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## News Release

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### **Children's Special Partners with USU to Help Military Families Adjust**

**BETHESDA, MD** — When military families are reunited following a deployment, in many cases the biggest challenge the family faces is trying to help younger children get reacquainted with the parent who had been deployed. And when that parent comes home injured, either with physical or psychological injuries, that re-acclimation becomes even more difficult.

Stephen Cozza, M.D., professor, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Department of Psychiatry, and associate director of the Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress, will be featured in a PBS Primetime Special, "*Coming Home: Military Families Cope with Change*". The program – scheduled to premier on PBS, April 1, 2009 at 8 PM ET/PT – will be hosted by Queen Latifah, John Mayer and Sesame Street's Elmo, and will discuss the challenges faced by injured soldiers and their families as they seek to cope with major life challenges. The program will encourage the sharing of feelings and encourage those dealing with change to turn to one another for support, while also providing the general public with a brief glimpse into what military families have to endure.

"Military families face so many challenges, with deployment and re-entry," said Dr. Cozza. "This program could ease the re-entry by allowing children to see, through the eyes of one of their favorite television friends Elmo and Rosita, that even though their parent might be different when they return, they are still the same father or mother who can be there to talk and to listen, and provide the same love and affection they shared prior to their injury. When necessary, parents and children together can learn new ways of spending time together and enjoying each other."

This is a live broadcast that builds on the second part of a three-part Talk, Listen, Connect series developed by Sesame Workshop with consultation from Dr. Cozza. The first part dealt with families who were dealing with the initial deployment of a parent. TLC II and the April 1<sup>st</sup> broadcast tell the story of how Rosita responds when her father comes home injured and in a wheelchair.

Since 2006, Dr. Cozza has worked closely with the Sesame Workshop and contributed to the development of an outreach kit aimed at helping young children of servicemembers deal with the stresses of military deployments. The kit, "*Talk, Listen, Connect: Helping Families During Military Deployment*," includes a DVD featuring the Sesame Street Muppets, that addresses the challenges and concerns children experience during various stages of deployment.

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***Cozza and Sesame Workshop***  
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Located on the grounds of Bethesda's National Naval Medical Center and across from the National Institutes of Health, USU is the nation's federal school of medicine and graduate school of nursing. The university educates health care professionals dedicated to career service in the Department of Defense and the U.S. Public Health Service. Students are active-duty uniformed officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Public Health Service, who are being educated to deal with wartime casualties, natural disasters, emerging infectious diseases, and other public health emergencies. Of the university's more than 4,200 physician alumni, the vast majority serve on active duty and are supporting operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, offering their leadership and expertise.

For more information, contact the Office of External Affairs at (301) 295-3981 or visit the USU Web site at: [www.usuhs.mil](http://www.usuhs.mil).