

National Guard Soldier & Family

# FOUNDATIONS

A Note from

LTG & Mrs.  
Clyde A. Vaughn,  
Director, Army  
National Guard

## HEALING WOUNDED HEARTS

Comfort  
Zone Camp

## NO MUSCLE LEFT BEHIND

Fitness  
for your  
whole body

# Becoming Resilient.

*Find Hope, Courage  
And Strength*

# BECOME A CAREER MENTOR

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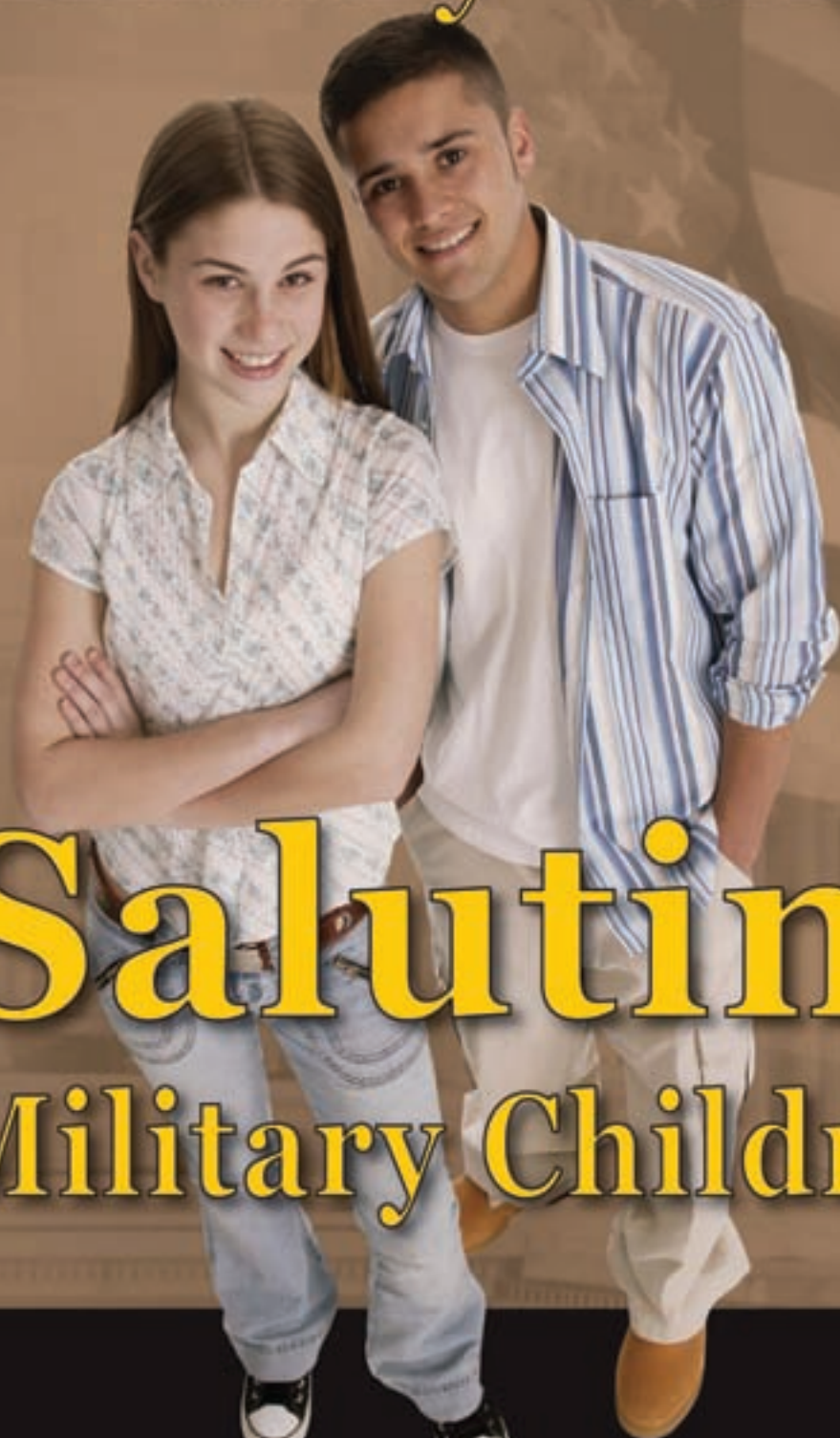


# Honoring . . .

“Month of the  
Military Child”



Saluting  
Military Children





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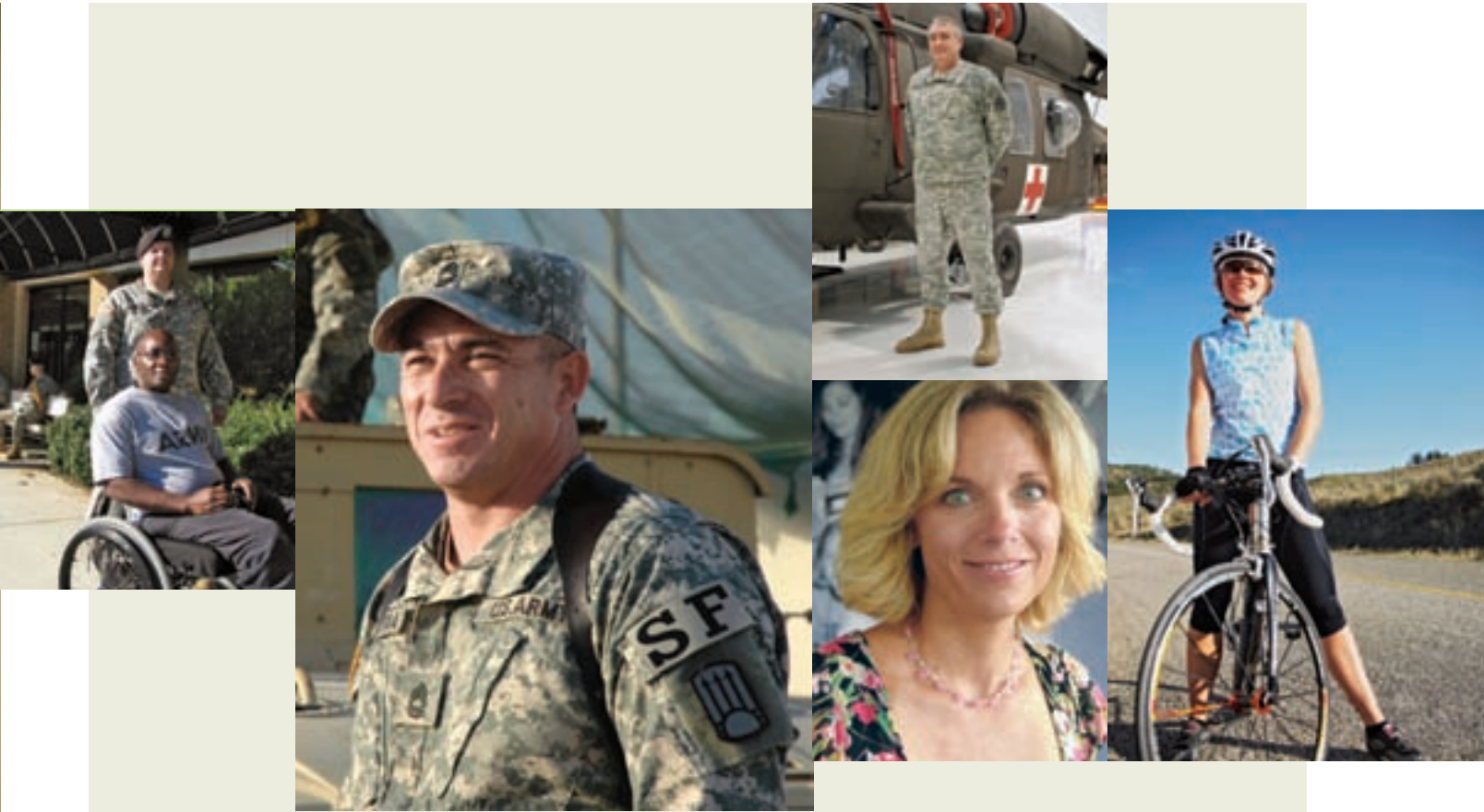
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## Becoming Resilient

Rather than get depressed or discouraged, Corey Briest focuses on winning daily battles. He taps into that special resolve of a Soldier—the fighting spirit.







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**“We can either find a way or make one.”**

**R**esiliency is a word heard often today. While it's bantered around in relation to many subjects, there's really only one subject I've ever associated it with: Soldiers and their Families. Serving in the National Guard today means more than one weekend a month and two weeks a year—it is a “body and soul” vow. To commit your life, as well as your Family's, to serving your country requires an extraordinary amount of flexibility and survivability.

This is especially true for our Wounded Warriors and their Families. Resiliency begins the moment a Soldier is injured. In our feature, “Becoming Resilient,” the Brist Family is a shining example of resiliency in the face of what most would see as overwhelming odds. Their “new normal” is built on the Family's resilient nature.

Resiliency is a fact of life for all Soldiers, as seen in “Serving Singles,” which points unmarried Soldiers to support programs. Additionally, we all understand our kids are affected by our service, so in “Healing Wounded Hearts,” we take a look at a special camp for grieving children.

The training we receive as Soldiers teaches us to tap into a reserve of “special strength”—a power that's difficult to explain, and best captured in a quote from the great general, Hannibal: “We will either find a way or make one.”

Marcia Beene Dickerson  
Managing Editor  
(Marcia serves as a Staff Sergeant in the Tennessee National Guard.)



South Dakota National Guard Soldier SGT Corey Brist shows strength and courage in the face of adversity.

PHOTO BY MIKE MALONE

National Guard Soldier & Family  
**FOUNDATIONS**

**MISSION STATEMENT:** To serve and support Army National Guard Soldiers and their Families by providing information and resources to improve their quality of life. To provide opportunity for all Soldiers and Families to benefit from the services available to them through the National Guard by presenting timely and relevant knowledge.

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## Dear Army National Guard Family,

I am proud to present the second issue of *National Guard Soldier & Family Foundations*. This issue spotlights our Wounded Warriors. All of us need to make a concerted effort to recognize our injured Soldiers for their selfless service and sacrifice. We must support all efforts to provide them with swift and comprehensive care.

As homeland missions and overseas deployments continue, all of our Soldiers and Families are heroes in some way. Many of you don't see yourselves as "heroes," but indeed you are the image of courage and unselfishness. You continue to answer the call to duty without thinking twice, despite the many sacrifices you know you will make along the way. You are our strength, and our strength is our foundation.



LTG Clyde A. Vaughn, Director, Army National Guard

## Dear Soldiers, Families and Friends of the Army National Guard,

Military Families everywhere share a unique bond and face many of the same challenges. Whether the Soldier in your life is serving stateside or overseas, your patriotic pride may be tempered by worry regarding new or unexpected responsibilities. As the spouse of a career Soldier, I have confidence that you can handle the challenges, whatever they may be.

*National Guard Soldier & Family Foundations* is an aid in boosting that needed confidence and brings us all together to better navigate a shared experience. On these pages and through Guard programs, we can make new friends and gain valuable support. I am proud to be part of an organization that offers such a wonderful resource that connects and better informs our Families.

I hope you enjoy this second issue of *Foundations* and, as always, thank you for your service!

Mrs. Carolyn K. Vaughn



SSG Alexander Purdue is a Senior Scout for the first Platoon of the INARNG Blackhawk Troop 2-152.



## How did you celebrate your return from deployment?

I put on my most comfortable civilian clothes, hung out with my Family and ate a bunch of home-cooked food. It is the small things you miss the most.

~ SSG Alexander Purdue, INARNG,  
Hero on Call Program Manager

The most enduring sight was my wife and children standing in that Fort Bragg hangar at 3:30 a.m. To be able to hug them and to feel like I was complete again was that first feeling. When I was gone I felt like a part of me was missing—my Family. We celebrated on the way home with a big breakfast at IHOP. Not the chow hall. Boy, was it tasty. Spending time with my wife was the next important moment. Just being able to smell the beautiful smell of her soft hair was heaven. The next thing was walking my kids out to the bus stop the next morning and hugging them goodbye for the day. When you're deployed you miss the simple things in life—the smells, the walks and the hugs.

~ CWO O'Neil Williams, Jr.,  
Director of Photography, SRSC

Everyone talks about having a big party when they come home. I came home right before Thanksgiving, so there were opportunities for that. Yet, even though my Family and friends were excited to see me, I had to spend time with my wife and two sons. I did get flak from my friends about being a hermit, but it was well worth the time I was able to spend with them. Our Families have the toughest job in any deployment, so I wanted to enjoy being home with them. That was my celebration.

~ 1LT David E Bryant, TF 1-151 Infantry

I went out to lunch with my Family after release of the unit. I came home to about 100 small flags along the road-way. I participated in a parade in Hastings the same day that I returned as a guest on the Cub Scout Pack 23 Float.

~ LTC Larry J. Herke, AR, MNARNG, MN Mobilization  
Readiness Officer/Commander 1-34 BSTB

The first thing I did was hug my wife and kids, and tell them how proud I was and thanked them for taking care of each other while I was gone. Then I took a few moments to thank the great citizens of North Dakota, who came to the airport late in the evening to welcome home a small group of Soldiers. Some magnificent friends of mine offered their condo to my Family for a couple of weeks, so we celebrated my return on the beaches in Florida, connecting as a Family and taking time to get updated on all the things that had changed in their lives while I was away.

~ 1LT Dan "Murph" Murphy  
Public Information Officer, NDNG JFHQ PAO



**We want to hear from you!**

Your answer to the question below could appear in the next issue of *Foundations*.

**What three things helped you get through your deployment?**

Email us your answers at  
Editor@GuardFoundations.com.



# ACRONYMS

## They're Not Just Military Terms Anymore

By ADRIENNE DICKEY

It's amazing the things you get used to when you work in the military. One of those things is a new language—namely, acronyms—LOT (lots of them).

I'm not a Soldier myself, nor have I ever excelled at learning another language. But after three years of marriage to a Soldier, my husband, unbeknownst to him, started teaching me a new language—that of the Army National Guard.

Military acronyms were the new lingo. The clothes my husband wore every day would now fall into categories such as ACUs, BDUs, PT and Class As. This “shortened-style” of talking sounded easy but strange, so how did my husband leave me behind in my monolingual world?

I, too, wanted to be bilingual; however, I was not willing to join the military to learn it. So over the years, I went to military Family trainings and read his unit's newsletters, constantly asking questions like, “What does MUTA mean?”

But I didn't totally get the hang of it. I was constantly using an interpreter (my husband), who loved laughing at my attempts.

Then my sons had to go all funny on me by instant messaging their friends with letters and symbols. Once again, I was the lonely one-language individual in the Family. They “texted” stuff like LOL (laughing out loud), POS (parent over shoulder) and BRB (be right back) that looked similar to the military's acronyms. They all looked pretty interesting, but trying to decipher them takes a degree from MIT. So once again, I was left with plain old English.

Then I decided to take the bull by the horns. Why couldn't I make my own language? It seemed like everyone else in the Family was doing it. I wanted to be part of the in-crowd.

But of course, not being a normal-thinking person, I had to put my own twist on things. Why couldn't I take the military acronyms and “spouse-ize” them?

I could make up acronyms about events every military Family member can relate to, such as acronyms or text messages about the monstrous piles of laundry during deployment. Believe me, during deployment I have to deal with all the laundry my husband usually washes, so this is




“... Trying to decipher them takes a degree from MIT.”

where I became AWOL (Annoyed With Outlandish Laundry).

I kept expanding my “vocabulary,” thinking about all the time I spend in the car with the three lively boys. I am always running late in picking them up or taking them to practice, so I wanted everyone to MOS (Move Over Slowpokes).

This, of course, led to the kids yelling in the car, so we would LES (Let's Everyone Scream). After all this screaming, I was too exhausted to cook, which just added more acronyms to my language. I could cook with my MEPS (Mom's Emergency Pantry Staple), which is Easy Mac. If we were still in the car, I would use the DTS (Drive-thru Tracking System).

Then it was time for my husband's homecoming, where all of us were yelling, “Welcome home!” I know I looked like an SRP (Spouse Ready to Pop) by the time the ceremony was over.

Woo-hoo, I did it! I developed my own language, making me bilingual like everyone else in the Family! I'm pretty sure MIT or the National Guard doesn't recognize this, but maybe I can put it on my résumé or just let it help me get through another day of being a Guard spouse. 



**in the know**  
*The Guard Family news line*

# Guard Families Reap the Benefits of “Team Utah”

Combined Efforts  
Assist Family  
Services

By MAJ Annette Barnes

**SAYING  
GOODBYE:**

LT Mark

Buffington of the  
Utah ARNG 145th  
Field Artillery  
takes one last look  
at his son, Joey,  
before leaving for  
the Mobilization  
Station for tests  
and training.





## Using this Team Utah approach, the Guard and several Utah agencies have come together to provide a total package of care for Utah Soldiers and their Families.

**M**ost American Families know little about the sacrifices that military Families shoulder during times of war. But the Utah National Guard is joining forces with other state assistance programs to address challenges on behalf of the state's Soldiers.

Using this Team Utah approach, the Guard and several Utah agencies have come together to provide a total package of care for Utah Soldiers and their Families.

In 2007 and 2008, the Utah State Legislature approved ongoing financial support for the Returned Veterans and Family initiative. They also set aside funds to advertise Veterans' benefits and services throughout the state.

One of the major benefits has been improved communication and collaboration regarding the many services already available to Veterans and their Families.

A committee consisting of a state representative, the Guard's State Family Program Director, Transition Assistance Advisor and Chaplain, plus representatives from the state's Veterans Administration and other government agencies, oversees the effort.

The group is focused on expanding access to programs in rural areas, developing new methods to reach Veterans, and reducing any stigma or reservations regarding the use of government services.

Many local businesses and corporations have joined forces over the past few years to be part of the Team Utah concept. A few examples of the combined effort include:

**The Utah National Guard Charitable Trust**—Established in 2005 with contributions from private citizens, civic groups and corporate organizations, the Charitable Trust provides grants and no-interest loans to Utah military Service Members, or immediate Family members, facing financial or medical hardships, or other emergency situations.

**Traumatic Brain Injury Resource Conference**—Utah Brain Injury Association and the Salt Lake City Veterans Administration Health Care System joined with the state to co-sponsor this June 2008, event, focusing on injured Veterans.

**The Sub for Santa Project**—Run by the Guard's Family Program, military Families are anonymously "adopted" for the holidays. The Charitable Trust helps underwrite the

program, which helped provide Christmas assistance for 110 Guard families—and more than 300 children—in 2008.

**The Utility Abatement Program**—Since 2003, Utah National Guard Family Assistance Centers have been reaching out to individual communities to help relieve utility payments during deployments. Now, more than 50 Utah cities offer free city utilities to Soldiers' Families during deployments. The program has already saved Utah military Families millions of dollars.


### Programs Also Promote State's Youth

Utah military kids also reap the benefit of these Team Utah collaborations. The Utah National Guard has one of the most active youth programs in the country and has fostered long-standing partnerships with the Utah State Extension and 4-H. More recently, the Operation Military Kids (OMK) program has added to those established organizations. Utah National Guard Kids are the largest recipients of OMK grants in America.

The Utah National Guard Youth Council is another strong organization run by young leaders who also hold school, athletic and church positions in their communities. The Youth Council helped create existing programs such as the Great Utah Road Tour, Trunk or Treat, Super Saturday and the Moroccan Youth Exchange, which is a joint effort with Utah's State Partnership Program.

A number of Guard programs and services are designed to assist Soldiers and Families with many of the challenges they face before, during and after deployment. Support programs such as Transition Assistance, Yellow Ribbon Reintegration, Military OneSource and the Guard Family Program—to name just a few—provide tremendous assets for Soldiers and their Families. And they allow the Guard to bring a vast amount of experience and resources to the Team Utah concept.

With the combined efforts of the National Guard, state government, businesses and corporate sponsors, Team Utah is coming through for Utah's Military Families.

For more information, contact MAJ Annette Barnes at: (801) 523-4533. 

# Attention Soldiers and Families!

*Below is information regarding programs and services available in your state. Please check back each issue for updates.*

## Alaska

(907) 428-6680

**April 11** Easter Holiday Event, NG Armory Drill Hall, Fort Richardson

**April 17-19** Volunteer Work Shop and Recognition Ceremony

**April 24** Friday Film Night, NG Armory Drill Hall, Fort Richardson

**April 25-26** PREP, Juneau

## California

[Calguard.ca.gov/readyfamilies](http://Calguard.ca.gov/readyfamilies)

(916) 361-4955

**April 18-19** TAG Symposium on Family Readiness, South San Francisco

**April 18-19** Marriage Enrichment Seminar, Sacramento

## Connecticut

(860) 493-2745

Child and Youth Programs

**April 4** Youth Activity, Hartford Armory

**April 11** Breakfast with the Easter Bunny, Hartford Armory

**April 21** CT Youth Council Meeting, Hartford Armory

**May 2** Youth Activity, Hartford Armory

**May 19** CT Youth Council Meeting, Hartford Armory

## Delaware

[DelawareNationalGuard.com/home/new/content/aboutus/Family.cfm](http://DelawareNationalGuard.com/home/new/content/aboutus/Family.cfm)  
(302) 326-7268

**April 17-19** Family Reintegration Retreat for OIF/OEF Veterans, Location TBD

**May 16** All Ranks Military Ball, Dover Downs Hotel, Dover

**May 29-31** Single Service Member Retreat, Location TBD

## Florida

(904) 823-0360

**May 29-31** Yellow Ribbon Reintegration, Tampa

## Georgia

[Gahro.com/Familyprogram/home.html](http://Gahro.com/Familyprogram/home.html)

(678) 569-5065

TBD Yellow Ribbon Reintegration, Fort Stewart

## Hawaii

(808) 672-1442

**April 25-26** Hawaii National Guard Annual

State Family Programs' Volunteer Workshop/ Youth Symposium, Waikiki, Oahu

**May 16-17** Strong Bonds Marriage Enrichment Workshop

## Idaho

(208) 272-4361

**April TBA** Financial Readiness Workshops, Pocatello/Idaho Falls

**April 3-5** Yellow Ribbon 90-Day ETT

**April 24-26** Idaho Family Programs Conference

**May 15-16** Pre-Marital Interpersonal Choices Knowledge (PICK), Boise

**May 29-31** Prevention & Relationship Enhancement Program, Sun Valley

## Indiana

[InARNG.org/Family2008/IndexFP2008.htm](http://InARNG.org/Family2008/IndexFP2008.htm)

(317) 247-3192

**April 17-19** Strong Bonds Couples

## Iowa

[IowaNationalGuard.com/Family/default.htm](http://IowaNationalGuard.com/Family/default.htm)

(515) 252-4416

**April 3-5** State Family Readiness Conference, Des Moines

**May 16-17** Marriage Enrichment: Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage, Council Bluffs

## Maine

[ME.NGB.Army.mil/Family](http://ME.NGB.Army.mil/Family)

(207) 626-4410

"On the 13th of December, the National Guard celebrated 372 years of service to the Nation. During that time, which began in the American colonies, we have consistently demonstrated the ability to recruit, train, mobilize and deploy units to fight the nation's wars and today have nearly 60,000 Citizen-Soldiers deployed around the world.

"What's new is the concept of a Joint Family Assistance Program (JFSAP) where each Adjutant General will have the responsibility, in their respective State or Territory, to integrate current and future staff and programs to ensure seamless outreach and support to military members and their Families of all components (Active Duty, Guard and Reserves).

"It is clear to me that one of my most important priorities in today's environment must be providing the best available support to our Service members and their Families throughout the cycle of mobilization,

deployment and reintegration. We recruit individual Service members but re-enlist Families. We owe them no less than our best effort in this cycle."

—MG John W. Libby, Adjutant General for Maine

## Massachusetts

[Mass.gov/Guard/Family\\_Program/Family\\_Support\\_MA/index.htm](http://Mass.gov/Guard/Family_Program/Family_Support_MA/index.htm)

(508) 233-7222

**April TBD** Deployment Briefings for 101st Engineers and the 125th Quartermaster, Location TBD

**April TBD** FRG Leadership Training and Volunteer Recognition, Wellesley Armory

## Michigan

[MI.NGB.Army.mil/Family](http://MI.NGB.Army.mil/Family)

(517) 481-8361

**April 17-19** State Volunteer Workshop, Boyne Mountain

**April 24-26** Strong Bonds, Boyne Mountain

## Minnesota

[MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/Families](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/Families)  
(651) 268-8300

**April 18** Family Reintegration Academy, Minneapolis Convention Center

**April 19** Family Programs Academy, Duluth DECC

**April 24-25** MN National Guard Enlisted Association 2009 Conference, Holiday Inn Duluth

**May 1-3** Youth Programs Speak Out, The Lodge, Brainerd

**May 11** ESGR Banquet, Golden Valley Country Club, Golden Valley

**May 12-14** FAC Training, Duluth

**May 15-17** Strong Bonds Retreat, Twin Cities Metro Area

**May 23** Monthly Individual Reintegration Training, Century College, White Bear Lake

## Missouri

[MOGuard.com/FamilyReadiness](http://MOGuard.com/FamilyReadiness)

(573) 638-9827

**April 4** Operation READY Training, Kansas City

**April 17-19** State Family Program Volunteer Conference, Springfield

**May 15-17** Strong Bonds, Kansas City



## Montana

MontanaGuardFamily.org  
(406) 324-3239

**April 17-19** State Volunteer Workshop and Youth Symposium, Great Falls

**May 15-17** Strong Bonds Couples, St. Mary/ Glacier Park

## Nebraska

Neguard.com/FAMILYASSISTANCE  
(402) 309-7331

**April 24-25** DeCA Commissary & AAFES (BX/ PX) Visit, National Guard Armory, North Platte

**May 16** Armed Forces Day Celebration, Mahoney

## Nevada

NV.NGB.Army.mil/Family.cfm  
(775) 887-7318

"The Nevada National Guard is undertaking the largest deployment in its history in April as the 1/221st Cavalry and the 1864th Transportation Company depart for Afghanistan and Iraq. We're a small state in Guard population, so taking about 700 Soldiers at one time is an awesome undertaking for us. It's taken a tremendous amount of work on everyone's part to make sure our Soldiers go out the door with the best possible equipment and training, the most security with their civilian employers and the most comprehensive plan for their Families left behind."

—MG Cindy Kirkland, Adjutant General for Nevada

## New Hampshire

NH.NGB.Army.mil/fp/  
(603) 225-1200

**April 25** Yellow Ribbon Reintegration, Concord

## New Jersey

(609) 530-6869

Reunion Briefs:

**April 4** Jersey City

**April 5** Vineland

**April 16** Cherry Hill

**April 19** Toms River

**April 27** Woodbridge

## New Mexico

NM.NGB.Army.mil/frg/index.html  
(505) 853-5668

**April 3-5** Strong Bonds, Albuquerque

**April 3-5** Yellow Ribbon Pre-Deployment, Albuquerque

## New York

Dmna.state.NY.us/Family/famredi.php  
(518) 786-4525

Quartermaster Company 30-Day Event, Marriott Hotel, Long Island

## North Dakota

www.Guard.Bismarck.ND.us/Family  
(701) 333-2058

**April 17-19** Volunteer Academy, Grand Forks

## Ohio

ONG.Ohio.gov/Family  
(614) 336-7352

**April 3-5** Ohio National Guard Family Readiness Conference, Columbus Marriott Northwest, Dublin

**April 18-19** Singles at the Crossroads Retreat, Columbus

**April 18-19** LINKS Marriage Enrichment Seminar, Toledo

**April 25** Hero Camps & Strong Family Workshop, Akron

**April 25-26** PREP Marriage Enrichment Seminar, Cleveland

**May 2-3** LINKS Marriage Enrichment Seminar, Columbus

**May 16** Hero Camps & Strong Family Workshop, Toledo

**May 30** Hero Camps & Strong Family Workshop, Bellefontaine

## Pennsylvania

MilVet.state.pa.us/DMVA/2881.htm  
(717) 861-9676

**April 19** Pennsylvania Army National Guard Day, Hershey Park

**April 24-26** Strong Bonds Single Soldiers, The Inn at Pocono Manor

**May 1-3** Strong Bonds Event, Hershey Lodge

**May 16** Armed Forces Day, City Island, Harrisburg

## Rhode Island

States.ng.mil/sites/RI/Familyprograms/default.aspx  
(401) 275-4162

Gov. Donald L. Carcieri signed into law the Rhode Island Military Family Relief Act in June 2008 that allows spouses or parents of

individuals called to service to request Family military leave.

## South Dakota

SDGuard.NGB.Army.mil/sites/famsup/default.aspx

(605) 737-6728

**April 4** Family Readiness Training, Chamberlain

## Tennessee

(877) 311-3264

**April 24-26** Strong Bonds Couples, Singles and Professional Development Workshops, Edgewater Hotel, Gatlinburg

## Utah

UT.NGB.army.mil/Family  
(801) 523-4533

**April 3-5** 60-Day Yellow Ribbon, Salt Lake City

**April 17-18** 60-Day Yellow Ribbon, Salt Lake City

**April 24-25** 30-Day Yellow Ribbon, Salt Lake City

**April 25** Resource Fair, Salt Lake City

**May 15** FRG, Treasurer and Guard Family Portal Training, St. George Armory, St. George

**May 15-17** 60-Day Yellow Ribbon, Park City

**May 16** 90-Day Yellow Ribbon, Camp Williams

## Washington

Familyprograms.washingtonguard.org  
(253) 512-7600

**April 24-26** State Family Programs Volunteer & Reunion Workshop, Location TBD

**May 16** Basic Volunteer Training, Yakima Readiness Center

**May 17** Phone Tree Point of Contact Training, Yakima Readiness Center

**May 17** FRG Treasurer Training, Yakima Readiness Center

## Wisconsin

(608) 242-3480

**April 8** Connection/Family Wellness, Oconomowoc

**May 1** Connections Info Session, Antigo

**May 6** Connections Info Session, Hayward

**May 29** Connections Info Session, Eau Claire

Don't see your state here? Let us know what events or programs are benefiting your Soldiers. Email [Editor@GuardFoundations.com](mailto:Editor@GuardFoundations.com).



# get fit

## Staying in Good Financial Shape During Deployment

*Courtesy of MILITARY ONESOURCE*

Unusual expenses and special pay and entitlements before, during and after a deployment can make it hard to create and stick to a budget. But if you take the time to understand your finances and plan your Family's spending, you can stay financially fit during deployment. The following information can help.

### Your spouse's deployment entitlements

If you know and understand your spouse's deployment monies and entitlements, you'll be in a much better position to budget and stay financially fit. Remember to use this extra money wisely—for instance, to pay down debt and to save with the Savings Deposit Program available during combat deployments.

Be sure to go to [MyPay.DFAS.Mil/MyPay.aspx](http://MyPay.DFAS.Mil/MyPay.aspx) to check your spouse's Leave and Earning Statements (LES). You will need your spouse's Social Security number and password to access his or her LES. Make sure you get this information before the deployment. And remember to keep security in mind when using your spouse's PIN to access financial accounts.

If your spouse is deployed for more than 30 days, he or she will be eligible for certain entitlements. If your spouse is on a combat deployment, short or long, depending on the unit, your spouse will receive other compensation for his or her hardships. Here are the entitlements:



**\* Family Separation Allowance (FSA).** This entitlement is given to service members deployed away from their Families for more than 30 days. If your spouse is deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, this pay will show up every month that your spouse is deployed. It ends when the service member comes home.

**\* Combat Zone Tax Exclusions.** If your spouse is receiving hostile fire pay because of an assignment to a combat zone, his or her pay will be tax-exempt. Although this means an additional amount in your spouse's paycheck, be mindful that this change in income may affect your taxes the following year.

**\* Hostile Fire/Imminent Danger Pay.** Depending where your spouse is deployed, if eligible, he or she will receive \$225 per month.

**\* Per Diem.** This is money paid out for each day your service member is deployed if the deployment is longer than 30 days. This pay will usually show up when your service member returns.

**\* Hardship Duty Location Pay.** This is a monthly payment for certain deployments. In Iraq and Afghanistan, your service member should receive \$100 per month.





### Special Ops/Rapid Deployment

In these types of units, where deployments can happen literally overnight, entitlements can fluctuate quickly. Be careful not to overspend. The following tips can help you stay on track financially:

**\* Check LES regularly,** as stated above, and make sure your spouse is getting paid correctly.

**\* Your spouse may be entitled to other special duty pay.** Regular monies, such as jump pay or other special pay, should continue during the deployment. Be sure to check on this each month.

**\* Be careful if your spouse is accidentally overpaid.** In some units, pay may change dramatically and quickly, so it's possible that your spouse may be overpaid at times. If this happens, be sure to report it to your administrative section. Don't spend the extra money until you have confirmed that it's truly yours. If there is an overpayment, the error will be noticed eventually, and you will be required to pay back the extra amount. Depending on the circumstances, the repayment may be taken in a lump sum, or it may be taken over several paychecks.

**\* Live off your usual financial plan.** Don't think of extra pay as extra money. Save as much as possible, and set up payments to pay down credit cards and other debt.

**\* Make sure you always know how to handle the bills.** With rapid deployments, it's especially important for you to completely understand all of your household bills and have access to the necessary accounts.

**\* Communicate about finances while your spouse is at home.** Make sure you agree on your budget, and make sure you are both honest about your expenses.

### Getting into a savings routine during deployment

Juggling bills you're not familiar with can be nerve-racking. If you prepare before the deployment, it will be easier to get into a simple routine during deployment. Ways to help keep your bills in check:

**\* Discuss the bills before your spouse leaves.** Make a list of all of your combined bills. Are any bills paid through automatic checking? For which bills will you need to send out checks? Be sure to figure out when all the bills are due. Also make sure that you have the necessary Powers of Attorney in place if you will have to make a purchase on behalf of your service member. If you are near an installation, the Legal Assistance Office can help with this. If not, you can obtain a list of local resources by contacting the Family Assistance Center closest to you.

**\* Don't overspend before the deployment.** Make a budget for deployment spending. Be sure not to go overboard with electronics and equipment you don't need.

**\* Keep an ongoing checklist of your bills.** Check your bank statement regularly to make sure that checks are clearing on time. If you need help balancing your checkbook, be sure to ask for help at your Family Support Center.

**\* Always keep some extra money in savings.** Even if it's just a few dollars from each paycheck, set it aside for emergencies. The Military Saves program at [MilitarySaves.com](http://MilitarySaves.com) can help you set savings goals, put them in writing and stick to them. Check out [FeedThePig.org](http://FeedThePig.org) and [360FinancialLiteracy.org](http://360FinancialLiteracy.org).

**\* Live off of your pre-deployment income.** Sometimes extra pay means that you have more income than you did

before your spouse was deployed, and you may be tempted to spend more. If this is your situation, try to live off your usual pre-deployment combined income, and use extra income to pay down debt or to put more into savings.

### Take advantage of extra savings during deployment

The Department of Defense (DoD) offers unique savings plans during deployment. If you take advantage of these higher-rate savings, you can build a nice nest egg for your family. Here are a few options:

**\* Savings Deposit Program.** At a very high rate of 10 percent, this is an excellent option for savings. It's available only during deployment. Continue the savings and earn extra interest during deployment. Go to [DefenseLink.mil/news/Dec2001/](https://DefenseLink.mil/news/Dec2001/) to find out more. You can also talk to a financial advisor on your installation to learn about the program. For more information, visit [ArmyOneSource.org](https://ArmyOneSource.org).

**\* Thrift Savings Plan (TSP).** If you don't invest regularly in this DoD safety net, definitely start during deployment. You're not likely to miss the money coming out every month, and you'll enjoy the benefits later on. Go to the TSP site at [TSP.gov](https://TSP.gov) for more information.

**\* Your Military Star Card offers special lower interest rates during deployment.** Make sure you or your spouse contact your Exchange Credit Services before the deployment. If you have other credit cards with a very high interest rate,


look at the service members' Civil Relief Act at [DefenseLink.mil/Specials/Relief\\_Act\\_Revision](https://DefenseLink.mil/Specials/Relief_Act_Revision) to see if you're eligible for reduced rates.

### Homecoming and overspending

Homecoming is an exciting time, and it can be tempting to overspend when you celebrate. So be careful—otherwise you're likely to be paying the price for a long time. Here are some ways to keep your homecoming debt free:

**\* During the deployment, take some of your savings and set them aside for a special occasion.** Even \$50 a month adds up.

**\* If you want to plan a vacation, go to your installation travel office for special post-deployment deals.** Also, if you're going to a family resort, be sure to ask whether special rates are available for service members returning from deployment and their families. Families not living close to a military installation can go to [ArmyWR.com/portal/travel](https://ArmyWR.com/portal/travel) for helpful information on military travel and discounts.

**\* Put some of your money where you can't get to it.** If you have extra money each month, ask your financial institution about the possibility of regularly investing a small amount. This is your best option for "hiding" your money, so you won't be tempted to spend it, and means that you'll have some extra cash later. 

## Other resources

### Defense Finance and Accounting Services

[DoD.mil/dfas/](https://DoD.mil/dfas/)

Everything you need to know about military finances.

### Military Pay

[Military.com/Benefits/Military-Pay](https://Military.com/Benefits/Military-Pay)

Understanding military pay and benefits.

### Military Money

[MilitaryMoney.com](https://MilitaryMoney.com)

Strategies for keeping more money in your account, including tips on new resources and programs for service members and their families.

### Your military support services

Each service branch sponsors information and support programs for service members and their families. You can call or visit any

installation Army Community Service Center, Marine Corps Community Services, Fleet and Family Support Center, or Airman and Family Readiness Center regardless of your branch affiliation.

If you aren't near an installation, National Guard Family Assistance Centers are available in every state. The Local Community Resource Finder on the National Guard Family Program at [GuardFamily.org](https://GuardFamily.org) will identify your closest center.

### Military OneSource

This free 24-hour service is available to all active duty, Guard and Reserve members and their families. Consultants provide information and make referrals on a wide range of issues. Up to six free face-to-face counseling sessions are also available. Call (800) 342-9647 or go to [MilitaryOneSource.com](https://MilitaryOneSource.com). Provided by the Department of Defense.





## healing wounded hearts

By MARCIA  
BEENE  
DICKERSON

April is Military Child Month. To underscore the important role children play in the Military community, *Foundations* is spotlighting Comfort Zone Camp, a bereavement camp for children who have lost a parent or significant loved one. The National Guard appreciates the caring and guidance this camp provides Military children and hopes this article captures their spirit.

A few hours' drive northwest of Newark, NJ, is a bucolic camp on the outskirts of town. Although the sign says, "YMCA Camp Mason," the campers and volunteers who arrive are not here for a YMCA camp.

Instead, they have come to heal their hearts. Comfort Zone Camp, aka CZC, is a place for children and youth who have lost a parent or significant loved one. CZC, founded by Lynne Hughes, who lost both of her parents by age 12, is the nation's largest independent bereavement camp, according to its website, [ComfortZoneCamp.org](http://ComfortZoneCamp.org).

### "You Are Not Alone"

"Our goal is to reach out to kids who think they're alone, but they're not," Hughes said. Helping children meet others who have similar experiences is key. It helps them understand there are others who identify with what they are going through. Losing a parent or significant loved one is remarkably difficult, but losing a Military parent is different.

Military kids "grieve in a fishbowl" because it's "hard to personalize their loss," acknowledged Hughes. This was evident after 9/11 when kids of the victims had no model to look to. "Military children who lose a parent are a lot like the 9/11 kids—there are not many people around them who 'get it,'" Hughes continued.

CZC has two locations: Camp Hanover in the Richmond, VA, metropolitan area and Camp Mason in the New York metropolitan area.

Several camps, which are Friday night through Sunday afternoon, are held each year for grieving children who come from across the country and range in age from 7–17. As of 1998, CZC has helped more than 2,900 children from 35 different states and Canada. Regardless of economic background, all children and youth attend the camps free of charge.

### Bringing Back the Fun

Although the idea of a camp for bereaved children may not sound like fun, there is a unique balance of entertaining and enjoyable activities along with time for reflection and

healing. Games such as four-square and kickball get the kids involved in physical activities. Likewise, other activities include hiking, fishing, swimming and making s'mores by the bonfire.

### Circles That Heal

Reflection and healing come in the form of "Healing Circles" led by professional grief counselors. The campers, along with their "Big Buddies"—volunteers who serve as the participants' mentor or friend while at camp—spend time in the Healing Circles sharing and reflecting on their lost loved one.


Each circle has a theme, with the initial one serving as the introduction of the lost parent or significant loved one with pictures or words. Later, Healing Circles explore ways of putting grief into words, finding healthy outlets such as journaling for those feelings, coping with the loss and moving forward.

### Powerful Service

The pinnacle of the weekend comes on Sunday, with the memorial service where campers can sing songs, recite poetry or express their personal growth in their own way. This service is conducted before Family and friends, and culminates in the releasing of balloons with personal messages to the lost loved one attached.

By the end of the camp, you see a tremendous amount of transformation. Children who reluctantly attended the camp are now hesitant to leave. They've formed a bond with their Big Buddies and others like them. The Big Buddies and other volunteers also experience a transformation brought about by the amazing resiliency and growth they witnessed in their little buddies.

Everyone who attends a Comfort Zone Camp leaves on Sunday with something they did not have when they arrived on Friday. Although most campers and volunteers find it hard to put into words, it may be said that over the course of two-and-a-half days, kindness, caring and understanding heal many hearts.

For further information (children, teens and adult volunteers), go to [Comfortzonecamp.org](http://Comfortzonecamp.org). 



### Making a Difference

By the age of 12, Lynne Hughes knew all about grief. At the age of nine, her mother died. Then three years later, her father passed away. Coping with the death of loved ones so early in life spurred a desire to make a difference in the lives of other children grieving the loss of a loved one. Lynne and her husband, Kelly, created Comfort Zone Camp, a non-profit organization based in Richmond, VA, in 1998. Since the tragic events of 9/11, Hughes and Comfort Zone Camp have held 18 satellite camps in the New York metropolitan area for the victims' children. In September 2005, she published her first book for Scholastic Press: *You Are Not Alone: Teens Talk About Life After the Loss of a Loved Parent*. Hughes currently resides in Rockville, VA, with her husband and two children.





# connecting the dots

## Military skills that translate into civilian jobs

By LYNNE YORK

**O**ne benefit of being a Soldier, aside from the chance to serve and protect America, is the exciting career opportunities available in the Army National Guard.

But what if you decide to change jobs or careers when you return to the private sector? Will your Armed Forces skills transfer?

Yes. Soldiers entering the civilian workforce can hit the ground running. And thanks to their military education, experience and state-of-the-art technical training, they're equipped with enthusiasm and a commitment to excellence.

### Defining Your Talents

Today, more and more companies see the value of your military expertise. Why? Your skills enable you to solve problems, handle adversity and adapt to change—talents that businesses need in order to be successful.

Skills fall into two groups: tangible and intangible. Tangible skills are concrete abilities necessary to do a specific job. For example, a computer technician needs knowledge of hardware and software programming to complete his or her task. Intangible, or “soft,” skills involve personal character traits such as integrity, ethics, leadership and loyalty.

“The military skills that help me most [as a federal police officer] are work ethic, integrity and professionalism,”

SFC Scott Wellsted of the Minnesota Army National Guard told *Foundations*.

The key to making a winning transition from military life to civilian success is understanding how your military occupational specialty (MOS) skills compare to civilian work skills.

“All of our military jobs can transfer into a civilian job,” said SGT Alyssa Vasquez of the Tennessee Army National Guard.

For example, your Guard job as an Avionic Mechanic trains you for civilian work with commercial airlines, aircraft maintenance firms and aircraft manufacturers.

Likewise, Topographic Surveyors, who conduct land surveys and prepare plans for construction projects, can become surveyors, mapmakers and cartographers.

### Web Surfing for Resources

A great place to start translating your military experience into civilian employment is online at O\*NET (OnetCenter.org), the Occupational Information Network. O\*NET matches military jobs with civilian counterparts through its comprehensive database of occupational skills, knowledge and abilities.

After entering O\*NET, the next step is to visit its interactive hub, [Online.OnetCenter.org](http://Online.OnetCenter.org). Here you can enter your MOS code into the Military Occupational Classification section in the Crosswalk Search, then click “Go.”



SFC Scott Wellsted joined the Minnesota National Guard in 1998 as a stinger gunner and now stands at attention while working as a federal police officer for the Minnesota Veterans Administration.

COURTESY OF SFC SCOTT WELLSTED



What follows is a summary report filled with sample job titles, related occupations, and wage and employment trends. You can also search using keywords or occupations.

You'll find additional information on skills translation at [HireVetsFirst.org](http://HireVetsFirst.org), [NationalGuard.com](http://NationalGuard.com), [Military.com](http://Military.com) and [TAOnline.com](http://TAOnline.com).

### Put Yourself to the Test

If you're unsure which commercial career to pursue, assessment testing can help steer you in the right direction.

The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) provides testing to active duty service members, National Guard and Reserve Soldiers, and spouses of members separating or retiring from the military.

The Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) administers assessment tests as well. Soldiers and Family members are eligible to use ACAP after 180 days of continuous active duty service and 180 days after return from active duty.

Part of the TAP assessment program includes informational workshops held at select military installations. During the workshop, you'll learn how to prepare a résumé and cover letter, and receive interview tips.

According to the Department of Labor, service members who have participated in the program find their first post-military job, on average, three weeks sooner than those who didn't.

To learn more about assessment testing, visit [TurboTap.org](http://TurboTap.org) or [Acap.Army.mil](http://Acap.Army.mil). You can also contact your State Transition Assistance Advisor.

### Finding Your Match

Once you identify which of your Guard skills will translate into civilian skills, and which career path is best for you, it's time to match yourself with employers eager to hire you.

Today, a majority of employment services are available with one click of a mouse.


"There are a lot of helpful websites for Soldiers needing civilian jobs," Vasquez said.

According to [RecruitMilitary.com](http://RecruitMilitary.com), a full-service, military-to-civilian recruiting firm, about 190,000 people transition out of active military duty every year. The agency offers help by providing free job services including résumé, interviewing and networking tips.

They also produce military career fairs nationwide and operate branch-specific websites. Visit [RecruitMilitary.com](http://RecruitMilitary.com) for more information.



**Thanks to your extensive military training and education, you have plenty to offer civilian employers.**

Thanks to your extensive military training and education, you have plenty to offer civilian employers. You're a renowned team player, mission-focused, motivated and ready to serve your country in a brand new way! 

**The following agencies offer online employment assistance to Guard Soldiers transitioning into a civilian career:**

- [HireAHero.com](http://HireAHero.com)
- [HireVetsFirst.gov](http://HireVetsFirst.gov)
- [MOAA.org](http://MOAA.org) (Military Officers Association of America)
- [RecruitArmy.com](http://RecruitArmy.com)
- [USAJobs.gov](http://USAJobs.gov)

# servicing singles

## Life as a single Soldier in the Army National Guard

By LYNNE YORK

**Unmarried Soldiers** currently make up about 50 percent of the Army National Guard's rank and file. This sub-group has a unique set of needs, and to ensure those needs are met, the Guard has retooled certain existing military support programs and launched new ones.

Take, for example, Strong Bonds. Initially designed for strengthening marriages, the program now offers solo Soldiers a fun workshop (hosted in their community) designed to help them find the right partner and develop healthy relational habits prior to

marriage. Through a nationally recognized curriculum, Strong Bonds Single Soldier attendees learn to examine relationship priorities, patterns of choosing a companion and ways to avoid making a poor partner decision, especially when facing transitional times like deployment.

Chaplain (CPT) Mark Phillips, Tennessee Strong Bonds program manager, utilizes the Premarital Interpersonal Choices & Knowledge (P.I.C.K.) curriculum at his workshops. P.I.C.K. teaches five relational choices: Know, Trust, Rely, Commit and

**MEET AND GREET:** Single Soldiers from Georgia's 48th Infantry Brigade gathered in Savannah for a weekend of relationship education.



“Strong Bonds isn’t therapy and it’s not a military briefing. It’s a singles retreat.”

—Chaplain (CPT) Mark Phillips





**Discover what the NACCRRRA Program advocates can do for you:**

- Determine needs and eligibility
- Answer questions and research options
- Assist with locating eligible care
- Fill out applications
- When necessary, advocate your Family's unique situation

**PREPPING FOR THE FUTURE:** Natalie Jenkins, PREP vice-president, and curriculum developer Lief Noll, teach a lesson on decision making to Soldiers of the 48th Infantry Brigade during Strong Bonds weekend in Savannah, Ga.

Touch. Phillips also includes a humorous DVD presentation called “Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage” and a session offering “A Bird’s Eye View of Dating.”

Although Strong Bonds’ purpose is to teach life skills, according to Phillips, one common misperception among Soldiers who haven’t participated is that it’s a counseling session.

“Strong Bonds isn’t therapy, [and] it’s not a military briefing. It’s a singles retreat,” said Phillips. In fact, time for recreation and relaxation are included in the weekend getaways.

Just as single Soldiers have a unique set of needs, so do single-parent Soldiers. And the Guard offers support to this group as well.

The National Association of Child Care Resource Referral Agency (NACCRRRA) recognizes the sacrifices Soldiers make and the impact deployment has on Families, especially when it comes to child care costs. NACCRRRA can assist parents in finding the best provider solutions and any available supplements to pay for child care.

The National Guard also supports Guard youth through

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## Unmarried Soldiers currently make up about 50 percent of the Army National Guard’s rank and file.

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its Family Assistance Centers and State Family Program offices. Specific state services can vary but many include youth camps, school programs and deployment activities.

In partnership with Child, Youth and School (CYS) Services, the Boys & Girls clubs and 4-H organizations offer military children hometown activities. Check out [Bgca.org](http://Bgca.org) and [National4-headquarters.gov](http://National4-headquarters.gov) to learn more about what’s available in your area.

The YMCA partners with the Guard at the local level as well, offering single and single-parent Soldiers free or reduced memberships, depending on their eligibility.

Whether by chance or by choice, being a single Guard Soldier can be challenging at times. But you don’t have to go it alone. With so many programs available, solo Soldiers can transform a solitary lifestyle into a rewarding and supportive social network. 

## For more information

or to participate in any of these programs, visit:

- [ArmyMWR.com](http://ArmyMWR.com)
- [OurMilitaryKids.org](http://OurMilitaryKids.org)
- [StrongBonds.org](http://StrongBonds.org)

Also, be sure to check out your State Family Programs Office, which can be found at [GuardFamily.org](http://GuardFamily.org).



# no muscle left behind

Keep your workout  
fun and effective with  
cross training

*By* LENA ANTHONY



**If** you're like most people, you have a "go-to workout" when it's time to exercise. Walkers stick with walking. Runners stick with running. And swimmers stick with swimming. It's what they know best. But what they might not know is that repeating the same old workout week after week could be keeping them from meeting their fitness goals, according to Kristin Calpino, a Nashville, TN-based certified personal trainer employed by the YWCA.

"When you always do the same activity, your body gets acclimated to it—so over time that activity becomes a less-efficient calorie burner," says Calpino, who has been training clients for more than 10 years.

"My advice to clients looking to break through an exercise rut or weight plateau is to do something different every day," Calpino said. "With cross training, your body doesn't get used to any one activity, so you're shocking your system every day. That keeps the energy level up throughout the duration of the activity, which results in greater calorie burn," she added. "What's more, since you're preventing overuse of the same muscles, bones and joints, you're going to be able to exercise longer and more frequently by cross training."

The best part: Cross training is so easy you can begin doing it at your next workout session. Here are a few tips from Calpino to get started.

**Take baby steps:** Does that elliptical machine look daunting? Don't know where your feet would go on that arm-bike-looking contraption in the corner of the gym? Instead of committing to doing something new for an hour, hop on it for 10 minutes. "The first step is just to get on a different machine at the gym," Calpino said. "If your routine is usually to walk 40 minutes on the treadmill, then do it for 20 minutes, jump on a new piece of equipment for 10 and then go back to the treadmill for the last 10 minutes. This takes away the intimidation factor."

**Ask for help:** Help is all around you. Want to try cycling? Start by taking a spin class where an instructor can walk you through the equipment and teach you correct form. If you're confused about a piece of gym equipment, find someone who works there to give you a demonstration. Or get a primer on running from [RunnersWorld.com](http://RunnersWorld.com).

**Remember to rest:** As with any exercise program, always designate at least one or two rest days per week. Also, Calpino suggested waiting at least 24-48 hours before performing the same exercise or using the same muscles. "If you run one day, don't do something the next day that would work your leg muscles," she said. "Use that day to work a different set of muscles before going back to legs."

**Have fun:** "Go into cross training with a good attitude and a sense of adventure," Calpino said. "With an open mind, there's always something different you can try, which will help prevent boredom and keep you excited about exercising." And who knows—with a try-anything attitude, you may realize what a great swimmer, runner or dancer you are. 🎯

**"When you always do the same activity, your body gets acclimated to it—so over time that activity becomes a less-efficient calorie burner."**

— Kristin Calpino

## Cross Training For All Types

Wondering what activity would complement your current routine? Check out these suggested workouts from certified personal trainer Kristin Calpino.

### If you run ...

Try swimming. "Swimming is good for a runner because it's non-impact but still keeps the heart rate up," Calpino said.

### If you do step aerobics ...

Try walking. Walking is a great cardiovascular activity, requiring only 30 minutes three times a week to obtain a good level of cardiovascular fitness. Your heart will definitely thank you for it.



### If you weight train ...

Try cardio. "Cardio should be an integral part of any fitness routine," Calpino said. "Alternate weight-lifting days with cardio of any sort." You could also incorporate cardio into your weight-lifting routines, such as adding quick bursts of treadmill running in between sets.

### If you cycle or swim ...

Try running. "When you're on a bike or in a pool, you're working muscles—but you're not building bone mass—so you need to have some weight-bearing activity to prevent brittle bones," Calpino said. Running is a good choice, but if that's too intense, try jogging, brisk walking or hiking. Step aerobics, stair climbing and any sport that requires direct contact with the ground will also help you build bone mass.

# a delicate balance

## Child care assistance for Guard Families

By LYNNE YORK

Whether you're a new parent or an experienced one, finding child care can be a challenging and confusing undertaking. And yet, it's one of the most important decisions a Family makes.

### Learn What's Best

Just as the reasons for needing child care vary for every Family, so do the factors in deciding who will watch your children—and where.

For example, what type of setting is best for your child? Will he or she flourish in a home or center setting, or will individual supervision from a friend, neighbor or relative be better?

There's also the cost of hiring a caretaker. Will your household budget be able to absorb the additional cost or will you need financial assistance?

With your child's well-being on the line, it's essential that you research every issue thoroughly before finalizing your decision.

### Become Child Care Aware

One group that's ready, willing and able to answer your questions is Child Care Aware.

"Every child is different, and parents know their own better than anyone else. So the best thing a parent can do when searching for providers is to ask questions," said Flor Philips, Associate Director of Child Care Aware.

In partnership with the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRRA), Child Care Aware (CCA) assists Soldiers and Families in locating quality care in their community.

"One of the reasons for this partnership [with NACCRRRA] is because there is such a great need for service members who don't have access to an installation. And together, we fill that need," said Philips.

"We want to make sure that all parents have a choice and know what to look for when seeking high-quality child care."

Families can contact Child Care Aware at (800) 424-2246 or by visiting its website, [ChildCareAware.org](http://ChildCareAware.org).

"Through the hotline calls and website visitors, our consumer education specialists get over 1 million inquiries a year," Philips said.

The specialists match parents with affordable and reliable child care through a network of organizations called Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies. Your local CCR&R agencies also have information about state licensing requirements, accreditation and financial assistance programs.


### More Than a Name

Child Care Aware isn't only about referrals.

"We also offer information that provides parents direction on issues such as qualifying for financial assistance and what questions to ask when they're interviewing providers," said Philips.

"And we work with other agencies that are federally funded, such as Head Start and the National Child Care Information Center," noted Philips. (Head Start is a nationwide school readiness program.)

### Peace of Mind

When it comes to finding the caregiver best matched to your child, know that you are not alone in your search. Friends and Family will support you and Child Care Aware will provide assistance. And your efforts will show in your child's smiling face. 

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### License to Care

The goal of child care licensing is to ensure the safety and developmental well-being of children. Licensing laws vary from state to state and provide a baseline of quality. Before making a final choice, contact your state's child care regulatory office.

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## 5 Steps to Choosing Quality Child Care

### 1. Start Early

Start looking as far in advance as you can. No matter what type of care you are considering—a child care center or care in someone else's home—finding the right child care option can take some time.

### 2. Make a Call

Begin your search by calling your local experts—your child care resource and referral agency.

### 3. Visit & Ask Questions

Make sure you visit the child care options you are considering.

### 4. Make a Choice

Think about what you saw at each visit, and make the best choice for your child and Family.

### 5. Stay Involved

The work isn't over when you find good care for your child. You and your child's caregiver are partners now.

#### Additional Resources

Two Army child care programs are available to National Guard Families—Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood (MCCYN) and Operation: Military Child Care (OMCC). Child Care Aware can assist National Guard Families seeking eligible providers and other care resources.

### Evaluating Providers

The following points are good ways to measure the quality of a child care home or center:

- Is the program licensed or regulated?
- Are the caregivers/teachers trained in CPR, first aid and early childhood education?
- Are parents' ideas welcomed?
- Is there enough staff to serve the children?
- Is there a fenced-in outdoor play area with a variety of safe equipment?
- Is there a daily balance of play time, story time, activity time and nap time?
- Will your child be happy there?

For more information on child care options in your area visit: [ChildCareAware.org](http://ChildCareAware.org)

# choosing a care option

By FRED D. MCGHEE II

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month and to recognize the sacrifices our brave Soldiers have made, *Foundations* is featuring care options available for Traumatic Brain Injury.

Brain injuries affect not only the Soldier, but the Family as well. This article discusses treatment options, but more important, it highlights the role Family plays in a Soldier's recovery. We salute the many programs the Guard has in place to support Soldiers and their Families, ensuring that, per one of the Guard's goals, "No Soldier is Left Behind."

Medical care for Soldiers returning from deployment is always a major concern for the Army. Many troops returning from both Iraq and Afghanistan require treatment for physical and psychological injuries received in combat. One of the most common post-war conditions is traumatic brain injury (TBI).

TBI is the result of the brain colliding against the inside of the skull, or shrapnel piercing brain tissue. The majority of TBI injuries are blast-related.

To better assist Soldiers in making the post-war transition to civilian life, the Army has made screening returning Soldiers for TBI a priority.

"Any patient who comes to Walter Reed Medical Center from theater is screened for TBI," said Dr. Aditya Bhagwat, neuropsychologist for the military medical facility. "If they have any injuries that look remotely like TBI, they will be screened by one of our staff. So there is a lot of education that occurs early on."

An early diagnosis is key in deciding the best care option. And determining the cause helps the attending physician make an accurate diagnosis—the first step in providing proper care. An incident history is important because TBI can be misdiagnosed, since it often shares symptoms with other conditions, like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

"It can also be that a Soldier has both [TBI and PTSD]. So the key to diagnosing is getting a good history of the event," said Bhagwat.


The recovery process for TBI is slow and requires patience, with months—or even years—of persistent rehabilitation required. It is important for TBI sufferers to concentrate on small, daily or weekly goals and not focus on the totality of their recovery.

"The small and attainable goals are a foundation of psychological recovery and rehabilitation. This process builds self-confidence throughout the recovery process," said MAJ Clifford Trott, Chief Behavioral Health Officer, Office of the Chief Surgeon, NGB-ARS.

There are two types of TBI: severe and mild. Severe TBI symptoms are strongest immediately after the incident and can resolve themselves over time with proper treatment. A worsening of symptoms is unusual, unless there is a second event.

There are major differences between mild TBI—such as concussions—and more moderate-to-severe TBI. But early treatment for all forms is similar, with the primary focus geared toward alleviating symptoms.

"Headaches and trouble sleeping are some of the most common complaints [with] mild TBI," said Bhagwat. "Sometimes we treat sleep symptoms with medication, and sometimes with behavioral changes and teaching good sleep hygiene." Regulating sleep patterns can have a big impact on the rest of the patient's functioning.

The same approach is used in treating moderate and severe TBI—trying to reduce symptoms through therapy, medication or both. 

## Care options for TBI Patients

**Therapy** – Most patients will require extensive rehabilitation. They may need to relearn basic skills, like walking and talking. Therapy usually begins in the hospital. Once a patient is well enough to leave, they may be transferred to a residential treatment facility for additional care.

**Surgery** – Many patients require immediate surgery to remove large deposits of clotted blood trapped between the skull and the brain to reduce pressure in the skull. Some sufferers may require surgery to repair skull fractures or remove skull fragments that are pressing into the brain.

**Medication** – Anti-seizure medications may be used to reduce seizures in moderate to severe cases, to prevent further brain damage. Diuretics, administered intravenously, may be used to decrease the amount of fluid in tissues and increase urine output, helping to reduce blood pressure and brain swelling.





The important thing to realize with any TBI injury is that advances in treatment have *significantly improved* prognosis for a majority of sufferers.



For more information about TBI, visit: [MayoClinic.com](https://www.mayoclinic.com)





National Guard MAJ W.D. Foster, in a wheelchair, and SPC Thomas Morgan are both nearing the end of their treatment with the Warrior Transition Unit at Fox Army Health Center. Foster suffered a spinal cord stroke while taking a physical training test with his Guard unit. Morgan was injured in a vehicle accident while serving in Germany.

# warrior transition units

## Help is Available for Soldiers in Need

By FRED D. MCGHEE II

The Army has established Warrior Transition Units (WTUs) to assist wounded Soldiers transitioning back into civilian life. WTUs are part of the Warrior Care and Transition Office, which is led by BG Gary H. Cheek.

The Army has established 36 WTUs at military installations around the country that coordinate the efforts of both civilian and Army resources to provide medical care for Wounded Warriors. For Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, nine Community Based WTUs (CBWTUs) were created to provide care closer to their families.

The Army's budget for WTU facilities and programs is an estimated \$1.2 billion. Currently, there are 10,500 Warriors in transition, and 2,373 Guard members in CBWTUs.

A three-member team, or triad, is tasked with supporting each Warrior in transition, ensuring they receive the care

their specific condition requires. The team includes a nurse caseworker, a physician and a squad leader.

"The triad helps with their medical and non-medical issues, like setting up appointments to receive specialty care and handling problems with pay or awards," said COL Daniel A. Kenkel, ARNG advisor to the Warrior Care and Transition Office. "They oversee the whole process."

The treatments available include holistic, physical, mental health and occupational therapy. A medical evaluation board determines the kind of care a Soldier receives.

The Army's goal is to have one squad leader for every 10 Soldiers and one nurse case manager for every 20 Soldiers. The squad leaders' duties include meeting with Soldiers and their Families. The WTU offers education and support services for Family members of transitioning Warriors.

"I believe the Army has a lot to be proud of," asserted Cheek. "It is going to get even better because we have some

COURTESY OF LTC SCOTT WALES

## What is WCTO (Warrior Care and Transition Office)?

WCTO develops, integrates and provides strategic direction for Warrior care initiatives and programs. These programs are dedicated to the support, care and healing of wounded, ill and injured Soldiers.

WCTO also assists Families and caregivers in order to develop a balanced Warrior Transition Unit structure that is ongoing and affordable, and can grow and respond to the Army and the needs of the Warriors in Transition.

great ideas to [improve] this program for Soldiers and their Families.”


Only a third of the Warriors in transition were evacuated from theater. The others were wounded in training or have illnesses unrelated to military training, such as diabetes or high blood pressure.

“It does not matter where a Soldier was injured or became ill, whether in combat, during pre-deployment training or in an accident,” Cheek explained. “We bring Soldiers into the program based on the severity of their condition.”

While the Army has made great strides providing Soldiers with the care needed for transitioning back into society, one obstacle remains: the Soldier mentality. A stigma exists within the Army regarding asking for assistance.

Some Soldiers fear asking for help will result in their being passed over for promotion or otherwise hindering their careers. Others view it as a sign of weakness.

Cheek said they are making progress getting Soldiers to seek care, but the stigma still remains.

“The tenacity of a Soldier to push through tough conditions and achieve a mission that is so vital in combat operations, is the mentality we have to combat to convince them to seek physical or mental care [when they need it],” Cheek said. 



The treatments available to Wounded Warriors include holistic, physical, mental health and occupational therapy.

### Triad of Care

National Guard SPC Jessica Newey, center, receives support from Community-Based Warrior Transition Unit representatives SFC Delois Williams, left, and MAJ Betsy Trimble. Williams is Newey's platoon sergeant and Trimble is her case manager. Newey has been undergoing medical treatment for injuries she sustained while serving in Iraq with the Alabama National Guard's 128th Military Police Company.

**WTUs PROVIDE LEADERSHIP**, non-clinical support, medical management and transition assistance for the Army's Wounded, Ill and Injured Soldiers (Warriors in Transition). The WTU Staffs are composed of Active Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers. WTU Staff are responsible for the day to day leadership and non-clinical support of Warriors in Transition, as well as assisting Warriors in Transition with planning their futures after the WTU. The Army National Guard is responsible for 380 staff positions at the WTUs ranging from Squad Leader to Battalion Commander. The CBWTUs are manned primarily by mobilized ARNG Soldiers who provide command and control (C2) for the Guard and Reserve Soldiers undergoing medical treatment within their neighborhood healthcare facilities.

For more information, go to: <http://www.behavioralhealth.army.mil/ng/index.html>.

## Interested in serving as Cadre at a WTU or CBWTU? Visit the following websites:

- Warrior Transition Unit (WTU): <https://gkportal.ngb.army.mil/sites/G1/SFSS/SSB/WTU/>
- Community-Based Warrior Transition Unit (CBWTU—formerly CBHCO): <https://gkportal.ngb.army.mil/sites/G1/SFSS/SSB/CBWTU/>



★ Becoming Resilient

# A Wounded Warrior and His Family Find Hope, Courage, Strength

By FRED MCGHEE II    *Photography by MIKE MALONE*





Three years ago, Jenny Briest was lying alone in bed, praying and hoping that the phone wouldn't ring and that there would be no knock at the door. Jenny's husband, SGT Corey Briest, lay in the hospital, critically wounded.

### No news was good news.

Jenny's husband was teetering between life and death. A phone call would cause anxiety—fear that the worst had happened. Adding to her anxiety was what to tell their two young children—Kylie, 7, and Connor, 4—if they lost their father.

A member of the C-Battery 1/147th Field Artillery in Yankton, SD, Corey was serving his first tour in Iraq, when the second Humvee of his convoy hit a roadside bomb. Corey, who was riding in a different vehicle, was called in to help his fellow Soldiers in the damaged Humvee.

As he rushed to their aid, a second roadside bomb detonated. The blasts killed three members of Corey's Guard unit. Corey survived—barely. He suffered debilitating wounds that would change not only his life, but the lives of his Family as well.

The blasts sent shrapnel into his brain, causing severe traumatic brain injury (TBI), along with a multitude of other long-term wounds, including permanent blindness due to brain swelling. He would from then on require intensive therapy and constant care.

The disaster caused major upheaval in the lives of the Briests, with everyone's schedule thereafter revolving around Corey's needs. They lost all semblance of a "normal life."

"I tell people that this is our 'new normal,'" Jenny said. "[Life] has totally done a 180 on us."

But Corey fought back. It was a different kind of battle. One that required a new type of strength. An inner resolve. Resilience.

Since the disaster, Corey and Jenny have learned a lot about resilience.

### New battle

The road to recovery has not been an easy one for Corey, an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) before joining the Guard.

He receives physical, occupational and speech therapy three times a week. The regimen is strenuous. He spends hours each day trying to regain his ability to speak and to do small tasks that most people take for granted, like getting dressed in the morning or walking to the mailbox.

But rather than get depressed or discouraged, Corey focuses on winning those daily battles. He taps into that special resolve of a Soldier—the fighting spirit.

"The best thing is Corey's determination," Jenny said. "He never says 'no.' Sometimes he may not be in the mood to work out. But he pushes harder and harder. When he gets frustrated or can't do something, he'll just say, 'The next day will be better.'"

### Making strides

Although the Briests have settled into a daily routine that revolves around Corey's therapy, Jenny attempts to keep life as normal as possible for her Family. A typical day starts with getting the kids up and ready for school. After dropping them off, Jenny and Corey run errands until it's time for Corey's therapy session.

In addition to sessions with a therapist, the Briests have

(Continued on page 36)

**“From the minute we knew of Corey's injuries, we just wanted him to be okay.”** —Jenny Briest



## 9 Ways to Improve Your Resiliency

**Get connected.** Build strong, positive relationships with family and friends who can listen to your concerns and offer support. Volunteer or get involved in your community.

**Use humor and laughter.** Remaining positive or finding humor in stressful situations doesn't mean you're in denial. Humor is a helpful coping mechanism.

**Learn from your experiences.** Recall how you've coped with hardships in the past, either in healthy or unhealthy ways. Build on what helped you through those rough times and don't repeat actions that didn't help.

**Remain hopeful and optimistic.** While you can't change events, look toward the future—even for just a glimpse of how things might improve.

**Take care of yourself.** Tend to your needs and feelings, both physically and emotionally.

**Accept and anticipate change.** Be flexible. Try not to be so rigid that even minor changes upset you or that you become anxious in the face of uncertainty.

**Work toward goals.** Do something every day that gives you a sense of accomplishment. Even small goals can be important, and help direct you toward the future.

**Take action.** Don't just wish your problems would go away or try to ignore them. Instead, figure out what needs to be done, make a plan and then do it.

**Maintain perspective.** Don't compare your situation to that of somebody you think may be worse off. You'll probably feel guilty for being down about your own problems.

Source: *The Mayo Clinic*





(Continued from page 34)

a mini-workout room in their home where Jenny puts Corey through additional rehabilitation. “We work on the things he does in therapy and try to get him [even] stronger,” Jenny explained. “Plus, we work on his speech at home.”

Jenny gave up her career as an elementary special education teacher to become Corey’s full-time caregiver. But she’s glad she made that decision. “He has made so many gains that I don’t think he would have made if I weren’t here,” she said.

Since he has been back home, Corey has made slow but steady strides in his rehabilitation. No longer in a wheelchair,

he now walks with the assistance of a cane. His speech, through countless hours of therapy, has become clearer, though it is still difficult for people to understand him.

“I think the huge gain we’ve made is cognitive. We had many doctors tell us he [lacked] cognitive [functions],” Jenny said. “Now, his short-term memory is getting better by the day, and his mathematical skills are right on. The things that you would not think he could do, he can do.”

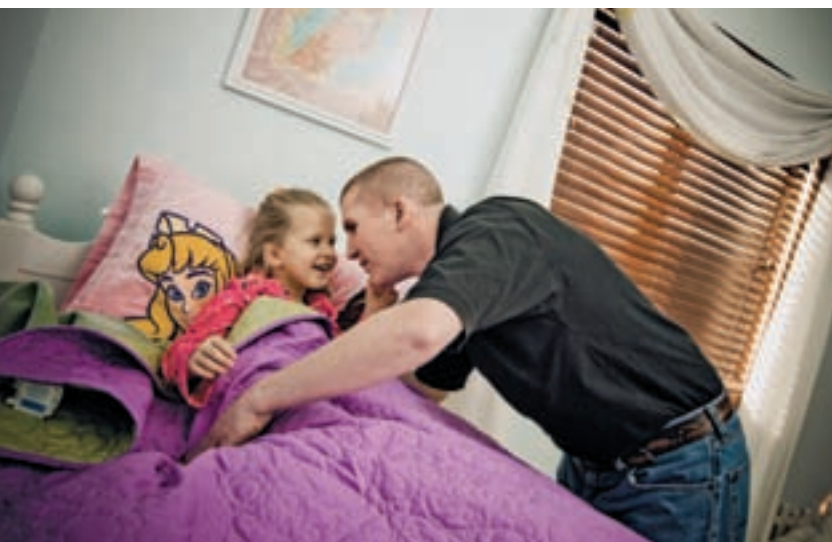
Every day, Corey regains more independence—so much so that he’s considering getting a job. Not for the paycheck, though—just for something to do. To be productive.

“I tell people it’s the Soldier in him,” Jenny said. “A Soldier doesn’t just sit around. [A Soldier wants] to do something.” For now, he’s content with helping out around the house—although he hates washing dishes. “Typical guy,” she laughed.

### Revised script, new roles

Corey’s condition thrust Jenny into a new role—head of the household. Before the accident, she was more laid-back, quiet and easy-going. Circumstances have forced her to become more assertive. But she doesn’t mind. “When somebody you love needs you this badly, it doesn’t matter,” she confided.

Still, Jenny revealed, sometimes she does get overwhelmed or feels her resolve start to weaken. To stay resilient through the daily challenges, she leans on Family members for strength and support, having learned that one of the keys to making it through the hard times is





For more information about traumatic brain injury (TBI) see "Choosing a Care Option," page 28.

memories of the three members of their unit who were killed that day—memories they would rather forget.

But Corey chooses not to forget, according to Jenny. She said not a day goes by that he doesn't talk about them.

### Making plans, setting goals

Throughout his trials, Corey has remained positive, not letting his physical limitations affect the personality that so many love and honor.

In fact, three years to the day after the incident—Dec. 4, 2008—the Briests celebrated "Alive Day," a day when Veterans with severe combat injuries celebrate life. By Jenny's account, more than 60 friends, Family members and well-wishers came to the Briests' home to support Corey in his recovery.

"It was a great way to [honor] what he has [accomplished since the accident]," Jenny said.

Corey also maintains an active schedule. For example, a longtime avid bike-rider, he traded in his 10-speed for a two-seater that he and Jenny can ride together. And on that bike, with Jenny at the handlebars, Corey participated in a 5K-benefit ride for the Family of a former classmate who had passed away.

"He was so proud of himself," Jenny recalled. But that was only the beginning of Corey's plans to resume a life of activity and service. His next mission: a Soldier Ride with the Wounded Warrior Project. 

asking for help and not being afraid to show emotion.

"Sometimes all I really want to do is cry," she admitted. "[But I know] it's okay to feel that way."

"Support systems are crucial to the recovery process. This includes Family members, community support networks and ARNG support networks," said MAJ Clifford Trott, Chief Behavioral Health Officer, Office of the Chief Surgeon, NGB-ARS.

Adding to Jenny's stress are the needs of their two kids. Connor is too young to recall what his dad was like before the injury, but Kylie remembers. And the "new normal" has been an adjustment for her, too. She watches her father struggle daily through his painful rehabilitation. But she also has tremendous resiliency and resolve beyond her years, remaining by his side, guiding him around and helping administer medicine through his feeding tube. She even does physical therapy with him, playfully telling him, "Daddy, I'm your little therapist."

"We know she is going to do something in the medical field because she is so passionate about helping her dad out," Jenny said.

Kylie's enthusiasm motivates Corey, and one of his long-term goals is to walk her down the aisle on her wedding day. "When he says that it makes her smile," said Jenny, adding that the kids play a significant role in his recovery.

While the Briest Family has adjusted to the "new normal," the transition has not been easy for members of Corey's unit. Seeing him is difficult for them because it brings up

## Characteristics of Resilient People

- \* You adapt to change easily.
- \* You feel in control of your life.
- \* You tend to bounce back after a hardship or illness.
- \* You have close, dependable relationships.
- \* You remain optimistic and don't give up, even if things seem hopeless.
- \* You can think clearly and logically under pressure.
- \* You see the humor in situations, even under stress.
- \* You are self-confident and feel strong as a person.
- \* You believe things happen for a reason.
- \* You can handle uncertainty or unpleasant feelings.
- \* You know where to turn for help.
- \* You like challenges and feel comfortable taking the lead.



**"I tell people it's the Soldier in him. A Soldier doesn't just sit around. He wants to do something." —Jenny Briest**



# support

## Resources for Guard Families



# decade of health

## Resilient Families

By ANN M. STARK

**R**esiliency has many definitions, but one often used comes from the American Psychological Association. “Resiliency ... involves behaviors, thoughts and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone. Being resilient does not mean that a person doesn’t experience difficulty or distress.

“Emotional pain and sadness are common in people who have suffered major adversity or trauma in their lives. In fact, the road to resilience is likely to involve considerable emotional distress.” In fact, resilience is the “ability to adapt and recover from stress.”

One of the most important parts of resilience seems to be the physical response to positive emotions. They quicken the body’s ability to rebound from negative emotions and may even make a person better able to handle future stress. The link between positive emotions and clearer thinking seems to strengthen both, which in turn leads to greater coping skills.

Military Families are particularly challenged during these times of long, multiple cycles of deployment. Stressors occur in both the home and military setting. LTG Clyde A. Vaughn, Director, Army National Guard (ARNG) recognizes Soldiers and their Families as they continue to serve the nation proudly in two major operations, and take the lead in Homeland Security and disaster preparedness.

Vaughn also acknowledges that the unprecedented scope of this mission places considerable stress on the Guard Family. He recommends using the information and tools located on the Decade of Health website at [DecadeOfHealth.com](http://DecadeOfHealth.com).

How do smart Families stave off stressors and build resilience? Smart Families are Ready Families. By building resilience every day through learning how to identify stressors, addressing them and communicating with each other to develop coping skills.

Here are some of the traits that can be found in resilient Families:

**Positive attitudes:** Remember that you’re an important part of an important mission. And that you are prepared for this.

**Positive emotions:** Positive emotions are linked to better health, clearer thinking, flexibility, creativity, quickened response time. Use them to help you recover from negative emotions and experiences.

**Hope and optimism:** Believe in hope and harbor optimism. “We can get through this and will be okay.”

**Gratitude and Openness:** We’re grateful for past successes, friends, Family and life in general. Know that it is acceptable to ask for and receive help if you need it.

**Humor:** Believe in laughter and find humor in yourself. Appropriate humorous activities are stress-relievers.


According to most studies, we are all born with resiliency. Building on and reinforcing that resiliency is a lifelong process that enhances flexibility, adaptability and other coping tools and skills.

Here are some exercises that can build coping skills:

- Define the responsibilities of Family members—for everyday and crisis situations.
- Play the “Past, Present, Future” game. What challenges past, present and/or future has the Family met or might meet? How did/will we cope and what did/will we learn?
- Practice solving a problem as a group and identify more than one way to solve it.
- Use the buddy system and look out for Family members, friends and coworkers.
- Develop a variety of positive tools such as rapid assessment techniques, stress busters and relaxation responses, and an emergency preparedness plan.

The ARNG Ready and Resilient Campaign will provide novel educational and training resources, links to existing Family and Soldier support services, and personal real-life stories of readiness and resilience.

The 2009 campaign will foster enhanced control by providing tools and options to deal with stress. Campaign material, information, and tools are located at [DecadeOfHealth.com](http://DecadeOfHealth.com).

A strong partnership with the ARNG Soldier Family Support and Services Division will strengthen the campaign outreach and participation. 



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# protect your score

## Getting and Keeping a Good Credit Score

By BILL HUDGINS

As the financial crisis continues, many banks and other financial institutions cite credit scores as the reason to turn down loans, deny credit card applications, and lower limits or raise rates on existing cards.

**Y**our score tells potential lenders how big a risk they're taking in lending you money.

"A low score has consequences outside of borrowing money," according to LTC Joseph Montanaro, a certified financial planner with USAA Financial Planning Services. "It may affect your ability to get approved for a residential lease, get a good deal on insurance or even land a job outside of the military."

If you're not sure what your credit score is, it's time to find out. By law, the three credit bureaus—Experian, TransUnion and Equifax—must allow you to get a free copy of your credit report once a year; for a small fee they will also provide your score (AnnualCreditReport.com). BrightScore.com allows active-duty service members to access their scores for free.

### Fixing your credit score

The credit score scale runs from 300 to 850, with the average score falling in the upper 600s. A score below 620 can indicate that you've had problems managing credit. If you can get your score above 700, you may qualify more easily for better interest rates.

Being late on paying bills or missing a payment on your mortgage, car note or even your cell phone bill could cost you precious points and stain your credit history for up to seven years, Montanaro says.


Carrying too much credit—such as maxing out credit cards—can damage your score, as can paying just the minimum on outstanding balances.

Having too many inquiries into your credit report in a short period of time can cause problems as well, he says.

The first step in repairing your credit is finding out what lowered your score.

"Some industry experts estimate that as many as one in four credit reports contain errors that can damage your credit score," Montanaro says.

Once you've corrected any mistakes, it's time to repair the problems. The steps are similar to those for getting a good score in the first place:

- Stop using high-interest cards. Pay more than the minimum on each card. If that's not possible, focus on the card with the highest interest rate.
- Get your monthly expenses under control and pay every bill on time.
- Avoid "payday advance" or "title loan" businesses, which often prey on cash-strapped service members and their Families and charge sky-high interest rates. 







# our military kids



By JAMIE ROBERTS

When Soldiers deploy and leave Families behind, continuing the kids' after-school activities may seem like the least of your concerns. Work demands, tight finances and an especially hectic schedule may take precedence over such pursuits. But it's precisely those extracurricular activities that provide the sense of normalcy and routine your children need in times of upheaval and stress.

With a mission of supporting military Families, Linda Davidson and Gail Kruzel co-founded Our Military Kids, a nonprofit organization that helps National Guard and Reserve Families operate normally in times of deployment or injury.

Our Military Kids provides grants to children of deployed and severely injured National Guard and Reserve Soldiers so they can participate in enrichment activities and tutoring while a parent is away.

"The grants cover a gamut of programs—from martial arts to art classes to gymnastics to Boy Scouts to horseback riding, sometimes even summer camps or school trips," Kruzel said.

Each grant provides up to \$500 for six months of an activity. Families can apply for additional grants if the deployment order is for an entire year. There are no income qualifications, and Families do not have to repay the money.

## Making Connections

Although neither Davidson nor Kruzel have Family or close friends serving in the National Guard, Kruzel came to understand the issue while her husband was on a civilian peace mission in Bosnia. "I know the sacrifices that Families make, especially when raising young children," she explained.

Both women were inspired to start the program after spending time with Families of deployed Soldiers of the Army Reserve and National Guard. One mother in particular made an impression. During her husband's deployment, she had to take out a second mortgage to put her special-needs son in private school and keep her daughter in cheerleading. "She wanted life to be as normal as possible while their dad was gone," Kruzel said.

Stories of personal sacrifice from not only the Soldiers serving, but also the Families supporting them back home, gave the organization its mission.

"Until I heard their stories, I didn't really know what the personal impact was on Families when a parent is deployed overseas," Davidson said. "I quickly learned how disruptive a deployment, especially an overseas one, could be to the routines of those children. We know that if a child starts to slip in school, or becomes withdrawn or angry, it can be essential to keep going with extracurricular activities.

"It's important to have this distraction and the positive outlet, especially when Family is gone," she explained. "Plus, involvement helps children cope and develop life skills."

## Building a Solid Reputation

Our Military Kids is a private/public partnership, with funding coming from charitable foundations, corporations and the Army National Guard.


The organization recently hired Michelle Nelson, the wife of a National Guard Soldier, as director of Family programs and community relations. "When there's a large deployment, Michelle goes in and talks to the units about this program and garners support in the local communities," Kruzel said.


The group's goals for 2009 include expanding the support and recognition of children with deployed parents. Davidson said the program appreciates the support it has received from LTG Clyde A. Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard.

"He has provided us with financial support and helped us raise awareness," she said. "It can be hard to get information to people scattered all over the country, but we want to reach even more Families with parents being called up to Afghanistan and Iraq."

Our Military Kids also wants to do more outreach to the children of severely injured National Guard Soldiers.

"It can be tough for Families of injured service members when they return home," Davidson explained. "Unlike other branches of the military, when the National Guard comes home from a deployment, they usually aren't near a military installation where they can take advantage of the support services available. In fact, he or she might be the only person in town who is affected by the deployment. We want to reach out to Families in those communities."

To contribute to this program or apply for a grant, visit [OurMilitaryKids.org](http://OurMilitaryKids.org). 



Grants from Our Military Kids cover programs including martial arts, art classes, gymnastics, horseback riding and summer camps.



# balancing act

How to juggle work, school and Family—without losing your mind

By MEGAN PACELLA

Going back to school is a huge time commitment, especially if you're working and raising a Family, too. Worried that you can't juggle all your responsibilities? Try these commonsense hints for nailing down a routine that will help you strike a balance—and ensure more time for yourself.

## □ Prioritize

Sit down at the beginning of every week and make two lists. One should include tasks you must accomplish by the week's end, and the other should list things you'd like to do if time permits.

Start with the must-do list, and once you've checked off every task, get to work on your other list. Items like attending classes, completing homework assignments and getting the kids to soccer practice are important. Don't get so preoccupied (or distracted) with something you'd like to do—such as organize your closet—that you don't have time for the things that really matter.

## □ Ask for help

You can't do everything by yourself. Assign chores to other members of your household to distribute the housework evenly.

Inform your professors that, in addition to taking classes, you also have work and Family responsibilities. If they know your circumstances, they might be willing to offer extensions on assignments or additional help outside of class.

At the beginning of each semester, give your manager at work a list of test dates, so he or she knows when you will need extra time off.

## □ Stay organized


Buy a planner and jot down your work schedule, class assignments and Family activities. Take a few minutes each week to look at the following week's responsibilities, and note things you can do immediately to help lighten your load.

Once you get into the habit of planning ahead, you'll create more breathing room for yourself.

Also, organize each day into manageable chunks of time, limiting yourself to only a few hours for each task. Enforcing time limits will help maximize productivity, so you'll have a few minutes to wind down with your Family each evening.

## □ Schedule free time

If you fill every second with work, school and Family, you're likely to get burned out before the end of the semester. Set aside a few hours a week to do something you enjoy.

Quality alone-time will leave you feeling recharged and ready to take on anything from midterms to extra hours at work to parent-teacher conferences. 



MSG Henry Renteria deployed to Qatar in 2006. While there, he served as the NCOIC of the force protection nightshift for the 111th Air Defense Artillery Brigade. Back home in New Mexico, he's the Maintenance Supervisor for the New Mexico Department of Transportation. Renteria juggles his Guard duty and civilian employment on top of being a husband and father. Married for more than 25 years, Renteria has four children.

support 

Set aside a few hours a week to do something you enjoy. Quality alone time will leave you feeling recharged and ready to take on anything.

## BOOK REVIEW

### *A Year of Absence*

*Six women's stories of courage, hope and love*

By Julie Zeitlin

Six women. Fifteen months. No easy answers.

*A Year of Absence* is an intimate account of the struggles faced by six military wives whose husbands are deployed for a 15-month tour.

It was 2003, and the six husbands, all members of the U.S. Army's First Armored Division, were deployed to Iraq from their base in Baumholder, Germany, where the Families were stationed. The wives—like military spouses of deployed Soldiers everywhere—were left behind to worry, wonder, wait and learn to manage their households without them.

Their challenges are at once unique and universal to military Families everywhere. Financial woes. Medical problems. Caring for young children—including newborns. Loneliness. Sadness. And the ever-present fear of the unknown—would they ever see their husband again? If so, would he be the same?


Each woman reacts differently to the strain of separation. Some of them maintain positive attitudes, finding ways to channel their emotions by volunteering with Family Readiness Groups.

Others become depressed about the upheaval the deployment causes in their lives.

To compound their stress, the tour—originally scheduled for one year—was, at the last minute, extended by three months.

Though they don't know each other, Beth, Teresa, Jena, Tasha, Kristina and Diane share a powerful bond—one shared by military Families of deployed Soldiers everywhere: the bond of honor.

In *A Year of Absence*, even through the toughest times, rays of light and hope shine through. The women learn to turn to others—Family, friends and community—for support. There, they find solace, courage, laughter and wisdom. They gain emotional strength. And they discover resiliency, persevering through the most difficult times.

If deployment has touched your life, this book will speak to your heart. Because through this crystal-clear window into the daily problems and triumphs of these six wives, you will find hope and comfort, and realize that, truly, you're not alone. 



# above & beyond

SFC Billy Davenport and his wife,  
SGT (Ret.) Roxanne Davenport

*Story and Photos By FRED McGHEE II*

**T**hey sit in funeral homes across the country. Simple urns hold the identified, yet unclaimed remains of Soldiers who received no medals, homecoming ceremonies or hugs from welcoming arms. It has grown easy to forget the sacrifice that many Soldiers have made in defense of freedom. But the members of one organization—Rolling Thunder Inc.—have made it their mission to never let Americans forget the sacrifices those Soldiers made in service to their country.

## Soldiers Honoring Soldiers

One couple who exemplifies what Rolling Thunder is about is SFC Billy Davenport and SGT Roxanne Davenport. The Davenports, both members of the Tennessee National Guard, joined Rolling Thunder in 2004 after returning from assignment in Kosovo.

Billy has been in the National Guard for more than 31 years. Roxanne was in the Guard for 12 years as an E-5 Blackhawk crew chief, before retiring due to a knee injury sustained during a training exercise. Both were attracted to Rolling Thunder because of the organization's message and the work it does supporting and honoring America's veterans.

"The main mission of Rolling Thunder is to keep the POW/MIA issue alive—to let people know that there are still POWs out there," said Billy.

Rolling Thunder is a non-profit organization with more than 88 chapters throughout the country. Its members are Veterans, Soldiers and their Family members, who donate their time without compensation. Funds collected are tax-exempt and used to assist Veterans, active military and their Families.

The TN-1 chapter of Rolling Thunder in Tennessee has over 100 members. They sponsored more than 100

fundraising events in Middle Tennessee during 2008.

But while the Davenports enjoy assisting Veterans and believe in the organization's mission, they caution that it is sometimes challenging to champion a cause most of the general public would rather forget.

"A lot of people come to us and ask us what we are about. They think it's a good cause, but say they just don't have the time," Billy said.

Soon, he won't have time to participate, either. A member of B Company 1/224th, Billy is scheduled to deploy to Iraq in May for 12 months, after volunteering to go with the 1/230th out of Smyrna, TN.

He won't be alone. The couple's daughter, Billy-Jean Grinder, is a Delta OH-58 helicopter pilot with 1/230th Air Cavalry Squadron. The Davenports also have a nephew and a son-in-law deploying to Iraq. Another daughter, Melissa, is a linguist in the California National Guard, but has not received deployment orders.

For Roxanne, it will be difficult to watch so many loved ones deploy. But she finds comfort in the fact that they will be there together, able to support one another if times get tough.

"Right now, it's not bothering me—but the day they leave, it will bother me," Roxanne said. "But at least I know





**Ready and Willing:** SFC Billy Davenport stands in front of a Blackhawk medical rescue chopper. Davenport, a National Guard member for 31 years, volunteered for a 12-month deployment to Iraq as part of the 1/230th out of Smyrna, TN.


**Collecting for Military Kids:** Members of the TN-1 chapter of Rolling Thunder of Middle Tennessee annually collect money to buy Easter baskets for children of deployed Soldiers.

they're all together. That's kind of comforting."

### Hitting the Road for a Cause

For the last four years, May has been a month for a different type of deployment excitement: the annual Memorial Day bike ride to Washington, DC. Rolling Thunder members and supporters trek cross-country in support of the organization's mission, culminating in a weekend event at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. More than 500,000 motorcycle enthusiasts make the trip.

Roxanne has not decided whether she will load up her Harley-Davidson Softail Deluxe and join her fellow TN-1 chapter members on the journey to the nation's capital. Because of Billy's deployment, she would have to go without him.

"I'm going to miss it this year and I'll miss the camaraderie," Billy said. "But if she still wants to go, I'll back her 100 percent. Plus, she would be going with a good group of people." 



**Guard Family:** Roxanne Davenport, a former Sergeant and Blackhawk crew chief, retired from the National Guard after 12 years of service. Davenport currently serves as secretary for the TN-1 chapter of Rolling Thunder.

For more information visit [RollingThunder.org](http://RollingThunder.org)



# On Patrol

How many military terms can you find in the puzzle below?

Y	E	L	D	A	R	B	S	L	R	N	R	B	M	K
P	M	M	P	X	J	T	D	E	V	S	D	I	F	C
B	R	R	Y	I	R	P	I	M	I	P	L	T	J	A
E	M	V	E	Y	L	D	B	W	C	I	O	A	B	S
S	X	X	K	T	L	O	A	H	T	A	P	N	B	K
R	E	E	V	O	P	S	T	A	O	J	X	K	N	C
E	R	R	S	U	M	O	R	T	R	B	Z	O	A	U
G	E	P	V	A	S	Y	C	W	Y	F	C	J	S	R
N	G	V	R	I	P	U	N	I	F	O	R	M	N	O
A	X	B	M	O	C	U	X	X	L	B	O	O	T	S
R	A	R	L	U	D	E	W	B	O	E	W	T	K	O
C	Z	I	M	K	H	L	I	H	K	E	H	Z	C	G
L	C	S	E	C	R	O	F	L	A	I	C	E	P	S
E	G	F	A	W	D	M	T	Q	T	G	S	K	C	G
N	D	Z	Q	M	F	A	V	H	Y	S	H	H	S	F

- |                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| ABRAMS          | SERVICE |
| BOOTS           | SOLDIER |
| BRADLEY         | STRYKER |
| HELICOPTER      | SGT     |
| UNIFORM         | MRE     |
| HUMVEE          | TANK    |
| VICTORY         |         |
| PILOT           |         |
| RANGER          |         |
| RUCKSACK        |         |
| MILITARY POLICE |         |
| SPECIAL FORCES  |         |





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# THERE WHEN YOU NEED US

## The Soldier Family Support and Services (SFSS) Division

is a diverse division focused on the care of Soldiers and their Families. Some of the programs we handle are: Child and Youth Services, Spouse Employment and the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration program. We have several other programs that are equally as important, and we continue to expand our role in Soldier and Family care issues and Deployment Cycle Support.



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**SUPPORT and SERVICES**

If you need information about these programs or have comments about *Foundations* magazine, please send them to [ngb-sfss@ng.army.mil](mailto:ngb-sfss@ng.army.mil).