



*Math Matters!*

**Department of Defense Education Activity  
Office of the Director, DoDDS Europe  
Diana J. Ohman, Director**

Revised 5 January 04

**THINGS WE'VE DONE**

- Revised Crisis Planning and Response Guidance (Our deployment related issues are addressed in our Crisis Plans)
- Provided specific guidance to principals on steps to be taken to initiate crisis responses and address family support
- Asked USAREUR to have Family Support Directors coordinate with principals
- Sent newsletters and correspondence to senior commanders regarding family support and school steps to be taken
- Created Crisis Teams at each school (112)
- Provided training at all levels of organization using in-house expertise
- Provided training and a curriculum by Dr. Tom Hardaway, US Army psychiatrist (Brooks Medical Center)
- Participated in AFN call-in shows on family support
- Made early contact w/ Ricky Gibbons (USAREUR ACS) to share resources and seek collaboration
- Participated in V Corp Rear Detachment Seminars (winter and spring 2003) (Frank O'Gara)
- Shared Operation Ready Information with school principals and crisis leaders
- Shared Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) materials with principals on deployment
- Participated in V Corp Rear Detachment Seminar September 2003 (Harv Gerry)
- Formed Support Groups as needed in schools/communities
- Sent a steady stream of resources to schools for use in training and interventions
- Launched deployment/crisis related website on DoDEA web page (odedodea.edu)
- Participated with USAREUR/IMA in the "Home is Here" campaign—cut a variety of media pieces on this to promote importance of schools as a stabilizing factor...Home is where your schools are...
- Included crisis response and family support in every briefing to CCAC, ESC, and CATC-C leadership courses, and senior spouses briefings in Heidelberg
- Requested Army support to include us in the casualty assistance briefs locally—we have a role to play. Asked for command assistance in including DoDDS in casualty assistance information and training
- Initiated contact with commands (24 April 03) for information we could share with principals on reintegration issues

- Crisis Leadership Training for all DoDDS Crisis Leaders (Sept 03—used a chaplain from Baumholder to brief on reintegration)
- Continuous flow of information to folks in the field on support issues
- Connected graduating seniors and deployed soldiers together for Graduation 2003 – live broadcasts from Wiesbaden and Vicenza - want to repeat this year for 1<sup>st</sup> ID locations – need command support and resources
- Early coordination with 1<sup>st</sup> ID now underway for pending deployments and support needed
- Resissued Action Plan to 1<sup>st</sup> ID schools

## **WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CLASSROOM**

Deployment can cause great worry and stress for children. Separation of any kind affects family life. School can be a comforting place for children. Their friends are there, a peer support network is available, and approachable adults are accessible to students.

Our principals, psychologists, counselors, and teachers collaborate with Crisis Teams to:

- Conduct staff in-service providing helpful hints for teachers
- Listen and talk to students about their fears and concerns during all phases of the deployment cycle
- Use scripts at appropriate times to guide discussions
- Facilitate communication between deployed members and students when appropriate and possible
- Hold parent meetings to explain strategies for helping their children to cope with stress
- Identify students who live in single parent homes or who have dual military parents and monitor their behavior
- Conduct support groups for students who might be having adjustment problems
- Refer students to activities sponsored by community agencies
- Develop a support group for staff with deployed spouses
- Be prepared to respond to death of deployed family members
- Work closely with community agencies

## **DEPLOYMENTS AND FAMILY SUPPORT -- OUR GOAL...**

Maintain a safe and secure school environment, which creates stability in the lives of military families and students so that learning continues as normal.

## **CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLANS AND TEAMS**

Each DoDDS-Europe school **must have an identified Crisis Team and a Crisis Management Plan** ready for immediate implementation in the event a crisis should occur. The DoDDS-Europe Guide for Crisis Management in the Schools (DS Manual 2943.3 School Action Plan for Crisis Intervention) provides the guidance for the team and plan procedures. The Crisis Teams work in conjunction with the school's Safety and Security Plan. Over the past two years, DoDDS-E schools have used their Crisis Teams for support for the terrorist attacks of September 11, the deployments of family members to Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe, the most recent war in Iraq, student and faculty

deaths, and natural disasters. Principals and Assistant Principals are actively involved in the Crisis teams at the school level.

Sometimes, a school has a crisis, which could lead to the need for intensive individual or group counseling. Our districts maintain a team of school psychologists and community mental health professionals ready to stop what they are doing and spend as much time as may be necessary at the affected school. If a community is faced with a crisis and needs help, call your superintendent or the Director's office and we'll respond appropriately.

## **FAMILY SUPPORT**

Each of our schools has a role to play in being an integral part of the total plan to care for families during times of crisis and conflict. Every effort will be made to work closely with commanders in any way possible to support students, parents, employees, and military communities. Each school has an **Action Plan** that includes measures to be taken in each community affected by deployments or other military operations.

Principals and school staff can best provide family support when they:

- Remain focused on business of learning and teaching
- Establish connections with the Family Assistance/Support Center
- Coordinate Counseling and Crisis Management Support
- Coordinate with Rear Detachment Commanders on a variety of issues including appropriate ways for children to communicate with deployed parents and casualty assistance
- Encourage and facilitate communication between deployed members and their children in schools using available technology, when appropriate
- Provide facilities when feasible to support Family Assistance Centers
- Maintain a stable environment

DoDDS-E has sent some guidance to high schools recently to stimulate discussions about ways to link graduating seniors with deployed parents. We had great success last year in a number of communities who were affected by Operation Iraqi Freedom. We need to duplicate those efforts in partnership with the commands in locations that will have major deployments in the coming year.

## **MANY STUDENTS & EMPLOYEES ARE AFFECTED**

- Many students and employees throughout DoDDS-Europe have been directly affected by this military operation. The absence of loved ones creates an emotional burden and uncertainty for many families.
- DoDDS personnel understand this kind of sacrifice well. The dedicated men and women who have gone, or will go, to the Middle East are the fathers and mothers of our students. They are the spouses, sons, and daughters of our teachers, administrators, and support personnel.
- Message from the Director...I ask you to keep our military personnel and their families in your thoughts and prayers. Whether you are at the Area or District Office, or in a school, please join me in providing the support needed to help our "DoDDS family members" through these trying times.

## **Community/Family Support**

Each of our schools in DoDDS-Europe has a role to play in being an integral part of the total plan to care for families during times of crisis and conflict. In the weeks and months ahead, we want to ensure that every effort is made to work closely with commanders in any way possible to support our students, parents, employees, and military communities. Media reports and comments from our political and military leaders may be indicators that many challenges are ahead. Involvement and deployment levels vary from community to community.

Family Assistance/Support Centers have been established to help families remain self-reliant and as stable as possible during this difficult time. These have varying names depending on the host service:

- **Family Service Centers** for Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard
- **Family Support Centers** for Air Force, or
- **Army Community Services** for Army families

Each principal, and appropriate members of the professional school staff, must establish an active contact with Family Assistance/Support Centers personnel. At a minimum, principals should do the following:

- Communicate with the Centers and Commands by attending meetings, offering services and information and integrating our efforts with theirs;
- Coordinate our counseling and crisis management support with the Centers and the Rear Detachment Command (in communities affected by any deployments);
- Encourage and facilitate communications between the deployed members and the children in your school;
- Provide information on students and families, as needed, for emergency purposes and support interventions;
- Provide our facilities where feasible and reasonable for activities in support of the Family Assistance Centers;
- Encourage your school staff to volunteer to support the Family Assistance Centers and the Rear Detachment Commands; and
- Have an up to date crisis intervention plan that is ready to implement at a moment's notice. Your school psychologist needs to be prepared to travel on short notice to any location in the district or beyond in support of any emergencies that may arise.

We still must remain focused on the educational mission and provide a stable environment for the children in our schools. However, we have the resources to help our communities during this difficult time.

January 5, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS

SUBJECT: Action Plan for Deployment Interventions

Each of our schools has a role to play in being an integral part of the total plan to care for families during times of crisis and conflict. In the weeks and months ahead, we want to ensure that every effort is made to work closely with commanders in any way possible to support our students, parents, employees, and military communities with reintegration efforts as well as new and ongoing deployments. Recently, a number of tools and suggestions were sent to principals through superintendents to assist in that regard.

Attached is an Action Plan to provide further guidance on measures that we should take in each community affected by deployments or other military operations. Request your assistance in working with principals to ensure that each school is responding appropriately and is in a proactive stance with regard to family support and deployments. The attached guide will give you an additional tool to share with principals to guide their actions and responses. It is critical that each principal establish and maintain an active contact with Family Assistance/Support Centers personnel and command officials. The *DoDDS-E Guide for Crisis Management in the Schools* is an important resource for you as well. Principals should be personally involved in the operation of a Crisis Team at the local level.

Any military engagement or conflict presents an opportunity for us to demonstrate our commitment to and concern for military families and communities. We have a responsibility to support communities in whatever challenges they face in the coming weeks and months. As I talk to commanders in your districts and communities, I will assure them that our personnel and schools will be there to support them. Our most important contribution comes when we remain focused on the educational mission and provide a stable environment for the children in our schools. Kindly copy this office on any direction you provide to principals in your district.

DIANA J. OHMAN  
Director, DoDDS-Europe

**DoDDS-EUROPE  
ACTION PLAN FOR DEPLOYMENT INTERVENTIONS  
JANUARY 2004**

**Objectives:**

1. Provide support to students and parents in deployed communities through military support centers and schools.
2. Establish communication between deployed personnel and dependent students in schools.
3. Encourage DoDDS personnel to become an integral part of deployed communities in supporting the total plan for caring for families for all phases of the deployment cycle.

**Action I. Integrate school programs and actions with military Family Assistance Centers (FACs).**

(Note: Family Service Centers for Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, Family Support Centers for Air Force, or Army Community Service for Army families can help with various concerns including crisis or financial counseling. Community Service Centers can help with crises and provide information, counseling, communication workshops and referral services. On major military installations, these are the primary points of contact for any information related to our families.)

1. Brief Principals in preparation for deployment.
2. Principal meets with Rear Detachment Commander(s) and makes recommendations regarding needs and issues of school.
3. Principal makes contact with Family Assistance Center. Opens lines of communication for integration of strategies.
4. Make and implement plans for assisting in community.
  - a. Identify local resources. Complete Crisis Intervention Resource List adding additional military resources available through Family Assistance Center.
  - b. Identify all groups deploying and those supporting groups who will stay behind with additional duties and longer hours. This information should be shared with all school faculty members.
  - c. Locate resource people to come into classrooms to discuss student issues.
5. Develop readiness plans for use after deployment. There is an integration plan between the Family Support Center and DoDDS initiatives.
6. Develop strategies to provide support through schools to children and families of deployed members.
7. Brief Commander(s) on DoDDS initiatives.

## **Action II. Assemble crisis management teams and strategies at all schools.**

1. School has copy of A Guide for Crisis Management in the Schools (revised Dec 01)
2. School identifies Crisis Intervention Chairperson & Team Members
3. Crisis Intervention Team establishes meeting schedule to monitor events.
4. School develops a Crisis Intervention Plan for Response to Southwest Asia Deployment and Community Resource Listings has been updated.
5. Faculty is briefed on plan and resources.
6. Confirm the establishment of Crisis Intervention Plan by sending copy to District Superintendent.
7. Identify students with deployed parents and confirm home addresses as well as guardians.
8. Implement intervention strategies with children.
9. School establishes procedures to interface with community crisis personnel (i.e. the local Crisis Management Team is involved with the Family Assistance Center for the duration of the deployment).
10. Crisis Management Team communicates with other schools as well as parents working together to provide services to the population with the greatest need.
11. Crisis Management Team receives professional training on Crisis Management procedures (i.e. sudden death, critical incident, stress briefing, etc.).
12. Conduct a school needs assessment with students and staff to identify issues and concerns.

## **Action III. Sensitize all DoDDS personnel to the effects of deployment on dependents, both children and adults.**

1. Contact local community newspaper regarding school initiatives and goals during deployment. Develop Parent Newsletter regarding initiatives. Provide local paper with articles on school initiatives.
2. All staff members have been briefed on needed sensitivities during the deployment. (in-service)
  - a. All DoDDS personnel need continual updating of information on military plans/issues/actions related to deployment/reintegration and how they will effect students.
  - b. Question and answer sessions need to occur with the Rear Detachment Commander(s) and school faculty on a regular basis to control rumors within the school setting.
  - c. Provide in-service to staff concerning deployment and how it affects the families including ways to interact with students who may be experiencing difficulties.
  - d. Inform all DoDDS employees of supporting military and community resources available to families of deployed soldiers.

3. Develop materials to disseminate for use in classrooms during the deployment and reintegration.
  - a. Have Social Studies teachers develop and share instructional units and curriculum ideas on countries involved in the conflict.
  - b. Have military provide schools with classroom materials (maps).
  - c. Have support centers provide schools with Deployment booklets and stress information for use in classrooms.
  - d. Disseminate packet of materials developed by the Crisis Intervention Task Force to faculty and parents, as appropriate.
4. Establish communications between deployed parents and their children. (Send newsletters to deployed family member. Establish communication using email/Gaggle accounts)
5. Establish effective rumor control procedures.
6. Assess school climate. Share **School Self-Assessment Survey** for Crisis Management with staff. Identify resources to address concerns. Develop intervention strategies (i.e. counseling groups, teach communication skills, normalize stressors, teach stress management/time management skills, parenting classes, etc.). Establish after-school support groups/clubs (i.e. journal writing or computer club, home economics, sports, games, etc.).
7. Consider developing an in-service training day to address school morale, stress, school climate, deployment issues, and utilize outside resources as facilitators.
8. Establish a Parent Center in school where deployment reading materials, videos, counseling support, email, and parenting books are available.
9. Give students ample opportunities to communicate with deployed family members through letter writing, banners, shoe boxes, videos, and Internet.
10. Coordinate commercial involvement/sponsorship for parent support sessions through use of such things as free phone cards.
11. A newspaper where parents create a school newspaper and make copies to be sent to deployed family members.
12. Set up "Question and Answer Rumor Box" for students and provide answers based on accurate and updated information.

**Action IV. Support deployed communities through additional measures and actions.**

1. As needed, support services should be adjusted to meet special needs of students.
2. DoDDS personnel have been encouraged to volunteer to support in community activities. Teenage students have been encouraged to help fill positions vacated by deploying soldiers (i.e. Post Office, etc.).
3. Morale of faculty has been addressed and special recognition given to DoDDS personnel giving support to the deployment.



## **ROLES OF DoDDS PERSONNEL**

### **Principal**

- Marshall all available resources to meet the needs of each individual student
- Implement School Action Plan for Crisis Intervention
- Coordinate with community officials
- Ensure a free flow of information on available support services
- Involvement in community meetings and initiatives

### **School Counselors and Psychologists**

- Form the core of expertise
- Provide formal and informal training for classroom teachers
- Organize support groups
- Provide individual/group counseling
- Coordinate with community professionals to ensure a unified approach

### **Classroom Teachers**

- Deal with day-to-day burden and anxiety -- separation anxiety not foreign to DoDDS teachers
- Support available from local, district, and regional resources
- Participate in activities designed to keep students in touch with deployed family members
- Guide discussions with students about issues raised by children

### **Crisis Intervention Teams**

- Guided by A Guide for Crisis Management in the Schools, DS Manual 2943.0 (Revised December 2001)
- Coordination with community medical, mental, and spiritual health care providers
- Assess community's needs and provide an appropriate response
- Meet individual, family, or community needs
- Assist with casualty assistance as appropriate

### **Area Task Force**

- Gather materials from stateside and overseas locations specifically designed to identify and treat behaviors, attitudes, and associated problems
- Organize training and guidance for school psychologists and counselors
- Provide materials and expertise to principals and classroom teachers

### **Support Actions**

- Crisis Intervention Teams
- Area Task Force
- Web resources

### **DoDDS Initiatives for Deployment**

- Adjust requirements on *in loco parentis* guardianship and sponsor meetings
- Assist Rear Detachment Commanders in maintaining student's current addresses
- Establish procedures for dealing with rumors from the community
- Encourage DoDDS personnel to volunteer in the community
- Establish lines of communication between DoDDS, RDCs and FACs
- Sensitize staff for all eventualities related to the deployment and reintegration
- Anticipate and communicate with major commands on possible enrollment fluctuations
- Initiate communication between children in classrooms and deployed personnel
- Activate Crisis Management Teams and counseling support services
- Encourage the school and staff to be an integral part of the total plan for caring for families
- Actively encourage families to remain in Europe to maintain family/student support

### **Where to Get Additional Help**

- Legal Assistance Office – Can provide help in preparing legal documents and provide help related to legal matters at no cost.
- Family Support Groups – Family centers or your unit supervisor can offer information on support groups, key volunteers and ombudsmen.
- Chaplain's Offices – Service men and women and their families of all faiths are welcome to seek advice and counsel from the chaplain.  
(Source: Deployment and Reunion, The Family Forum Library)

H:\Deployments 03 04\Action Plan 04 Deploy Family Support.doc