

As moms and dads of deployed troops, you face several unique challenges when your sons and daughters leave for war or other dangerous military operations. The deep pride you feel in their patriotism and dedication is no doubt tempered by your natural protectiveness for your children's safety and welfare.

If your son or daughter is married, you may also be frustrated that you are removed from the front line of information. Conversely, you may have your daughter-in-law or son-in-law now living with you — perhaps with your grandchildren, too. These situations and others can bring added stress to an already stressful time.



# A NOTE TO PARENTS OF SERVICE MEMBERS

## Helping You Cope

### Coping

*Realize it is normal to feel a tremendous loss, an experience called anticipatory grief. Grief is common with any loss—not just with death—and having your child deployed during wartime is a loss.*

**Click here for a list of more than 150 activities that help diffuse stress.**

- Realize it is normal to feel overly protective of your adult child.
- Realize it is normal to feel a tremendous loss, an experience called anticipatory grief. Grief is common with any loss—not just with death—and having your child deployed during wartime is a loss.
- Expect a roller coaster ride with your emotions. One minute you're happy, the next you're crying. Again, it's a normal reaction to an abnormal situation.
- Follow the advice you gave—and probably still give—your son or daughter: Eat healthy foods, get plenty of rest, don't worry too much.
- Click here for a list of more than 150 activities that help diffuse stress.

## Helping You Stay Connected

- Have a plan for communicating. Find out if your service member will have email and any telephone access. If available, remember these communications are not as instantaneous as stateside.
- Be sure you have your son's or daughter's unit name, including the battalion, ship, squadron or platoon, plus an FPO or APO address.
- Understand that remote locations, travel, power outages and other situations can affect the frequency with which you communicate. Realize that your son or daughter may not be able to reveal certain information to you, including location and activities.
- Keep a list of topics you want to discuss with your service member so you're prepared when you do have a chance to communicate.

### Resources

<http://www.militaryonesource.com/skins/MOS/home.aspx>

<http://www.emilitary.org/links.php>

## AND SOME TIPS TO HELP YOU DURING A STRESSFUL TIME

- Check out [www.TroopTube.tv](http://www.TroopTube.tv), an authorized Department of Defense website for service members and families to post and share videos. It's a free service.
- When sending a care package, include such homey touches as a family-made DVD or a home-town newspaper.
- Ask how you can get information from your son's or daughter's unit. Find out if there are command newsletters. Many commands and units also have their own websites.
- Ask if phone trees are available. Volunteers pass on information to other families.
- Check out support groups in your area for parents of service members. Look into the Marine Corps Family Team Building website, [www.usmc-mccs.org/mcftb/](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/mcftb/), or the Navy's Fleet and Family Support Program, [www.ffsp.navy.mil](http://www.ffsp.navy.mil) to get started.