

Redesigned FOCUS Web Site Provides More Resources

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WASHINGTON (NNS) -- The Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) redesigned the Web site for Project FOCUS (Families OverComing Under Stress) to better serve military families trying to cope with stress associated with multiple overseas deployments.

The dramatically redesigned site, www.focusproject.org, offers family friendly information about FOCUS that will benefit military families. The Web site's homepage offers visitors a video describing the FOCUS program and its benefits while also offering information about the program's history, mission and resiliency training programs.

"We hope that families will explore our new Web site and take advantage of this program," said Kirsten Woodward, BUMED Family Programs Division director. "We are pleased to help our family readiness and preparedness through this unprecedented program that Navy Medicine offers."

FOCUS is an eight-week, skill-based, trainer-led, intervention that addresses difficulties that families may have when facing the challenges of multiple deployments and parental combat-related psychological and physical health problems.

The program provides structured activities to bridge gaps in shared family understanding that may follow stressful experiences and separations. FOCUS uses family training techniques to highlight areas of strength and resilience in the family and promote family growth to help address daily challenges.

The Web site contains information about common challenges families face before, during, and after deployments. It also contains resources for parents, children, and service providers on how to deal with the associated stress. The site offers tailored local information for each FOCUS site nationwide and testimonials from former FOCUS participants that help describe what families could expect when they enroll in FOCUS resiliency training.

According to Woodward, military families can sign up for a quarterly newsletter and should be able to use the website to access FOCUS World in the coming weeks. FOCUS World is an interactive Web site experience that teaches families resiliency training skills. Visitors also have the opportunity to sign up for the FOCUS quarterly newsletter to help them maintain awareness of the unique needs of military children and families.

"Announcements about FOCUS World launch will follow in the next few weeks," said Woodward. "We look forward to growing this site in the future and welcome any feedback from our families on how we can serve them better."

The Bureau of Medicine and Surgery developed Project FOCUS to serve the growing need of military families and children in coping with stress associated with multiple deployments which often compounds existing stress. In January 2009, the BUMED Family Programs Division was stood-up under the Deployment Health Directorate in the Wounded, Ill, and Injured Warrior Support Command of BUMED and now oversees FOCUS training.

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