot produce. More credibility and unit cohesion will result from providing a few effective services than from making large commitments that are not kept.

The family support system developed, no matter how simple or complex, must be compatible with the support system to be used during mobilization. A deployment could easily escalate into a partial or total mobilization. The family support system must be viewed as part and parcel of the combat readiness of the entire command.

A family support system has three crucial components: the FSG program, the Family Assistance Center (FAC), and the Rear Detachment Commander (RDC). The effectiveness of this system rests on the integration of the three components. The goal is for the FAC staff and the RDC to be back-up resources, with the FSG as the most immediate source of help. Without a functional FSG, family members tend to overwhelm the FAC and RDC with inquiries. This leads to their inability to respond in a timely and adequate manner.

Keys to Success

The FAC furnishes information, assistance, guidance and referral to units and families of soldiers in the event of an emergency deployment, mobilization or, at times, in response to a major disaster resulting from a deployment. An example of the latter was the activation of a FAC in response to the 101st Airborne plane crash in Gander, Newfoundland. Many FACs were operational during the recent conflict in the Persian Gulf.

FAC may not be activated for all deployments and extended field exercises. When activated, it serves as a liaison with all resource agencies; services from a wide variety of military and civilian agencies are sometimes made available on a 24-hour basis. Personnel often include ACS paid and volunteer staff, legal assistance officers, chaplains, health benefits advisors, mental health professionals, Red Cross personnel, the Provost Marshal and housing, transportation and finance specialists. An FAC officer is designated to coordinate the activities. This is usually the ACS officer on active army installations. For the Army National Guard, this role may be filled by the State Family Program Coordinator or Family Assistance Officer of the State Area Command. Army Reservists may access either the active Army installation FACs or those operated by the State Area Command.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Purpose and Composition of the FAC

Discussion: During extended deployments, the need for assistance for family members increases dramatically. For this reason, the installation must be prepared for the increase in the use of family support services. Types of agencies that should be located at the FAC include ACS, Red Cross, CHAMPUS, Finance, Adjutant General, Family Advocacy, DENTAC, MEDDAC, Provost Marshal Office, Chaplain, Inspector General, Judge Advocate General, Public Affairs Officer, Directorate of Engineering and Housing, Director of Logistics. These agencies are the suggested composition of an FAC. This is not an all-inclusive list.

Lessons: Installations and Reserve Component organizations must tailor the composition of their FACs to the special needs of the installations or units.

- All agencies on post should be prepared to assign personnel to the FAC once it is placed into operation.
- Since many of the agencies' services will be required 24 hours a day, contingencies should be made to have a representative available on call around the clock.
- The FAC should have phone numbers for the rear detachments and FSGs.

An RDC is usually designated when an active Army unit deploys or goes on extended exercises as a primary point of contact for family members who have questions or need assistance prior to and during the separation. Reserve Component organizations may not be able to appoint an RDC, so that role might be established within the FAC. The needs of the family during this stressful period of separation require that the RDC be more than an authority figure. It is best if the RDC is someone who is compassionate and sympathetic to the needs of family members. This means that thought should go into the selection of the RDC.

It is important that the FSG closely coordinate its efforts with those of military family support personnel. Coordinated efforts are essential to:

- Ensure FSG integration into the unit's deployment family support plan;
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of FSG volunteers, the RDC, FAC staff and any other key resource people that may be involved; and
- Set an early precedent for the importance of all family support components working together.

Clarification of roles both within an FSG and between FSG representatives and military representatives is essential, especially during deployment situations. These roles need to be established, in writing, prior to deployment and clearly defined and implemented in both deployment and nondeployment situations. When key members of an integrated system have a role in organizing and evaluating that system, they have an increased desire to see it work.

The formation of FSGs cannot be mandated. Family members must see the need for an FSG before they will be willing to become involved in one. Even when interest is present, the development of a responsive, well-functioning FSG is often a slow process, especially in units that are not facing an impending deployment or extended training exercise.

An impending or anticipated deployment focuses attention and increases the felt need for family members to bond together to help one another cope with a common crisis. Without such a crisis, whether impending or anticipated, this perceived need for bonding is absent. This does not mean that the formation of an FSG will be impossible; it just makes it more difficult.

Research has conclusively shown that commands having effective FSG programs have defined two alternating missions for FSGs in relation to unit activities and deployments. Based upon this research, it is proposed that FSGs organize to provide two distinct levels of effort at different times - an action level and a sustaining level. In periods of unit deployment, an FSG mobilizes at an action level of effort; during periods of garrison duty, it operates at a sustainment level of effort.

The action level of effort is concentrated around events such as predeployment, deployment and the immediate postdeployment periods. FSGs provide support to family members and soldiers by offering accurate and helpful information on unit activities, and referral assistance for community resources. Activities during this level are geared toward helping family members cope during the separation and bond with other family members in the unit.

The sustaining level of effort represents a reduced degree of interaction between FSG volunteers and family members as well as between members within an FSG organization. This level occurs mainly during nondeployment periods, but sustainment roles also operate during deployments. During the sustainment period, FSGs may:

- Update rosters of family members' addresses and telephone numbers;
- Continue regular meetings between FSG representatives and unit leaders; and
- Provide welcoming, sponsorship, orientation and networking support for new and stressed family members through group meetings or telephone tree contacts.

Other factors affecting the success of FSGs include these:

- The willingness of family members to establish an FSG, including family-member leadership and participation in its organization and operation, and their genuine concern for its goals;
- Commander linkage demonstrating and assuring active support for and approval of FSG activities;
- The existence of a command and family-member steering committee to develop the organizational structure of the total family support system for deployment, to delineate the respective roles of each component, and to formalize an ongoing linkage to the FSG and family members for information exchange;
- The appointment of FSG volunteer representatives at both the battalion and the company level; and
- The formal incorporation of the FSG program into the unit's written deployment family assistance plan and the development of a local FSG memorandum outlining the program's purpose, goals, objectives, structure and responsibilities to define it as a command program.

Although an FSG must be institutionalized, meaning that it must be supported by command, it is essential that it belong to the unit family members. They must organize and operate the FSG, with unit support. Without an organized, well-developed and self-directed structure, an FSG may not survive adverse events; may not maintain an effective and comprehensive family support network; may not maintain adequate

participation on the part of family members; and may not effectively anticipate and address the issues and concerns important to family members.

By providing support that benefits family members, an FSG provides invaluable support for the military mission. It would be difficult for an FSG to perform this function during deployment or mobilization on a continuing basis without adequate links to its associated military unit. It is to the advantage of both the unit and the FSG if these links are defined and institutionalized through a local memorandum of understanding, affiliation or charter as soon as the FSG is developed.

There is no "best" way to structure an FSG. The structure should be tailored to the unit, its missions and the makeup of its family members. The FSG structure outlined in this handbook focuses on the anticipation of deployments by an entire active Army battalion that has companies within close proximity. Its organizational structure may be simplified and can also be adapted for use in nondeployable commands. Army National Guard and Army Reserve FSGs may vary from this structure as required by geography, demographics or other factors. Such FSGs are usually organized around specific military units but may be organized on a geographic basis.

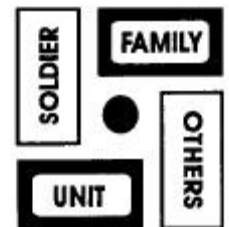
FSGs can be organized at three levels along unit lines to form a communication and support network:

- The contact level includes family-member volunteers who play leadership roles within an FSG. They may be called contact people, key persons, circle leaders, chairpersons or by other titles at the discretion of the organizers.
- The company level includes military members who represent the command. Junior officers or NCOs may be assigned such duties. They may be referred to as Points of Contact (POCs), as company representatives or by other similar titles, depending on their roles.
- The battalion-level structure is like that at the company level but exists at the higher organizational level.

Each level or component in the structure is designed to facilitate communication, to insure contact and to encourage mutual support. This structure may need to be modified depending on the organization and geographic location of the various levels or components.

Two of the three FSG levels exist within the company - the contact people (or key persons) and company representatives or POCs. This results in the company being the primary focus of FSG activity and where FSG volunteers most directly interact with soldiers and their families. The quality of FSG activity within the company will determine its effectiveness.

Organization



Formal Structure

Strong and visible command support is essential to help ensure that an active communication and support network extends throughout the company and reaches all family members. Strong command support also encourages volunteerism and participation by a wide variety of family members and soldiers, including the single soldier.

The contact level is the first level of an FSG organization. At this level, the unit's entire family-member population may be divided into support circles. Each support circle is centered around a family member volunteer who has agreed to lead the support circle. A contact (or key) person is a volunteer family member who assumes communication and support responsibility for a support circle.

Contact people initiate and maintain basic contact with family members; at least one telephone call or visit every two weeks to everyone in the support circle is suggested during deployment and as appropriate when the soldiers are in garrison. This process reduces social isolation and reassures family members that there is a communication support and information system operational and at their disposal. These volunteers also distribute important information, identify family member concerns arising in their support circles, and act to have these concerns addressed at appropriate organizational levels.

During deployments, contact people become the major source of information for most family members. They are the first to know of family-member concerns and most often are available to help provide support for family members. They are helpful in providing accurate information, in soliciting volunteer assistance and in reducing stress.

Several factors determine the number and size of support circles in each unit. These factors include the number of family members in a unit and the number of family member volunteers that can be recruited as contact people.

Generally, three to ten support circles should be planned for each company-sized unit, with six to ten family members in each circle. A support circle should not exceed ten families. Larger support circles tend to be less cohesive and less personal; they overtax the efforts of contact people and develop communication and support gaps. Often FSGs must function temporarily with a few support circles that are larger than desired. This is especially true in the early phases of organization or when there is not an immediate crisis.

Support circles might follow the organizational groupings of the associated military unit. Support circles should not try to mirror the rank structure of the chain of command in their own organizational structure, however.

The company level is usually the first level of management within an FSG. At this level, the participants are the FSG family-member volunteers, all of whom might make up the company-level management committee. The company-level management committee meets periodically, perhaps once a month and ideally before any battalion-level FSG meeting.

The FSG management committee has these responsibilities:

- Implementing FSG activities and a communication support network within the company;
- Coordinating company-level activities with the battalion-level FSG structure;
- Forming a link with the company-level military unit, especially the first sergeant;
- Initiating supportive actions identified as needed by soldiers and families at this level; and
- Address family-member concerns appropriate to the battalion level.

Company-level representatives or POCs are responsible for communicating with each contact person as needed during the sustainment period.

A company may have one or more POCs assigned to work with the family members in the FSG. Sometimes more than one person in each company will assume a role as a company POC; in this case, it is very important that the responsibilities of these military representatives be clearly distributed. Overlapping responsibilities lead to confusion and create gaps in the communication and support network.

Linkages at the company level for exchanging pertinent information with company-level military representatives must also be established and maintained. When family-member issues are too big to handle within the support circle or FSG, the FSG leaders should contact the company POC for assistance. During deployments, company-level FSG management may interface with the RDC.

Personal and face-to-face interaction characterizes the company and contact levels within the FSG. Usually, all the family members come to know one another rather closely. Some FSGs have functioned solely at these two levels without ever being organized at the battalion level.

However, there are disadvantages to keeping FSG contact at the company level only. Company-level FSGs may be short on resources, influence and access. Organizing and conducting family-member events, getting information and resources, and resolving serious family-member concerns can be overwhelming tasks for company FSGs that operate without a battalion-level organization. For example, producing a unit FSG newsletter or command letter can be a difficult task when attempted at the company level, but it's fairly easy to achieve with an active FSG structure at the battalion level.

The battalion level is normally the next highest level of management in an FSG network. Participants are the battalion-level FSG family-member volunteer representatives. These representatives may organize into a central management committee and into other functional committees in order to:

- Plan, activate and coordinate overall FSG support;

- Support FSG participants at the company level;
- Address family-member concerns appropriate to the battalion level;
- Form organizational linkages at the battalion level;
- Transfer pertinent information to company FSG representatives; and
- Form volunteer committees to assist in the above activities.

Battalion-level FSG representatives serve as the interface between family members and battalion-level military personnel. They gather information and access resources from

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: FSG Composition

Discussion: FSGs are self-help organizations made up primarily of unit spouses but that also may include guardians of dependent children, parents and significant others, and soldier volunteers. FSGs are open to families and guardians of all members of the command, regardless of a soldier's rank. Participation is voluntary.

Lessons: FSGs are organized groups interfacing between families, deployed units and soldiers, unit rear detachments, relatives of single soldiers and local support agencies.

- Volunteer spouses in FSGs are sometimes associated with military rank or duty position. Leaders can be selected by the organizers or group members. There are many instances of spouses of junior soldiers serving in leadership positions. The main requirements are a caring attitude and a willingness to work. FSG success may depend on the degree of ownership volunteers hold toward the group.
- FSG volunteer leaders may find that their homes become communication centers. Call-waiting and answering machines are helpful.
- It is important for FSG leaders to remain calm, be reassuring and recognize that no leader can please everybody. FSG leaders can call on the rear detachment, FAC agencies and chaplains for support.
- It is important that FSG leaders take care of their families and themselves. FSG volunteer leaders tend to "burn out" when they provide direct services to unit families or substitute for the RDC in providing official assistance to spouses. Those who help others must have help.
- Commanders and FSGs should make a concerted effort to include non-command-sponsored families in FSG support activities, social events and the distribution of information.

the battalion and from military and community resource agencies, and manage and coordinate the activities of the overall FSG.

Battalion-level FSGs may also serve as the interface between unit-level FSGs and the community, although it is certainly appropriate for company-level FSGs to do so when required. During deployment, battalion-level volunteers may be the first family members to be given official information of importance.

These volunteers should communicate with all principal company volunteers often during deployment and as needed during the sustainment period when the soldiers are in garrison. The purpose of these contacts is to provide support, ensure continuity of activities and establish frequent opportunities for the exchange of family-member information and concerns.

The frequency of battalion-level FSG meetings should be determined by the tasks to be accomplished and the availability of family-member volunteer time. However, key participants in the family support program, both military and family member, should meet at least once a month even during sustainment to insure organizational continuity.

An FSG also has an informal structure, a caring network of family members. Through this network the group can educate and inform themselves regarding things that are important to them as military family members. An FSG is a means not only of supporting family activities during deployment but also of enriching family life on a continuing basis.

The informal FSG structure should involve all family members and should be organized, managed and directed primarily by them. Everyone within the community, regardless of the military member's rank, should automatically become a member with the opportunity to participate as much or as little as he or she wishes.

All family members should have the opportunity to hold office within an FSG, to participate in projects and to provide mutual support. All family members should be able to use the group to get to know other family members within military units and to join in activities that are mutually beneficial. (The "Simplified Parliamentary Procedures" in the revised edition of *Roberts' Rules of Order* may be used for the conduct of FSG meetings.)

Each FSG should set its own goals; here are some typical ones to consider:

- Publishing a monthly newsletter or command letter and mailing it to all spouses at their home address;
- Holding monthly meetings on a day and time to be decided by the FSG at any good central location;

Informal Structure

- Providing speakers or activities in a planned informational program at each monthly meeting, with a mid-program refreshment break;
- Providing acceptable child care for family members attending all meetings;
- Holding regular gatherings;
- Electing a newsletter reporter and a hospitality person;
- Making sure contact persons are appointed for each unit; and
- Establishing regular personal phone contact between a trained contact person and each spouse.

The FSG should establish, as accurately as possible, a confidential list of the name, address and phone number of each of the spouses. The list should be held by the group's membership coordinator. It should also be broken down into an alert roster by company, including the names and phone numbers only, and distributed to each company spouse. A phone chain should be established from the alert roster to pass on information (commonly referred to as a telephone tree). This chain can help the FSG or FAC staff put spouses in contact with appropriate assistance agencies as necessary and assure that available support is used effectively.

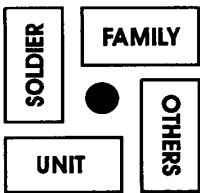
This section describes the roles of key military personnel who interact with the FSG and suggests how FSG duties might be distributed among volunteers. It also provides sample Standard Operating Procedures for ongoing FSG activities.

The roles and responsibilities of Army personnel whose activities most directly affect an FSG program and of key battalion-level and company-level FSG volunteers are summarized below.

Unit commanders are responsible for establishing an atmosphere of care and concern for the families of unit soldiers. They should anticipate and address the needs of unit soldiers and their families when temporary separation occurs. This can be done by using orientation programs, command letters and predeployment briefings and letters; by providing family assistance materials; and by organizing social functions.

Unit commanders should organize systems of mutual assistance and a network of communication prior to and during deployment that includes the FSG and the chain of command. They actively sanction the FSG program and officially appoint key military POCs and representatives. These POCs and representatives assist the FSG by providing unit information systems, facilities and resources, including unit rosters, mailing privileges, administrative supplies, equipment, transportation (when available and appropriate), training from unit and installation professional resources, volunteer recognition and coordination of deployment family assistance plans.

Roles and Responsibilities



Key Personnel

The commander should involve community resource people in planning and implementing the deployment family support plan. This might include ACS staff, Judge Advocate Generals, the Red Cross, the adjutant general, chaplains, and medical and financial specialists. Commanders can ensure that all family members receive an installation telephone directory and appropriate family assistance materials. They should include soldiers in predeployment briefings and provide child care whenever possible. They should also ensure that the necessary regulations and Standard Operating Procedures are in place prior to deployment providing for the establishment of an FAC and FAC duty book and the gathering of necessary information.

Rear Detachment Commanders (RDCs) are responsible for ensuring that families are cared for and assisted during deployment in cooperation with the FAC and the FSG program. They should make an on-call officer available at the FAC on a 24-hour basis and make sure that all those working at the FAC are familiar with the role of the FSG and know who the FSG volunteers are and how to contact them.

Army Community Service (ACS) is the principal source of services for many active Army and Reserve Component personnel and their families who live near installations. ACS provides resources to the FAC and FSG and assists in developing, providing and coordinating FSG training programs. ACS assists unit and installation personnel with predeployment briefings and ensures units have copies of the installation telephone directories for family members and appropriate materials to assist in developing these briefings.

Coordination with Army Emergency Relief and the American Red Cross to ensure rapid response to emergency financial situations is also an ACS responsibility. ACS should develop an ACS family assistance mobilization plan, coordinate implementation of the plan with individual units, and familiarize ACS volunteers with the plan. They should also assist with unit and FSG outreach efforts, especially to junior ranking families off post, and assist in the training of rear detachment personnel especially regarding available community resources.

The Army National Guard **State Family Program Office** provides many of the services listed above for the National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers and their family members who do not live near installations.

Chaplains provide spiritual and emotional assistance and counseling to families. They may act as liaison between family members and helping agencies, and they may provide for the physical needs of individuals not meeting other criteria, for example, by operating a food closet for families in need.

The **Family Support Group (FSG)** provides for the general welfare of family members through mutual assistance and involvement. FSGs develop and operate systems to provide information, solve and manage family problems, welcome and orient new families, create involvement and prevent isolation. They interact with military family members, the unit commander and the RDC at the company and battalion levels and help involve families in unit activities.

FSGs should refer family needs that cannot be met within the FSG to the appropriate unit, installation or community resource. They provide support to families who remain in the local area while soldiers serve unaccompanied tours and assist the unit in developing and evaluating appropriate deployment materials. FSGs help ensure that all family members have deployment information and installation telephone directories.

Sample duties and responsibilities that might be performed in FSGs at either the company or the battalion level are given below. These are samples only and should not be considered limiting or restricting in any way. Each FSG is different and has different needs. Creativity and innovation, not regulations and stereotypes, are called for. Use these with that in mind.

Battalion-level FSG. The Battalion FSG Chairperson recruits potential leaders for the FSG structure and attends initial company-level FSG meetings and FSG, FAC and battalion-level FSG management committee meetings. The battalion FSG Chairperson acts as a spokesperson for the FSG program with FAC and RDC staff.

The Battalion Chairperson acts as advisor to other FSG members, available to and approachable by all of them. This person writes battalion-level news articles for the monthly newsletter and helps proofread the newsletter prior to its going to press. She or he gives battalion information updates at FSG meetings, keeps the RDC informed of FSG happenings and in general helps keep all FSG members informed of functions and events.

The Battalion Chairperson also negotiates the use of available resources and helps solve problems at the lowest level. She or he acts as the FSG spokesperson at any special meetings where FSG information is required, contacts out-of-town spouses on occasion, and sends out periodic assessments to FSG members.

FSG Vice-Chairpersons assist the Chairperson by attending initial company meetings to distribute information packets and by planning the agenda for and attending FSG, FAC and management committee meetings. The Vice-Chairpersons may coordinate FSG guest speakers and preside at FSG meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. They can also act as spokespersons for the FSG at FAC meetings and any other special meetings where FSG information is required.

The Vice-Chairpersons obtain telephone notification rosters, submit battalion-level news for the newsletter and in general act as problem solvers for the management committee. They maintain communication with contact persons and other management committee members and advise and assist the Chairperson regarding the establishment and modification of FSG policy.

The FSG **Newsletter Editor** holds monthly staff meetings to collect news and discuss the upcoming edition of the newsletter, writes battalion-level news articles and, along with the Associate Editor, directs the layout of the material. The Newsletter Editor assembles the newsletter material and proofreads the final copy, giving it to the Chairperson to read prior to printing, and delivers the master copy to the appropriate agency for printing. The Editor also attends management committee and FSG meetings.

The FSG **Associate Newsletter Editor** is the acting editor when necessary. The Associate Editor gathers and writes battalion-level news, attends newsletter staff meetings, helps the Editor direct the layout of newsletter material and attends management committee and FSG meetings.

The FSG **Membership Coordinator** keeps up-to-date addresses on file for each family in all companies, notifies the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of changes of address, and addresses the newsletter copies and returns them to the unit S-1 for mailing. The Membership Coordinator attends FAC meetings and keeps accurate records of questions asked of the FAC and answers received. She or he attends management committee and FSG meetings.

The FSG **Child-Care Coordinator** selects a room with facilities that are adequate to accommodate the children of FSG members during meetings, compiles a list of experienced babysitters and makes babysitters aware of the parents' and the group's guidelines during FSG meetings. This person arranges babysitters' transportation to and from FSG meetings, periodically checks the nursery during the meetings, distributes refreshments for the children and pays the babysitters with funds obtained from the treasurer. She or he attends management committee and FSG meetings.

The FSG **Refreshment Coordinator** arranges a rotating list of companies to supply refreshments, napkins and cups for FSG meetings, notifies the appropriate volunteer of this obligation and arranges the table setting for FSG meetings. She or he arranges for snacks for the children, supervises refreshment clean-up and attends the management committee and FSG meetings.

The FSG **Hospitality Person** sends notes of appreciation to guest speakers and attends management committee and FSG meetings.

The FSG **Treasurer** keeps records of donated money and expenditures, arranges for door prizes during FSG meetings (when applicable) and provides the Child-Care Coordinator with funds to pay babysitters. She or he attends management committee and FSG meetings.

The FSG **Recorder** keeps records of all FSG functions and attends management committee and FSG meetings.

Company-level FSG. The FSG **Company Chairperson** gets the names, addresses and phone numbers of all married personnel in the company from the first sergeant and organizes the company coffee group. She or he selects a company reporter for the newsletter staff, selects contact persons from spouses in the company who will make support circle calls to other company spouses and selects a company Hospitality Person. (These appointments can be made by a vote of the company FSG if desired.) The Company Chairperson attends battalion-level FSG meetings on behalf of the company, determines dates for monthly company meetings, organizes a company spouses' telephone tree to distribute information and notifies the Company Hospitality Person of people to be remembered with cards on special occasions.

FSG **Support Circle Leaders** (or contact people) attend meetings to learn the best ways of handling problems through social services, phone company spouses on a regular basis to let them know the system is working and that they are being thought of and cared for, ask if they need assistance and inform the Chairperson of problems. These volunteers also disseminate information to family members and help combat rumors.

The **FSG Company Recorder** attends company FSG meetings and keeps records of them, asks for news from the company POC, writes articles for the battalion FSG newsletter and attends newsletter staff meetings. She or he assists the editor in putting together the newsletter (for example, by typing).

The FSG **Company Hospitality Person** collects donations at company meetings to purchase stamps and cards for mailing, keeps a calendar of important dates for company families and sends cards for important events (such as birthdays and births).

Commander's spouse. Traditionally the **Commander's wife** has had an important role in FSG programs. Where this is still the case, she should be aware that by virtue of her husband's position, other spouses may expect her to have far more power and influence with the unit than she actually does to get them what they need, want or demand. Many will assume that if she tells the RDC to do something that it will be done. Where it is possible to do so, she might try to explain to others that her role is to operate from a position of concern, care and compassion as an Army wife, not from a position of control, coercion and command. Hers is a frustrating and difficult role, but it can be extremely critical. A successful deployment depends in part on her support.

All soldiers should encourage their families to take an active part in the Army community and to share with their families details of the heritage and the accomplishments of their unit. It is also imperative that all soldiers be kept well informed with regard to their individual role within their unit during both peacetime or deployment.

LIMIT

Basic rules for spouses:

- Don't press your spouse for details of his or her job.
- Don't gossip to those outside the unit about the unit's schedule or activities, especially deployments.
- Develop the habit of saying "I don't know" if you are asked unnecessary questions about the status or mission of your spouse's unit or about his or her job.
- Rest assured that information will come to you as promptly as possible through your FSG concerning actual deployments.

Sometimes, however, because of the nature of the soldier's work, he or she may not be able to discuss certain things at home or answer certain questions. In the course of work, a soldier may come in contact with many operations, documents and pieces of equipment that are considered classified. Only those persons with a "need to know" are given information about them.

Standard Operating Procedures for an FSG program in a particular active Army installation might be introduced as follows:

This standardizes routine procedures and prescribes responsibilities and policies to assist the battalion in the development and conduct of a Family Support Group (FSG) program during deployment as well as to enrich family life on a continuing basis. The Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) outlined here are intended to:

- *Limit the number, length and frequency of directives used;*
- *Simplify and perfect procedures;*
- *Facilitate and expedite procedures and minimize confusion and error; and*
- *Incorporate the most up-to-date concepts into the family support program.*

This SOP should be distributed to the company level. It is applicable to all personnel involved in the FSG program. Recommendations for improvements and modifications are encouraged. Changes should be published in the form of numbered page substitutions whenever practicable.

The principal components of the family support system are:

*The **Rear Detachment Commander (RDC)**. The RDC is the person responsible for executing those missions given to him by the battalion commander. The RDC acts for the battalion commander. He is appointed on orders as an assistant adjutant. He understands the commander's intentions regarding the allocation of the battalion's budgetary resources for operations and acts accordingly.*

Sample Standard Operating Procedures

Family Support Groups (FSGs). An FSG is a structured group that includes a Chairperson, two Vice-Chairpersons, Support Circle Leaders and a management committee. This group operates without the benefit of legal power, and thus cooperation and volunteerism are essential.

The FSG acts as an information agency in two ways:

- The FSG uses regular telephone contact and a monthly newsletter (if desired) to disseminate information; and
- The FSG provides feedback to Army personnel connected with the family support system.

Family Assistance Center (FAC). The FAC is a group having expertise in administration, finance, legal affairs, health/medical care, social welfare services, religious matters and Army benefits. The FAC helps to provide answers to questions of a technical nature and acts as liaison to the various personnel services agencies.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: FSG Operations and Functions

Discussion: In many units, the operations and functions of FSGs have been thought out in advance of unit deployments. In proactive units, areas that hold the potential of becoming problems to families during the soldier's absence have been addressed, with support actions established to facilitate resolution (for example, what to do if the spouse is locked out of quarters or the family car, how to handle landlord or pay problems).

Lessons: FSGs foster an atmosphere of mutual support and togetherness in times of need. However, the extent of FSG support should be realistic. Family members may develop an inappropriate dependency on FSG leaders who exceed their mandate for FSG operations.

- Commanders of deployment units and rear detachments should clearly define the operational boundaries of FSG activities for FSG leaders. FSGs without boundaries may be subjected to conflicts among volunteers and loss of mutual support within the group.
- FSGs distribute pertinent information to families and provide a mechanism for family members to get assistance in dealing with common problems. Some assistance may come directly from the FSG or the FSG volunteer may refer the spouse or guardian to an agency especially equipped to handle specific problems.
- Disseminating correct and timely information is very important. FSGs should assist or participate with the rear detachment in conducting periodic information briefings. FSGs need help from RDCs in preparing newsletters and paying postage. A reading file for families to review during the week is helpful if they are unable to attend scheduled information briefings. The data in the reading file must be kept current.

Desert Storm (continued)

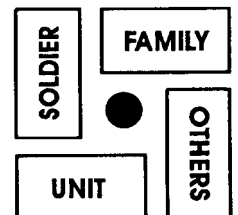
- Some organizations, both active and Reserve, did not appreciate the potential value of the databases that produced family support rosters. These databases could have had significant application during a major or mass casualty situation, had one occurred. Emphasis on completeness and accuracy is essential to assure viable databases.
- FSGs perform an important function by helping rear detachments and military communities keep track of dependents. During deployments, some dependents leave the area to live with family while others visit relatives or friends and then return to their quarters. This makes 100-percent accountability of dependents very difficult for rear detachment and community commanders. In overseas areas, this impacts on noncombatant evacuation operations planning.
- Some commanders are not married and may be less focused on, or have less appreciation for, family support issues. FSGs can be very effective in facilitating a unified effort for the command.
- For Reserve units, family support may need to be regionally based, with unit-based telephone trees. Family unit activities or social events are needed during nondeployment times to acquaint spouses with other spouses.
- When phone calls became expensive or difficult, such as in the distances associated with Reserve units, newsletters become very important.
- Rosters are important tools for FSGs. They are more accurate when the information is gathered as part of unit in-processing. In addition to names, addresses and phone numbers, rosters may contain information on special problems (such as language spoken or physical disability).
- Rosters should be transformed into useful "telephone trees" to provide verbal support to FSG members or to transmit valuable information rapidly. Telephone tree contacts form positive support relationships by bonding together families or service members in the same company or platoon.

The SOP might also address roles, responsibilities and any special local needs.

The Family Support Group (FSG) is designed to be useful to family members, soldiers and military units during periods of normal military life and military crises, reducing stress for both the soldier and family members.

The principal purpose of an FSG program is to enable a unit's family members to establish and operate a system through which they can effectively gather information, solve problems and maintain a system of mutual support. FSGs have the potential for improving a unit's readiness. FSG goals include the following:

Summary



- To become an essential part of a military unit's family support system through activities such as unit activity day, unit family briefings and battalion or company family meals;
- To reduce social isolation among family members, especially in the junior enlisted ranks;
- To enable the members to provide each other with close, mutual, personal support;
- To assist the members in gathering important information and resources more efficiently and effectively;
- To facilitate and establish a real sense of community among soldiers and their family members; and
- To enhance the military family member's feelings of belonging, control, self-reliance and self-esteem.

The success of an FSG is dependent on family members interacting with each other and with military unit representatives on a regular basis. This interaction creates the network that identifies and helps solve family member concerns and issues effectively, efficiently and in a close, personal, caring manner.

Through involvement in managing an FSG and interacting within a unit community, family members become an important and integral part of that unit's activities. Family members should be given the opportunity to belong, to make significant contributions and to fill significant and satisfying roles within their community relevant to their interests.

TIPS

For a peaceful and productive FSG:

- Be friendly and positive in FSG meetings.
- Try to forget about rank! This is a spouses' group. Spouses do not wear rank unless they themselves are in the military.
- Show respect to the resource people.
- Try to mingle with all of the spouses at the meetings.
- Be useful- share information.
- Try to draw leadership from all sources.
- Try to listen and be open to new possibilities.
- Learn to ask questions instead of always giving advice.

It's important to maintain a sense of perspective in relation to the goals, purposes and limitations of an FSG. FSG volunteers cannot be substitute parents, social workers or psychiatrists, nor can they always meet members' needs for such things as transportation or housing. An FSG is not a social club, even though sponsoring social activities may be an important means of accomplishing program goals. FSG-sponsored events should always be chosen with these program goals in mind.

At the end of this chapter is a blank Family Support Group Questionnaire that can be copied for use in compiling member information.

In the fall of 1983, 4-187 Infantry (Air Assault) was notified that it would be the core organization around which TF 4-187 would be built for peacekeeping duties in the Sinai, Egypt. Serving in Egypt was nothing new to the battalion since it had just redeployed from there where it had trained with Egyptian paratroopers in the Sahara Desert as part of exercise BRIGHT STAR 83. Unlike BRIGHT STAR's 45-day deployment from Fort Campbell, the mission to support the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) promised to be a 180-day plus deployment, clearly highlighting the need to consider the challenges of such an extended separation of soldiers from their families.

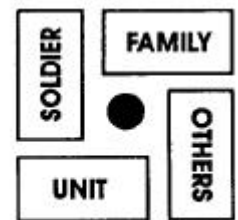
The need to look for new approaches for dealing with family members was self-evident, particularly as we reviewed our after-action reports from BRIGHT STAR and a preceding deployment to Fort Drum, which had taken place earlier in the summer of 1983.

TF 4-187 had a historical tradition of involving family members in unit events such as company picnics, battalion organization day, special events during holidays such as Christmas, and predeployment briefings. But we assessed that while we had a fairly strong bond between the unit and the soldiers' families, it was not enough for the MFO mission. Our after-action reports indicated that families were inadequately prepared for their soldier's absence, information flow to the families was spotty, services from on-post agencies could have been secured by the rear detachment in a more timely manner, and we needed to rethink the support dimension among wives. Further, while Fort Campbell had been a prime initiator of the Chain of Concern concept, it had limited application in our organization since so many of the company commanders' and first sergeants' wives worked.

Six months prior to TF 4-187's deployment to the Sinai (July 1984), we laid out an organizational and action blueprint to forge an effective bond between the unit and its families. The key organizational element was the Family Support Group (FSG); however, the focus was also on greater community involvement, Green Tab commitment and special training for FSG leaders.

By January, 1984, a detailed analysis had been made of key problem areas, TF 2-327 and TF 2-508 after-action reports had been reviewed, and contact had been established with every on-post community activity agency. We were in the market for good ideas and were in particular impressed with the results achieved by TF 2-508's FSG. Social research documents obtained from Fort Bragg gave us the conceptual underpinning for the actions required to forge a strong unit-family bond, just as

Backgrounder: One Command's Experience



Moskos' hallmark study of UN peacekeeping soldiers in Cyprus provided the framework for unit-soldier training preparation requirements.

By contracting the responsibility for the delivery of soldier-family support services, we were able to obtain a clear commitment early, listen to their concerns and the problems they had encountered with previous Sinai deployments, and learn the lower-ride system for solving the tough cases. We made a list of problems ranging from separations, divorces, infidelity, psychiatric care, vehicle registration, landlord eviction, child abuse, arrests, convictions, excessive long-distance phone bills, loss of ID cards, coping with stress, not knowing how to write a check and so forth.

Because the list was so long and highly predictive, only a concerted effort on the part of both the task force and the FSG could mitigate some of the problems. Subordinate commanders were briefed, wholehearted Green Tab support was elicited and organizational slack was identified to tackle some of the issues head-on. The task force chaplain, in concert with the Battalion Commander's wife, wrote our family assistance handbook, the task force social worker identified the number of soldiers and families with pronounced emotional or psychiatric problems, our finance officer audited each soldier's pay record and matched it against the Sergeant Major's bad debt list, and the Medical Platoon Sergeant insured that every family member was properly enrolled in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System (DEERS).

Some startling information came to light. Only one-third of the 310 families in the task force were fully enrolled in DEERS, over a dozen marriages were in serious trouble before we had even gone to the Sinai, some 20 plus soldiers needed social work therapy and several child abuse cases became visible, as well as underage marriages. Hardest to deal with, though, was a prevalent attitude among the young soldiers that their wives could not attend functions on-post unless they were there with them. In one company an informal discussion with young wives of E-4s and below revealed that fully two-thirds had never been to the Commissary, less had used the Post Hospital's outpatient services, and only half had ever been to the PX.

The truth of the matter is that most very young soldiers prefer to have their spouses stay home in their trailer and not to bring their even younger wives on post for fear of losing them to another soldier. A corollary to this syndrome is that the same young soldiers are reluctant to share unit and pertinent family information with their spouses.

It is within the above context that the focus shifted to forging a viable FSG. We were particularly concerned that this organization put real meaning into the words care and caring. Contact persons within each company formed the key to reaching out to five to ten other families. In turn, company representatives sat on the FSG executive steering committee, along with activities, child care, membership, hospitality and refreshment coordinators, and a treasurer, newsletter editor, secretary and the sponsoring Battalion Commander's wife.

The purpose of the FSG was to inform, to involve, to support, to help, to advocate - in short, to create a spirit of cooperation that linked the unit with its families. Filling the leadership positions did constitute a special issue. Since many Chain of Concern wives were either going to school or were working, over three-fourths of the FSG positions were filled by NCO wives.

Unlocking the vast leadership and talent potential of NCO wives who saw the special contribution that the FSG could make not only in their lives, but also to the balance of the families of TF 4-187, proved to be a winning combination. Their high educational levels, special skills and experiences of having dealt with previous separations brought forth a torrent of ideas. First, though, a special executive seminar was requested for FSG leaders to learn how to deal with certain crisis situations, since problems from the families would initially be referred to them. It was our concern that everyone receive a baseline body of knowledge from on-post agencies so that the right kind of recommendations would be formulated. The chaplains, for example, discussed dealing with death in the family or extended family and coping with loneliness and depression. The Women's Rape and Crisis Center covered threatening phone calls and prevention of rape. The family practice representative highlighted access to the Family Practice Clinic, redress of grievances and what constituted emergency medical care. The mental health representative discussed dealing with suicide threats.

In short, numerous other agencies highlighted in this three-hour executive seminar the most crucial issues so that a better, more caring and sympathetic response to problems could be provided with the intent not to be a problem solver per se, but to facilitate resolution by knowing what to expect plus knowing to whom to hand off the problem on post. Similarly, each member of the FSG Executive Committee was handed a detailed list of their role responsibilities and a list of dos and don'ts. For example, loaning funds, running a task force foodlocker, or providing accommodations was discouraged to preclude duplication of on-post services.

The FSG's principal role, once organized, was to facilitate family-member preparation for the extended separations. That is, in concert with the TF chain of command, mandatory briefings were conducted for soldiers and their families. Since they were on the training schedule announced in the battalion's newsletter and through telephone follow-up, tremendous attendances were achieved. In one case with the entire chain of command present, over 400 soldiers and family members received briefings on the unit's mission, role of the FSG, the rear detachment, legal and financial issues, family practice, the Red Cross and security matters. Most of the issues were followed by brief articles in Wives' Side, the battalion newsletter, which was distributed not only to subordinate units, but also sent directly to family homes. Particularly noteworthy were the scope of activities the FSG planned for the ladies and the chaplain's open discussion of feelings, stress and how to deal with loneliness.

Every effort was also made to legitimize the FSG in the minds of the young soldiers so that attendance by their young wives, once we were in the Sinai, would be sanctioned. Nevertheless a substantial number still sent their families home to parents. Yet the FSG contacted them there periodically by phone and sent them the newsletter.

As time drew closer to departure the FSG picked up momentum on its own accord. The newsletter was a huge success and was very well received. On-post publicity for raising funds generated substantial community support.

The Executive Committee managed to have a station give a free troubleshooting class, the YMCA offered its "Fun Bus" for transportation, the Kiwanis cash contributions, and the Post Exchange, with presentation of an MFO ID card, free car lubes, fluid checks, free birthday cake and so on. Merchants in the area also willingly contributed, particularly crafts materials and soft drinks for FSG membership meetings. It was truly heartwarming to see the civilian and military communities support our FSG so tremendously.

The rear detachment's Standard Operating Procedures were also rewritten to insure the procedural system for allotment changes, wills, Powers of Attorney and replacement of ID cards functioned smoothly. A special model was designed incorporating the FSG in the information flow with the rear detachment commander, the sponsor of the FSG, and an on-post troika consisting of the brigade chaplain, a social worker and the family practice physician responsible for our TF. If problems could still not be resolved at that level, recourse was available to the brigade commander.

Throughout this period every opportunity was used to clarify the purpose of the FSG and the special measures taken, all to strengthen the bond between the unit and its families and to prepare soldiers for their mission. Even the Rakkasan Regimental Association deemed the efforts sufficiently unique that it provided funds, participated in company- and taskforce-level events and sought to enhance the feeling of the Regiment and its families.

There is a psychological profile that can be drawn for families once their soldiers deploy. We knew the initial week would be very hard on wives, the five-to-six-week mark was difficult, and all the holidays were particularly trying. The FSG, as a result, insured that each company scheduled a meeting for their wives within a few days of that unit's departure, the FSG steering committee was there for any questions, and within a week of the last unit's departure, a battalion-level FSG meeting was so oversubscribed that the babysitting service by the wives of Company D was sorely taxed.

During these meetings heavy emphasis was placed on timely topics such as what and how to mail to the Sinai, activities scheduled for families for Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas, and crafts to be sent to the Sinai. Consequently, the mutual support and bond between wives grew tremendously. So also did the support from the post, since from the commanding general's wife on down emphasis was placed on facilitating the FSG's efforts.

It was heartwarming to witness how wives started to support each other in times of crisis, such as accidents, miscarriages, deaths and serious surgery. Taking care of each other indeed became a reality and the vignettes abounded of mutual support. In one case where hospitalization was required, the doctor contacted the FSG. Within 30 minutes a volunteer was at the hospital with the woman and other wives took over caring for the children and the household. When the woman was discharged from the

hospital, the FSG continued to support her, bringing prepared meals and dealing with the children's needs until the mother was able to care for her family again.

Throughout the deployment the need for open communication was stressed for both families and soldiers. The TF's newsletter in the Sinai, Sinai Scorpion, was sent back to Fort Campbell, reproduced and appended to the Wives' Side newsletter and then distributed to all the families. In some cases it went to parents of soldiers with gratifying results. Four months into the deployment the Battalion Commander's wife visited the unit in the Sinai at the encouragement of Lieutenant General Ingebrigtsen, the MFO Force Commander. She received much positive feedback from soldiers about the FSG.

Some of the younger soldiers indicated that had they really understood the FSG and appreciated how supportive it was, they would have left their wives at Fort Campbell instead of sending them to stay with parents. Similarly, when the unit experienced a helicopter crash with serious injuries to the crews, the involved soldiers requested that the FSG ladies be present in conjunction with the official notification.

The tapes from the FSG's Halloween and Christmas parties arrived in time and commanded prime viewing time at the MFO South Camp. Similarly, the Christmas decorations were truly appreciated on each peacekeeping outpost and South Camp. Consequently the last few weeks passed by quickly, as chaplains in the Sinai and at home station prepared soldiers and their families for the reunions.

Difficulties were expected after such a protracted absence. Some marriages did break up, but in the aggregate the postdeployment counseling program did pay dividends. The consensus among commanders was that the FSG had facilitated our mission accomplishment. The TF in fact repatriated no one due to family reasons. Army Emergency Relief loans were the lowest for such a deployment, and the soldier comments about the special relationship that had been forged between the unit and its families all reflected that care and concern had permeated the entire organization.

It has been our experience that soldiers will do their jobs and do them better if they know someone is taking care of families. By anticipating problems, preparing for them and forming an FSG that genuinely cares, one can truly enhance unit readiness, soldier performance and family resilience. The bond that emerges then between these three entities tends to take on a growth dynamic of its own that is like a pyramid in the minds of soldiers and their families.

None of this will bear fruit, however, unless the Green Tab chain supports the FSG's efforts. We consider that a particular precursor for success, and in the Year of the Family we were truly supported by the senior leadership of Fort Campbell in this endeavor, as well as by the civilian community.

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE

Spouse's Name: _____ Age: _____

Military Member's Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

_____ Housing Area: _____

Information about Children and/or Dependent Adults in the Home (Name, Age, Sex):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Does the nonmilitary spouse work? Yes _____ No _____

Can the spouse drive? Yes _____ No _____

What language is spoken at home? _____

Last Duty Station: _____

Who would you notify in case of an emergency other than your spouse? _____

In what areas would you like to have more information or need help with?

_____ Medical / Dental Care

_____ PX/Commissary Privileges

_____ Babysitting

_____ Entertainment Available

_____ Serious Medical Problems

_____ Legal Services

_____ Religious Services and Programs

_____ Transportation

_____ Emergency Care Services

_____ Physical Handicaps

_____ Child Daycare

_____ Financial Counseling

_____ Veterinary Services

_____ Youth Activities

_____ Learning Disabilities

_____ Family Counseling

_____ Coping with separation from spouse

_____ Coping with separation from children

_____ Coping with separation from parents

_____ Reunion after separation

Comments or additions to any of the above: _____

Note: This questionnaire is used to gather general information necessary to initiate the Family Support Group program. The information listed above will not be released to any third-party individuals without your permission to do so.

Please realize we need your active participation and assistance in making our Family Support Group a Success. Which of the following areas would you be willing to help with?

Leadership position	_____	Mailing	_____
Program Planning	_____	Transportation	_____
Newsletter	_____	Babysitting	_____
Telephoning	_____	Other (Explain)	_____

What do you think Family Support Groups should do for your family?

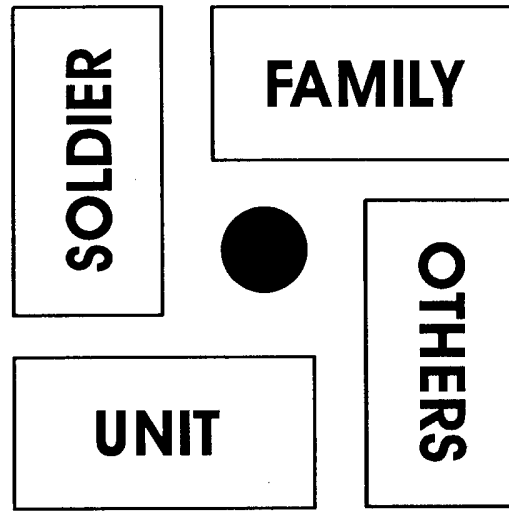
What talents or abilities do you have that you would be willing to share with other Family Support Group members?

What adult activities would you like the Family Support Group to sponsor?

What children's activities would you like the Family Support Group to sponsor?

Note: If you would like more information about the Family Support Group, please call:

_____ at _____
(Name) (Telephone)



3. Resources for Successful Family Support Groups

Ideas and resources for ongoing activities to assist those leading or facilitating Family Support Groups (FSGs) in developing a more comprehensive program

- Activities
- Maintaining Telephone Contact
- Newsletters
- Volunteers

The type and scope of activities in which the Family Support Group (FSG) becomes involved depend largely on the identified needs of unit soldiers and their families; the number of FSG volunteers available; and the time, energy and creativity of those volunteers. The emphasis will also vary depending on whether it is a deployment or a nondeployment period for the unit.

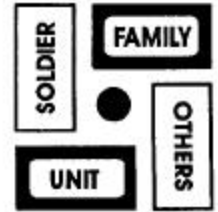
Since the goal of an FSG is to support the military mission through provision of support, outreach and information to family members prior to and during periods of family separations, certain FSG activities are essential and common to all groups. These include holding regular meetings for battalion and company representatives and contact people; publishing FSG newsletters/command letters; maintaining up-to-date family rosters; and organizing a telephone chain.

Many other activities that FSGs commonly sponsor, coordinate or participate in also directly or indirectly foster family support goals. These typically include:

- Sponsoring new families;
- Holding newcomers' orientations;
- Organizing holiday and other unit parties or outings;
- Arranging employment or relocation briefings;
- Compiling listings of available child care or actually providing short-term care;
- Arranging transportation, especially during deployment, to essential locations such as the commissary or hospital and to FSG meetings;
- Obtaining discount tickets for family activities, especially during deployment;
- Making plans for homecoming;
- Raising funds;
- Providing workshops on topics such as coping with stress, managing loneliness, military benefits, prenatal care, preparing for deployment (emotionally and practically) or using community services; and
- Distributing deployment assistance materials and Community Resources Directories to all family members.

FSGs often form committees at the company and battalion levels to handle various FSG activities and events. This maximizes involvement, makes the best use of individual talents, and avoids volunteer overload and burnout.

Activities



DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: FSG Initiatives

Discussion: FSG activities should include ongoing initiatives to sustain family members in dealing with common problems.

Lessons: FSG initiatives could include predeployment training classes or programs on:

- Family stress management
- Antiterrorism precautions, especially overseas
- How to keep busy with sports, crafts and or volunteer efforts
- How to read Leave and Earnings Statements
- Spousal employment information and opportunities
- Basic home maintenance, including Army self-help programs
- Auto servicing
- CHAMPUS procedures
- Dealing with the news media
- Control of privately owned firearms
- Managing finances
- Counseling children about deployment

Bake sales, auctions, ecology drives and car washes are among the fund-raising activities that might be authorized as FSG fund raisers. If conducted on post or at a National Guard armory or a Reserve center the activity must have the unit commander's approval prior to the event. If conducted off post, any permits or licenses would be the responsibility of the FSG, and the activity should have the unit commander's prior approval. Ideas should be submitted to the appropriate approving authority well in advance.

LIMIT

If conducted off post, an appropriate disclaimer must be included in all advance publicity and on signs or posters at the site such as the following:

This activity is not an official function of the U.S. Army.

The unit commander, in consultation with the local Staff Judge Advocate's office, can provide the words appropriate to the occasion.

Remember, these events can only be successful if they are publicized and involve as many persons as possible. Several ideas can be combined and incorporated into carnivals and festivals.

Many other FSG activities can be planned primarily for fun - and to develop group cohesion. For example, potlucks are a good way to welcome new people. Schedule them on Sunday afternoons during deployments. Sometimes it's easier to get couples together at a potluck for their first FSG function. Take time to share recipes. Develop an international flavor by bringing traditional dishes from each family's native country of heritage. Organize a house-to-house potluck with salads at one house, dinner or dessert at another.

Picnics can be organized for families and soldiers that have stayed behind during a deployment. Have the soldiers be responsible for the music. Use picnics for predeployment briefings. Have soldiers babysit and entertain the children; take pictures of the moms, dads and kids. Arrange a barbecue after a deployment where soldiers get awards and their wives and other support people get certificates of appreciation. Schedule picnics with ample space for children to play and people to eat. Make sure restrooms are available. Organize family competitions between platoons or between companies at battalion picnics.

Schedule a family day right before a deployment so the spouses can meet one another. Have movies and inexpensive meals. If soldiers are deployed, show videos of them at work. Have a carnival. Visit night-time firings so families can see their soldiers at work. Set aside one day a week for families while soldiers are deployed; arrange games for adults as well as children. Plan a tour to an often overlooked but inexpensive place. Arrange car pools and have babysitting available as needed. Have a field day where a child or spouse does a soldier's job for a couple of hours, followed by a lunch or dinner. Let children ride in trucks or sit in helicopters. Arrange a unit family-day picnic at the beach.

Holidays provide many opportunities for FSG activities. Organize an Easter egg hunt and involve single soldiers by having them hide the eggs, play the Easter bunny or judge the winners. At Halloween, have secret pals among the adults; discover who your secret pal is at Halloween-time coffee. At Christmas, in addition to organizing gift parties for the children, make stockings for single soldiers, build camouflage Christmas trees or decorate quad doors. Have the unit participate in annual 4th of July celebrations with a pot luck or barbecue. On Valentine's Day, have children make valentines for single soldiers, or have each spouse be a "secret sweetie" with another spouse of the same sex.

At Thanksgiving, plan a big dining hall dinner for all unit families and single soldiers with "Turkey Trot" activities. During deployment, plan a "Mom's night out." Trade off babysitting with another company. Schedule bingo nights, card games, movies or videos of soldiers in action. Have a banner-making party for returning soldiers. Plan welcome-home parties, especially for midnight homecomings. Have soup and sandwiches or cookies and coffee. Go ice skating. Offer door prizes at

predeployment briefings. Plan a children's party; create presents or pictures for the missing parent. Take family pictures to send. Rent cabins for a weekend family campout.

Ask to have predeployment briefings at a time that lets soldiers go home with their spouses afterward. Have a letter sent from the commander to family members explaining the deployment - where the unit is going, why and what kind of training they expect the soldier to receive.

Invite new spouses to gatherings personally and provide transportation if you can. Identify bilingual or non-English speaking spouses and make a special effort to help them feel a part of the group. Consider arranging FSGs by language. Have welcome or hospitality committees who assist arriving and departing soldiers. (Don't forget single soldiers in this.) Adopt a single soldier to send letters to and to invite for Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner. Remember families in special need with holiday food baskets and Christmas gifts for the children.

Have several small activity parties on the same evening and let each spouse choose what's most interesting. Have an FSG meeting where video games or other attractions are available to amuse the kids while the spouses socialize. Color-code name tags at battalion meetings or family days so spouses can easily identify families in the same company. (This could also be done by geographical area.)

Announce awards, marriages and births in the monthly newsletter. Present unit certificates of appreciation to all those involved in the FSG, not just the most active ones. Recognize births with special certificates.

The post television channel can be utilized to educate Army families on family readiness. Programs should hold family members' interest, whether dramatizations, skits or announcements promoting participation in FSGs and the importance of family readiness. A well-produced half-hour video on the subject of family support and deployment readiness could be aired periodically, especially when deployment is anticipated.

Workshops for company commanders, NCOs and their spouses on the importance, structure and needs of FSGs can also be sponsored. Readiness should be part of the unit's team-work; a readiness buddy system involving two couples or a platoon "readiness party" with awards for the "readiest" family may help accomplish this.

Family support briefings might be more effective at the company level. Basic deployment readiness information should be included in welcome packets and the importance of family readiness stressed at welcome briefings rather than waiting for predeployment briefings. Predeployment briefings might include a slide show about the unit's destination, especially if it is a foreign country.

Company commanders should have a record on each soldier and his or her family. They should be aware of the needs and special needs of each family. Chaplains might be encouraged to devote a sermon to the importance of family support groups and family readiness.

The Rear Detachment Commander (RDC) should be involved in postdeployment briefings. His or her first-hand knowledge of family problems during deployment is valuable to the family support system. The RDC should be chosen on the basis of experience rather than convenience. Single and younger commanders may not be as sympathetic to family needs as an older married commander.

All these activities - whether sponsored by the FSG alone or with Army leadership, whether for social, educational or fund-raising purposes or for providing assistance to families with specific problems can contribute to military readiness by contributing to the health and cohesion of the family and the community.

The telephone tree extends to all members of the FSG. It is organized much like the unit's alert notification roster. FSG volunteers probably use the telephone tree the most frequently to convey information, interest and support to family members, especially during deployment. Confidentiality and discretion must be used in conveying information through the telephone tree.

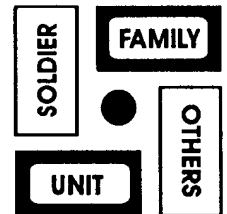
Community resource personnel should be identified and made available to unit representatives and FSGs to help them handle some of the more difficult situations that may arise. Guidelines for telephone contacts are included below.

The unit roster is the basis for the FSG telephone network. Volunteers should be recruited to contact no more than ten family members each. More than ten calls may overtax the volunteer. Generally, however, the number to be contacted will depend on the size of the unit and the number of volunteers. Two types of rosters may be generated and used by the FSG: volunteer rosters and membership rosters.

An FSG roster should contain the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all key family-member volunteers, as well as those of the unit Point of Contact (POC). Because of the function these key people have within the FSG, this roster should be given maximum official visibility. All those persons to be listed should be informed about this and voluntarily agree in writing to have this information published. The roster should definitely be available in the Family Assistance Center and in family-member directories, and it should be included in deployment assistance materials.

Key military and family members listed on the volunteer roster must be perceived by all as legitimate sources of help. Single soldiers should know that they can also use the FSG for sending accurate information to their next of kin or significant others while deployed.

Maintaining Telephone Contact



The services that FSG volunteers can provide must be widely known and the volunteers' credibility established.

An FSG membership roster consists of updated names, addresses and telephone numbers of all families within the unit. The information will be used by the FSG volunteers who initiate and maintain contact with those family members who desire to be in support circles.

LIMIT

Participation must be voluntary and a privacy act statement included on the form. Confidentiality and the discretionary use of this information must be stressed.

For maximum participation, the purpose of collecting this information will need to be explained to soldiers and their family members. This can be done during in-processing into the unit or at a unit newcomers' briefing or FSG briefing. The rosters, to be an effective tool, must be updated continuously.

The availability of contact people for calls from families within the command is critical to a successful FSG program. This will ensure that they are a visible part of the command. A large portion of their time will be expended dealing with individuals on the telephone. Therefore, it is imperative that they be prepared for any type of call. The more information and resources they have, the better equipped they will be to assist those seeking help.

There are many ways to gather information and develop resources. Contact people should become familiar with the unit's community resource and deployment materials and keep them handy. Contact people should be encouraged to be innovative with ideas and to share information with one another. Create a network of communication among FSG representatives, and encourage them to attend educational workshops and meetings.

These guidelines should be passed on to contact people:

To keep unit families well informed, you should ensure that you have current information. The information you receive from callers should be clear, concise and accurate. Make sure you understand what is being said and if not, have it repeated.

When dealing with a problem call, ask pertinent questions and record the information you gather. When possible, give the caller information on available resources and encourage them to follow up on their own. If this does not work, then you should attempt to find a reasonable solution. In doing this, be sure to tell the caller of your intentions. Do not tell them you cannot or will not help them. If you don't know the solution, continue to investigate, keeping the caller informed.

Exercise tact, politeness and good listening habits when handling phone calls. Ask yourself how you would like to be treated over the phone. If you don't know what to do or don't have an answer, don't be afraid to say this. Assure the caller that you will try to find the answer. Utilize the resources that are available to you, such as your unit POC, RDC, Army Community Services personnel and chaplains. This is another reason to keep yourself well informed and up to date on current resources.

LIMIT

Be aware that some problems, such as spouse and child abuse, must be referred to the appropriate agency. Don't try to be a psychologist or social worker. You may do more harm than good. Refer the caller to the right place to get the help he or she needs.

Confidentiality plays an important part in your position as an FSG representative. When a family within your command comes to you with any problem or tells you something in confidence, it is your obligation (with the specific exceptions listed above) to keep the confidence. Your worth as an FSG representative may depend on how well you keep a confidence regarding the personal problems of a particular person or family.

- While listening, ask yourself these questions:
- What is the caller feeling? Keep in mind every call is important to the caller.
- What basic needs of the caller are not being met?
- What are your own expectations? Are they realistic?
- Who might assist? Use available referral resources.

There are many different types of calls and each should be handled differently.

Information calls. As has already been stated, keep your information current and accurate. Giving outdated information can create many problems. If the information the caller is looking for is not available to you, then you should seek it out. Maintain a notebook of all resources, announcements and information you receive relating to Army families. The Army and civilian communities offer many services, and you should be constantly gathering information concerning them.

Problem calls. Record all pertinent information. Ensure that you follow up on all calls, even if it is just to check that everything is all right.

Crisis calls. The handling of this type of call can be a delicate situation. What determines a crisis? Since we are not trained as counselors, we have to rely on our sound judgement. How do you recognize if the crisis is genuine? This can be determined by listening and answering questions. Don't give rash answers; think first. If you are in doubt about what to do, don't hesitate to contact someone from your referral list for assistance. You may need ongoing access to a mental health expert for assistance with screening calls. Do not try to handle a situation that you are not sure of.

In dealing with problem and crisis calls, give the caller alternatives to choose from. Help them to help themselves, be positive and try to stay objective but responsive.

Social calls. You should limit the length of this type of call. Everyone needs someone to talk to occasionally; loneliness is something all Army spouses face, and it does help to talk with someone. However, you have other obligations that require your time, and these calls need to be carefully controlled.

Gossip. If you think that a caller is talking just to gossip or seems to be passing on unfounded rumors, remind the caller that you are not interested. State that if the rumor were true, you would have been notified.

Chronic callers. Chronic Callers may often have underlying problems that you may be able to bring out and possibly resolve. Use tact and diplomacy with chronic callers.

In general, be well organized and take care of yourself. Recognize when you are overextending yourself, and don't allow people to exploit you. Encourage friends to call you socially only during certain hours. Encourage the FSG Chairperson to find others to assist you with the load. Identify and use helpful people within the command. Remain alert and try to accomplish everything in a professional manner. Realize that you can't be all things to all people!

Establish your sincerity. On initial contact, try to be calm and sympathetic. Be realistic; most people can see through insincerity. As you record pertinent information needed to assist the individual, use their first name if you feel comfortable doing so. Reflect to the caller that you know how they feel. A simple confirmation of this will often soothe even the most hysterical person if not initially, at least after a few repetitions.

A person may be very depressed when they finally call you. Their world may have come down around them and they may feel humiliated. Their own actions or inactions may have caused their present predicament - or at least they may believe so. By using positive statements, you can reinforce their ability to cope with the problem.

Ask the individual what they think they should do. If their suggestion seems poor, say "That's an idea, but what do you think about..."?

Don't use negative statements; they tend to create feelings of inferiority and insecurity. The individual is already feeling insecure; don't enhance this emotion. The tips below will help you distinguish between positive, sympathetic statements and negative, judgmental ones.

TIPS

Avoid these phrases:

You should have called sooner.

Stop crying!

Calm down!

You should have taken the baby to the doctor last week.

I don't know if I can help you.

Use these instead:

I'm glad you called me now. You're doing the right thing.

It's okay to cry. Take a deep breath when you're ready to tell me your problem.

Yes, that's awful, but we can do something about this.

Well, let's get the baby a doctor's appointment as soon as possible.

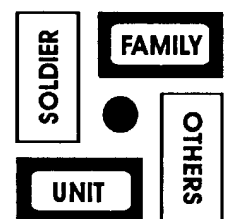
I'm sure we can find someone to help you. Let me find out who would handle this.

Newsletters or command letters are an important means of building a sense of community and reaching out to all family members within a company or battalion, as well as of disseminating important information, recognized achievements and publicizing FSG events. If the newsletter is sent in the form of a command letter, it may be possible to mail these as official mail. Check with the postal service for information on current mailing requirements and procedures, and with the command for limitations on the use of official mail. For example, advertisement of items for sale may be prohibited, and the availability of official postage may be limited.

Command letters are prepared by the FSG to meet the needs of the group as determined by the members. Command letters may be published monthly or bimonthly; they should be printed at least quarterly to maintain communication with the unit families. Monthly letters may do the best job of maintaining a sense of contact and providing up-to-date information. The company or battalion FSG command letter is designed to reach all family members, and its importance cannot be overemphasized. A good newsletter can:

- Bond family members together by creating a sense of comradeship similar to that shared by the soldiers;

Newsletters



- Relay information from the command and the FSG that will reduce social isolation and convey the command's concern for families' well-being;
- Inform family members about the availability of installation and local civilian agencies for both routine and emergency services;
- Help family members better understand not only what the unit is doing, but why, which can help reduce marital stress;
- Keep families informed about activities sponsored by the unit or FSG;
- Allow families to realize that others are experiencing many of the same tensions and strains of military life as they are; and
- Institutionalize an important communication link and information source that is vital during a deployment.

Each unit should have its own Letter of Instruction or Standard Operating Procedure on the printing and mailing of FSG command letters. There is no specific format for a command letter; it may take several editions before the right format for your unit and FSG is determined. This section gives general guidelines.

Consistency in format and layout is vitally important. For example, reminders about FSG meetings or company coffees, placed in the same easy-to-find spots each month, help keep attendance up at these functions. An attractive format making efficient use of space is critical. Uniformity from issue to issue assists the reader in locating items of special interest. Issues should probably not exceed eight pages (four pages front and back).

The command letter name and any associated artwork such as the unit crest should take up no more than one-fourth of the first page. Include the date of the issue and the unit name and location. The masthead should also state the purpose and frequency of the publication and include the names of key unit personnel and of the newsletter staff. Also include a disclaimer stating that opinions expressed by writers and other unofficial material in the newsletter are not an official expression by the Department of the Army. As with other disclaimer statements, check with the local command for proper wording.

Since the average person only scans printed materials, divide content into clearly defined sections. Each section can be titled in capitals and key words underlined. Sample section headings might include a message from the command, medical news, new community programs and items to note. Information that is squeezed together is often lost. If cost becomes an issue, it may be more important to have less information than a massive amount that no one may take the time to read.

For the command letter to be successful and a credible vehicle for communication, it must look professional. Consistency in format and clearly defined sections will help convey a sense of organization and credibility to readers. The letter should be carefully proofread for spelling and grammatical errors after typing. If a good volunteer typist

cannot be found, arrange with the command to have it typed. If the command is deployed, the RDC can help.

Be sure that each item is complete and includes a source to check with for further information. Always check out your information for accuracy before printing. Content should be pertinent, complete, objective and current.

LIMIT

The release of confidential unit information (departure or return dates, destination and so on) may jeopardize the unit's mission or endanger family members' security and is prohibited.

Information should be presented in a readable and easy-to-understand format. Photographs sometimes cannot be clearly reproduced, but line art or graphics highlight and enhance layout.

The contents of the command letters will vary depending on the type of information available to the FSG and whether the command is deployed or in garrison. The letter should include information from the command about activities and resources that would be helpful to your group. For example, family members of a deployed unit might appreciate tips on how to make their homes more secure or instructions on how to send messages to their spouses. Repeated printing of the most commonly needed emergency numbers is always highly recommended. Think about the specific needs and interests of your group. Ask for suggestions on subjects they are interested in. Possibilities include:

- A message from the commander;
- Specific news regarding videotaping of family events for viewing by deployed units or new programs to be initiated;
- Information about helpful Army or community resources, for example, health clinic hours or child-care locations, with as much information as possible including a phone number that you have verified;
- For deployed units, tips on handling different kinds of problems while soldiers are gone, for example, what kind of help you can get at the post auto crafts shop;
- A question-and-answer section on the problems that seem to come up most frequently;

- Periodic summaries of what the FSG contact person and representative can do to assist the family members and encouragement to call on the FSG when assistance is needed; and
- Listings of the most commonly used resources (Army Community Services, Army Emergency Relief, Red Cross), with reminders of what services they offer - especially during deployments, when they may eliminate many unnecessary telephone calls.

Volunteers may be authorized to use official mail to mail FSG command letters or packets containing information commanders deem appropriate and necessary to maintain morale and enthusiasm within their unit. The commander or a designated representative must approve these mailings.

Ideas for articles can come from many sources. Get into the habit of looking out for helpful information to pass along. Develop a filing system to find the information when you need it. Scan and identify useful material, and keep it in an envelope to collect potential items for the next letter. Try to keep up with the flow so that it isn't overwhelming. Possible resources include:

- Specific command messages and pertinent information that comes to the attention of unit personnel;
- Command letters from local Army and community resources such as the hospital or housing office;
- Other unit FSGs;
- Army presentations and military newspapers;
- Local schools, churches, child-care facilities, specialized community programs and military chapels;
- The local Chamber of Commerce; and
- Local newspapers and magazines.

LIMIT

When using copyrighted materials, remember that permission must be obtained from the source. This includes artwork as well as articles. The unit commander or Staff Judge Advocate can advise you on when and how to seek a copyright release.

The signature block of the unit commander may be required within the text of the newsletter. This can be done as part of the masthead or in a separate feature such as "Commander's Notes" or "Commander's Corner." The appearance of the signature block

indicates the newsletter's content is official government material.

This section is intended to provide a resource for volunteers and those who recruit and manage volunteers. Included are a general statement on the benefits of volunteering and an overview of the volunteer management process. Prospective volunteers should know what to expect.

Most of this section deals specifically with volunteers in the FSG program. It outlines the recruitment process, benefits and guidelines for writing job descriptions, and gives job descriptions for typical FSG volunteer positions. These job descriptions can also be used as samples for writing volunteer job descriptions for positions in any of the organizations or services associated with a particular installation.

The Army does not have the resources and personnel to provide all of the necessary services that contribute to a high-quality lifestyle for soldiers and their families. Most of these services, if not directly mission related, are only possible because they are staffed by volunteers. Likewise, communities use volunteers to work in important local organizations and activities. Volunteers are the lifeblood of many of the military and community programs and services that we have learned to take for granted. The overall quality of life both on post and in the communities where Guard members and Reservists live can be greatly enhanced by encouraging everyone to get involved.

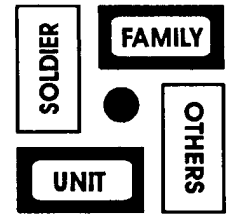
People volunteer their time and abilities for many reasons. Most people say the personal satisfaction of helping people is the main reason. Volunteers also enjoy being exposed to new activities and experiences. It allows them to remain active and further develop their talents and skills. For many people, voluntary experience can be translated into additional credentials. Volunteers can often use this experience to their advantage in the future on resumes and job applications.

For military family members, volunteering is often an ideal way to gain experience. Volunteer work may allow parents with child-rearing responsibilities to enter the job market at a higher level once the kids are gone. Volunteer work sometimes turns into paying jobs.

Services on post and in the community offer great opportunities for acquiring skills that are in demand in the workplace. For example, the need for quality child care for working parents is so great that it has become a political issue. Volunteering in a child-care program offers an excellent opportunity to receive training in this area.

Members of active Army families can find opportunities to volunteer at the Installation Volunteer Coordinator's office, usually located within Army Community Service (ACS). Guard and Reserve families should ask about volunteering through the State Family Program Office or the Family Coordinator's Office. In areas where none of these offices exist, community programs such as the Red Cross or United Way offer good opportunities to make a contribution.

Volunteers



Why People Volunteer

Recruitment

No matter what volunteers' interests, they're sure to find a service or organization where their time is needed and where they will benefit from the skills acquired. To ensure that this experience can be translated into a job resume, volunteers should request that there be a job description for what they do and make sure that they can get a letter of recommendation from their supervisor listing specific examples of what they did for that organization. They may also need help in learning to develop a resume and filling out an application form to reflect their skills and experience.

Methods used to get people involved vary. Common methods include:

- Command letters to all officer and enlisted spouses in each company inviting them to participate on a steering committee or attend a briefing meeting;
- A command invitation to key family-member leaders to attend a steering committee or briefing meeting; and
- A command briefing to soldiers and spouses of each company outlining the proposed family support system and the importance placed on FSG involvement.

Whatever the method and whoever the audience, it is essential that command support be clearly evident. In addition to the commander, a family support briefing should be attended by some of the key support and resource personnel who are to be involved in the support system. These may include the commander's spouse, command sergeant major's spouse, RDC, ACS staff, a mental health representative and the chaplain.

The agenda for the first briefing generally covers the mission of the unit, outlining the basic concept and goals of a deployment family support system and stating the reasons why family-member involvement in an FSG is so important. Personal or written testimonials about successful FSG initiatives are often helpful to convey the concept in concrete terms, especially if a large or mixed soldier and family-member group is present.

Attendees should be given an opportunity to ask questions, make comments or suggestions, and indicate an interest in FSG involvement. If initial volunteer response is not overwhelming, do not become discouraged. Remember that the most successful method of recruitment is personal contact, and a large FSG steering committee is neither necessary nor desirable to get plans off the ground.

Any family member, whether civilian or military, male or female, should be considered a potential candidate for an FSG position. Selection should be based on good leadership and organizational skills, a caring attitude, a willingness to help and an ability to work with others.

The commander's spouse does not need to be the battalion or unit leader for the FSG to be successful. However, in many FSGs the commander's spouse takes an active role in supporting the FSG and being available for guidance and advice.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Fluctuating Volunteer Support

Discussion: Volunteers traditionally extend ACS service. Experience indicates that the numbers of volunteers available decreased somewhat during the predeployment and immediately following troop departure. The number of volunteers reached or exceeded previous levels at about the 30- to 45-day point after deployment. The increase was due primarily to new volunteers joining the organization.

Lessons: Expect some loss in volunteer support at a time when additional staff is needed to meet new or increased service demands. Other staffing alternatives are needed to ensure effective responses in the event of volunteer loss.

Gear volunteer orientation and training programs to process the new volunteers quickly.

Continue active volunteer recruitment efforts to tap potential new resources for prospective volunteers. Volunteers from the civilian community have provided valuable assistance to other activities such as Youth Services, and could be a resource for many ACS programs. The retired military community should not be overlooked as a potential source of volunteers.

As volunteers in the Army family support programs, FSG members are entitled to recognition, training and job descriptions. Each benefit increases the job-market value of the volunteer's experience and makes it easy for the experience to be translated into a job resume.

Volunteers must be recognized for their work within the Army community. Recognition is not only a way to say thank you, it is a response to individual interest, commitment and involvement. Methods of recognition vary as people and their motivations vary. Forms of recognition should be on both the unit and installation level and include informal and formal activities.

Volunteers may be nominated to receive a certificate from the Commanding General. Units are encouraged to design their own certificates of recognition using unit colors and logos.

Awarding other recognition items such as plaques or pins should be considered, and special funding can sometimes be made available for these. The unit POC can obtain and help interpret guidelines for the types of recognition items that can be purchased; special care should be taken to be sure these are followed.

Supervision

Letters of appreciation and commendation can also be presented, extending the unit's thanks and documenting the volunteer's work. These are of particular value if the volunteer wishes to use the FSG experience on a job resume. (See sample letter later in this section.) There are many other ways to recognize volunteers, such as a note from the unit commander, a handmade or purchased gift, a round of applause at the FSG meeting and a sincere "thank you."

The FSG volunteer is also entitled to training, and for many motivated volunteers it is the most welcome and appreciated form of recognition. Training programs offer volunteers who are committed to working for the good of the Army family the opportunity for self-improvement. What better way to enhance their skills, increase their self-esteem and raise their potential for future service?

FSG volunteers should receive well-designed training on how to establish, operate, lead, support and sustain an FSG. Inclusion of key military personnel in part or all of the training might also be advisable if they have had no prior experience with an FSG.

Some FSG volunteers are placed in the position of being the first contact point for family members who are in a crisis situation. Because of their unique function prior to and during deployments, they are also often in a position to be the best ones to evaluate how a family is coping (or is going to cope) with the separation and to arrange for early intervention to prevent a crisis situation from developing. In order to perform this role effectively, adequate training must be received.

Examples of training topics that will help FSG volunteers perform their functions more effectively include:

- Effective communication
- Active listening
- Problem solving
- Crisis intervention
- Community resources
- Key unit and community resource personnel
- Principles of information and referral
- Use of a telephone tree
- Family advocacy
- Coping with stress
- Conflict resolution
- Effective meetings

- Management/leadership skills
- Time management
- Personal awareness
- Volunteer supervision
- Command letter preparation
- Military correspondence
- Committee management

FSG volunteers should receive training in at least the first eight items above prior to the soldiers' deployment. Training should be ongoing, and FSG training needs should be periodically reevaluated based on the problems that are encountered prior to, during and after deployment. Some FSG volunteers will require specialized training. Others, as they gain experience, may benefit from refresher courses.

Since the FSG exists to support the military mission, it is incumbent upon commanders to ensure that FSG volunteers are well trained. Training is a major area where a strong link to community assistance resources can be of great benefit to the commander.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: FSG Volunteer Training

Discussion: FSG training initiatives are intended to provide support, outreach and information to family members while at the duty station and during periods of family separation. In many cases, the G1/S1 is the command structure link with the mission of supporting and coordinating FSG training initiatives. These offices coordinate "sustainment seminars" (quarterly) to ensure all units will have several trained volunteers who can work collectively with unit family support programs. FSG volunteers are often in the position of being the first contact point for family members who need help. Due to their unique functions, FSG volunteers are often in a position to best evaluate family coping abilities given differing situations. Moreover, the volunteers can arrange early assistance to prevent a crisis situation from occurring.

Lessons: To perform their unique roles, FSG volunteers must receive appropriate training.

All FSG volunteers, including committee leaders, should receive job descriptions. This helps clarify roles and provide added protection for volunteers in case legal action is ever taken against them. Company contact volunteers are especially vulnerable since they are the primary information and direct-service providers. Job descriptions assist

the FSG in identifying the tasks that need to be done and in

providing the volunteer with specific responsibilities and standards. They should be reviewed and evaluated periodically with input from the volunteers, as well as their supervisors.

Recruiting consists of matching a specific volunteer position and its unique needs with a qualified person who can volunteer the required time. Rarely does general recruiting for a variety of positions prove effective. The key steps in recruiting are as follows:

- Examine the volunteer job description.
- Investigate the marketplace for potential volunteers, that is, ask where you can find and contact the type of volunteer you are looking for.
- Know your competition for recruiting, what they offer to their volunteers and how those volunteers are recruited and rewarded.
- Examine the elements of your position that are pluses and minuses: location, hours, costs, training, experience, benefits, rewards.
- Determine what to communicate and the best medium to use to gain exposure: flier, poster, letter, announcement, speech, help wanted ad, public service announcement, unit publication, bulletin board announcement, letter to the editor, feature story, news release or display.
- Consider all the alternatives: nonworking spouses, teenagers, senior citizens.
- Develop and implement an action plan for recruiting the best available candidate.
- Review interested individuals who match the position qualifications.
- Find out the needs and motivations of the top candidates.
- Select the best applicant based on qualifications, temperament and ability to perform the assigned duties and to work effectively with others.

Remember, some of your best prospects will not apply; they must be found and asked to consider volunteering their time.

Training is necessary for all positions, but the amount and type of training required varies with the position. A few of the options, ranging from the most to the least intensive, are:

- Formal training for complex or sensitive positions;
- On-the-job training, which enables new people to learn from established workers over a longer period of time; or
- Familiarization, where a limited amount of time is spent familiarizing the new person with the required duties.

Motivating volunteers is the key to productivity, morale and retention. People react differently to various forms of motivation. Some are self-motivated while others require constant external motivation. The important thing to remember is that the motivational tool (praise, recognition or rewards) must fit the person, the position and the circumstances. It is also important how it is done, rather than simply what is done.

One expert listed 101 ways to recognize and positively motivate volunteers. They included these: smile, recognize personal needs, be cheerful, greet by name, hold rap sessions, give additional responsibility or privileges, take out to coffee, ask to help train others, compliment in public, write thank you notes, plan off-duty fun times together, give an award, send a birthday or holiday greeting card.

Work with volunteers the way you would like others to direct or supervise you. Attempt to have decisions made at the lowest possible level. Be certain the subordinate you choose is capable of handling the work and solving the problem. Define and explain the objective or the results you desire. Give assignments in manageable chunks. Explain the importance of the task assigned. Delegate the authority to make decisions along with the responsibility for carrying them out.

Know the workload of your subordinates. Do not overload and "burn out" volunteers. Help set priorities and timely deadlines. Be reasonable, but apply a little pressure to accomplish objectives and to meet deadlines. Tell subordinates when you intend to follow up and then do it. Set up checkpoints and a system for reporting when they are not met. Show you have confidence in their ability to carry out a task. Be more interested in the fact that it was done, rather than worrying about every detail of how it was accomplished.

Demand completed work; don't take work back. Do not accept problems from subordinates; help them focus on alternative solutions. Always give praise for work well done and tasks completed on time. Remember intelligent people learn from their mistakes. Review what went wrong and how to avoid it next time. Do not find fault with the person who made the error, unless it happens repeatedly. Establish an enriching working atmosphere. Try to make each job enjoyable and fun. Empower those you lead.

Key elements in volunteer job descriptions include the title of the position and the organization offering it, where the work is to be performed, the objective of the position and its major responsibilities, qualifications (whether required or desirable) and the type of orientation, training and supervision that will be provided. Specify the minimum time commitment required, the hours per day or week, special meetings or requirements, the minimum number of weeks or months a person must be willing to serve and so on. Finally, state the benefits for the volunteer (such as skills to be acquired, car mileage, bus transportation or free parking).

Letters of recommendation are important. They should be written on official letterhead. The first paragraph should include the name of the agency for which the volunteer has worked and the time that has been committed to his or her volunteer assignment.

The second paragraph might discuss the characteristics and abilities demonstrated by the volunteer. For the more experienced volunteer, this would include an amplification of any experience in working with human resources (either supervising people or working with others as an organizational leader) and any experience with material resources (budgeting or financial management). Additional paragraphs could highlight any major achievements, such as successful program development or implementation.

Since the nature of each volunteer experience differs, each letter will vary according to the length of time and level of responsibility of the volunteer's assignment. A task-specific job description is a valuable tool that can be used in the composition of this letter. A sample volunteer letter of recommendation follows.

SUBJECT: Letter of Recommendation

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

_____ was President of _____, a social, cultural, recreational, charitable, and educational organization, from June 1982 through May 1983.

As President, she directed the activities of the Executive Board, which consisted of 25 members. She was responsible for the overall management of a thrift shop, a music center, a drama center, a monthly publication and all sources of revenue for the club. She spent an average of 25 hours per week directing these operations.

Under her supervision, the club organized and conducted two successful fundraising activities, netting over \$12,000. Through these efforts, the club was able to donate \$10,000 over and above the budget to charities and groups in the _____ community.

Her major accomplishments during her term in office were in establishing the family support group program and the restructuring of the thrift shop's operations, thus ensuring the tax-free status of the organization.

_____ was a truly dedicated and professional volunteer. She consistently demonstrated strong organizational and managerial abilities. I recommend her to you without hesitation or qualification.

(Signature)
Major General, US Army
Commanding

Volunteer Job Descriptions

The position title in a volunteer job description should describe the volunteer's responsibilities and what the volunteer actually does. Both a first and a second-line supervisor should be listed if possible. The first-line supervisor is the person the volunteer should go to if questions arise. The second-line supervisor is the person the volunteer should go to in the absence of the first-line supervisor. List supervisors by position rather than name because of staffing turnover.

A concise statement should reflect the ultimate goal or results of the service to be performed. Two primary benefits occur from defining volunteer jobs in terms of results:

- People gain a sense of achievement and feel worthwhile in their volunteer activity; and
- Programs are more effective because people understand what they are supposed to accomplish.

Duties should be described clearly and concisely. This is the "what" and the "how" of the job. Usually this is more effective if specific tasks are listed rather than put in paragraph form.

State the actual time commitment required. One of the most serious mistakes an agency can make is to fail to truthfully indicate how much time the volunteer will need to do the job. Recruiting volunteers without clearly defining the time commitment will ultimately result in failure. If you do not know the amount of time the job will take, say so. Ask for input from the volunteer. Agree to discuss the job after a short period (one or two cycles of the routine) to reevaluate the time required. This will show the volunteer that the supervisor is concerned about meeting the needs of both the volunteer and the project.

Include all of the qualifications necessary for the effective performance of duties, listing physical qualities as well as skills, experience and abilities. Be careful not to overqualify the position. Once the qualifications are established, the agency or FSG should adhere to its written statements.

Include the nature of required training, specific content of the training, the appropriate hours and timing of orientations, and any job-specific training. Orientations and training sessions should be carried out on a regular basis.

Be very specific about stating who does the supervising. Consider including a schedule of supervisory reviews. Feedback is essential for both the volunteer and the supervisor to perform their respective duties well. Since the job description should serve as a clear statement of a volunteer's duties, it should be used in volunteer-supervisor feedback sessions. This is the time to revise time requirements, distribute duties to another position or create another job if necessary. Job descriptions should be revised annually or as needed.

Actual job descriptions for positions in a typical family support program using FSGs follow. They are not all-inclusive and should be modified as appropriate for use in specific programs and locations. Job titles and other terminology will vary, as will responsibilities, according to the needs and desires of local FSG participants. These samples illustrate the general idea, however.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: FSG Volunteer Expectations

Discussion: FSG volunteers may encounter a wide range of inquiries and issues. Commanders of units, rear detachments, military communities and posts should set realistic expectations on volunteer duties, recognizing that FSG volunteers are not professional counselors. One volunteer was reportedly reprimanded for the way she handled a potentially suicidal caller.

Lessons: Commanders must involve themselves in defining the scope of volunteer duties and the training needed to produce the standards of performance expected of them. FSGs should not become surrogate parents, guardians or social workers; become part of the casualty notification process; become a babysitting service or lend money, cars or expensive items; divide into groups, such as enlisted versus officer wives; or duplicate the services of other support agencies.

Volunteers need skills that enable them to screen and identify the category of inquiries and calls they receive, such as information calls, social calls, problem calls, crisis calls, unnecessary calls and chronic calls.

The focus of volunteer training should be on refining their assessment and referral skills. FSGs worked well with little formal training but even better when members and leaders received continuing training and support.

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

POSITION TITLE:	Coordinator/Manager
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Commander or Rear Detachment Commander
JOB DESCRIPTION:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Initiate programs and activities to improve the quality of Army family life■ Recruit volunteers to implement programs■ Organize meetings to disseminate information■ Analyze and determine family needs■ Coordinate among functions and program leaders■ Review program execution including rewards and recognition■ Help identify available resources
TIME REQUIRED:	20 to 30 hours per week (on call); one-year commitment
IN-SERVICE TRAINING:	Workshops
QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Knowledge of family support programs, unit structure and procedures■ Ability to persuade people to get things done

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

POSITION TITLE:	Battalion FSG Chairperson
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Battalion Commander
PURPOSE:	Organize battalion-level FSG structure
JOB DESCRIPTION:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Act as advisor to commander on FSG matters■ Act as manager of battalion FSG■ Gather and disseminate information on activities at the battalion level and above■ Determine other key volunteer personnel and delegate duties and job responsibilities
TIME REQUIRED:	10 to 20 hours per week; one-year commitment
IN-SERVICE TRAINING:	Workshops
QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Knowledge of family support programs, unit structure and procedures■ Ability to persuade people to get things done

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

POSITION TITLE:	Company FSG Chairperson
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Company Commander
JOB DESCRIPTION:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Supervise the committees, groups and functions for a Family Support Group (FSG) consisting of families for the sustainment of morale, cohesion, communication, unit cooperation and the well-being of company personnel and their families■ Delegate FSG responsibilities to selected volunteers in order to promote participation in FSG activities and accomplishment of FSG objectives■ Act as liaison between battalion- and company-level FSGs■ Identify needs or unique problems of unit families■ Act as company FSG spokesperson for communicating family members' concerns and ideas to the company commander and the battalion-level FSG
TIME REQUIRED	Six to eight hours a week schedule dependent on deployment status and other scheduled activities; one-year commitment
IN-SERVICE TRAINING:	Workshops
QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Knowledge of family support programs, unit structure and procedures■ Ability to persuade people to get things done

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

- POSITION TITLE:** Platoon Key Person
- RESPONSIBLE TO:** Company FSG Chairperson
- JOB DESCRIPTION:**
- Contact five to eight spouses regularly to disseminate company information
 - Telephone one to two times a month during nondeployment, a minimum of once a week during deployment
 - On initial contact find out convenient time to call
 - Provide your number to everyone via phone list provided by company; help command to keep accurately informed
 - Keep log of calls made, date, time, what said; ensure confidentiality
- UNIT SUPPORT NEEDED:** Roster
- TIME REQUIRED:** Two to four hours per week; one-year commitment
- QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS:**
- Good telephone skills
 - Calm under stress

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

POSITION TITLE:	Contact Person
PURPOSE:	Gather and disseminate information
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Key person
JOB DESCRIPTION:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ensure spouses receive newsletters■ Keep accurate notes (up and down the chain)■ Contact four to eight spouses regularly, giving accurate information■ Keep log with date, times contact was made■ Pass on information only, not solve problems■ Follow up on problems■ Give name and number of contact person to spouses
UNIT SUPPORT NEEDED:	Roster
TIME REQUIRED:	Two to four hours per week; one-year commitment
QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Good telephone skills■ Calm under stress

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

- POSITION TITLE:** Support Circle Leader (Company Level)
- RESPONSIBLE TO:** Company FSG Chairperson
- JOB DESCRIPTION:**
- Telephone six to ten spouses on a regular basis
 - Give accurate information
 - Disseminate general information within two to three days
 - Disseminate emergency information within 24 hours
 - Call at least once a week during deployment and at least once a month during periods of nondeployment
 - Keep log of all contacts with dates and times noted
 - Pass family needs information to the next higher contact person if necessary
 - Make referrals to appropriate resources
 - Follow up on all identified problems
- UNIT SUPPORT NEEDED:** Roster
- TIME REQUIRED:** Four to eight hours per week, three- to six-month commitment with option to renew
- IN-SERVICE TRAINING:** Communication skills, crisis intervention
- SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE & ABILITIES THAT WILL BE GAINED:**
- Become a more concerned person
 - Develop communication skills
 - Develop time-management skills
 - Develop managerial skills
 - Develop empathy for others

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

- POSITION TITLE:** Editor, Company FSG Newsletter
- RESPONSIBLE TO:** Company FSG Chairperson
- JOB DESCRIPTION:** Editor for monthly company newsletter. Manages the following functions and committees:
- Announcements
 - Art
 - Circulation
 - Distribution
 - Layout
 - News Reports
 - Photography
 - Proofreading
 - Special Features
 - Typing
- UNIT SUPPORT NEEDED:**
- Complete and timely family information
 - Copy facilities and supplies
 - Postage
 - Military information
- TIME REQUIRED:** 10 to 20 hours per month, one-year commitment
- IN-SERVICE TRAINING:** Workshops

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

- POSITION TITLE:** Battalion FSG Newsletter Editor
- RESPONSIBLE TO:** Battalion FSG Chairperson
- JOB DESCRIPTION:**
- Develop information chain
 - Identify purpose, frequency of newsletter
 - Organize a volunteer newsletter staff (reporters, writers, editors, typists, illustrators, collators, mailers)
 - Oversee gathering of information from all sources; organizing, writing and editing of material; typing or word processing; final editing; layout and paste-up
 - Submit camera-ready copy to unit for reproduction; arrange for collating, stapling, labeling, mailing
 - Solicit feedback and monitor effectiveness of process
- UNIT SUPPORT NEEDED:**
- Word processing assistance
 - Unit training/activities schedule
 - Points of contact for information and support
 - Reproduction and mailing services
 - Current/updated mailing lists
 - Incidental supplies
- TIME REQUIRED:** Approximately six to ten hours per month, (depending on newsletter frequency); one-year commitment
- QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS:**
- Typing, spelling, grammar skills
 - Ability to write concisely Journalistic skills
 - Managerial skills
 - Knowledge of organization
 - Good rapport with spouses
 - Good communication skills
 - Creativity, energy, artistic talent
- SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE & ABILITIES THAT WILL BE GAINED:**
- Organizational and managerial skills
 - Communication skills
 - Writer/editor skills
 - Graphic arts skills
 - Journalistic skills

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

- POSITION TITLE:** FSG Publicity Chairman, Battalion Level
- PURPOSE:** To inform all soldiers and family members of FSG of all activities (ongoing and upcoming)
- RESPONSIBLE TO:** Battalion FSG Chairperson
- JOB DESCRIPTION:**
- Inform new members of the purpose and structure of the FSG
 - Prepare information for soldier at in-processing
 - Follow up with contact person
 - Communicate with chairperson, unit S-I/contact person, company contact persons/reporters
 - Disseminate information through contact persons, newsletter, flyers, mailings, public announcements at meetings, unit bulletin boards
 - Get work out using organized unit support structures
- UNIT SUPPORT NEEDED:**
- Identification of key contact person
 - List of FSG contact persons
 - Timely information
 - Typing, word processing equipment
 - Mailing services

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

- POSITION TITLE:** Hospitality Coordinator
- RESPONSIBLE TO:** Company FSG Chairperson
- PURPOSE:** To make newcomers feel welcome and cared for
- JOB DESCRIPTION:**
- Keep of with news of incoming families, newly married couples, new babies, illness in the family from contact persons
 - Send flowers and card to home or hospital as appropriate
 - Inform FSG of incoming families without "welcome" packets
 - Gather information on the number and ages of children in each family and their special interests
 - Confirm new families have been assigned sponsors
 - Extend invitations to upcoming FSG activities and otherwise make sure newcomers feel welcome
- TIME REQUIRED:** Up to 10 hours per month; six-month commitment
- QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS:**
- Like to meet and be with people; enthusiastic

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

POSITION TITLE:	Fund-Raising Key Person, Battalion Level
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Battalion FSG Chairperson
JOB DESCRIPTION:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Coordinate fund-raising events to ensure that funds are available for the group's activities■ Recruit volunteers and delegate work■ Determine requirements and logistics■ Develop work schedules■ Keep Co-Chairperson informed■ Account for funds
UNIT SUPPORT NEEDED:	Unit schedule; reproduction equipment
TIME REQUIRED:	Ten hours per month; one-year commitment
IN-SERVICE TRAINING:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Communication skills■ Public relations skills
QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Outgoing personality
SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE & ABILITIES THAT WILL BE GAINED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Supervisory and managerial experience■ Organizational skills■ Communications skills

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

POSITION TITLE:	Activities Coordinator
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Battalion or Company FSG Chairperson
PURPOSE:	Development of an activities calendar
JOB DESCRIPTION:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Solicit ideas, interests through newsletter, at coffees and newcomer orientations and at predeployment briefings■ Coordinate location, date, time with FSG leadership■ Establish committees for each activity■ Recruit other workers through all publicity channels and motivate them■ Be familiar with the unit training schedule (timing is essential)■ Coordinate financial needs with treasurer, FSG leadership■ Coordinate publicity with newsletter editor and publicity coordinators
UNIT SUPPORT NEEDED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Training schedule■ Occasionally detailing personnel for large events■ Phone numbers■ Access to equipment and distribution system■ A unit point of contact, such as chaplain, S-1 or Rear Detachment Commander
TIME REQUIRED:	Three to six months
QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Innovativeness■ Motivation and ability to generate interest in others■ Time to devote to the job
SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE & ABILITIES THAT WILL BE GAINED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ability to organize■ Ability to recognize needs and interests■ Communication and interpersonal skills■ Ability to determine resource requirements■ Ability to work with and request assistance from sources of resources and assets

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP (NATIONAL GUARD)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

- POSITION TITLE:** Chairperson
- GENERAL STATEMENT:** The Chairperson of a Family Support Group (FSG) within the _____ National Guard is the leader of the group and its spokesperson. The Chairperson presides at FSG meetings and maintains regular communication with the affiliated organization's commander or authorized unit Point of Contact (POC) in order to help keep participating families informed of unit activities and policies. She or he also communicates regularly with the State Family Program Coordinator and the State Volunteer Representative on plans for FSG activities, family-member concerns and requests for assistance.
- JOB DESCRIPTION:**
- Plan and conduct FSG activities that support family well-being and preparedness and the unit, consistent with the goals of the State Family Program
 - Keep the affiliated unit informed of FSG activities
 - Keep information flowing between family members, the unit and the State Family Program Office
 - Preside over FSG meetings, which are held as needed
 - Meet annually with other Chairpersons throughout the state to share ideas
 - Help identify volunteer spouses for local projects
 - Encourage family members to become active FSG participants
- DURATION:** One-year duration (renewable)
- TIME INVOLVED:** Approximately 6 to 8 hours per month, depending on level of FSG activity
- IN-SERVICE TRAINING:** One annual training workshop at government expense
- COMPENSATION:** No pay; reimbursement available for use of private vehicle on FSG business
- QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS:** Must believe in and support the _____ National Guard Family Program; have a family member in the _____ National Guard; have good listening skills; like to help people; enjoy being with other National Guard family members; be able to organize others; be able to communicate with and on behalf of the families and the unit.

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP (NATIONAL GUARD)

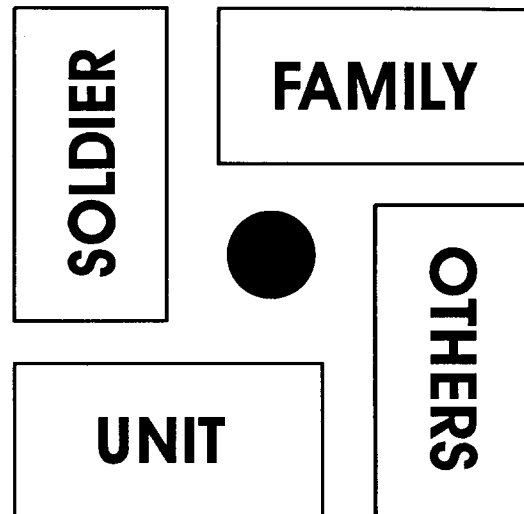
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

- POSITION TITLE:** State Volunteer Representative
- GENERAL STATEMENT:** The State Volunteer Representative (SVR) assists the State Family Program Coordinator in the management and oversight of the _____ National Guard Family Program, provides training and assistance in program development to unit Family Support Groups (FSGs), and acts as liaison with appropriate state and national National Guard Associations.
- RESPONSIBLE TO:** State Family Program Coordinator
- JOB DESCRIPTION:**
- Assist State Family Program Coordinator
 - Coordinate family-member volunteer efforts
 - Serve as point of contact for FSG and family members for information, referral and follow-up
 - Serve as "Team Leader," State Family Program Council ("The State Team")
 - Assist in management and coordination of special projects
 - Participate as the Volunteer Representative of the Family Program at conferences and workshops at local, regional and national levels
 - Assist in planning, preparation and presentation of family-member briefings
 - Act as liaison with the _____ National Guard Association and the National Guard Association of the United States
 - Exchange ideas with volunteers from other states
 - Maintain familiarity with both civilian and military family support services available throughout the state
- DURATION:** Normally a one-year commitment; may be extended by the State Adjutant General
- TIME INVOLVED:** Approximately 16 to 24 hours per month; some travel required at government expense
- IN-SERVICE TRAINING:** State Family Program Coordinator provides training in use of State Family Program Office management systems; outside training sessions, conferences and workshops may also be available at government expense.
- QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS:** Must believe in and support the _____ National Guard Family Program; have a family member in the _____ National Guard; have good listening skills; like to help people in need; have strong verbal and written communication skills and good organizational skills.

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP (NATIONAL GUARD)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

- POSITION TITLE:** Member, State Family Program Council
- GENERAL STATEMENT:** The State Family Program Council ("The State Team") is formed by direction of the State Adjutant General in order to increase family-member involvement in the _____ National Guard Family Program. Membership is voluntary and limited to those appointed by the Adjutant General. All Geographic locations and the parent and retiree populations are represented.
- RESPONSIBLE TO:** State Family Program Coordinator and "State Team" Leader
- JOB DESCRIPTION:**
- Advisory roles** (on behalf of constituency)
- Bring family-member concerns to the state level for appropriate action
 - Review and comment on the effectiveness of the Family Program; make recommendations for improvement
 - Take an active role in the Family Program's strategic planning process covering the next two to five years
- Action roles**
- Organize and provide leadership for the accomplishment of approved Family Program objectives and approved special projects and events
 - Facilitate the regular flow of information among Family Program participants in leadership roles
- DURATION:** Normal term is two years and appointments are generally made in September of each year; extension or release from service is at the discretion of the Adjutant General
- TIME INVOLVED:** Approximately 8 to 12 hours per month with some voluntary travel offered; State Team meets quarterly (in January, April, July and October), with additional Adjutant General-approved special meetings called as needed
- IN-SERVICE TRAINING:** Training sessions, conferences and workshops (both in and out state) may be available at government expense.
- QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL SKILLS:** Must believe in and support the _____ National Guard Family Program; have good listening skills; like to help people in need; have strong communication skills and good organizational skills.



4. Coping with Separations

Ideas and strategies to help soldiers and their families manage deployment separations, and to help military and FSG leadership prepare them

- **Survival Strategies**
- **Children and Separation**
- **Crime Prevention and Safety**
- **Homecoming**
- **A Family Separation Workshop**
- **Backgrounder: Dealing with Separation**
- **Family Readiness Workbook**

Soldier, spouse and children all feel the pang of separation. Deployment disrupts the normal functioning of the family unit. There is no denying that. But there are things that can be done to survive the separations.

This section and the one following (on communications) give many specific suggestions for surviving separations, written from the point of view of the military family anticipating or experiencing deployment separation. These suggestions can be passed on at a Family Support Group (FSG) meeting or workshop, or even duplicated for distribution to individual members.

All family members should be aware of the emotions associated with the four stages of the departure-return cycle. Both parents and children tend to act out emotions during this cycle - the kids will tend to mirror the emotional feelings of the parents. The stages are these:

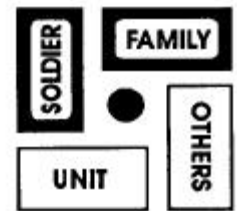
- **Protest against loss:** "It's not fair that you have to leave us." Everyone is on edge and irritable. The spouse is likely to feel tense, selfish and angry.
- **Despair:** "How will I ever live through these next few months without you?" You might find yourself waking up in the middle of the night feeling fearful.
- **Detachment:** Most days you feel in control; you are confident that you can handle the day-to-day living, but you may also experience despair and anger. "Why does he or she have to be away when I need him or her the most?"
- **Return adjustment:** Anxiety and doubts surface. "Will she still love me?" "Will he like the decision I made?" "Now that she knows how to take care of the family alone, will she still need me?"

Here are things you can do to help yourself and family members survive this separation. First of all, take the children to the soldier's point of departure, even if it means taking them out of school, so that fearful fantasies are reduced. After the departure, participate in a planned activity, such as shopping or taking the children to the zoo. There's no need to return to an empty house immediately. Plan a pot-luck dinner or go to a restaurant with another waiting family to get over the "first day hurdle."

Try to carry on children's activities just as if the soldier were home. Tell the children's teachers that dad or mom just left so they will have more of an understanding of behavioral reactions and be able to help. Use mealtime or bedtime to talk about what to say to dad or mom on the next tape or in the next letter. Children whose fathers are away should be involved in organizations where there are good male leaders. Scouts or soccer and baseball teams help to channel some of their energy while teaching lifetime skills.

The soldier should call home, if possible, upon reaching his or her destination. This may be a good opportunity to take a course, read some new books or do something for yourself. If the active-duty military is not a career for you, think of ways you can

Survival Strategies



use your current experience in preparation for a civilian life. Take your family on tour via a tape-recorded account and snapshots. Look for inexpensive tours on foot or by bus. Participate in a service project or other activity organized by the unit. Keep a diary of your experiences to share with the family.

For the spouse remaining at home, set some goals for yourself, then pursue your self-development program whether or not your spouse is home. You will like yourself a lot better. Get involved in some ongoing activity. It might be a full- or part-time job. It might be volunteer work, an effective way of gaining professional skills. Don't make excuses by saying that you will have to give it up when your soldier comes home. Dare to stretch yourself. Many organizations need your help: Army Community Service, your church, the American Red Cross, your school and your unit's FSG, to name a few. Get involved in FSG activities. Reach outside your immediate circle of friends. Take up a new hobby or return to one you gave up for lack of time.

Know at least three of your neighbors. You may need their help on an emergency basis, and they can offer day-to-day support. Make sure you are financially secure before your soldier leaves. Do you have enough money to cover an unexpected bill? Don't feel guilty about going out with friends and leaving your children with a babysitter. That's the cheapest form of sanity you can buy. But resist the temptation to run home to Mom if the going gets rough. That is usually a temporary solution at best. If you and your spouse have some differences, try to work them out before you are separated. They might get bigger if you don't.

Keep a journal of your thoughts and activities while your spouse is absent. Include snapshots of yourself and the children so the two of you can catch up together with what you have been doing. Find a "buddy," another military family member who is also alone temporarily and whom you can call when you feel "blue." If you have children, find another woman to pal around with who has children the same age as yours. This is where your unit's FSG comes in especially handy -you're all in the same boat and need the mutual support.

Little things can help a lot: Cook a special dish that you enjoy, but that your spouse hates; start a small sewing project; play the piano; do some physical labor, which will help relieve emotional tiredness. Take the kids on an outing. Go to the museum, to the library, to the woods for a hike. Break up the week with special activities, such as a Friday night movie or a Tuesday morning shopping trip. Don't sit at home on weekends thinking, "Oh, if only the family were together." Get a group together and go to the beach; go skating; have a picnic.

Don't hesitate to attend a party where single men or women will be present. Wear your wedding ring to prevent confusion and criticism, but recognize that as a mature adult you are capable of having conversations and relationships with both men and women.

Finally, think of ways you can help reduce the stress of the return period. After you've experienced deployment a few times, you may be better able to handle the expectations that usually come with the soldier's return. You may want to prepare for the return in a way that leaves you time to relax with the kids one or two days before your soldier arrives.

Communications during separation play a critical role in maintaining an emotional presence of the soldier not physically present. It is very important for the family members to share their thoughts and feelings with the soldier. Here are some helpful ways to sustain the relationship and prepare for a happy homecoming.

Commercial phone calls can be a very expensive way for a family to communicate, unless there is a real need to have a two-way conversation. The cost of collect calls can be quite a burden on a spouse's already tight budget.

Unexpected phone calls can be very unsatisfying, too; the partner receiving the call first wonders if there is an emergency, and then finds out that he or she does not have much news to offer. It is frustrating to spend the rest of the day thinking of questions (or answers) that might have been thought of during the call.

An alternative to commercial telephone communication is the Military Affiliated Radio Systems (MARS) network. Many military installations have MARS stations, which can be accessed by soldiers and families by contacting the nearest one. This system is an economical way to handle nonemergency calls.

Letters are the least expensive and most satisfactory lifelines. Some hints for letters:

- Answer all questions. Write with the soldier's picture in front of you. This will help you imagine you are talking directly to him or her.
- Let your spouse know how much you appreciate the letters, tapes, pictures that have been sent. Mention in each letter one or two things that made you feel especially close.
- Express yourself clearly. Don't leave the other person to guess what you mean.
- If writing at length daily is difficult, the family should consider postcards. Receiving notes frequently (and regularly) is more important than the length of the message.
- Expressions of love are important; the need to verbally express affection does not diminish with distance. The soldier should be reassured that he or she is cherished. Sometimes problems take undue priority over saying "I love you." Relationships need to be nurtured if they are to survive separations and ensure a loving reunion.

Communications

- Share your feelings as openly and as freely as you can without indulging in self-pity. Let your spouse know you'd like to share his or her feelings.
- Take responsibility for your feelings. Say, "I feel bad that you're not here." Avoid saying, "You make me feel bad."
- Both partners need to write regularly. Otherwise there is temptation to worry about the other or to be hurt. At a distance the imagination can run wild; communication will reduce speculations. Some couples number their letters so it will be obvious if they are received out of order.
- The soldier should write directly to each child instead of including them in a letter to a spouse.
- Add interesting newspaper articles and cartoons.
- Add photos. These are the best ways to share rapidly growing children. Include candid shots of the spouse, too. They can be enjoyed over and over again in quiet moments.

Some families find that cassette tapes are easy to send (although a recorder is needed) and are even more personal than letters. As with letters or journals, a little can be added each day. Children love to hear their voices and the tapes can be treasures to enjoy for many years to come. Friends could add to the tape, too.

Videocassettes are an excellent way for families to communicate during absences, particularly on special days and holidays. A recorder and video camera are required, but may be rented in the continental United States or obtained through military video clubs outside it.

One idea is for family members to prepare a "goody bag" containing "a pack a week." Each envelope could contain such items as love notes from the spouse and children; reminders of things to look forward to when the soldier gets back; kids' drawings; or funny reminders of life at home.

Stress Management Techniques

Here are some ways you can reduce the stress in your life; they are useful not only for FSG leaders and volunteers, but also for other family members experiencing the stress of separation or relocation and can be passed on at an FSG meeting or workshop. Don't let the length of the list scare you. Try different techniques (each for at least three days) until you find ones that work for you. Some of the suggestions may mean

major changes in the way you now face life. Try them. The only thing you have to lose is a lot of stress.

- Exercise; give physical expression to feelings of flight and fight through swimming, jogging or tennis.
- Maintain good eating habits. Keep calories under control and reduce sugar intake.
- Do relaxation exercises. For example, inhale as you count from one to seven, then hold your breath while counting to seven, then exhale for the same count. As you inhale and exhale, let go and feel your body relaxing. Or relax by keeping everything out of your mind and focusing on the number "one."
- Plan some aesthetic activity each day, such as a walk in a garden or through an art museum.
- Read enjoyable books not related to your work that require concentration. Browse through a bookstore or ask a librarian to help you select a book at your public library.
- Practice "active listening." Let others finish speaking without interruption. Then respond.
- Have a place for retreat at home. Initiate a "quiet time" at home when everyone in the house is quiet.
- Slow down. Operating in "overdrive" burns up energy.
- Take personal responsibility for you actions, and also allow others to do the same.
- Organize and manage your time. Your time is precious and finite.
- Each week, take your calendar and block out some free time for yourself as a personal reward.
- Focus on the quality of your life. It's not the number of things you do, but how well you do what you do.
- When making decisions, take time to ponder and weigh alternatives. As a result, you will be more satisfied with your decisions.
- Give your personality room for fantasies, dreams and fresh hopes. Don't be afraid to be spontaneous.
- Manage your time nonstressfully; prioritize. Whatever does not get done today can go on your "to do" list for the next day.
- Take vacations that suit you.
- Be more flexible.
- Identify and accept your own strengths and limitations. Everyone is different.
- Establish long-range goals for your life. Identify short-term objectives that help you achieve these goals.

- Delegate some of your work to others when possible. You don't have to do it all.
- Program your work day in a way that makes effective use of your time and avoids "hurry sickness":

Revise your usual daily schedule of activities to eliminate as many events as possible that do not contribute directly to your own well-being. Allow more time for activities so as not to be rushed. Allow a 5 to 10 minute break between appointments. Rise earlier so as not to rush to get dressed. Work in a peaceful place. Talk less and only when necessary. Schedule lunch as a real change of pace and activity. Skip any urgency about finishing work exactly on time (five o'clock frenzy). Before leaving your work space, put things in order, turn your chair around away from your desk and spend 10 to 15 minutes relaxing. Mentally prepare yourself to return home, and leave the work there.

- Learn to wait - a drill against "hurry sickness."

Each morning, noon and mid-afternoon, remind yourself that living is always an unfinished business. You are only finished when you're dead. Begin to listen quietly to the conversation of other people. Quit trying to think of more than one thing at a time. If someone is doing a job slower than you could, don't interfere unless you're positive he or she can't do the job at all.

When confronted with any task, ask yourself, "Will this matter five years from now? Must I do this right now?" Before you begin to speak, ask yourself, "Do I really have anything important to say; does anyone want to hear it; is this the time to say it?" If the answer to any one is "no," don't say it. Tell yourself at least once a day that no enterprise ever failed because it was executed too slowly, too well.

When you have scheduled appointments, anticipate that you may have to wait. Don't waste waiting time. For example, carry a paperback book or needlework with you for times when you have to wait. If you don't protect your allotment of time, no one else will. Remember that not everyone has "hurry sickness" and some won't mind waiting for you as much as you would mind waiting for them. Purposely frequent restaurants and other establishments with a companion where you know there will be a wait, and learn to wait without fidgeting.

- Retrieve your total personality. Detach yourself from the narrow pattern of work and short-circuited emotion. Express yourself!
- Widen your cultural and intellectual horizons with plays, concerts, good books, museums.
- Open yourself to new friendships. Nourish yourself with communication with people, particularly those who reinforce your newly expanded interests.
- Choose events and experiences that yield pleasure as you live through them; concentrate on savoring them, and live each moment more fully.

Some say children are relatively unaffected by their father's absence, but studies show that is not true. Children probably experience the same psychological pattern as their mothers, due to their own feelings of loss and their awareness, conscious or unconscious, of the mother's emotional situation. They are generally upset when she is and calm when she is. Children often test Mom to find out if she will bend more when Dad's gone, especially when he first leaves and again upon his return.

Some women compensate for their husband's absence by becoming permissive or overly protective with their children. Rules change. Some decisions are harder to make alone, so the mother may not be able to make clear-cut decisions. The children are being subjected to a different environment. They become caught between two worlds, juggling their behavior according to whether or not their father is home.

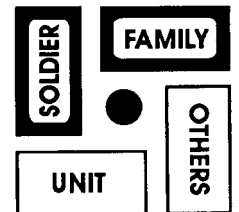
Both partners must be consistent in their discipline. They should decide on the rules and who is responsible for what area of discipline. Some fathers become "one of the kids" and expect the wife to be the disciplinarian. Sometimes, the mother essentially leaves the children without a parent at all by deferring decisions until the husband gets home: "Just wait until your Dad gets home. You're gonna get it!"

When the father returns, children behave in a variety of ways, with happy hugs, kisses and squeals of welcome, but also with feelings of hurt, anger, resentment and hostility. Child psychologists say all children have both positive and negative feelings toward returning parents. That's okay, as long as the feelings are dealt with honestly.

"Children need stability," says one military counselor. "Look at it this way. If one of the two most important people in your life were constantly coming and going, here two weeks, gone two weeks, home two days, gone again, wouldn't your security be shaken a little? Imagine what it does to the children!"

With their father gone, children often become the main focus of the mother. But what happens when he returns and she becomes a wife again? The child often feels he or she is not "number one" anymore and has to take second place, physically and emotionally. Insecurity, loss of status and change in routine all add up to two strong emotions: hurt and anger directed at father. Children also feel love, pride, need and security. The mixed feelings leave them confused, unable to understand what's happening to them.

Children and Separation



Children express their feelings in different ways, and their outward behavior is not always a good reflection of what's going on emotionally. Some children cover up their true feelings; others are more open. A child's rejection, even if it is subtle, can be devastating to a returning parent. Some psychologists say part of a child's negative feelings toward a father may be a reflection of his mother's attitudes, suppressed by the wife but sensed by the children.

Helping a child cope with the emotions of separation requires that the family be open to the honest expression of feelings. These steps will help children cope - even when there appears to be no conflict. Pass them on to the FSG volunteers and other family members.

Before deployment, spend time explaining, at the child's level, why you are going, where, with whom (for example, with Mary's Dad) and for how long you will be gone. Sit down with the whole family and talk about your feelings. Let each family member express how they feel about the separation. Talk about what will happen when Dad (or Mom) is gone and what will be different when he returns. Let the older children relate their assessments of previous deployments to younger children: how long it seemed, what they did, how they felt while one parent was away and when he or she returned. The departing parent should spend time individually with each child: Play a game, go for a walk, or go out for an ice cream cone go just the two of you. Take a picture of each child with the parent about to leave.

During deployment, display pictures of the missing parent at the kid's eye level. Let each child have a picture of him or herself with the missing Dad or Mom in their room. Routine is important. Keep the same rules and family schedule. The children need the stability of unbroken routine. But make opportunities for special outings, especially on weekends and holidays when both parents would usually have been home (picnics, breakfast at McDonald's, visits to historic sites, building a bird feeder together.) Encourage writing letters to Dad or Mom and enclose school work or drawings. Have the missing parent write a separate letter to each child occasionally, mailed in a separate envelope. That extra postage is well worth it! The parent can also read stories and talk to the kids on tape.

Have each child choose a chore that the absent parent usually does. It will be a special contribution to maintain the house and will help develop responsibility. Praise them for their efforts. Keep in touch with teachers. Work together to evaluate, avert or redirect unusual or negative behavior. Discuss with the kids the fact that people do change, so after a long period of separation they may see some changes in their parent. They will adjust better to the changes if they are explained they will know that the seemingly "strange" behavior does not mean he does not love them.

Make homecoming a family reunion; Mom and Dad can vacation alone later. Expect some anger and insecurity from the kids. Talk about the negative feelings as well as the good ones. The returning parent might arrange a date with each child to reestablish the relationship. He or she may have to court the children, as well as his or her partner. Spend as much time as possible as a family, without outsiders, at the beginning. Postpone visits with relatives and dinner parties with friends for a few days.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Preparing Children for Parental Deployment

Discussion: The deployment of forces to Operation Desert Shield placed soldiers under heavy work demands to prepare unit equipment for movement and to get their personnel records in order. Unit leaders were not always able to give them predictable "family time" before departure. Recurrent false starts kept many soldiers and families from bringing closure to their "good-byes."

Lessons: Deployment farewell practices are a significant command issue affecting morale. Many soldiers and spouses had no time or training in how to manage deployment departure from children or one another. Commanders attuned to these family concerns, who were able to allocate some free time to their soldiers, enhanced the morale and cohesiveness of their unit.

- Soldiers need time to devote genuine attention to their children and the anxieties they hold. Their perceptions and concerns are very real. The disruption of the family during deployment can have continuing effects on how children see themselves and the world in which they live. It can affect their performance in school and their response to authority.
- To help children cope with the absence of a deployed parent, the parent should talk with each child individually; explain simply and honestly what is going to happen; talk about where the parent is going, why and what he or she will be doing (using a map or globe); talk about what the child will be doing during the separation; prepare the child for the soldier's absence at events (such as ball games) parents normally attend; talk about when the soldier expects to be home in terms of special occasions; and remind the child of previous separations and happy reunions.
- Spouses should help children give the deploying parent personal items they've made to take along or to decorate a suitcase or locker. Also, they should help the children put together a survival kit of family photos, stationery and books.
- Children should be included in family good-byes at the point of departure. If possible, let the children board the plane or boat to see how the soldier will travel. Letting them see the parent deploy gives them a greater sense of reality and reduces fantasies.

Leonard J. Lexier, M.D., has identified seven common themes that typify the myths parents use to cope with the stress of father absence. (Some of these myths may apply equally well to mother absence.) These myths and consequences are described below. Awareness of these myths and their consequences can provide a foundation for pertinent family programs and are useful for FSG volunteers to understand. Consider including them in an FSG workshop on separation.

Myth #1: Physical separation means emotional disengagement. Fathers are singled out, both by themselves and by families, as the cause and cure of many childhood disturbances.

It is difficult to reconcile love of work and love of family, but it is especially difficult for fathers when their work entails physical separation. Analysis of the most successful military families reveals the common ability of the spouse to keep the father emotionally present at home during periods of physical separation. These mothers and fathers also have noncompetitive relationships. Fathers, even though physically separated, maintain an active and highly emotionally charged relationship with the children. The success with which a father's interest and his loving attachment is communicated to the child in large measure dictates the outcome of the child's emotional development.

If a disturbance arises requiring psychological evaluation and intervention, one of the most common fantasies heard from fathers is that a change in location or assignment will provide the "cure." This is a reflection of the guilt felt that somehow the father, and by extension the military, caused the problem in the first place. Dr. Lexier has observed fathers who leave active duty out of concern for their families, only to discover that this was neither the cause nor the cure. As a result, they now have an additional burden of job dissatisfaction.

Myth #2: Anger is not an acceptable part of a child's love relationship with the father.

When faced with the upset over the father's impending separation, the direct verbal expression of anger is not tolerated by many of the fathers, nor is the anger seen as a normal reflection of the child's love. This can lead to the anger being displaced into other parental relationships, especially onto adults at school. Returning fathers do not anticipate that the process of reunion would release feelings of anger associated with the initial separation. They have little ability to predict this reaction nor can they understand this behavior. They tend to see the behavior as defiance of teacher or parental authority and challenge to the father's position.

Myth #3: "You have to be there when the keel is laid but not at the launching," that is, the father's presence is not necessary to the child's growth and development.

This myth is frequently coupled with the idea that fathers play an insignificant role in the mental development of their children. The net effect that these myths have had for some men is that they feel more like uncles to their children than fathers. This was especially true for soldiers during the Vietnam period, when tours extended for periods of time of up to thirteen months.

Myth #4: The human mind, in terms of feelings, works like a wall switch that is either "on" or "off."

It would be more accurate to compare the mind to a rheostat or dimmer switch. How fast a person adjusts to changes in his or her environment depends a lot on his or her personality. Often, following an extended deployment, both husband and wife underestimate the amount of time needed to shift back to a normal family environment.

Both expect the other to be well rested, emotionally and sexually available and eager to pick up the relationship where it left off at the time of deployment. For example, the Navy wives Dr. Lexier studied had no concept of the number of inspections and drills required to bring a nuclear armed and driven ship into port. Wives also had little knowledge of the "channel fever" that lasts the 48 hours before making port.

Husbands fail to appreciate the intense excitement and anxiety that their return evoked in spouses and children. Some men have described how they would try to get their children out of the way: "Tell the kids that you threw 25 half dollars on the lawn and that they cannot come in until they find all 25. But only throw out 24." Men's expectations center on noncompetitive possession of the wife. Some men in this study expected that the children would be sent to neighbors for the first 48 hours after their return. Both husbands and wives expect to adjust to the presence of the other in a few days. Actually, the period of adjustment can take as long as six weeks, depending on the length of separation.

Myth #5: A good father's major contribution to the family is being a strict disciplinarian capable of straightening out problems that arise during his absence.

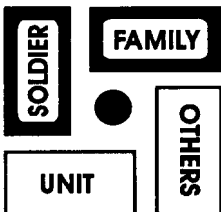
The flip side of this myth is the idea of a good mother and wife who allows the returning father to make changes in the family routine, so that he can reestablish himself as the head of the household. Parents describe "change of command" ceremonies that take place on the doorstep of the family home. Women describe their reactions of anger and frustration at having to walk "three steps behind" the returning husband.

Fathers and mothers have little sense of how changes in family routine affect their children. Furthermore, they do not see the connection between male children's negative attitude toward women and fathers' tendency to belittle the woman's effort to manage the family during periods of father absence.

Myth #6: Fathers have little to do with the education of children, especially during the elementary school grades.

This concept has led fathers not to have a predeployment conference with teachers nor familiarize themselves with the anticipated course of instruction that their children will receive. Planned father-teacher conferences via mailed material from the classroom teacher are not arranged, and fathers are called upon only during times of academic or behavioral difficulties.

Crime Prevention and Safety



Myth #7: Physical affection is not necessary as the children enter pubescence.

Withdrawal of physical affection at the time of the daughter's puberty is typically seen as the cause for running away and other antisocial behaviors. Inconsistency of parental expectations and disagreement on rules and limits are associated with many behavioral disturbances. Adolescent males who historically over-idealized their father when they were younger have greater difficulties resolving the negative connotation placed on their close emotional relationship with their fathers. Often, the result is manifested as severe school underachievement and dropout, along with heavy alcohol and marijuana use. This is especially true of those adolescents whose fathers had highly successful military careers.

The significance of this study is that it points out the military fathers' concern for their children. This should promote a willingness on the part of the military leadership to support programs that enhance the relationships between military parents and their children.

Safety and security should be special concerns for husbands and wives during deployment. Soldiers will feel more comfortable about leaving if they have done all that they can to ensure their families' well-being. A complete residential security survey from the local provost marshal or nonmilitary policeman is advisable. The following precautions should be emphasized to the FSG members:

- If the apartment or house does not have a peephole in the door, install one.
- If outside doors do not have deadbolt locks, install them.
- If windows are not secured, they should have good locks or should be drilled and pinned to prevent opening from the outside.
- Sliding doors should have adequate locks or anti-jimmie devices to prevent entry by prying the door open or removing it from its tracks.
- A phone is a necessity for security and communication. Ask that rank not be listed in the phone book. This helps to avoid harassment. Some families list only the soldier's first initial.
- Post emergency phone numbers and procedures beside the phone, or actually taped to it, so they can be readily found.
- If obscene or nuisance calls are a problem, avoid answering the phone using your name. If the caller remains silent or makes obscene remarks, quietly hang up. Keep a whistle near the phone and use it. If calls are repeated, take the phone off the hook temporarily. If the calls continue, report them to the phone company representative and follow his or her advice.

- If a phone chain (a list of unit spouses and phone numbers) is provided, protect this information.
- Plan escape routes in case of fire, burglary or other emergency and be sure all family members can use them.
- Leave an extra key with trusted neighbors for emergencies.
- Carry an extra car key in your wallet or wear it on a chain.
- In case the neighbor is not home when needed, bury a front door key in a jar in the yard near some easily remembered spot.
- When traveling, avoid putting your address on outside tags. Pin that information inside the luggage in case of loss.
- Do not list your name on the mailbox unless it is required by the post office.
- Report any door-to-door soliciting in military housing.
- Carpool to evening functions during deployment with at least one other spouse.
- Know some neighbors well, so if you are followed coming home you can go to their door.
- CB radios have proven to be a great source of emergency assistance.

Some communities recommend that front or back door lights be left on all night. Consider investing in several timers for lights and appliances. Whatever is done with lights, use a consistent pattern so that they do not signal absence or the soldier's deployment.

For personal security when away from home, follow these guidelines:

- When driving, stay on busy, well-lighted streets as much as possible and avoid driving in the curb lane at night. Keep your door locked. Walk with a companion when possible, and stay away from dark alleys and bushes.
- Do not pick up any hitchhikers under any circumstances.
- If the car breaks down in an isolated area, raise the hood. Sit inside your car until help comes. Do not open the windows or unlock the doors to talk to strangers offering assistance. Instead, ask them to call the police.
- Never carry large sums of cash. Flashing a lot of bills sets you up to be held up.
- Don't resist an armed robber. Hand over your wallet or purse quickly and quietly. Make mental notes of the description of the robber, weapons and vehicle, and identify any witnesses.
- Lock your car when you leave it. Roll up the windows and take your keys with you. If you must leave anything of value in the car, lock it in the trunk.

- Report any crime or suspicion of crime at once. Public apathy is the criminal's greatest ally. No violation is too small to be reported. You can't assume that someone else has already reported it.
- Should you be stopped by a police officer on or off post, be polite and understanding. This person is doing his or her job.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Family Security and Safety

Discussion: Family security and safety are concerns to soldiers and families when the soldier is away from home. Units should include family security in predeployment family support planning.

Lessons: Major commands can minimize soldier and family concerns prior to deployment through active support from their Directorate of Engineering and Housing and the Provost Marshal.

- For example, on-post quarters should be equipped with dead-bolt locks. Housing areas should be well lighted and continually patrolled by military police.
- Off-post families, especially those overseas, should be advised not to put up yellow ribbons or red, white and blue banners that call attention to their quarters as being those of deployed soldiers.
- Commands have been surprised by the "run" on handguns at local Rod and Gun Clubs. While family security is important, control of family firearms is a genuine safety concern to the military community. The purchase of firearms during unit deployment is sometimes a last-minute action imbedded in a multitude of other important deployment actions. Often, there is little or no time to effectively train the spouse in proper control and use of firearms. There is an ever-present danger that family weapons may become accessible to adolescents who are largely naive about their potential dangers or proper handling.
- Commanders have moral and statutory responsibilities to control privately owned firearms, especially in on-post housing areas. Soldiers have a responsibility to register privately owned firearms with the command and to secure them while they're deployed.
- While soldiers living in the billets are required to secure privately owned firearms in unit arms rooms, commanders can also offer the use of unit arms rooms to soldiers living in family housing or off-post to secure their privately owned firearms during deployments.

We expect to react to homecoming with joy but it also brings anxiety and represents a period of readjustment that can be difficult. These suggestions (adapted from material in the Army Times) should help. Again, they can be the subject of an FSG meeting or workshop.

Approximately two weeks before the soldier returns home, both soldiers and family members will begin to experience anxieties. Here are some of the questions that run through their minds:

- Will everything still be the same?
- Will she (he) welcome me with open arms?
- Do they still need me?
- Will he notice that I did a good job taking care of the family?
- Will I be able to continue my class and go out with my friends?
- Will Dad (Mom) be angry at me?

During the unwinding time, after the soldier returns, there is bound to be some friction. Both husband and wife need a little time alone to sort out the readjustment process.

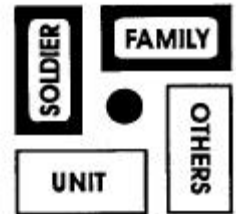
The soldier, especially, has been surrounded by people the entire deployment and may feel more need to be alone than the spouse, who may have had more than enough time on her or his hands. Being aware of each other's needs is crucial to a smooth homecoming.

Here are some tips for spouses on how to cope with those "homecoming blues":

- Acknowledge that there is nothing wrong with feelings of discomfort or uneasiness.
- Expect your soldier to be different. Think how much you have changed. So has the soldier. Remember that he or she has been subject to daily regimentation and routine and may rebel against schedules and preplanned events. Leave some room for spontaneity.
- Expect your soldier to have trouble sleeping for a while. He or she may be used to certain sounds or to the presence of other people in a barracks.
- The soldier might not have been behind the wheel of a car for quite a while. Go ahead and drive home.
- Don't be defensive about the way you've handle the children. Discuss any criticisms calmly.
- Expect that it will take time to reestablish sexual intimacy.
- The soldier may want to celebrate the return home with a spending spree. If you can't afford it, hold tight to purse strings. The urge to spend will pass.

Homecoming

by Celeste McCall



- Don't grill your partner about real or imagined affairs. Don't poke around his or her belongings looking for "clues." Questioning your mate about infidelity can only destroy trust between the two of you. Swallow your curiosity.
- Expect the soldier to be surprised or hurt that you've coped so well alone. Reassure your spouse that he or she is needed without giving up your independence.
- Communicate before the soldier returns. Sharing feelings and concerns about his or her return in the last letters will help clear the air and give you time to handle those feelings before homecoming.
- Take things slow and easy. Perhaps recalling how the relationship first started will help; again, share this with him or her in that last letter.
- Communicate soon after your soldier returns: Ask him or her not to "take over," especially with the children; allow him or her to gradually assume the original role. Let the soldier know what family rituals continued while he or she was gone, what new ones may have started.
- Keep a journal of events and feelings during those last weeks when no mail is exchanged. This can update the soldier more readily than trying to recall everything at once.
- When talking with the soldier, don't be too quick to analyze what he or she is saying - simply listen.
- Let the needs of the family as a whole come first. It is very important that the children have "quality time" with the soldier right away. After a reasonable time, a few days or weeks, plan that second honeymoon and arrange to have someone take care of the children for two or three days.
- Now, here are some tips for the returning soldier:
- Don't disturb a family setup that has been working well. It's best to ease back into the system gradually. Try to enjoy being an "honored guest" for a while.
- Take it easy on the children, especially where discipline is concerned. It's best for children to have a constant routine, so let existing rules stand. Don't barge in as the "heavy"; wait to negotiate any changes.
- Don't try to alter the financial affairs. Chances are your spouse has been handling them fine. Remember that prices have probably risen during your absence. Don't try to second guess your spouse's decisions. Assume that he or she made the best decisions at the time.
- Sex might be awkward with your spouse at first. Talk it over. Physical sex may not be what your partner needs at this time.

- Be willing to spend some time cuddling, talking and getting reacquainted. Don't grill your partner about infidelity.
- Expect your spouse to be different. He or she is a more confident and independent person. How did you feel the first time you negotiated a loan or fixed a car or made a major decision all by yourself? Remember, the fact that he or she has shown the ability to cope alone does not mean that your mate wants to take on all responsibilities and shut you out.
- Expect your spouse to be a little envious of your travels, so go easy on the descriptions of seven-course Asian banquets or German beer fests. Bring a gift.
- Don't ask right away to pack the kids off to a relative or friend so the two of you can have an intimate reunion. It's vital to reaffirm your bond with your children. Later, the two of you can slip away for a "second honeymoon."

Separation of family members due to deployments and extended unaccompanied tours is stressful. Individual family members are subjected to different worries, fears and anxieties before, during and after these separations.

The soldier and his or her family (children as well as spouse) need to be aware of the problems likely to arise as a result of a separation and prepare for these problems to be better able to cope with them. An FSG-sponsored family separation workshop is a good way to prepare soldiers and their families for this challenge.

Ideally, soldiers and their families should attend the workshops as a group. This may not always be possible, and in these cases it is hoped that at least the soldier or the spouse will attend so that at least one adult member of the family is exposed to the ideas and concepts that will be presented.

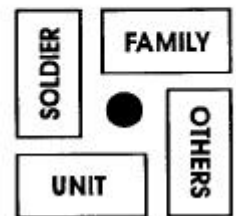
Workshops should be held in the evenings. This will require child-care facilities for preschoolers since the families will be attending the workshops as a unit. A maximum of four evening sessions will minimize the time the family must spend in the structured workshop environment.

Avoid a paternalistic approach. The workshop should be treated as a review for those who have been through separations before and as a refresher in common sense for first-timers. Avoid lecturing.

The goal of the workshops is twofold:

- To make the soldier and the family aware of the problems likely to be encountered before, during and after separation; and
- To prepare the soldier and the family to deal with these problems as they arise, improving their ability to cope with stresses of separation.

A Family Separation Workshop



On completion of the workshop, the participants should:

- Be aware of the various stresses and problems likely to occur before, during and after an extended family separation and able to identify at least the major ones;
- Through improved communication skills, be more aware of the other family members' reactions to the separation, resulting in a more open dialogue between family members regarding their true feelings about the separation and how it is affecting them personally;
- Be able to cope with the problems associated with separation by using the skills acquired in the workshops in the areas of improved communications skills, ability to combat boredom and loneliness, better planning, and minimizing role conflict during and after the separation; and
- Be aware of the resources available to dependents during separation in case of emergency or other personal needs.

Begin with an overview of the workshop schedule as a whole. Explain how each phase of the separation and homecoming cycle will be covered. Then explain the agenda for the day's program.

In a preseparation workshop, each spouse might fill out a sheet listing the strengths of his or her partner that the writer feels will enable the partner to handle the separation. A short, voluntary discussion of these lists may follow if time permits. Then each spouse might list his or her own fears or anxieties of the upcoming separation, again followed by a short discussion of these points.

Role playing can be a useful technique in a postseparation workshop. Have the group view a short videotape on separation and reunion. Check with your local Army Community Services office or unit Point of Contact on the availability of videotapes or other audiovisual instructional material. This can help participants become more aware of their partner's feelings towards the separation, how they view their partner and what fears they both harbor. Ask for volunteers to participate. Afterward, list feelings and discuss ways to handle the situation.

Here is a role-playing example, with parts for a female spouse and a male soldier.

You are a 23-year-old female married to a 25-year-old staff sergeant. He has just returned from a month deployment and you are going through a period of readjusting to one another.

Until he deployed, your husband handled all of the family finances. He gave you a household allowance and if you needed more you had to go to him and ask. You really had no idea how the rest of the family finances were disbursed and were in the dark when it came to money matters.

During the deployment, you took on the routine chores of banking and bill paying and became responsible for most of the family's finances. You enjoyed the job, did it well and also planned on retaining it after your husband returned.

On his return, your husband tells you that he wants to go back to the old system of giving you an allowance while he resumes the responsibility for the books. You see this as unfair and resist. It all comes to a head one evening when you are writing checks to pay the monthly bills and he comes in and confronts you, demanding that you give up your role of family financial manager.

Here is the scenario from the soldier's point of view:

You are a 25-year-old staff sergeant and have just returned from a month deployment. Before you left, you handled all of the family finances on a regular basis and your 23-year-old wife had virtually nothing to do with controlling the family budget.

While you were gone, it was necessary for her to assume responsibility for the routine, everyday financial affairs of the family such as bill paying and handling the savings accounts. You've returned and decided to take over the family responsibilities once again. Your wife resists and claims she did a good job while you were gone and sees no reason why she would have to relinquish her position.

You view this as a threat to your control of the family purse strings and demand that she give up control of the family finances. She still resists. It all comes to a head one evening when you confront her while she's writing checks for the family bills.

Summarize major points at the end of each workshop session. On the next page is an evaluation form for use in getting feedback from work-shop participants. In addition, the Family Readiness Workbook at the end of this chapter provides materials that can be used in a family separation workshop.

WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORM*

1. Did you understand the goals and objectives of the workshop? _____ Yes _____ No

2. In your opinion, were those workshop aims met? _____ Yes _____ No

3. If you answered NO to either 1 or 2, please elaborate below:

4. Circle the word that best describes the overall effectiveness of the workshop.

Inadequate Marginally Effective Effective Very Effective Outstanding

5. Based on your response above, what suggestions do you have for improving the workshop?

6. How did you benefit from this workshop?

7. Did the workshop meet the needs of the overall audience? _____ Yes _____ No

8. Please rate the trainer's presentation by circling the most appropriate response.

Inadequate Marginally Effective Effective Very Effective Outstanding

9. What are your comments about the trainer's presentation?

10. If you were the next trainer to present this workshop, how would you improve it?

*Use the back of this sheet to continue your responses if necessary.

Many mothers dread the long separations from their husbands that is part and parcel of life in the military. [This applies to husbands anticipating their wives' leaving, too.] Why? Listen to what Mary Ellen had to say: "I have trouble with my children when my husband is away on assignment. They just won't listen to me like they do to him. When he's home, anytime the kids won't obey me he steps in and makes them mind. When he's away, they just run wild.

Mary Ellen is not alone. "My kids won't listen" is the cry from Connecticut to California. Let's set the record straight right now. Moms are every bit as capable as dads at effectively disciplining kids. The problem is that through the decades of "wait until your father gets home," many dads have developed discipline strategies that many mothers haven't learned to use. Let's look at some of these differences.

Men tend to dispense with words and action quickly; women tend to talk, nag, cajole, plead, remind, threaten and bribe. But words are weak discipline tools. Using words to make kids mind is like trying to steer your car with your horn; it just won't work.

Another ineffective parenting technique moms are prone to use is the "rescue operation." Rescuing moms bring their kids' forgotten lunches to school, drive kids to ball practice when they miss the bus, take out the garbage themselves when the kids have gone to bed without doing it.

The intention of these moms is usually laudable; they want to help their kids out of a tight jam. But the effect rescuing behavior has on kids overall is negative.

Overly sympathetic moms make the mistake of relaxing all the rules in times of stress, and long separations certainly qualify as stressful periods. All misbehavior is excused because the kids are under pressure, or unhappy, or upset. Mom does so much to compensate for kids' unhappiness that she robs them of the opportunity to learn to cope with stress while continuing to act appropriately in the world.

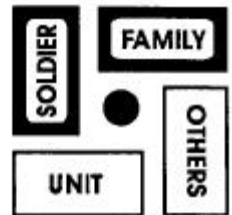
When you stop excusing, bailing, rescuing and talking too much and start taking appropriate action, you will find that you can discipline your kids as well as Dad.

Like many parents, you may need to learn what actions are appropriate and effective for coping with today's children. Pick up one of the many books available on the subject or attend one of the excellent parent training programs offered by schools, family service centers, agencies and religious organizations around the country. Group programs provide an excellent peer support group for adults as they learn new parenting skills.

Once you stop talking and take action, do it all the time. Don't rely on your husband to do it when he's around. Share the responsibility. In so doing, your kids will get used to the idea that Mom means business when they step out of line, whether Dad is home or away.

Backgrounder: Dealing with Separation

by Dr. Linda Alpert



While Dad is away on assignment, you'll also want to take some steps to help kids cope with the long separation. Helping your kids do this begins before Dad leaves. With the whole family together, mark the dates Dad will be away on a large hanging calendar. Once he is gone, take time each evening to mark off the day that is ending.

Count how many days Dad has been gone to look ahead to his return. Relate the remaining days to tangible events in a child's life. "Dad will return in 50 more bedtimes." "After you see 12 more Cosby shows Dad will be back." The calendar and references make time concrete and understandable for kids.

A map placed by the calendar makes it easy for kids to understand where Dad is. Attach the map to corkboard or a bulletin board and use marking pins to show Dad's location on any given day. You could even pin a wallet-size picture of Dad to the map at the appropriate locations.

A way to help your kids before Dad leaves is to make special good night and good morning tapes with personal messages and stories for each child to listen to. These tapes could be placed with a small, inexpensive tape recorder on a table next to each child's bed.

Beside each bed, too, place a recent picture of the child alone with Dad. Add a small personal memento of Dad's to reassure your child that he will be coming home. It could be a favorite tie, a piece of jewelry, or even a knick-knack that your kids know is important to Dad.

While your husband is away, make him a real part of your daily life. Take a few minutes after dinner and have everyone contribute a few words about their day to a letter that will be mailed off once a week. If you prefer, make a "talking letter" with an audiotape. Accumulate a "family newsbox" in which kids put samples of their papers and art work brought home from school, placemats from restaurants if you eat out, news about the family pet, short summaries of family activities, even new jokes or riddles that someone has learned. Imagine the fun the whole family will have when Dad returns, and you look together through everything in the newsbox.

Most important of all, you can encourage the kids to share their feelings related to their father's absence. Unexpressed feelings often appear disguised as aggression and inappropriate behavior. The more the feelings can be voiced, the easier it is for kids to accept them and function normally. At different times, they may express sadness, anger, loneliness and resentment. Don't ever demand they be "strong" and hide tears. Listen to them, put your arm around them and reassure them that whatever they feel is okay.

Another way to help your children during long separations is to increase what I like to call the "4 A's of Parenting" - attention, appreciation, acceptance and affection. Attention means "quality time" spent listening, talking and doing things together. Appreciation is expressing thanks for specific tasks and behavior contributed towards the well-being of the family. Acceptance implies letting kids know that they are liked just the way they are now, however imperfect that may be. And affection refers to all the physical and verbal ways you demonstrate your love for your children.

You can never give too much of the 4 A's. You can't spoil your child by listening too much or expressing love too often. During separations you can double the A's, triple them, go as high as you like. But at the same time remember to take appropriate action when the kids misbehave.

A special kind of support for separated families is a "best friend family," another family with kids approximately the same age as yours whose dad is also away on assignment. The purpose of this family is fun and support. Loneliness is decreased when we can play and talk with others in similar circumstances. Share meals often. Plan enjoyable weekend excursions and celebrate birthdays, holidays and special occasions with each other. Encourage the kids to talk openly about their feelings for their fathers and about the separation. Such sharing will happen naturally if you look at each other's maps, calendars and family newsboxes. The long separations won't seem quite so harsh when there are others to share the wait.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

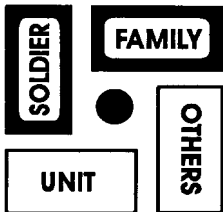
TOPIC: Family Finances and Household Budgets

Discussion: Family finances are an important area that can spawn problems for families during deployment. Soldiers and spouses must decide who will pay the family bills during deployment.

Lessons: Soldiers must ensure that spouses understand their monthly income, how it will be received (allotment or check to the bank), and their monthly financial obligations, including amounts, due dates and creditors' addresses. Some spouses were surprised by the unanticipated credit accounts or charges.

- Family budgets were sometimes aggravated by reduced income due to the loss of income from a soldier's second job. If monthly financial obligations depend on this supplemental income, the soldier will need to coordinate with creditors so that payments are adjusted to put them in line with the actual income available during the deployment.
- Single parents or dual military parents whose children will be cared for by a relative or guardian should ensure that an allotment is in place to provide for their children's needs during deployment.
- Assistance in managing family finances is available before deployment. For instance, Army Community Service is staffed to provide help in planning household budgets.
- For Reserve component soldiers, the Army needs to correct the two-month gap between when the service member is activated and the time the first pay is received. The support of the Judge Advocate General's office is needed to provide information associated with implementation of the Soldier's and Sailor's Relief Act.

Family Readiness Workbook



To the Soldier

The materials in this Family Readiness Workbook can be used in an FSG workshop on readiness or a predeployment briefing for soldiers and family members. Handouts and checklists are provided for both the soldier and the spouse, along with a family financial worksheet and a form to record emergency telephone contact information.

Being ready to deploy is too important to be left to a last-minute "crash program." Leaving important personal and family matters until deployment notification is risky and produces needless worry, stress and expense. A small investment of your time throughout the year can prevent this and save hours on deployment.

Readiness is a 52-week commitment that insures you and your loved ones are ready. Remember: although most deployments have advance notice, there's no guarantee your unit won't be deployed within 24 hours of notification. Schedule a few hours each month for you and your spouse to update financial, health and other family records. Decide on a reward for yourselves each time you do this.

With a small year-round readiness effort, you and your family will find deployment an orderly activity with adequate time to handle unanticipated details. No matter how careful your planning, there are bound to be a few odds and ends that need your attention. Rather than trying to handle a hundred different details, you can concentrate valuable time on a limited number of activities. A final review of the soldier and family readiness checklists will help last-minute problems and needs. Being prepared for deployment gives you the peace of mind of knowing that you and your family are ready for whatever lies ahead.

How would you feel if your family were left unprepared during your deployment, or your car or valuables not taken care of? There is enough stress during deployment without adding to it with your personal problems. Deployment requires clear heads and quick thinking. Needless worrying about your spouse, children, car and so on will interfere with your concentration and could endanger your safety and that of your unit. After you are deployed, your ability to help resolve these problems is either significantly reduced or eliminated altogether.

When you are on the plane enroute overseas is not the time to remember that your car is illegally parked, that your spouse doesn't have the car or house keys, that the family needs military ID cards or family medical cards, that your spouse doesn't have an allotment or joint bank account to have access to your Army pay. The best way to solve these and other problems is to anticipate and take care of them in advance! Here are specific steps you can take:

Give your spouse or family the name, address and telephone number of your financial contacts and advisors: bank or credit union contact person, stock or securities company, insurance agent and company and a list of military and community organizations that can provide financial advice and assistance during your absence.

How much money do you or your family need to pay monthly bills and handle all of your other expenses? Personal and family budgets should be prepared. It will help you and your spouse to understand your income and each monthly, periodic and special expense. Anticipate all of your needs and those of your loved ones. Make provisions for payment of your bills and maintenance of your financial affairs.

Provisions need to be made to make sure your spouse can receive and deposit or cash your paycheck. If your check is sent to your unit, your spouse must have a Power of Attorney, a unit mail card and a current military ID.

You are encouraged to have your paycheck automatically deposited into your bank account; your spouse's name must be listed on the account and on the bank's signature card to authorize withdrawals.

Remember, Basic Allowance for Subsistence will not be paid for the period of your absence when you are provided meals with the unit. If your family is on food stamps, your benefits will be reduced by one person during your deployment absence.

Make sure all transactions and services that are needed during your absence will be made automatically or can be handled with your spouse's signature. Make sure your spouse has all of the bank books, loan papers, automated teller cards and so on that he or she might need. Make a list of key contact people, addresses and telephone numbers for these companies. List pending monthly or balloon payments and their due dates. Make sure your spouse has the credit cards needed and the telephone numbers used to report any loss. List the approximate amount owed on each card, the average monthly payment amount and the monthly due dates.

Make sure your spouse has the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of your insurance agent along with copies of the policies and monthly payment statements. He or she should also have the name, address and telephone number of your income tax consultant or preparer. Make sure your spouse has copies of the returns from prior years. If you or your spouse is self-employed, make sure the deadlines for special state and federal tax returns are met.

Make sure your unit, their rear detachment and the Family Support Group has the name, address and telephone number for one or more persons who will know where your family will be at all times (even if they move or are out of town).

Almost nothing can be done by your spouse and dependents without a current military ID card. This is one essential item that insures their well-being. Without a military ID they are virtually helpless, since they cannot get your mail, pick up your check or use the hospital, PX, commissary or other facilities. They can even be denied entry to the post. Without you they cannot get replacement cards easily.

LIMIT

Taking a dependent's military ID during your deployment is a violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and can result in nonjudicial punishment or a court-martial.

Make sure your spouse has a copy of all necessary keys: the house, garage, car, private storage unit, safety deposit box and so on. Hiring a locksmith is a time-consuming and expensive proposition. Remember, locksmiths will usually not allow entry unless your spouse can prove ownership of the property being unlocked.

Your spouse must have immediate access to key family documents (rent or mortgage papers, military ID cards, family hospital cards, shot records, marriage and birth certificates, family social security numbers, deeds, automobile title, school registration papers, proof of military

service documents, copies of orders with all necessary endorsements, shipping documents or household goods inventory, court orders for support and custody of legal dependents, unit mail card and, if appropriate, naturalization papers, divorce decree, adoption papers, death certificates.

The safety of your spouse and dependents is an important aspect of deployment. Anticipate their needs. Put a "peephole" in your doors in addition to providing adequate locks or bars on all doors and windows. Show your family how to turn off household gas, electric and water during an emergency.

Add smoke or heat detectors throughout your residence where recommended by the authorities. Have adequate fire extinguishers throughout the residence. Review with each member of your family two exit routes from each room. Post emergency telephone numbers by each telephone (fire, police, doctor, hospital/ambulance, poison information).

If your automobile is not going to be used during your deployment, be sure it is parked in a legal and secure long-term location. If your spouse or family will be using it, there are many details they should know about. Here is a brief list of the most important items to check:

- Driver's license for spouse (current with known renewal date)
- Car registration/state safety inspection (current with known renewal dates)
- Post registration (current) and insurance or road service coverage
- Up-to-date periodic maintenance (oil change, lubrication, tune-up, fluid levels); important equipment in good working order (brakes, steering, battery, tires, lights)

- Automotive papers available (title, registration, safety inspection, insurance papers and certificate of insurance, warranties and guarantees, road service card)

Give your spouse or personal representative a Power of Attorney, which allows them to act as if they were you - to take actions and sign for you. A Power of Attorney can be general, so it covers everything, or it can be limited, where it only covers specific areas. Without a correctly dated and signed Power of Attorney, no actions can be taken for you or by your family that would require you to be present to sign the papers.

Family hospital cards and a military ID are essential in order to obtain ambulance, medical, dental or optical services on post. Make sure your spouse has each family member's shot card and medical and optical prescriptions. Be sure they know about these services, their limitations, locations and the telephone numbers for both emergency care and routine appointments.

Special needs of particular families may require special preparation:

- If your spouse does not speak English, remember that translation services and English language classes may be available. Contact your Family Support Group for details and enlist their assistance.
- If your spouse does not drive, explore car-pooling and both post and public transportation alternatives. Again, enlist the assistance of the Family Support Group.
- If there is serious illness or injury within the family or a handicapped family member, contact the Army Health Clinic, the chaplain's office, the Family Support Group and relevant community organizations for information and assistance.
- If you are a single parent or have a pregnant wife, seek guidance and referrals from the chaplain's office, the Family Support Group and community organizations.

SOLDIER'S CHECKLIST

Automotive:

- _____ Proper periodic maintenance up-to-date (oil change, lubrication, tune-up, fluid levels)
- _____ Equipment in good condition (brakes, tires, battery, lights)
- _____ Insurance policy adequate (liability, medical, uninsured motorists, damage to automobile)
- _____ Road service policy (if desired; provides assistance with flats, lock-outs and other emergencies)
- _____ Vehicle registration/license (on post and state) and renewal dates current/known
- _____ State annual safety inspection current and renewal date known
- _____ Driver's license for spouse current and renewal date known
- _____ Spouse has automotive papers (tire warranty, battery guarantee, insurance policy, road service card)
- _____ Spouse has automobile information: warranties/guarantees in effect and from whom; correct tire pressure and how to inflate and check tires; oil to use and how to fill and check dipstick; gasoline to use; where to go for maintenance and repair services; how to get emergency road service; where car keys and spares are
- _____ Spouse familiar with bus routes and alternative transportation in case the family car is out of service

Family:

- _____ Unit has the complete current address and telephone number for your family, along with the names, addresses and telephone numbers of one or two relatives, neighbors or friends who will know where your family is living (if you do not have a phone, list neighbors' numbers)

Make sure spouse has:

- _____ Name, address and telephone number of your landlord or mortgage company
- _____ Names, addresses and telephone numbers for your commander, Family Assistance Center, Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator, Rear Detachment Commander and Family Support Group representatives
- _____ Current ID cards for each member of your family (check expiration dates)
- _____ Keys (house, car, garage, personal storage company, safety deposit box)
- _____ Marriage certificate
- _____ Birth certificates

Soldier's Checklist (continued)

- _____ Insurance policies (life, home, automobile)
- _____ Family social security numbers
- _____ Deeds and/or mortgage papers
- _____ School registration papers
- _____ Proof of service documents
- _____ Copies of orders and all endorsements
- _____ Shipping documents and/or household goods inventory
- _____ Court orders for support and custody of legal dependents
- _____ Unit mail card

And if appropriate:

- _____ Naturalization papers
- _____ Divorce decree and separation agreements
- _____ Adoption papers
- _____ Death certificate

Financial:

- _____ Class E Allotment applied for
- _____ Bank or credit union accounts in both names with an "or" rather than an "and" between the names (checking, savings and any other accounts)
- _____ Spouse has account number, bank books, check books, automatic teller card
- _____ Spouse has credit cards, bills, information on amounts due and when and how to report lost cards
- _____ Spouse knows amounts due on loans, monthly payment dates, addresses and phone numbers of loan companies
- _____ Spouse is aware of savings bonds and securities owned, where they are and how to gain access to them if needed
- _____ Spouse is aware of all bills that need to be paid routinely, with address and telephone number for each (rent or mortgage, car payment, telephone, electricity, appliance/furniture payments, water, credit cards, garbage collection, all types of insurance, debt repayment, cable television, dues and subscriptions, and so on)

Soldier's Checklist (continued)

- _____ Spouse has access to copies of state and federal income tax returns for the last five years, the name, address and telephone number of the person or company who helped you with your return last year, along with information, forms and tax deductible receipts for the current year
- _____ Spouse knows where to go for financial assistance in times of crisis: Army Community Services, Army Emergency Relief, Rear Detachment Commander, Family Assistance Center, Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator

Legal:

- _____ Spouse has the name, address and telephone number of your private or military attorney or legal advisor
- _____ You and your spouse have current wills to specify how you want your property handled and distributed in the case of the death of either
- _____ If needed, spouse has Power of Attorney giving him or her the right to sign your name and do the things you could do if you were actually present; may be specific or general
- _____ Spouse has copies of all insurance policies, along with the name and telephone number of your insurance agents
- _____ Spouse has information on where to go for legal aid: Legal Assistance Office, Rear Detachment Commander, Family Assistance Center, Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator

Medical:

- _____ Spouse has family medical cards
- _____ Spouse has family immunization records
- _____ Prescriptions (medical and optical) are readily available
- _____ Spouse has phone numbers for medical and dental services: emergency care, outpatient and inpatient medical care, pharmacy, routine or emergency dental care and Health Benefits Advisor for assistance with CHAMPUS

Security/safety:

- _____ Military or local police crime prevention survey for your quarters has been conducted
- _____ Your home or apartment has at least a front door "peephole" and adequate locks on all doors and windows
- _____ Your family's name is on the military police quarters checklist
- _____ Your smoke detector is working and has a new battery

Soldier's Checklist (continued)

-
- _____ Fire extinguishers are charged and are in good working condition; family members know where they are and how to use them

 - _____ Your family is familiar with alternate exits they can use to leave the home from each room in case of fire or other emergency

 - _____ Spouse knows how to reach police, MP's, fire department, ambulance, poison information center, chaplains, help line; locate numbers by the telephone

 - _____ Spouse and older children know how to turn off electricity, water and gas in case of an emergency

Once a unit has deployed, it is too late to realize you need your spouse's signature or don't know where things are or how important tasks are done. These problems can easily be avoided. The best solution is to be totally prepared.

True family readiness comes from a series of minor tasks accomplished well in advance rather than a sudden "crash" program begun after receiving an unexpected deployment notice. Last-minute rushing produces needless family worry and stress. It causes many parts of the family readiness plan to be left undone.

By looking ahead and anticipating the likelihood of a deployment you and your loved ones can adequately plan for this separation. Remember, once your soldier has been deployed, the responsibility for your family transfers directly to you. Ultimately, you are responsible for knowing your rights and privileges and what resources are available to you as an Army spouse.

To the Spouse

SPOUSE'S CHECKLIST

Automotive:

- _____ Get automobile key (and spares)
- _____ Get garage key (and spares), if applicable
- _____ Have oil changed, new oil and air filter installed and car lubricated; know the mileage reading when the oil should be changed next
- _____ Make sure all fluid levels are up to normal (oil, transmission fluid, brake and steering fluid, water); know how to check and fill them yourself (if needed) and what gasoline to use
- _____ Make sure all vital equipment is in good condition and working order (including brakes, tires, battery, belts, hoses, headlights/high and low beams, tail lights, brake lights, turn signals)
- _____ Review your insurance policy to make sure it provides adequate coverage (liability, medical, uninsured motorists, damage to your car and others); know the renewal date, cost of renewal, who to contact to renew the policy (name, address and telephone number)
- _____ Investigate a road service policy (if desired) to provide assistance with flat tires, towing, stalled engine, being locked out of your car and other emergencies; know what your policy covers, when it expires and has to be renewed, cost of renewal, who to contact to renew (name, address and telephone number); what to do if you don't have this coverage and one of these events happens
- _____ Look into the renewal of state and on-post vehicle registration (year, cost, where to go, what to do)
- _____ Check your state driver's license expiration date, cost to renew, where to go, what to do
- _____ Check your annual state automotive safety check (if required; when it expires, cost to renew, where to go, and anything that may have to be repaired or replaced to pass this inspection)
- _____ Take possession of automotive papers (car registration, safety inspection, tire warranties, battery guarantee, insurance policy and certificate of insurance, road service card); know where they are, what they mean, how to use them)
- _____ Learn where to go, who to see or call when you have problems with the automobile (routine maintenance, auto repair, tires, oil changes and lubrication)
- _____ Learn what alternative transportation is available (on post, car pools, taxis, city buses, friends)
- _____ Prepare a list of automotive "dos and don'ts" and hints on car care

Spouse's Checklist (continued)

Family:

- _____ Make sure your spouse's unit has your name, address and telephone number, along with the name, address and telephone numbers of one or more people who will know where you are at all times (even if you travel or move)
- _____ Get the name, address and telephone number of your landlord, mortgage company or government housing office
- _____ Get the names and telephone numbers of key members of your Family Support Group, your unit's Rear Detachment Commander and chaplain, Family Assistance Center, Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator
- _____ Make sure you have a military ID card for each member of your family
- _____ Get the keys to your house, safety deposit box, personal storage company

Important documents you should have:

- _____ Marriage certificate
- _____ Birth certificates
- _____ Insurance policies (life, home, auto)
- _____ Family social security numbers (including your childrens')
- _____ Rental or lease papers (if appropriate)
- _____ Deeds and/or mortgage papers (if appropriate)
- _____ School registration papers (if appropriate)
- _____ Spouse's proof of military service documents
- _____ Copies of your spouse's orders and all amendments
- _____ Shipping documents and/or household goods inventory
- _____ Court orders for support and custody of legal dependents
- _____ Unit mail card
- _____ Copy of your most recent allotment request (if appropriate)
- _____ Naturalization papers (if appropriate)
- _____ Divorce decree (if appropriate)
- _____ Adoption papers (if appropriate)
- _____ Death certificates (if appropriate)

Spouse's Checklist (continued)

Financial:

- _____ Take possession of appropriate bank books, automated teller cards, checkbooks, credit union papers or books, credit cards
- _____ Know how to report lost credit cards and how to request replacements
- _____ Make sure you can make deposits and withdrawals with only your signature. If the account shows an "and" between the spouse's name and yours, it requires both signatures; an "or" insures you can make deposits and withdrawals in the absence of your spouse. This can be changed only while the soldier is here.
- _____ Keep a list of automatic deposits and withdrawals or payments made to financial accounts (paycheck, insurance, loan or bill payments)
- _____ Have your spouse apply for a Class E Allotment (if desired and appropriate) and keep a copy of the signed application

Important documents you should have:

- _____ Get a Power of Attorney, unit mail card and military ID card if you will have to pick up your spouse's paycheck and/or mail from the unit
- _____ Prepare a list of outstanding payments, loans and other obligations with due dates, amount owed, who to pay, contact person, address and telephone numbers
- _____ Prepare a list of investments such as securities or bonds with their value, contact person's name, address and telephone number; know how to cash these in an emergency
- _____ Get copies of the past five years' state and federal income tax returns and everything needed for the next filing, including due dates and who to contact for assistance in preparing the returns
- _____ Prepare a list of military and community organizations that offer financial advice, counseling, information and assistance

Legal:

- _____ Get the name, address and telephone number of your military or private attorney or legal advisor
- _____ Get a Power of Attorney (general or limited) if you will need to sign documents or act on your spouse's behalf during the deployment
- _____ Make sure your will and your spouse's will are up to date and valid
- _____ Get copies of all insurance policies and find out what is covered and to what extent; get contact person's name, address and telephone number; ask whether you need a Power of Attorney to file a claim during your spouse's deployment

Spouse's Checklist (continued)**Page 4**

_____ Secure a list of military and community organizations that offer legal advice, counseling, information and assistance

Medical:

_____ Make sure you have family medical cards for you and your children

_____ Make sure you have family shot records for you and your children

_____ Make sure current prescriptions for medicine and glasses or contact lenses are available

_____ Get a list of military, community and state and federal organizations that offer medical, mental or emotional, dental and optical assistance

Security/safety:

_____ Request a military or local police crime prevention survey for your home

_____ Add a "peephole" to at least your front door and adequate locks to all of your doors and windows

_____ Place your family's name on the Military Police Quarters Checklist (or notify the local police if you live in a civilian community) if your family will be away from home for an extended period

_____ Install a smoke detector (or check existing detectors) in key areas of your residence (kitchen, bedroom, living room, shop/garage)

_____ Install a fire extinguisher (or inspect existing extinguisher) in key areas of your residence (also recommended for your automobile)

_____ Discuss with your family alternate exits they can use to leave your home from each room in case of a fire or other emergency

_____ Get a list of military and community organizations that offer security/safety advice, counseling, information and assistance

MONTHLY FINANCIAL WORKSHEET

INCOME:

Base Pay	\$ _____
Quarters Allowance	\$ _____
COLA (Cost-of-Living Allowance)	\$ _____
BAS (Basic Allowance for Subsistence)	\$ _____
Other Allowance	\$ _____
TOTAL	\$ _____

DEDUCTIONS:

Federal Withholding Tax	\$ _____
State Withholding Tax	\$ _____
FICA Tax (Social Security)	\$ _____
SGLI (Servicemen's Group Life Insurance)	\$ _____
Allotments	\$ _____
Other Deductions	\$ _____
TOTAL	\$ _____

AVAILABLE INCOME (Income minus Deductions): \$ _____

MONTHLY EXPENSES:

Rent / Mortgage	\$ _____
Utilities:	\$ _____
Gas	\$ _____
Electricity	\$ _____
Telephone	\$ _____
Heating	\$ _____
Water	\$ _____
Food (all groceries, including pet food)	\$ _____
Clothing Purchase	\$ _____

Monthly Financial Worksheet (continued)

MONTHLY EXPENSES:

Clothing Care (laundry, dry cleaning) \$ _____

Personal Items (hair, toiletries) \$ _____

Payments:

 Car \$ _____

 Furniture \$ _____

 Appliances \$ _____

 Insurance (all types) \$ _____

 TV (cable) \$ _____

 Newspaper / Magazines / Books \$ _____

 Gasoline \$ _____

 Recreation (movies, bowling, restaurants) \$ _____

 Children's Allowance (including lessons) \$ _____

 Child Care \$ _____

 Dental and/or Medical Costs \$ _____

 Gifts \$ _____

 Contributions to Church or Charity \$ _____

Other Expenses \$ _____

Savings \$ _____

TOTAL EXPENSES AND SAVINGS \$ _____

TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME: \$ _____

DIFFERENCE: \$ _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

This information may be useful if you have an emergency that requires getting in touch with your soldier spouse. Complete the form and keep it near your telephone.

Soldier's Social Security Number: _____

Soldier's Military Unit: _____

Soldier's Unit Telephone Number: _____

Soldier's First Sergeant: _____

Family Support Group Contact Person: _____

FSG Contact Person's Telephone Number: _____

Steps to take:

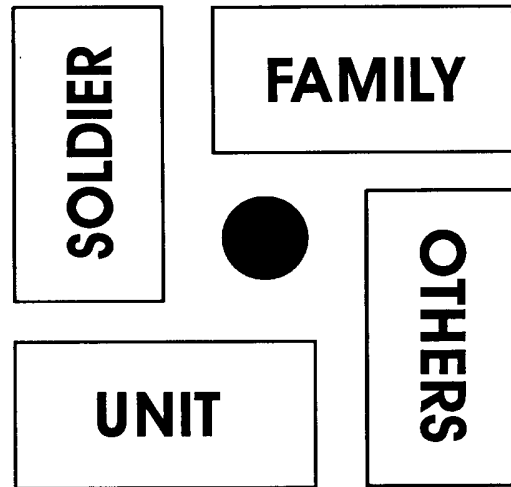
1. Contact the Red Cross so they can confirm any emergency through Red Cross channels.
2. Call the Rear Detachment Commander, Family Assistance Center or Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator as appropriate.
3. Give them the following information:
 - a) Soldier's full name and SSN
 - b) Nature of the emergency
 - c) Soldier's military unit
 - d) That you have notified the Red Cross

TEMPORARY MAILING ADDRESS (DEPLOYMENT)

Rank _____ Name _____

SSN _____ Unit _____

APO/FPO/Other _____



5. Managing Deployment and Homecoming

*For Army personnel managing deployment and homecoming;
how to take advantage of family support resources and reduce
family problems*

- Preventive Maintenance
- Predeployment Briefings
- Family Support during Deployment
- Homecoming Seminar
- Backgrounder: A Network of Support
- Final Readiness Review

Mission readiness and effectiveness are high-priority items for Army commands. Army leaders recognize that well-constructed family support programs that are sensitive to "people needs" are important factors in achieving mission readiness.

Family support programs are not built in a day but require time and effort from a number of sources. Especially critical are family-member predeployment briefings, which contribute to mission effectiveness, readiness and training by teaching families to manage time apart.

Family-member predeployment briefings cannot achieve this purpose if they are isolated events. They must be an integrated part of the command's commitment to family support, including sponsorship of spouse groups, strong support of the sponsorship program and the establishment of open, well-defined lines of communication.

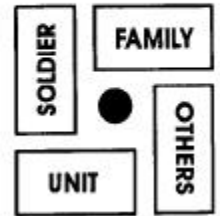
This section contains predeployment briefing guidelines and resources to help both soldier and family cope with separation. Some of the material is appropriate for handouts or inclusion in welcome and briefing packets. The family readiness materials from Chapter 4 of this handbook can also be used in family-member predeployment briefings; they may already have been covered in Family Support Group (FSG) meetings.

In all likelihood, the soldier will not have time to plan, prepare appropriate documents and attend to personal and family matters should there be an unanticipated alert notification for deployment, unless a special effort has been made to prepare in advance. Unit commanders must take an active role in ensuring that their soldiers are ready for deployment at all times. This tells the soldier that family deployment readiness is a command priority. It says, "I care."

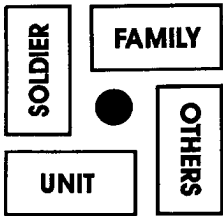
At regular intervals, the unit commander (or the next in the chain of command) might sign off on a checklist for each soldier; an incentive might be offered for families who are most ready for deployment. Perhaps a workshop at the unit level would give soldiers and family members time to establish what needs to be done and what assistance they need to get it done, especially if the unit FSG has not sponsored such a program.

Taking care of family affairs in advance gives the soldier and family more time to spend together prior to deployment. It might also leave more time at predeployment briefings for family fun such as slide shows or presentations about the deployment destination when such information does not breach security.

Preventive Maintenance



Predeployment Briefings



Predeployment briefings for soldiers and family members help equip them to cope with an upcoming separation by acquainting them with unit plans and making available handbooks and information on spouse contacts and post and community resources.

The following guidance refers to briefings that will be conducted on the battalion level when the battalion deploys as part of a task force. Companies are encouraged to conduct similar briefings when they deploy as smaller elements. These milestones should be kept in mind, as advance planning is important:

Date	Event	Responsibility of
Six weeks prior to deployment	Schedule briefing to include facility, speakers, equipment refreshments.	S-1, S-3
Five weeks prior to deployment	Send out personal invitations from battalion commander.	S-1
Three weeks prior to deployment	Conduct briefing.	Battalion commander

The battalion should publish procedures for the conduct of battalion predeployment briefings, reserve the facility to be used and insure adequate equipment is available.

The S-1 should schedule briefing presentations, send out invitations, designate an appropriate Master of Ceremonies for the briefing, provide for refreshments, insure that pertinent information is prepared and distributed at the briefing - including information from the American Red Cross (ARC), Army Community Service (ACS) and so on and arrange for child care.

The briefings can be built on a schedule similar to the following:

Topic	Presented by	Time
Welcome	Battalion commander	05 min
Training highlights	Battalion S-3	10 min
Personnel issues	Battalion S-1	15 min
Security	Provost Marshal Office	05 min
Break		15 min
Elective	Various	20 min
Company time		30 min

During the elective period, the participants can choose to attend one of several briefings given, for example, by the chaplain, division social work personnel, the Rear Detachment Commander (RDC), a Family Assistance Center (FAC) representative, Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator or key FSG personnel. A Judge Advocate General (JAG) officer might make a presentation on Powers of Attorney and wills. The companies may use their time to elaborate on issues specific to their group.

A great deal of planning must go into a successful briefing, and there is no shortage of good material. The remainder of this section outlines things to be taken into consideration in planning predeployment briefings and areas of concern that might be discussed. There may be more material here than a single briefing can address; the content should be tailored to local needs and might be varied from one deployment to the next. Some topics may already have been covered in FSG workshops.

A group planning session for the briefing should include the major installation family support personnel, Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator and representatives of the unit to be supported, such as:

- The unit commander and senior NCO (with FSG leadership as appropriate),
- The Director of Personnel and Community Activities (or Military Personnel Office for the Army National Guard),
- An ACS representative, and
- The chaplain, medical and mental health representatives, representatives from the legal office and other representatives as appropriate.

Whenever possible, it might be a good idea to have speakers from the civilian community to present ways the spouse can become involved in the larger community.

In choosing an appropriate date, consider the deployment needs of the unit. Time selection is a difficult task as many families have both spouses working. When large numbers are deploying, consider both a daytime and an evening briefing. If only one briefing is decided upon, most likely an evening time would reach the greatest number.

The length of the briefing will depend upon choices made in content, but a good rule of thumb is not to exceed two hours. Shown below are some options to be coordinated with deployment processing agencies.

- Weekday afternoon at approximately 1300. Provide child care for children not in school. Soldiers who attend should leave work (if not in the duty section) at the end of the briefing.
- Weekday morning at approximately 0930 to ensure that children are in school. Release soldiers from duty to transport family members, if needed, and to attend briefing.

- Weekday evening at approximately 1900 or 1930. Provide child care.

Location and meeting area are crucial. Ensure that the space available can accommodate the anticipated number of attendees and that there is adequate parking nearby. Consider the briefing an opportunity to develop a sense of "family" within the unit.

Two types of issues should be covered. Some material should deal with the emotions associated with family separation, such as stress, communicating feelings and helping children cope. There should also be information on practical aspects of deployment. This would include a mission statement, standard procedures, readiness checklists and so on.

Included in these guidelines are suggestions for developing content. These ideas are not all-inclusive; those conducting briefings are encouraged to supplement these suggestions when necessary. Creativity in both content and method of presentation are critical to full participation. Attendees should be actively involved in the briefing; they may have coping skills to share with others present.

Be sensitive to the needs of the entire unit and all family members. Pull from the list below speakers who are dynamic and have been determined to be most appropriate. Add others as desired. Active participation by the commanding officer and the sergeant major is essential, but consider these as well:

- ACS representative or Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator
- Staff Judge Advocate
- Army Emergency Relief (AER) representative
- ARC representative
- Chaplain
- Provost Marshal
- Medical treatment facility representative
- Finance and accounting representative
- FSG Chairperson and other well-known, articulate family members
- RDC or FAC representatives

Provide good publicity through as many sources as possible. Some ways of getting the word out include personal letters mailed from the commanding officer to each spouse (strongly recommended; should be addressed to the spouse by name, not to "Dear Spouse") or publication in the unit newsletter, post newspaper or daily bulletin.

Attendees appreciate receiving an agenda of briefing events. It is important to provide information in the form of a handout that includes these items:

- Mailing address of deployed soldier
- Name and telephone number of RDC Point of Contact (POC)
- Speakers' names, agencies and telephone numbers
- Locally developed deployment guides or family assistance materials
- Standard procedures for dealing with emergencies
- Information on FSGs
- Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator brochures or leaflets

Some of the following items will be useful as well:

- Printed program/agenda
- Will forms
- Power of Attorney forms
- Allotment forms
- Release forms for privacy act disclosure
- Family member predeployment checklist
- ACS brochures/leaflets
- FSG information

Some additional recommended items include these:

- List of suggested activities for family members
- Reading list
- List of ways to deal with stress; clippings pertinent to stress
- Material on family relations
- Information on child-rearing practices
- List of planned get-togethers for families
- Family Readiness Workbook (Chapter 4)

Some typical ways of dealing with both emotional and practical aspects of deployment are described below.

Separation of family members due to deployments is stressful. Individual family members are subjected to different worries, fears and anxieties before, during and after these separations. Role changes during separation cause significant stress for both spouse and children.

Emotional Preparation

Four basic stages in the departure-return cycle are:

- Protest against loss or departure,
- Despair,
- Detachment, and
- Return adjustment.

These may be discussed as they relate to the stages of predeployment, deployment and postdeployment. The following descriptions may be helpful.

Two to four weeks before leaving, a mixture of emotions such as anger, sorrow and fear surfaces in families. These feelings are expressed through psychological distancing, clinging or crying. The soldier withdraws from the family and spends more time at work or with friends, or engages in other activities that exclude the family. Grouchy and quick-tempered behavior is sometimes evident. Spouses become "too busy" for shared time or to go anywhere. One or both may try to protect themselves from the hurt of parting by gradual physical withdrawal. He or she may talk to other family members about feelings of hurt or rejection.

What's needed at this time is understanding. It helps if family members can understand that the soldier has a need to behave in this manner; it is not a personal rejection of them. The soldier is trying to prepare for the separation.

Honest and open communication between family members is very important, especially so when emotional needs exist. Soldiers can reassure family members by telling them, "I'm going to miss you." The words "I love you" are the most important words said before separation.

Families must be taught not to be unnecessarily hard on children. If parents learn to acknowledge their own feelings, they will easily see how the children, too, are reacting to the coming separation. Temper tantrums, whining and other similar behaviors are reactions to tension that children pick up from the soldier and spouse during this stressful period; children are not being deliberately naughty.

The soldier may demand attention and constantly be underfoot. Or the spouse becomes clinging and needy. The soldier is likely to hear, "How will I live without you? I'll never be able to get along." Children may show increased need for attention through positive and negative behaviors. They may demonstrate fear of the unknown (or known), of inadequacy, of inability to cope or of loss of love. Family members may feel annoyed or strangled by this behavior. This may lead to a feeling of guilt.

The soldier must reassure family members by letting them know he or she understands their fears. One way of acknowledging this is by saying, "I know it is going to be hard for you. I don't want to leave you either, but I'm confident you can manage. You've done it before."

Communication is the key to dealing with predeployment stress. How much stress family members suffer will depend on how well they communicate during this two-to-four-week predeployment period. Before the soldier leaves, the entire family needs to sit down and talk about their feelings concerning the separation. The discussion should include what will happen when Dad or Mom is gone, how they will keep in touch, fun things the remaining family members can do while the soldier is away, and what will be different upon return.

Deployment generates a new set of responses. During the first two weeks of separation, the spouse experiences feelings of loss, anger and mild depression. Loss of appetite or constant eating, weight loss or gain, stomach pains, sleeplessness and waking up early prevail. The spouse may be short with the children. After about a month, most spouses are into a fairly workable routine, which continues, with highs and lows, for the remainder of the separation.

For the first few days, the soldier may be too busy, excited and challenged to feel the pang of separation. When the routine becomes stabilized, the soldier may be moody, forgetful and quick to anger. Most of this will pass in two to three weeks and will not reoccur until two to three weeks before return. Depending on workload and pressure, a mild depression may occur in the middle of separation.

The kids may have sleep disturbances, nightmares, appetite problems or behavior problems (temper tantrums), and they may test new limits. Bed-wetting in recently trained children may occur. Older children may pick fights and resist authority. They may be inattentive at school and grades may slip. Discipline can be a problem; the usual pattern of discipline should be continued.

Children should not necessarily be allowed to sleep with a parent; however, cuddling, hugging and special one-on-one time is important. Limits must be set immediately - the children should know from the start what is and what is not permissible. This is especially important if the departing soldier is the disciplinarian in the family.

The main influence on how well the children cope with family separation is the attitude displayed by the present and absent parent. One of the main factors that influences parental attitude is the quality of the social environment. Parents need to be supported in their efforts to parent effectively.

This is where a successful family support system and the FSG network come in handy. Remaining family members are likely to feel less isolated and will get support from others if they are encouraged to be a part of this network. A pep talk on the importance of the FSG program should be included in the briefing.

The postdeployment period has its own stresses. Tension emerges approximately two weeks before and two weeks after return. Various kinds of expectations are set. The

soldier may feel confident that everything and everyone will be just as they were when he or she left, and the soldier will be welcomed with open arms immediately into old places and roles. On the other hand, he or she may fear that everything will be changed; the family will not take him or her back. Roles may have been taken over by other family members; he or she is no longer needed.

The spouse may fear that the soldier will not like the new competence gained during the separation or that newfound freedom and confidence will be taken away when old roles are resumed. Conflicting emotional reactions surface: anger; resentment of intrusion; fear of loss of freedom, self-esteem, love or acceptance; and blaming the spouse for whatever went wrong or for changes that have taken place.

The children may fear that the soldier will return and express anger for a long list of misdeeds that the other parent has saved up for him or her. All of those "wait 'til Dad gets home" situations will now become reality.

During the briefing it is important to discuss the feelings and expectations associated with homecoming. Effective family communication during deployment may help reduce the reentry stress. Most families work out reintegration problems and arrive at a fairly stable routine within two to three weeks after the soldier returns. (Additional information on meeting homecoming challenges is provided later in this chapter.)

Practical Preparation

To assist families in preparing for the practical aspects of deployment they should be briefed and offered assistance in the areas of finance, family record-keeping, bank accounts, insurance, wills, Powers of Attorney, emergency assistance, crime prevention and safety, nutritional health, and household and automobile maintenance.

Soldiers and family members must understand that maintaining family readiness is a mutual responsibility. The spouse must have enough information to enable him or her to know what to expect from the soldier. One suggestion is for the family to set aside a specific time each month to go over family records - a "togetherness" activity for which they could reward themselves by doing something special.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Family Care Plans

Discussion: With thousands of single-parent Army families and families in which both parents serve in the Armed Forces, there is a considerable need Army-wide for workable Family Care Plans that can be immediately administered in short-notice deployments. Unit commanders and RDCs must expect that some family care plans may fail, especially during long deployments.

Lessons: The adequacy of Family Care Plans over time is the responsibility of the service member. However, unit commanders are responsible for critically reviewing Family Care Plans and judging their adequacy.

- Family Care Plans must be carefully screened by unit commanders and hard questions asked about the guardian's capacity, willingness and availability.
- RDCs should monitor Family Care Plans, include guardians in the distribution of information and provide support as appropriate.
- If a Family Care Plan fails after deployment, the RDC must coordinate with the deployed soldier and his or her unit on actions to resolve the situation. Deployed soldiers whose Family Care Plans fail are not able to concentrate on their duties until the situation is rectified.

Prior to leaving, there is an immediate need for the family to plan finances. Questions about how much money is available and how much money should be left for the family should be addressed. As a minimum, family members must be left with enough money to cover monthly expenses.

The best way to ensure family financial security is through the monthly allotment. Soldiers should be encouraged to set up an allotment in the spouse's name not only to cover basic needs (rent, utilities, food, clothing and transportation) but also for some pleasures such as entertainment. The need to make a proper adjustment to the family's requirements and income should be emphasized. So, too, should the need to reach an understanding with creditors or combine and refinance debts.

Often, neither soldier nor spouse knows where important family papers are kept. A family crisis that would make locating these papers necessary can occur at any time. Family documents should be grouped together and put in a single box in a secure and permanent place. Share these suggestions during the briefing:

- Use a bank for savings and checking accounts.
- Maintain a bank account during your entire military career, either in your hometown or in each permanent station, in order to get checks cashed.

- Ensure that accounts are also in the spouse's name, that he or she has the passbook to savings accounts, and that he or she knows how much money is deposited to accounts and when.
- Consider a second checking account for the soldier to use during deployment so that he or she will know exactly what funds are available to spend. Otherwise, the regular account that the spouse will be using during the absence may be overdrawn.
- Make certain that beneficiary designations and premiums for life insurance policies are up to date.
- If property and automobile insurance will expire during the tour, make arrangements for renewal.
- An up-to-date will is urgently needed to safeguard hard-to-come-by family belongings in the event of death. The individual gets to choose who he or she wants to take possession of the belongings.
- Legal assistance in preparing a will is available to every soldier.

A Power of Attorney authorizes someone to act in the soldier's behalf in his or her absence. A General Power of Attorney is a very broad and sweeping grant of authority. Although useful in conducting personal business in the soldier's absence, it should not be made without prior consultation with a legal assistance officer or other attorney. General Powers of Attorney are not always sufficient for some legal transactions. It is wise to anticipate major needs that might occur during deployment, such as buying a house or a car, and then check to determine if a Special Power of Attorney is needed. A Special Power of Attorney also designates another individual to act in the soldier's behalf, but only for specific matters or actions.

Types of assistance available, such as loans through AER and the handling of emergency messages by the ARC, should be discussed, including those services available to family members with special needs. In some cases soldiers may need help understanding the special needs of their spouses. For example, the isolation felt by a non-English speaker may not be easily understood by others.

Safety and security are concerns for both husbands and wives during deployment. Soldiers will feel more comfortable about leaving if they have done all that they can to ensure their family's well-being. They should be advised to request a complete residential security survey from the local provost marshal or civilian police. (More on crime prevention and safety was provided in Chapter 4.)

Despite the changes deployment brings to families' daily lives, it is important to maintain good nutritional habits in both the amount and type of food consumed. (This applies also to medicine and alcohol.) This is true for both husbands and wives. Generally, mealtime is shared time, so it is "loaded" emotionally. Some people find that they eat more than they should when they are stressed. Some spouses find that setting out exact amounts that they plan to eat and putting the rest away helps to maintain limits on what is eaten.

Just as it is desirable to have one month's pay ahead in savings, it is wise to have at least one week's supply of food in the house at any time in case of illness, inclement weather, lack of finances or transportation problems.

The soldier should show family members how to do basic household and automobile maintenance and repairs if they do not already know. Leave a list of the preferred repair people for automobile and household emergencies. Organize the workbench and tools so that all members of the family (children, too) can find tools for minor repairs. Keep a checklist in a file folder of maintenance tasks to be completed before deployment.

Generally, a big question for military couples during separation is where the family members will live. For some there may be a choice between going home to relatives or staying in military housing. Especially those who stay must be willing to develop friendships with trusted people who can offer support when needed. This may mean going outside their immediate circle of friends and really taking advantage of the support available through the FSG. Living can be less stressful if family members learn about available community services that they can turn to for help.

Provisions should be made should it become necessary for family members to leave during the soldier's deployment. They should be aware of the options and standard procedures.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Disposition of Pets During Deployment

Discussion: Pets easily become important members of a family, especially to children. Pets of single soldiers or of military couples also need a place to go, especially if the family relocates while one parent is deployed.

Lessons: The disposition and care of family pets must be considered before deployment. It is inhumane to go off and leave a pet to fend for itself.

- If the soldier intends to retain ownership of the pet through and after the deployment, arrangements should be made with a nonmilitary neighbor or friend.
- If the soldier does not plan to keep the pet, it should be offered for adoption before turning it over to an animal shelter.

Briefing Outline

Following is a suggested outline for a predeployment briefing for soldiers and family members.

Separation is a fact of military life. There are several things you should know about it:

- A. You might experience any number of different feelings or a mixture of feelings, some of which may seem contradictory. This is common. These feelings include:
 - 1. Emptiness
 - 2. Loneliness
 - 3. Fear
 - 4. Anger
 - 5. Grief
- B. Keep in mind that these feelings are normal.
- C. There may be a tendency to avoid talking about the upcoming separation.
 - 1. Communication between spouses can break down prior to a separation, but it doesn't have to.
 - 2. It is better to work at communicating painful feelings than to avoid them and leave important things unsaid.
 - 3. Remember men and women tend to communicate differently; men may be more oriented toward factual content, while women may be more attuned to feelings.
- D. There may be pre-separation anger and resentment.
 - 1. You may find yourselves on edge with each other.
 - 2. You may find yourselves arguing more frequently.
 - 3. These are normal reactions, and they can be worked through.
- E. You can do several things to help you cope better with your separation.
 - 1. Communicate with your spouse. Both partners are responsible for effective communication.
 - 2. Set mileposts to help the time go by.
 - 3. Manage your time; don't let it manage you.
 - 4. Saturdays, Sundays and holidays are often more difficult to handle. Plan activities for these days.
 - 5. Keep busy with recreation, exercise classes or volunteer work -- a great way to gain experience that can be translated into a job resume.

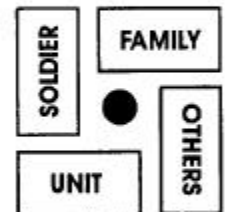
- F. Depression may accompany your separation. Talk with someone about your feelings.
1. Some depression is normal and to be expected during a period of separation.
 2. Depression can be aggravated by feelings of powerlessness.
 3. Boredom can add to depression.
 4. Depression can intensify if you turn your resentments inward.
- G. Remember that you are not powerless or alone; help is available through many sources:
1. FSG
 2. Chaplain
 3. ACS or Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator
 4. FAC
 5. Other friends
 6. Community resources

All of the information in this handbook has been directed at one primary objective; making possible effective family support and assistance during periods of deployment. This section uses comments from family support program participants to reinforce the importance of this effort; provides sample Standard Operating Procedures specifying the FSG's role during unannounced deployments; and discusses the special roles of the RDC and Family Assistance Officer (FAO) during deployments.

The following comments were made by various members of the family support system at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, during discussions on deployment issues. Although much of the information has been included in one form or another in other places in this handbook, the comments themselves might also help give direction to a system of continuing family support:

- Traditionally, the Army priority has been mission first, welfare of troops second. This remains true, but Army leaders recognize that the welfare of troops and families has a very significant effect on successful mission accomplishment.
- Readiness on a continuing basis means that we don't have to reinvent the wheel each time a unit deploys. Command support for the family must be timely, consistent and ongoing.

Family Support During Deployment



Importance of Continuing Family Support

- There has to be a two-way flow of information between the command and the families; otherwise, the family feels isolated. That's not good for morale. For example, spouses should be told that the manifest may change at the last minute and that the soldier may not be returning home at the time anticipated.
- Murphy's Law usually takes over 24 hours after deployment -- whatever can go wrong, does go wrong: car breaks down, toilet backs up, child gets sick. It is important that the family of the deployed soldier be ready to handle the situation.
- Because most of the deployments of [our] division are announced, there is not a sense of urgency for soldiers to have their affairs in order ahead of time. This leaves a false sense of security. It is important that the unit commander and chain of command take the initiative in helping the soldier understand the importance of being prepared at all times.
- To be effective, helping spouses must be legitimized and trusted with the information they need to help others.
- An FSG might be more effective if NCO wives are encouraged to get involved instead of leaving it all to the officer's wives. If the NCO understands that there is a purpose and structure for family support, they are less likely to view the FSG as a coffee club.
- Some senior NCOs must be encouraged to change their attitudes toward the families. They traditionally see leaving the families on their own as a "rite of passage" that's part of being in the Army. Times have changed; if the family is not supported, the soldier will not reenlist. It's that simple.
- Caring is the basis of inspiring soldiers to be prepared. The unit commander's attitude should be, "We care; therefore, we want your family to be properly taken care of in your absence."
- Family deployment readiness should be made a part of the "teamwork" of the unit. There should be a unit family readiness checklist for the commander.
- Awareness and education are keys to family support. Effort should go into ways to convince the soldier and spouse to be prepared. A spouse should know enough about the family support system to be able to remind the soldier about things he or she has to do to keep the family prepared.
- Spouses may question the sincerity of support efforts if the only contact of concern is during deployment. Therefore, it may be a good idea to establish an outreach system on a continuing basis. Contact may be viewed less as "snooping" if it is ongoing.

Family Support Groups are, of course, especially important during deployment, particularly in the event of an unannounced deployment when special needs arise. What follows is a set of sample Standard Operating Procedures that might be used during an unannounced deployment, with provisions for notifying soldiers' families and solving some of the problems likely to appear:

Deployment Family Support Group (FSG) information sheets are to be filed in the company orderly room to aid each soldier's family in the event of deployment. These are to provide a record of names, addresses and phone numbers of next-of-kin; special medical requirements; language spoken; and family members' potential transportation problems while the military member is deployed.

Notification procedures are as follows:

- For rostered soldiers, the company FSG chairperson or representative will call spouses in the FSG roster active section. The company commander will authorize inactive list notifications in the event of deployment.
- For nonrostered soldiers, Soldier Family Information Sheets are to be used to contact the next-of-kin of soldiers not on the FSG roster. The company Point of Contact (POC) will notify a deployed single soldier's family. The FSG representative may volunteer to assist the POC in notification.
- The Army authorizes notification of only one person or household. If the soldier has listed more than one person to be notified, the military representative will select one. As a guideline for notification priority, a wife has priority over a mother, a mother over a sister and so on.
- The use of government phones is authorized for notification calls. Each call must be made with approval of the company commander or his representative and recorded on the appropriate form. Tell the operator the call is official and limit the call to not more than five minutes.
- The Rear Detachment Commander (RDC) will provide the FSG representative with the following information to pass on to each soldier's family: time of soldier's deployment; soldier's current location (if known); soldier's mailing address; location for receipt of mail from soldier; location of soldier's Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) and documentation required for family member to pick up the POV; and unit POC's telephone number in case of a family emergency. This may be the FSG Chairperson or representative, the RDC, a member of the FAC staff or another designated individual.
- The company POC, FSG representative or other designated caller will record each completed call. This memorandum for record will include date and time of call, person receiving call and information relayed.

The following procedures apply to areas of special concern:

- ***Soldier's mail to family.*** Deployed soldiers may mail letters and sometimes packages to their families.
- ***Mail to deployed soldiers.*** Based on mission, deployment location and needs of the soldiers, the company POC, RDC, commander or Family Assistance Center (FAC) will advise family members of mailing procedures. For example, when the soldiers are deployed to areas with tropical or desert-like climates, it is better to send sealed snack foods than perishables such as cookies, brownies, cakes or fruits.
- ***FSG telephone network.*** Once deployment commences, the FSG Chairperson, support circle leaders or other contact people will maintain frequent contact with families on the active telephone roster. Spouses on the inactive roster are encouraged to become active during deployment. Government phones may be used to provide local information updates and long distance calls, if FSG members leave the area. The FSG representative must maintain a record of each long distance and local call; the unit will have forms for this.
- ***Transportation.*** The spouse may pick up the deployed soldier's POV if left in the unit area. If the soldier's vehicle is secured in the motor pool, the FSG representative can make arrangements through the RDC or company POC to pick up cars at a time convenient to the spouse. The FSG representative can help spouses find transportation to the unit or the motor pool.
- ***Pay problems.*** These are to be addressed before deployment. If problems arise during deployment, the FSG representative will contact the RDC or FAC for resolution.
- ***Army Emergency Relief (AER).*** Normally located with the ACS office, AER exists to help families with severe pay problems and to provide low-interest loans or grants to needy service members and their families. The FSG will notify the RDC if a spouse needs financial help. The RDC will help complete the forms needed to request AER assistance. ACS also provides budget counseling for Army families. Families with financial problems are encouraged to seek guidance from ACS personnel.
- ***Leave and Earnings Statements (LESs).*** The RDC will deliver LESs to the orderly room at the end of each month and issue them to spouses. Coordinate transportation to the orderly room with the FSG. It is necessary to mail LESs to out-of-town spouses. A Power of Attorney is required for spouses to receive service-member LESs.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Disposition of LESs and W-2 Forms

Discussion: Many spouses of deployed soldiers had difficulty acquiring LESs and W-2 forms. Often, the RDCs would not release these documents to the spouse or the forms were forwarded to the Theater of Operations. In most cases, soldiers did not want or need the LESs while in theater.

Lessons: Disposition of LESs and W-2 forms is a command decision that should be made prior to deployment and relayed to Finance. Either the LESs are forwarded to the soldiers in theater or they are retained by the RDCs. If the command decides to have the RDCs retain the LESs and W-2s, spouses should be able to acquire these forms by using a Power of Attorney. However, the soldiers must specify that the spouses are authorized to receive the LESs by requesting a Power of Attorney. Commands and families should also be aware of the types and criteria for acceptance of Powers of Attorney in their geographical areas.

- **Legal Assistance.** The Office of the Judge Advocate General (JAG) can answer spouses' legal questions. The RDC will provide the name of the attorney assigned to support the battalion. Any legal problems within the FSG network should be brought immediately to the attention of the RDC. While the lawyer from JAG cannot represent a family-member spouse in a civilian court, he can give advice on how to obtain a civilian lawyer.
- **Power of Attorney (POA).** The RDC will arrange for the spouse to obtain a POA as necessary. A JAG lawyer will prepare the paperwork and the RDC will forward it to the deployed soldier for signature. The RDC and a JAG lawyer will advise the spouse whether a General or Special POA is appropriate. To use the POA off post, it may be necessary to register it with the state. A lawyer from JAG can explain the procedure.
- **Identification Card (ID Card).** The RDC will be notified if an ID card is lost, stolen or expired. He or she will initiate the necessary paperwork for reissue or renewal.

FSG volunteers and family members should be made aware of these additional sources of assistance:

- **Chaplains.** The battalion chaplain will provide pastoral care, counseling and assistance. The chaplain can help the FSG deal with problems and suggest other agencies that may be of service. The chaplain's office can sometimes assist those in need who do not meet ACS criteria.

- **Army Community Service (ACS).** ACS is a principal source of social services for active Army personnel and their family members. Services include emergency loans (AER), a lending closet for household items, babysitter or child-care provider lists, transportation, budget counseling and providing informative welcome packets for all newcomers.
- **State Family Program Office.** This is the office to which Army National Guard families should turn for support similar to that provided by ACS. This office can refer the Guard family to essential services available in the community or on active Army installations.
- **Family Program Coordinator.** Some Army Reserve centers have personnel designated to assist families. If this service is not available, Army Reservists and their families can contact ACS (if near an installation) or check with a local Army National Guard unit for information on how to contact the State Family Program Office.
- **Rear Detachment Commander (RDC).** The RDC is a member of the battalion who has been designated to stay behind to run what remains of the day-to-day operations. He or she is the battalion-level support point of contact for FSG-related problems, providing information and assistance as needed.
- **Telephone numbers.** The FSG and the company POC or RDC will maintain a current list of family members' telephone numbers, as well as those of essential service providers.

The FSG volunteers might also benefit from the tips below during deployment.

TIPS

- Do:**
- Offer support, sympathy and a shoulder to cry on.
 - Offer to arrange "one-shot," short-term assistance, such as commissary runs, transportation or child care.
 - Try to link up neighbors, friends and same-unit wives to help each other out.
 - Offer to visit or call to arrange for another wife to do so.
 - Pass important information to the RDC or chaplain in a timely manner.
 - Encourage wives to call each other periodically just to check up on how they are doing.
 - Stay in daily contact with the RDC or FAC.

Tips (continued)

- Don't:**
- Overtax or overexert yourself. Trust others to help.
 - Try to be all things to all people.
 - Make promises or guarantees of unit assistance or action (such as bringing spouse home), or infringe on the duties of the RDC.
 - Be surprised if you are misunderstood or misquoted. You can avoid both to some extent if you are clear in your communication and stay in the area of your responsibilities.
 - Expect to successfully resolve every situation. Sometimes you just can't win!

The role of the RDC is to ensure, in cooperation with the FAC and the FSG program, that families are cared for and assisted during deployment. During the Persian Gulf War, FACs established and run by the Army National Guard rendered support to families of active, Guard and Army Reserve soldiers, as well as to family members of those in the other uniformed services. The RDC and FAC leadership ensure that all who work at the FAC are familiar with the role of the FSG system and know which FSG volunteers to contact and how. It is also the duty of the RDC to ensure that an on-call officer is available to the FAC on a 24-hour basis. (See Chapter 2 for more on FACs and their interaction with FSG volunteers.)

Role of the Rear Detachment Commander

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Staffing the FAC for 24-Hour Operation

Discussion: Twenty-four-hour availability is considered essential during the heaviest periods of predeployment and the initial 30 to 45 days following troop departure. Using internal manpower assets to operate 24 hours a day without prior planning strains installation or State Area Command (STARC) resources. Dedicating ACS staff to FAC operations without prior planning will result in some primary missions going unattended.

Lessons: Prior planning is critical to maintaining essential base operations while meeting extensive additional requirements of FACs. Staffing alternatives include:

- Staggering the schedules of civilian employees,
- Cross-leveling staff from other agencies with diminishing demands (such as the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Program; Morale, Welfare and Recreation; and Education Center),
- Compensating civilian employees for overtime, or
- Supplementing existing manpower resources with overhires, temporaries, volunteers, nondeploying soldiers, retirees and Individual Ready Reservists.

On deploying, a typical battalion task force will leave behind roughly 250 spouses and 400 children. The deployed soldier's effectiveness, and hence the unit's mission accomplishment, is contingent upon the state of morale of his or her family members. Just as with the soldier's morale, the family member's morale is not based solely on financial security or meeting physical needs such as food and lodging. As with soldiers, family members must receive respect, be kept informed and know that their sacrifice is worthwhile. One way to accomplish this is for them to be in contact with the family members of other deployed soldiers. At a basic level, this mutual contact provides minimal moral support. When structure is added to this body of family members, much more mutual support becomes possible.

An FSG should initially act as an information agency, using telephone contact and a monthly newsletter (if desired) to disseminate information. The next major function of an FSG, as a conduit of feedback, should evolve spontaneously. An FSG can identify issues and questions of concern to the family members. You, as part of the command, can respond to these and return the solutions and information to an FSG for dissemination. This process will help the FSG to grow in structure, strength and credibility.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Changes in the Nature of Requests for Assistance

Discussion: Initially, FAC personnel found that family problems centered around the need for accurate and timely information and financial and housing concerns. Financial problems were focused on long-standing money management issues that were aggravated by deployment, for example, existing indebtedness, personal expenses incurred before leaving, the transportation of children to caretakers and transportation to the home of record for waiting spouses.

FAC personnel report that, as the deployment progressed, requests for assistance shifted to the need for counseling and emotional support to relieve family stress. Parents experienced stress due to the uncertainty about the duration of the deployment, full-time responsibility for children and, in some cases, the extended absence of the primary disciplinarian.

Lessons: Initially, additional staff will be required to meet requests for financial assistance (AER/ACS), housing (DEH), and general information (ACS). Proactive planning to provide services as needs emerge may prevent a family breakdown that might result in the early return of the soldier. Programs, such as Parent Support Groups, Mother's Day Out, special groups for children/teens, matching families in a "buddy" system, respite care and free child care for meetings and classes, should be implemented to relieve family stress.

For an FSG to flourish, the spouses must voluntarily commit themselves as members. Furthermore, the FSG must operate without benefit of legal power. Cooperation and volunteerism are thus essential. Once an FSG is organized, the RDC must patiently allow the group its independence. The persons who will best understand the needs of the spouses are the spouses themselves. Key your attention to their concerns. Any issue raised by the spouses merits your attention; none should be dismissed out of hand. The best position that an RDC can have in relation to an FSG is that of being an advocate and provider of resource support, with little or no involvement in the inner workings of an FSG.

However, the RDC is not the only person from the rear detachment who will have contact with an FSG and the spouses in general. The entire rear detachment must project a positive image to the spouses. The rear detachment can enjoy a good working rapport with the spouses through the extension of simple courtesies. Those soldiers left back in the barracks, for example, might personally escort visiting spouses to the orderly room rather than just pointing them down the hall. They may need to be reminded to be polite at all times.

Some simple gestures can help demonstrate good will on the part of the RDC and set a positive tone for RDC-FSG relations. For example, a polaroid camera and film might be purchased by the battalion for use in snapping pictures of spouses. The spouse walks out with a snapshot to send to the soldier. This is an act of caring.

The soldiers' LESs might also be photocopied before being sent to them. For those soldiers who have signed a release, the copy of their LES is mailed to their spouse from the rear detachment, arriving at their home on or about pay day.

The RDC of one unit set up a telephone credit card charged to the battalion budget. This number was delegated to a select number of FSG contact persons who called long distance to spouses that had left the post area. This call every three weeks or so affirmed that the family member was doing okay and helped to break their isolation from the FSG. In two months this service cost the unit less than sixty dollars.

The RDC can act as an advocate for the spouses in dealings with such offices as the Deputy Installation Commander on active Army posts, who often has the authority to overcome roadblocks. On this point, three and one-half months after one active Army task force advance party deployed, there had been no congressional inquiries and no Inspector General complaints. Further, no soldier had been evacuated from the task force area of operations for family problems.

Good rapport and courteous treatment of all persons involved goes a long way toward facilitating a successful program.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Family Emergencies Requiring Return of Service Member

Discussion: The Army recognizes that some family emergencies warrant return of the soldier if existing military operations permit. The field commander determines whether mission conditions will allow the soldier's return. Emergencies involve the death, critical illness or injury of a member of the immediate family.

Lessons: Immediate family members include the soldier's spouse, children, brother or sister, parent and guardian who raised the soldier in place of parents.

- Critical illness or injury means the possibility of death or permanent disability.
- Illnesses such as the flu and injuries such as a broken arm, although not minor, are not considered emergencies.
- Prior to the soldier's departure, spouses and guardians must be educated on early return policy and the notification process.
- The spouse or guardian must contact the Red Cross, which will verify the nature of the emergency. The rear detachment, FSG or installation FAC can assist the family in contacting the Red Cross if necessary.
- The soldier's commanding officer must be notified by Red Cross message verifying the nature of the emergency before the commander can make a decision to return the soldier.

Role of the Family Assistance Officer

FAOs act as coordinators for family assistance information. They can be appointed at any level of command and may work for or with the FAC or RDC. FAOs direct questions and requests from family members, FSG volunteers and others to the proper agency or staff section. This role is especially vital when large numbers of soldiers are deployed, although the appointment and training of FAOs cannot wait until just before a deployment. Ideally, an FAO should be on call 24 hours a day (especially during deployments), and information on where and how to contact this person should be made readily available to soldiers, their families and FSG volunteers.

Each FAO should be briefed on the importance of his or her duties and trained in providing appropriate referral services. Each local Army installation and each local community will have a unique network of family-related programs, services and agencies. Providing accurate, up-to-date information on this network is a substantial job. Recognizing serious family problems and identifying appropriate resources to help solve them requires patience, good judgement, experience and expertise, especially under crisis conditions. At times the FAO may be called on to respond to situations involving domestic violence, potential suicide or other serious emergency, or to respond to distraught family members who have heard rumors of combat casualties.

FAOs interact with the Battalion Commander, RDC and unit FSG leadership.

Commanders are responsible for planning and implementing programs to support military family members. They develop appropriate procedures for the operation of family assistance services both while soldiers are at home and during deployment.

Rear Detachment Commanders are responsible for ensuring that the families of deployed soldiers are properly cared for and receive needed services through the family assistance program. **FSG leaders** work closely with FAOs to maintain contact with family members, identify needs and problems that cannot be met through FSG resources, and make certain that appropriate referrals are made.

FSG volunteers will sometimes be faced with crisis situations that they are unlikely to be fully trained to manage; the importance of FAO guidance and support under these circumstances cannot be overestimated. In many cases, the FAO will be able to rely on the FSG to provide assistance in such areas as family-member transportation or emergency babysitting. FSG volunteers and the support circle structure are the FAO's link to the families of the unit's soldiers and the key means of providing outreach to family members with special needs.

Because the service network in each particular local area will vary, and because this information needs to be continuously updated, precise guidelines for handling specific problems and requests are not provided in this handbook. However, some of the special problems the FAO should be prepared to encounter, and some of the resources most likely to be available, are given in this section.

The FAO should keep careful records of all requests for information or assistance. A family assistance call sheet should be used to record, at a minimum:

- The name of the FAO and the date and time of the call;
- The caller's name and phone number and the problem reported;
- The name and phone number of the person needing assistance (if not the same as the caller), and this person's address;
- At least one other means of contact, such as a neighbor's phone or the person's FSG support circle leader;
- The name, rank and unit of the soldier in this person's family, and their relationship to the person needing assistance; and
- Complete information on the disposition of the inquiry (information given, agency to which referred, results of follow-up contacts).

Collection of this type of information from family members may require the use of a Privacy Act statement specifying that the purpose of the information is to provide assistance to the family and that giving the information is voluntary but failure to respond may result in a delay in receiving services. The FAO should check with the local command for details on this requirement.

A local resource notebook, in which information on services available both through the Army and through local community agencies is kept, should be made available to each FAO as a part of his or her training. Telephone numbers, hours of operation, names of contact persons and details of service eligibility and availability will need constant updating. Examples of offices and agencies on which current information should be kept include these, although this list is far from inclusive:

- Adjutant General's Office
- Ambulance Services
- American Red Cross
- Army Community Service
- Army Emergency Relief
- CHAMPUS Office
- Chaplain's Office
- Dental Care Facilities
- Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Counseling
- Emergency Medical Facilities
- Finance Section
- Food Bank Program
- Food Stamp Program
- Home Health Care
- Housing Directorate
- Immunization Clinic
- Inspector General's Office
- Legal Aid Society
- Lending Closet
- Mental Health Facilities
- Military and Local Police
- Ophthalmology/Optomety Facilities
- Outpatient Medical Facilities

- Public Transportation
- Staff Judge Advocate
- Transportation Office (Household Goods)
- United Way
- Well-Baby and Well-Child Clinics

FAOs should be trained to distinguish between emergency and nonemergency inquiries. Sometimes this will be obvious; at other times it may be clear only after careful listening and tactful questioning. Procedures should be established for responding to emergencies during off-duty as well as on-duty hours. All callers should be told to call back if the referral agency does not appear able to resolve their problem; all calls should be followed up by the FAO within 24 hours to be sure needed help has been received. An FAO receiving a call that might involve a life-threatening emergency should be told never to hang up; instead, they should keep the caller on the phone while they get someone else to get help.

LIMIT

FAOs should be aware that legal requirements and limitations under either state or Federal law may affect their work. Reports that suggest the possibility of child abuse or neglect must be reported to the appropriate investigative agency. Reports of sexual assault or domestic violence are police matters, although victims of these crimes often elect to work through appropriate community agencies who can provide emotional support and specialized assistance.

Casualty information. All calls received from family members regarding rumors of either the death or the injury of a soldier must be handled with tact and diplomacy. Nothing should be confirmed or denied; casualty information can only be given out by Casualty Branch personnel.

An FAO who receives a call about a casualty rumor should take these steps:

- Ask the caller politely to try to remain as calm as possible; remind them that information that does not come through official Army channels is unreliable.
- Tell the caller that if the service member were in fact to become a casualty, a representative of Casualty Branch would contact them in person as soon as possible with this information.
- Inform the caller that Casualty Branch will be contacted to investigate their concern, then follow up by making this inquiry.

- If Casualty Branch has no information on any casualty involving this soldier, call the family member as soon as possible and advise them of this.
- If Casualty Branch does have information that the soldier sustained a casualty and the family member calls you again before official notification has been made, tell them you are still working on their request.

LIMIT

Remember, the FAO should never make casualty notifications. Only the experts -Casualty Branch personnel - are authorized to release such information, using procedures established specifically for just such a purpose.

The FAO should be trained to remain polite, tactful and sympathetic to the fears of the spouse or other family member, even if these fears turn out to have no foundation in fact. Family members who are worried or upset may need to be referred to a chaplain or mental health counselor even if there has been no known casualty.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Dealing With Loss of Life

Discussion: How a community deals with the grief brought about by the sudden, traumatic losses possible in war is critical. Leaders are the key. They must lead with warmth and sensitivity, and give the community permission to grieve through public observances. Comforting and ensuring the welfare of the next of kin are also vital to giving them the strength to move ahead.

Lessons: The following list of tips is provided to assist the bereaved:

- Listen.
- Provide assurance, but do not dismiss or negate the person's feelings.
- Be patient.
- Repeat directions and explanations until they are understood and remembered
- Treat them with warmth and sensitivity, the way you would want to be treated.
- Do not tell someone how they should feel; let them experience their own emotions.
- Do share your own feelings about related experiences of loss.

Desert Storm (continued)

- Arrange for a close friend or relative to stay with the survivor.
- Be with the survivor at a time normally reserved for the deceased spouse, such as evening when the spouse would be returning from work.
- Allow the bereaved to direct the conversation if desired (sometimes nothing needs to be said; one's presence is enough).
- Provide accurate information. It will lessen their hostility.
- Be honest.
- Help with chores and meals. Offer to babysit.
- Screen and keep records of phone calls and visitors.
- Send a note or flowers.
- Isolate them from the media if desired and needed.
- Assist with thank-you notes.
- Call weeks later, when others have stopped.
- Spend special time with the widowed when depression is most likely to be experienced - anniversaries of the incident, holidays and birthdays, and during such times as when a child leaves or when the widowed may be experiencing a new loss that is likely to reopen old wounds.
- Ensure that a person who speaks the same language is available.
- Provide alternatives; be a sounding board; do not make decisions for them; allow people to decide what is best for them.
- Encourage their independence.
- Include them in social activities.
- Remember, only a physician can prescribe medication for the bereaved.

Public affairs. Questions related to public affairs, news reports or rumors of unit activities should be answered only on the basis of official public information releases from the commander or the RDC. Requests for additional information should be referred to the Public Affairs Officer. Special care should be taken to insure that only authorized public information is released.

If a family member is contacted by the press, they should be advised to be polite and use their own discretion. However, it's best that they get in touch with the Public Affairs office before talking to someone from the news media; this office can give them whatever specific advice or assistance they might need. The FAO should remind the family member to check the credentials of anyone who contacts them to avoid a situation that could be awkward or even dangerous. The Public Affairs office can take care of this for them.

DESERT STORM UPDATE

TOPIC: Dealing with the News Media

Discussion: Reporters relish the opportunity to interview soldiers and their families during military operations. Interviewers often focus on the sensational, the emotional or the controversial; these areas supposedly "sell" news. American news reporters play a vital role in democracy. It is not harassment when they ask for an interview. It is harassment when they persist after you've declined to comment.

Lessons: Before answering questions, write down the name of the reporter and his news organization. This will discourage the reporter from persisting if you decline to comment.

- Before an interview, set the ground rules. Tell the interviewer what you will or will not discuss, especially when talking to a television or radio reporter. If the interviewer breaks your ground rules once the taping session starts, end the interview. Keep in mind that, with today's technology, even the enemy has access to your comments the moment you make them.
- Do not address specific units, personnel strength or anything else that would identify your (or your spouse's) mission. Talk only about those areas in which you have first-hand knowledge. Do not speculate about future operations.
- Do not attempt to speak for your unit, installation, the Department of the Army or the Department of Defense.
- Do not comment on our national policies, especially foreign affairs; leave this to the highest levels of government.
- Don't say anything, even in jest, that you don't want to read, see or hear later.
- Be aware of the levels of attribution used by some reporters: "on the record" remarks, where you may be quoted directly or indirectly by name; "background information" remarks, where the interviewer agrees to attribute your comments only to a nonspecific source (a "family member," for example); or "off the record" remarks that are to be held in confidence and not used in any form.
- "Do not quote me" is not the same as "off the record." If you tell a reporter not to quote you, he or she may still assume you are providing "background information" that can be used in a story. Don't make "background" remarks if you are being taped. It is always best to assume you are speaking "on the record."

Deployments are difficult times for the whole family. Understanding some of the dynamics of family relationships can be helpful when reunion time comes. Homecoming is sometimes the most difficult part of deployment. Reality rarely matches our expectations.

Family members tend to fantasize how good homecoming will be in order to get through the deployment period. The soldier looks forward to returning to a loving family, super sex, peace and quiet, a good home-cooked meal. The spouse at home cleans in preparation for homecoming and plans a special meal. A wife may buy a new outfit in expectation of the return of a loving husband who will relieve her of responsibility for the kids. Reality, in contrast, may mean a fussy four-year-old who spills milk six times at the homecoming meal; a husband who doesn't notice the new outfit; a spouse who forgot to make the car payment while the soldier was gone.

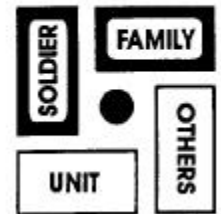
A homecoming briefing or seminar to prepare soldiers and their families for what to expect can lessen the shock and stress of homecoming. This section gives a suggested outline of points a homecoming briefing might address.

- A. All anticipation of homecoming isn't positive. Be prepared for this.
 - 1. Old problems don't go away. If they were not resolved before deployment, they will still be there.
 - 2. New hurts (real or imagined) often arise. New anger may crop up during separation. Letters may not have gotten through, or there may be disagreement with the decisions made by the spouse remaining at home.
 - 3. Fidelity may be an issue.

- B. Mixed feelings about reunion are normal.
 - 1. You may be happy to see each other, but each resent the other. Avoid competition over "who had it worse."
 - 2. Each spouse wants the other to take care of him or her.
 - 3. Both want to be together but they both also need space to be alone.
 - 4. The spouse at home had gotten used to his or her own routine and way of doing things, while the soldier has had to abide by the Army routine - where there is a right and wrong way of doing everything.

- C. It is normal to "pigeonhole" your feelings during deployment; this is an emotional survival tactic.
 - 1. The soldier buries (or suppresses) his or her feelings so as not to miss the family too much.
 - 2. The spouse suppresses his or her feelings in order to get through the lonely nights.

Homecoming Seminar



3. It takes time to open up to our feelings and to feel the love again.
 - a. For husbands, developing loving closeness with the children may take time.
 - b. Wives may not be as responsive sexually at first; this may take some time, too.
 - c. Kids may be angry at Dad or Mom for going away. They may not let you pick them up or get close at first.

D. When homecoming expectations fall short of reality, there are steps you can take.

1. Recognize the problems. Awareness is half the battle. Now that you are aware of the situation, you can change it.
2. Talk about it without blaming the other person. Try to see some humor in the situation. Realize there will be some awkwardness and that it's okay to discuss your feelings.
3. Give each other physical and emotional space. Don't pressure your wife into sex or your children into talking. Give your family time to get used to your presence and be ready to talk.
4. Have good communication.
 - a. Remember that the message sent isn't always the message received.
 - b. Our emotions distort the message; one partner or the other may be angry or upset.
 - c. Feedback is necessary; otherwise, we may wrongly assume our messages are understood.

For example, a man might say to his wife, "When's dinner ready?" She hears, "You're late cooking; get busy!" What he meant was, "I'm really looking forward to dinner with you."

Or the wife might say, "I don't have enough money to buy groceries." He might hear, "You don't make enough." What she meant was, "I forgot to cash a check!"

5. Nonverbal communication is as powerful as verbal and usually says more than one might be willing to state verbally.
 - a. Walking in the door, sitting down and watching TV without saying anything is still communicating.
 - b. A powerful message is being sent, but it may be an ambiguous one.
 - c. Negative feelings should be put into words to allow the other person to deal with your feelings. Otherwise we can avoid responsibility for these.
 - d. Your tone of voice must match your words to convey the right message. No matter how hard you try, your voice will betray your emotions.

For example, depending on our tone of voice, we can say "You look great!" and either be sincere or mean just the opposite.

6. Remember that men and women sometimes communicate differently. For example, a wife is describing her feelings when she says, "I don't want you to go." A husband may respond with a factual statement: "You know I have no choice."

The husband might have shown that he understands the wife's feelings by saying instead, "I know it's hard on you, but it's part of my job." This type of "feeling response" can often avoid an argument.

- E. Many strategies used in relationships have negative effects.
 1. We sometimes talk or think our way into being angrier about a situation than we need to be.
 2. We may resort to labeling or name-calling - categorizing someone in a totally negative manner ("You jerk!") while forgetting all about their many positive traits.
 3. We may think we can mind-read and assume we know why a person acted in a certain way, even believing they were just trying to hurt or get back at us. ("She is trying to drive me crazy.")
 4. We may also think we can tell the future, believing that because something happened in the past that it will continue. ("He'll never change.")
 5. We may exaggerate the importance of a negative event rather than being mildly annoyed over an inconvenience. ("I can't stand it.")
 6. We make "should" statements, translating preferences into demands. ("Because I said so.") This causes feelings of injustice, self-righteous anger and vengeance.
- F. To combating "self-angering" thoughts and overcome reliance on negative strategies, try positive ones instead.
 1. Avoid labeling by focusing on the behavior, not the personality. ("I don't like her complaining about the Army.")
 2. Avoid trying to guess about motives and intentions. ("I don't know why she's doing this.")
 3. Remember that nobody knows the future. Negative predictions can become self-fulfilling prophecies; if you don't think things will get better, they probably won't. Avoid the words "always" and "never."
 4. Think carefully about how bad or inconvenient something really is. Is it really the end of the world or just an inconvenience?
 5. Don't make your preferences into demands on others; don't assume everyone has to do things your way.

6. Expect a certain amount of "craziness." It's better for your mental health and the health of your relationship. Try to accept your spouse's behavior and work out ways to handle the differences.
- G. The incidents of spouse and child abuse increase immediately before and after deployments. The emotional factors associated with separation are a major cause. Expectations also play a role. Be aware of this.
1. Your child may not respond to you as you expect.
 - a. The child may have learned to live by different rules while the soldier was away.
 - b. Discipline by example is perhaps the best control you can have on your kids.
 - c. You will have to readjust to being around kids again; giving orders as though still in the field does not make for an open and happy family.
 2. Recognize the signs of child abuse.
 - a. Disciplining that leaves marks or bruises or hitting a child on the face or head are definitely abuse.
 - b. Emotional abuse (involving name-calling, threatening and so on) can be more damaging than physical abuse.
 3. Recognize the forms spouse abuse can take.
 - a. Physical battering may be involved.
 - b. Sexual abuse (including marital rape) also constitutes abuse.
 - c. Psychological abuse (threats or harassment; more than an argument) is another form of abuse.
 - d. Destruction of property or pets is also abuse.
 4. Recognize the causes of spouse abuse.
 - a. Concerns about fidelity may be involved.
 - b. The returning soldier may resent changes made while the soldier was gone.
 - c. Your spouse may be doing some things differently now, and you want to have more control.
 - d. Husbands may resent their wives becoming more independent.
 - e. Each spouse may want his or her needs met immediately.

The material above will work best if it is combined with interactive exercises that allow those attending to participate and explore their feelings rather than just listening passively. See the section in Chapter 4 on family separation workshops for examples, and the "Homecoming" section of that chapter for additional ideas. Some material suggested earlier in this chapter for predeployment briefings may also be useful at homecoming.

Groups of 82d Airborne Division wives have rebuilt small-town America at the end of a phone line. The idea isn't new. Commanders, wives and ordinary soldiers have tried it before. But these efforts have worked so long as the individual spark plug stayed there to keep the engine running. When the spark plug received orders, the engine died.

At Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the 82d is providing the official spark. The spouses of the soldiers do the work of building a small-town, self-supporting community. Even though the energy to provide the spark is ever so slight, the engine keeps running when the division leaves Fort Bragg. The division calls that engine "Family Support Groups."

It seems when a wife needs the most help from her husband, events conspire to heave him on an exercise in Grenada or on guard post in the Sinai.

Sherri Watts and her husband have a five-year-old son and two trucks, or what she calls one and a half trucks. Keeping that half a truck going when he wasn't there made her the angriest. "I wouldn't get depressed," she said. "I'd get mad at him. 'Why aren't you there? This is when I need you.' I have family close by and knew there was somebody I could take the problem to. But that wasn't the point. It was his responsibility. He should be there to do it."

Little things serve to remind women their husbands are gone. "Things like taking the garbage out on garbage day," said Tammy Bongi, "when all the neighborhood men are taking the garbage out and you're out there pulling the garbage out. And things like mowing lawns." One woman broke her finger mowing the lawn, while another jokes that the only solution to long grass is teenage sons.

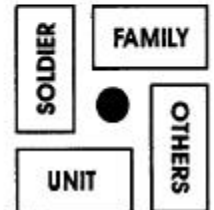
"I bought a new lawn mower," said Paula Wood. It was a decision that her husband would normally make. "And then I ran it without any oil. I cut one strip of grass and that was it." She returned the lawn mower to the store and said, "I thought it came with oil." The store replaced the mower. It did cause a few moments of anxiety for her husband, on duty in the Sinai. "He got the first letter saying, 'I think I tore up the lawn mower,'" said Wood, a mother of two children who is expecting a third. "The next letter said, 'but I replaced it.'"

However, there's more to a soldier's deployment than solving household problems. Soldiers in the field deal with trucks that won't start, just as their spouses do. The soldier, however, is part of a squad, a platoon, a company and a battalion. Soldiers share the frustrations and the triumphs of life in the field with each other. The hardships and distress of field duty can bind a unit together. Bringing the mutual self-help of a squad in the field to the wives of soldiers is the soul of the Family Support Group (FSG) movement.

Watts could have bundled up her son and trucked off to her parents, who live 75 miles from Fort Bragg. But she stayed near the post when her husband's battalion went to Sinai for six months. "I went home often, and my parents were understanding," she said. "But they just couldn't understand like other wives could. I could call another wife, and she knew exactly what I was going through. She was having the same feelings."

Backgrounder: A Network of Support

by MSGT Norman Oliver



Putting the FSGs into an official setting was the brainchild of Capt. Alfred J. Johnson, a sociologist and the 82d's social work officer. "When I got to the division my primary concern was combat stress casualties," Johnson said. "Statistics from the 1973 Mideast War confirmed common sense suspicions." The married soldier is the soldier at risk as a combat stress casualty. He's usually carrying extra stress with him to the battlefield. He's concerned about his wife. Then when he gets there, he becomes the first combat stress casualty. He is the hardest to recover.

"At least 10 percent of the wounded in the war were combat stress casualties. Of these, 80 percent reported disturbances with wives, girlfriends or people who were important to them in their unit or extended family. That's 80 percent. Fifty percent of them reported that their wives had a baby or were pregnant in the last six months. Another 23 percent had a death in the immediate family in the last year."

With half the Army married, Johnson knew there could be many problems. He realized focusing on families could bring about the most gains in readiness because the least was being done in that area. On the other hand he knew there were three things he couldn't do: spend large sums of money, commit division soldiers or depend on the Army's traditional social support institutions. He couldn't spend money, since funds for social programs often fall by the wayside as policies and priorities change. He couldn't rely on soldiers to do the work since they would be gone when they were most needed. The Army's institutions, like hospitals, can become overwhelmed when a crisis hits.

"We can't take care of the person who says: 'My car' s busted, and I don't know anybody in the world. Can I get a ride or somebody to fix my car? I don't have any money,'" Johnson said. "But if you say you're going to commit suicide, we might be able to help you."

Many times, the person handing out the help feels good, but the person being helped can feel miserable, incompetent and unsatisfied. "We're not effective," Johnson said. That kind of help just won't replace the thing that he thinks is really lost: a sense of community.

"We have a fragmented, mobile lifestyle," Johnson continued. "That's especially so in the military. We have a young population, which tends to be more fragmented than older populations. With all that fragmentation you don't have a community. People don't have a friend that they can turn to."

So Johnson turned to a social work skill called community organization. He lobbied chaplains and commanders and talked with those who already had something working. Then came the requirement to send a battalion to the Mideast for over six months. The 82d had the first rotation, followed by a battalion from the 101st Airborne Division. Johnson had the benefit of earlier family problems and experiences in forming his plan.

Johnson's ideas were tried. They worked and became refined as other battalions were deployed. The massive deployment to Grenada was the baptism under fire. Battalions with well-organized FSGs had far fewer family problems than those who were just getting started or had to start up when troops left. Officials in the 82d Airborne Division had known there would be family problems during a sudden, massive deployment of the division. They had planned for that. During Grenada, they pulled out the plan and set up the Family Assistance Center.

At the beginning, Major Lee Anderson, the division's reenlistment officer, and a small handful of senior sergeants manned the center around the clock. In the first few days they were swamped with calls from around the country.

"Some of the Family Support Groups were strong immediately upon deployment," Anderson said. "They had been active with social affairs and unit activity days - the things which bring the family together. Those were the groups who were coming to us and saying: 'If you get a call for anybody in our battalion, here's a list of our Family Support Groups. If they're from A Company, you tell them to call the first sergeant's wife.' " The deployment caused those that were less well organized to become better organized, according to Anderson.

"All the Family Support Groups came up to speed rapidly," he said. "Once that happened, our workload at the center just diminished. My whole emphasis was not to provide direct support but to get them to the Family Support Groups to establish that link. Our job was to ensure that people got on the right track.

"We stopped car repossession, had utilities turned on that had been turned off. You know, some were at least two months delinquent. Creditors backed off just from telephone calls, nothing in writing. We avoided potential disasters that way."

The division avoided not only many of the financial disasters that dog the heels of a separation, but also many of the emotional disasters.

"We're not caught with so many emergencies and crises," said Major (Dr.) Paul Rumbaugh, Chief of Social Work at Fort Bragg's Womack Army Hospital. "Those seem to have gone down. We have this constant ability to give group support and talk with the group. That helps alleviate the problems. We can identify people before they get into a crisis. There's an early warning system that helps people feel better and helps us get involved quicker."

Rumbaugh says the system has begun to work better. He saw a lot more families with the first deployments to the Sinai than he does now. "We did see some child abuse cases. We saw women having affairs on the side and getting caught up in being lonely and needing emotional support.

"You can't eliminate all the problems. People are going to have problems regardless," Rumbaugh said. But one surprise for him and the social workers was the lack of conflict when husbands and wives rejoined. "One of our assumptions was that people would have problems with the readjustment time. We really haven't seen much of that."

The FSGs spell the end of isolation for many spouses. But other spouses already have a well-developed network of friends and relationships.

"So how in the world do we connect people without being offensive about it?" Johnson asked. "What I came down to was minimal basic contact. First we bound the community to the battalion, big enough to get things done, small enough to still have identification that's meaningful to everybody. Then we break that community down into small contact circles. One contact person who's a volunteer agrees to keep track of, inform and take care of the initial problems of six to ten other people." The number of six to ten wasn't pulled from a hat. People work well in groups that size. An infantry squad, which can have a maximum of 11 soldiers, usually hits the field with about six to ten.

"Above that, you don't keep track of people," said Johnson. "You can't be that personal with people." The contact person telephones other spouses in her circle about once every two weeks. That was the concept. "It's that simple," Johnson said.

"Then we built a structure throughout the battalion spouses which we call a communication and support network. There are issues you can't handle at contact-circle level. And you can't handle it from on top. You have to build a network, much like the chain of command. But it's a lot better because it doesn't have the stratification that a chain of command has, which tends to resist the passage of communication.

"So that's what the organization is all about. Just keep that communication and support network intact, so that when they need it they can use it. If they want to develop an activity through it, they can. It also gives people a central focus. They can work on it and build their family-member community around it."

An additional organization is composed of representatives from various post and division agencies like finance, the hospital, family housing and the commissary. They meet with a committee from the FSG about once a month to help solve problems.

The spouses own and operate the FSGs. Different battalions and companies have organized themselves differently. Johnson said there haven't been problems with groups developing goals in conflict with those in the Army. "This is where I learned something and I grew confident," he said. "The most influential people and the most resourceful people happen to be the people at the top -- the senior sergeants' wives or the battalion commander's wife. You need them. 'You also need the battalion commander's sanction. You can't say you're the wives of the second battalion of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment unless he says you can use his outfit's name. So he's got a tremendous amount of control.'

And spouses find they have control over their own lives, too. "After 22 years of being in the Army," said Vivian Newman, "this is the closest-knit group I have ever been associated with. Wives have never felt they had a group. Well, there have been the officers wives' and enlisted wives' clubs. But that's social." FSGs are social, too, but they fill other needs as well.

Newman said soldiers always feel part of a group. But soldier's wives face a fear of their own when their men go on dangerous missions. Being able to share those feelings with a woman whose husband is in the same unit helped them.

"I feel like I am part of my husband's career now," Paula Wood said. "I'm a military wife and I am proud of it. I think that this group helps keep the military family together. The wife isn't going to look elsewhere because she is a part of her husband's going away. She's still involved with the military. She's not left to fend on her own."

Wood has been a military wife for eight years and has spent many lonely nights alone. "That's what it's been like for a long time. When they go to Korea, that wife is sitting there with no contact with the military except for going to the PX and commissary."

"Family Support Groups build togetherness with family and friends," Newman said. "I think this helps in marriage." Some wives said the groups provide an outlet for their creative talents. Wives who have had skills that have lain dormant in years of housekeeping and child-rearing have the chance to contribute.

"I think that comes to pass," said Newman, "because we're not rejected by the military. They have allowed us to show our own potential for organization. If every move we made were directed by the military, we would definitely be resentful.

"Instead of resentment, we have found self-confidence. A wife who contributes feels better about herself. If she feels better about herself, she will align more closely with her husband and family and perhaps stabilize that relationship instead of reaching out for something new or different."

Wood shows that self-confidence. "My health isn't what it should be with this pregnancy," she said. "I had a bad week, and my husband was worried." In the 82d he could have gone on a moment's notice. Wood continued, "I said, if you all go anywhere don't worry, I have the Family Support Group to turn to for assistance. And his shoulders slumped down a bit and he was relaxed. He knows that when he goes now I'll be all right."

This section contains four sample forms that might be used as one of the last steps in preparing soldiers and family members for deployment. The Preventive Maintenance Checklist records completion of the Family Readiness Workbook (from Chapter 4) by both soldier and spouse. The Individual Deployment Checklist is for use by deploying soldiers immediately before departure. The Individual Deployment Family Survey should also be filled out by deploying soldiers to provide information that might be needed to assist their family members. Finally, a Briefing Evaluation Form is included to give soldiers and family members attending predeployment briefings the opportunity to provide feedback on briefing effectiveness. Adapt these forms to local requirements to close the predeployment preparation loop prior to the soldier's departure.

Final Readiness Review



PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

Use this form to sign off on completion of the Family Readiness Workbook by both soldier and spouse.

Unit _____

Unit Commander _____

Soldier's Name _____ Rank _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____

If Married, Spouse's Name _____

Children: Yes No

Family Special Needs/Considerations _____

Requirements have been met to deal with special needs:

Yes No

Assistance Needed: _____

Has soldier completed all items in the Family Readiness Workbook?

Yes No

What still needs to be completed? _____

Assistance needed to complete items in workbook _____

Deadline for completion _____

Name/Signature of Soldier (print and sign)

Name/Signature of Supervisor

Date: _____

Follow-Up Action: _____

INDIVIDUAL DEPLOYMENT CHECKLIST

This form should be filled out by all deploying soldiers and initialed off by the next person in their chain of command.

Name _____

Rank _____

Unit _____

Address _____

If married, answer the following:

Spouse's name: _____

Home phone: _____

Children: _____

Have you completed your Family Readiness Workbook?

Yes No

Do you have a will?

Yes No

Do you have a Power of Attorney?

Yes No

How will your spouse get your paycheck? _____

Does your spouse have transportation?

Yes No

Do you have ID cards for your spouse and children?

Yes No

Did he / she attend the briefing?

Yes No

Is he/she listed on the FSG roster?

Yes No

Special considerations / requirements: _____

Date attended deployment briefing _____

Reason it was missed/remarks _____

Disposition of paycheck _____

(Continued on back)

Individual Deployment Checklist (continued)

Disposition of mail _____

Disposition of POV _____

Disposition of high-value items (if in barracks) _____

Remarks _____

Name/Signature of Soldier (print and sign)

Name / Signature of Supervisor

Name/Signature of Company RDC

Date completed and turned in to the RDC _____

INDIVIDUAL DEPLOYMENT FAMILY SURVEY

This form should be filled out by all deploying soldiers to provide information that might be needed to assist their dependents.

Soldier's name: _____

Spouse's name _____

Children: Name _____ Age _____

_____ Age _____

_____ Age _____

_____ Age _____

Address _____

Spouse's work phone: _____

Place of Employment: _____

What is the best time to call your spouse? _____ Day _____ Time _____

Will your spouse and/or dependents be staying on post or in the local community while you are deployed?

Yes No

If no, where will they be staying? _____

Spouse's friends/neighbors who can be contacted if we aren't able to reach your spouse at home:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Is your spouse expecting a baby?

Yes No

If yes, when is the due date? _____

Does anyone in your family have any medical problems that the unit should be aware of?

Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

Do you have a Power of Attorney for your spouse?

Yes No

If yes, is it General or Specific? _____

If Specific what is it for? _____

Which of the following do you have? _____

Check to Bank ("Sure Pay") _____

Check to Unit _____

Check to Address _____

(continued on back)

BRIEFING EVALUATION FORM

This form should be completed by all soldiers and family members attending a predeployment briefing.

We appreciate your assistance in evaluating the quality and effectiveness of the family-member predeployment briefing. Your comments will be used to evaluate our briefing and will influence the direction of future briefings and seminars given to families.

Thank you for your cooperation.

1. My interest in the briefing was:

High
Above Average
Average
Below Average
Low

2. The usefulness of the briefing was:

High
Above Average
Average
Below Average
Low

3. The planning and organization of the briefing was:

High
Above Average
Average
Below Average
Low

4. My overall evaluation of the briefing is:

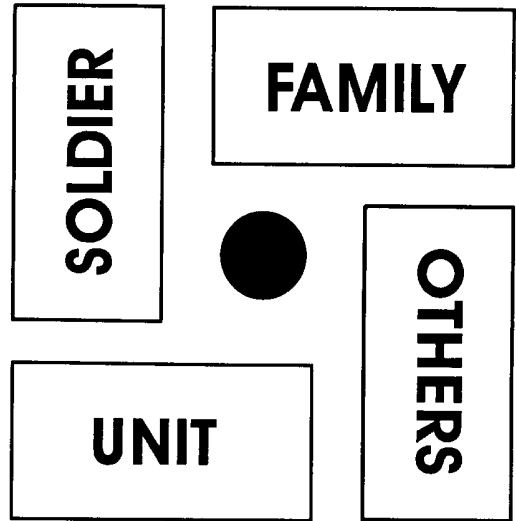
High
Above Average
Average
Below Average
Low

5. What session was most useful to you?

Why?

6. Is there any subject you would add?

7. Please add any other thoughts or suggestions (use reverse side).



Selected Bibliography

Selected Bibliography

Regulations

AR 1-1	<i>Headquarters Department of the Army</i>
AR 5-01	<i>Mobilization</i>
AR 5-3	<i>Installation Management and Organization</i>
AR 10-42	<i>Organization and Functions, FORSCOM</i>
AR 27-3	<i>Legal Assistance</i>
AR 30-19	<i>Army Commissary Operating Policies</i>
AR 37-104-3	<i>Military Pay and Allowance Procedures</i>
AR 37-104-10	<i>Military Pay and Allowances Procedures for Reserve Components of the Army</i>
AR 37-105	<i>Finance and Accounting for Installations: Civilian Pay Procedures</i>
AR 37-106	<i>Travel</i>
AR 40-3	<i>Medical, Dental and Veterinary Care</i>
AR 40-121	<i>Uniformed Services Health Benefit Program</i>
AR 55-46	<i>Travel of Dependents and Accompanied Mil & Civ Personnel To, From, or Between Overseas Areas</i>
AR 55-71	<i>Transportation of Personal Property and Related Services</i>
AR 135-210	<i>Order to Active Duty as Individuals During Peacetime</i>
AR 140-1	<i>Army Reserve Mission, Organization and Changes</i>
AR 140-145	<i>Individual Mobilization Augmentation Program</i>
AR 210-50	<i>Installation Family Housing Management</i>
AR 210-51	<i>Army Housing Referral Service Program</i>
AR 215-1	<i>Morale, Welfare, and Recreation</i>
AR 310-25	<i>Dictionary of United States Army Terms</i>
AR 360-61	<i>Community Relations</i>
AR 500-5	<i>The Army Mobilization and Operations Planning and Execution System (AMOPES)</i>
AR 600-8-1	<i>Army Casualty and Memorial Affairs and LOD Investigations</i>
AR 600-8-3	<i>Unit Postal Operations</i>
AR 600-8-101	<i>Personnel Processing: In- and Out- and Mobilization Processing</i>
AR 600-15	<i>Indebtedness of Military Personnel</i>

AR 600-20	<i>Army Command Policy and Procedures</i>
AR 600-29	<i>Fund Raising Within the Department of the Army</i>
AR 600-75	<i>Exceptional Family Member Program</i>
AR 600-85	<i>Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Program</i>
AR 600-240	<i>Marriage in Overseas Commands</i>
AR 601-10	<i>Mobilization of Retired Members of the Army</i>
AR 608-1	<i>Army Community Service Program</i>
AR 608-2	<i>Government Life Insurance</i>
AR 608-3	<i>Naturalization and Citizenship of Military Personnel and Dependents</i>
AR 608-8	<i>Mortgage Insurance for Service Members</i>
AR 608-9	<i>Survivor Benefit Plan</i>
AR 608-10	<i>Child Development Services</i>
AR 608-11	<i>Eligibility for Reduced Cost Commercial Air Fare for Unofficial Travel</i>
AR 608-18	<i>The Army Family Advocacy Program</i>
AR 608-25	<i>Retirement Services Program</i>
AR 608-99	<i>Support of Dependents, Paternity Claims and Related Adoption Proceedings</i>
AR 640-3	<i>ID Cards, Tags and Badges (Reserve and Guard Dependent ID Card)</i>
AR 680-300	<i>Reporting of Dependents of Active Duty Military Personnel and US Citizen Employees</i>
AR 690-11	<i>Mobilization Planning and Management (Civilian Personnel)</i>
AR 930-4	<i>Army Emergency Relief</i>
AR 930-5	<i>American National Red Cross Service Program and Army Utilization</i>
FR 500-3	<i>FORSCOM Mobilization and Deployment Planning Systems (FORMDEPS)</i>
ANGR 211-1 and NGR 600-12	<i>National Guard Family Programs (Joint Army National Guard and Air National Guard)</i>
NGR 10-2	<i>State Area Command, Army National Guard</i>
NGR 350-1	<i>Army National Guard</i>

Pamphlets

- DA PAM 55-2 *It's Your Move*
- DA PAM 190-52-1 *Personnel Security Precautions Against Acts of Terrorism*
- DA PAM 350-21 *Family Fitness Handbook*
- DA PAM 352-2 *Educational Assistance and Opportunities Information for Army Family Members*
- DA PAM 352-4 *High School Completion Programs for Army Dependent Spouses*
- DA PAM 352-5 *The Army Family - A Partnership*
- DA PAM 360-525 *Family Assistance Handbook for Mobilization*
- DA PAM 360-531 *Your Personal Affairs - A Checklist*
- DA PAM 600-5 *Handbook on Retirement Services for Army Personnel and Their Families*
- DA PAM 600-19 *Quality of Life Minimum Standards*
- DA PAM 600-41 *Military Personnel Managers Mobilization Handbook*
- DA PAM 600-60 *A Guide to Protocol and Etiquette*
- DA PAM 600-72 *Army Manpower Mobilization*
- DA PAM 608-4 *A Guide for the Survivors of Deceased Army Members*
- DA PAM 608-28 *Handbook on Volunteers in Army Community Services*
- DA PAM 608-33 *Casualty Assistance Handbook*
- DA PAM 608-39 *Exceptional Children: An Army Parent Handbook*
- DA PAM 608-42 *Handbook on Information and Referral Service for Army Community Service Centers*
- DA PAM 608-43 *A Guide to Family Member Predeployment Briefings*
- DA PAM 608-47 *Family Support Groups*

Other Readings

FM 100-9	<i>Reconstitution</i>
FM 100-17	<i>Mobilization, Deployment, Redeployment, Demobilization</i>
NGB PAM 600-5	<i>Handbook on Retirement Services (ARNG)</i>

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The Channing L. Bete Co., Inc., 200 State Road, South Deerfield, MA 01373, (800-628-7733), offers several useful information booklets on military family life. The titles listed below are available as of February, 1993:

About Being a Guardian for a Military Dependent Family Member

About Deployment

About Reunion

Annual Training

Credit Management for Military Personnel

Family Care Plans

Family Support Groups

Good Money Management for Military Personnel

It's Time to Move! Coloring & Activities Book

Let's Talk About Deployment: An Information & Activities Book

Let's Talk About Reunion: An Information & Activities Book

Military Families are Special! Coloring & Activities Book

Preparing for Mobilization

Until Your Parent Comes Home Again: A Deployment Coloring & Activities Book

You Belong to the National Guard Family

You Belong to the U.S. Army Reserve Family

Your Army Community Service Center

Your Military Chaplain

Your Parent is Coming Home! Coloring & Activities Book

Extensive bibliographic listings are available from The Military Family Clearinghouse, 4015 Wilson Blvd., Suite 903, Arlington, VA 22203-5190. Phone: (703) 696-5806 or (800) 336-4592.

For a complete listing of all references and audiovisual training devices, contact your nearest installation ACS or RC Family Program Coordinator's office.