

Behavioral Health for Military Families

Presentation to Behavioral Health Services Subcommittee

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GOALS OF PRESENTATION

1. To provide an overview of military families and their unique needs.
2. To identify gaps in knowledge and understanding related to military families.
3. To describe current efforts to address issues of military families in New Mexico.
4. To provide an overview of the Department of Family & Consumer Sciences and their contributions to military families.



CURRENT TRENDS

- More than 2 million men and women have been called to action since 2001 (National Center for Mental Health Promotion & Youth Violence Prevention, 2010).
- By the end of 2008, 1.7 million American service members had served in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2011).



CURRENT TRENDS

- Estimates suggest that more than 2 million American children have had a parent deploy to Afghanistan or Iraq (Chartrand, Frank, White, & Shope, 2008).
- Multiple deployments are disruptive to family life and in many cases service members have had two, three, and even four deployments to areas of conflict (Zoroya, 2006).



Deployment Effects

Deployment can have a negative impact on children:

- Changes in academic performance
- Anger related incidents
- Increased anxiety
- Increased levels of depression



Deployment Effects

Deployment can have a negative impact on families:

- Increased parental stress
- Greater incidence of child maltreatment (Renz, Marshall, Loomis, Casteel, Martin & Gibbs, 2007)



Gaps

- Much of the research has concentrated on Active Duty Personnel, thereby failing to identify ways in which National Guard and Reserve member families have coped with the effects of deployment to areas of conflict.

- More than 450,000 service members called to action following 9/11 are National Guard and Reservists (National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, 2010).



Department of Family & Consumer Sciences at New Mexico State University

- Marriage & Family Therapy Program
- Undergraduate practicum experiences



Current Efforts Aimed at Problem

Operation: Military Kids at NMSU

- Partnership between Army Child and Youth services and 4-H National Headquarters.

- Builds partnerships with organizations throughout the state.



Current Efforts Aimed at Problem

NIH Grant Opportunities (Research on Children in Military Families: The Impact of Parental Military Deployment & Reintegration on Child and Family Functioning (R21)

"Improving the Success of Military Families Through On-line Parenting Education" proposal submitted by Dr. Marin (PI) and Dr. Vaillancourt (Co-PI).



Current Efforts Aimed at Problem

Outreach: White Sands Missile Range's Together Everyone Achieves More (TEAM)

- Programming for middle and high schoolers targeting issues related to parental deployment, depression, risk-taking behaviors, etc.



Partnerships

White Sands Missile Range

- **Shawn Ticho**
US Army Child, Youth, & School Services
Coordinator
- **Raymond Jojola**
WSMR School Liaison Officer



Next Steps

- Continue research efforts aimed at:
- Identifying patterns of family distress associated with deployment.
 - Transitions back home on child behaviors.
 - Differences and similarities among Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve families in New Mexico.



Questions



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