



# CHALLENGES FACED BY DUAL MILITARY COUPLES

Presented by Military & Family Life Counselors

# OBJECTIVES

## Participants will learn about:

- The challenges of dual military couples and coping methods for dealing with the challenges
- What to do when the dual military couple has children and both parents deploy



# AGENDA

- Positive Aspects of a Dual Military Couple
- Challenges
- Coping Methods
- When Both Military Parents Deploy
- When to Seek Help



# POSITIVE ASPECTS OF A DUAL MILITARY COUPLE

- Understanding first hand what it's like to be deployed
- Opportunities to be deployed together
- Being able to relate to each other's career challenges and accomplishments in a way non-military spouses may not
- Having a special bond based on shared sacrifices



# CHALLENGES

- Frequent separations
- Finding childcare when both parents are deployed
- Differences in rank, career fields and branches of service
- Difficult career decisions sometimes necessary



# COPING METHODS

- Communication is key – communicate by phone, email, text messaging, etc. daily if possible
- Connect with other dual military couples
- Focus on the positive aspects of your lives together
- Recognize and support each other's career goals



# COPING METHODS

CONTINUED

- Be flexible, and be prepared to switch roles
- Practice self-care and find balance in your life
- Develop a support network
- Take action in trying to find joint assignments



# WHEN BOTH MILITARY PARENTS DEPLOY

Have a primary plan for childcare as well as a back up plan.

Make sure all paperwork is up to date including:

- Transfer of guardianship and powers of attorney
- Wills
- Lists of medications, dietary restrictions, allergies, etc.
- Emergency contacts
- Life insurance
- Health insurance
- Bank accounts





# WHEN BOTH MILITARY PARENTS DEPLOY

## CONTINUED

- Notify doctors, schools, daycare, dentists, teachers, etc.
- Spend extra time with your children
- If possible, allow the person who will be guardian to spend time at your house with your children and learn routines
- Decide ahead of time how you will communicate
- Once deployed, communicate with your children and their caregiver regularly
- Encourage the caregiver to talk with your children about you and their feelings about the deployment



# TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT BOTH PARENTS DEPLOYING

- Talk to your children as soon as possible once you are notified of your deployment
- Let them know who will be taking care of them while you are deployed
- Use age appropriate language and give as much information as you can
- Allow your children to express their feelings
- Let them know you are both trained to do your jobs
- Discuss changes in lifestyle that may occur
- Reinforce the emotional bond



# WHEN TO SEEK HELP

- If the challenges of being a dual military couple become overwhelming and coping methods aren't working, don't hesitate to seek help from a chaplain, Military Community Services or behavioral health services
- Remember – everyone needs assistance at one time or another, and it's a sign of strength to ask for help when needed





**QUESTIONS?**



# RESOURCES

- Military Community Services
- Chaplain and Local Clergy
- Military OneSource (800) 342-9647
- TRICARE [www.Tricare.mil](http://www.Tricare.mil)
- Behavioral Health Services



# REFERENCES

- *When both Parents are Deployed,*  
[http://www.military.com/fs/0,,fs\\_deploy\\_bothparents,00.html](http://www.military.com/fs/0,,fs_deploy_bothparents,00.html)
- *Dual Military, Kids and Deployments,*  
<http://www.homefrontonline.com/article.asp?articleid=1189>
- *Dual Military Spouses Share Deployment Successes,* By 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Greg Freisinger Forward Support Company, 84<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, [www.army.mil](http://www.army.mil)
- *Balancing Work and Life as a Dual Military Couple,*  
[www.MilitaryOneSource.com](http://www.MilitaryOneSource.com)





**THANK YOU**

