

In Touch

Idea update for military families facing separations

Based on the books "I'm Already Home" and "I'm Already Home...Again"

Elaine Dumler ♦ 6460 W. 98th Ct. ♦ Westminster, Colorado 80021 ♦ 866-780-0460 toll free
www.ImAlreadyHome.com ♦ Elaine@ImAlreadyHome.com



August 2007

Issue 12 - August 2007



What's up at:

www.ImAlreadyHome.com

1. **Readiness Training** tab to read about having Elaine speak at your conference.

2. **Blog link** directly to a blog where you can read and comment on ideas.

3. **Flat Daddy™** page to bring you photos, instructions, and how to get one for free!

4. **Operation Connect a Family** to provide books free to families.

Inside this issue:

Message from Elaine - 1
"The don't-do-it button"

Help Wanted! 2

2 New Resources 2

2 Web video links 2

"Volunteer Survival Kit" 2

Websites to Bookmark 3

Month's BEST 6 Ideas 3

operationgoodybag.com 3

Book and Trainings 4

"Got Your Back" 4

Book 2008 Dates



Message from Elaine:

Might be my most "thought provoking" one yet.

I tend to keep things upbeat when I write my newsletter columns, and while this one is no different, its message may hit some more directly than others...and that's what I want to have happen. I want you to think.

A couple of weeks ago I was visiting a friend who has a five year old daughter named Sarah. I enjoy it when children are old enough to actually carry on a conversation because they often say the best things. This particular afternoon we were driving to Home Depot and I was sitting next to her car seat in the back. We were talking about all that she had learned lately, and one of those skills involved the DVD remote control. She was telling me that she knew how to work the buttons and what each was for.

"I can do the back button, and the forward, and the don't-do-it, and the pause!" she told me with the excitement of a five year old with new information.

"Wait...did you say the 'don't-do-it'?" I asked back.

"Yes. You know, the one with the square on it," was her response.

Then it hit me: *"Oh, the STOP button, right?"*

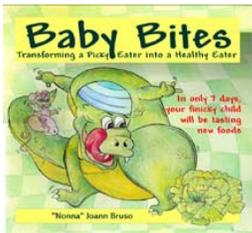
"Yep...that one. That's the 'don't-do-it' button," she said with a big smile.

After I stopped chuckling, I thought about how perfect Sarah's new name for the STOP button was. It was simple and to the point: if you push it, the DVD stops right where it is and nothing happens.

I realize that each one of us has our own built in "don't-do-it" button. It's called a conscience. I think we should be pushing our "don't-do-it" button more often than we are. With everything that's going on, life is becoming more and more difficult and it's harder to get through a day without some kind of moral or ethical decision coming our way. We tend to respond so well to instant gratification that we're not taking the time to consider the consequences of some of our bigger dilemmas. If you're considering something that is riding the line of being the "right" thing to do (from speaking hurtful words to considering an affair), hit the PAUSE button on your life and think about your actions. Determine if you really want to hit the PLAY button and continue, or if you should hit your DON'T-DO-IT button. Trust me, I don't judge anyone, I just think it's harder to push the STOP button after the PLAY has been on for a while. It's much better to face each new day feeling great about YOU!

HELP!

If you can, please help. Most of you know that in partnership with SFC Graphics we've been offering **Free** "Flat Daddies" or "Flat Mommies" to deployed families. In order to keep this project going, we need to be able to accept donated funds. Right now we have been offered a sizeable donation but I need to be a 501(c) 3 non-profit to accept it. Since my company is not a non-profit, I've been advised that the best way to go is to have an established non-profit be a **fiscal sponsor** for this project. So we need you. If you are a foundation or non-profit with a mission similar to mine (helping military families) please consider sponsoring this project so we can keep it going. Call me at either 303-430-0592 or 303-956-0316. Help us continue to make a difference in the lives of families! Thanks, Elaine Dumler



Do you have a **finicky eater** in your house? It's hard getting kids to eat the right things. I found this cool resource. It's a book called **Baby Bites**. To read more about it, and tips to help your kids eat better, visit:

www.babybites.info.

When Parents Are Deployed program is available for viewing online, in it's entirety at the following link:

<http://www.sesameworkshop.org/wpad/>



"Healing Fields" Note cards now available!

Remember my great flag photos from "Healing Fields"? Lot's of you have asked about them. I've created a custom set of 6 note cards with envelopes each with one of three different original photos from



"Healing Fields". Each card is linen finish with a foil border accent, photo attached (not a print) and beautifully packaged. On the back of each card is a lovely description of the Healing Fields as a symbol for freedom. Keep a set for your own special notes or give a set as a gift. **Only 18 sets are available at \$12/set!** Order at www.ImAlreadyHome.com.

This video link was forwarded to me by some Guard folks in Kansas. It's great...but a tearjerker. View at your own risk :)

<http://www.youtube.com/v/ervaMPt4Ha0&autoplay=1>

When I was invited to be a speaker/trainer at a National Guard family programs conference this summer, I arrived to find a beautiful gift basket in my room. One of the items in the basket was a **"Volunteer Survival Kit."** The items pictured here were in a small bag with a card attached explaining each piece. I loved it because it sends the right message to all your amazing volunteers. Here's a sample of 5 of the 9 sayings on the card to give you an idea of how cool this is:



1. The Cinnamon Toothpicks will help you "pick out" your special qualities and skills.
2. The Peppermint is to thank you for your commit"mint" to helping others.
3. The Smarties will keep you thinking logically to solve tough problems.
4. The Candy Lipstick will help you communicate effectively.
5. The Laffy Taffy® will remind you to always keep your sense of humor.

You can order from a variety of "Survival Kits" at: www.Dailyapples.com/employee_gifts.shtml

Some of the best submitted ideas...

1. "My daughter will be starting kindergarten this fall and since Dad won't be home for that we started making an ABC book. We sorted through the family pictures and found things like Daddy eating an **apple** (for the letter A)...all through the alphabet. Since making it, this has become by daughter's favorite book. I sent a copy to my husband who read it to her on a video which we put onto a DVD. This lets him feel like he is a part of her education, makes her excited about learning and gives her something to help her cope when she starts school (by sending the book with her)."
2. "When we found out that all the Troops in country were going to be extended, this just broke my heart...but it got me to thinking of new ways to show my husband our love and support. I got butcher paper (from Wal-mart), markers, paints, glue, glitter...just about everything you can imagine. I had my daughter lay down on the paper and we traced her outline. Then I took a picture of her and cut out the face and glued it to the paper. She then decorated the rest of it as her little heart desired. I took lots of pictures of her making this and then using Windows Movie Maker I edited them into a video for him. We added her favorite children's songs to give it a special touch. I packaged it to mail in a poster tube that I let my daughter decorate. I put the video disc in the tube and mailed it all with a little note that simply said...'we are thinking of you.' He loved it." **Thanks, Shannon for Ideas 1 & 2!**
3. "My husband purchased a locket, placed a photo of himself and our daughter inside to give to her to wear so that she can always have him with her while he's gone."
4. "For our son, my husband had regular dog tags made that said 'I love you (child's name), Your Daddy'. We happened to find a kiosk at our exchange that makes dog tag necklaces and they etch a photo on it. We took a photo of our son and his dad and engraved it with the 'I love you' statement."
5. This idea was offered by a reader to those families who are part of a Christian community: "Our Sunday school teacher mentioned that our actions are sometimes made by not having the presence of God or "seeing" God beside us, causing us to forget that He does see us at all times. Based on the "Flat Daddy" idea, I'm making a "Flat Jesus" to be in our home as a reminder."
6. "My kids and I took the last 12 Fridays to count down Daddy's return. We would decide the week before what fun activity we wanted to do with him. On Friday night we would go buy the supplies. (for example a picnic - plates, cups, napkins, etc.) Then we would wrap the supplies in gift paper and store them in a box the kids decorated. When he returned, whatever activity of the 12 he unwrapped, we did!" **Thanks to Natalie from Alabama for this great idea!**

You may know of someone who is deployed and would like to receive a "goody bag." This organization is part of AmericaSupportsYou. A **Goody Bag** holds: 5 pieces of candy, 2 poems, 1 personal letter and 1 puzzle.

www.operationgoodybag.org



*Bookmark
These
Websites*

This organization has helped many military families. There are chapters all over the US.

www.operationhomefront.net



The Fisher House is like the Ronald McDonald House, but provides temporary housing for military families who want to be near their injured soldier while he/she is in a military hospital. Visit:

www.fisherhouse.org



Julie ran across this site when they offered a "free" one year family website for those families of deployed military. Your site is password protected so the entire family can post photos that are only seen by those you select to view them.

www.thefamilypost.com



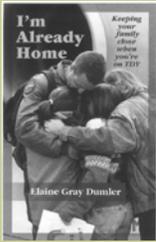
This blog is established by Craig Phillips, a survivor of traumatic brain injury and he provides encouragement to our veterans and others who have been wounded in service to our country. Read back posts to hear his story, and pass the site to anyone it can help.

<http://secondchancetolive.wordpress.com/>

ELAINE DUMLER "I'M ALREADY HOME"

6460 W. 98th Court
Westminster, Colorado 80021

Phone: Toll Free 866-780-0460
Colorado 303-430-0592
Elaine@ImAlreadyHome.com
Elaine@ElaineDumler.com



We're on the web:
www.ImAlreadyHome.com

Do you have your own copy of the book "I'm Already Home...Again" or the CD? If you haven't ordered one yet, read what Julie Doyle just sent me in an email:

"I have already listened to the CD 2 times and just finished the book this morning!! I know I will read it many more times. Thank you so much for all the ideas and hints and helps. I have so many things that I plan to use from your book to show him I have thought of him while he has been away. I have a lot to do now!!"

Order your copy **NOW** at:
www.ImAlreadyHome.com

"The military recruits...the family retains."



...to reserve Elaine to present and train at your State Readiness Conference, training, or briefing.
Call 1-866-780-0460 toll free or visit
www.ImAlreadyHome.com

Review descriptions of trainings and programs at the website under the **Readiness Trainings** tab on the home page. You can also view media clips and request to review videos from past programs for all branches of the service.

The following wonderful poem was forwarded to me to share with you. I've tried to find out who the author is, so if you know who wrote it, please let me know. Enjoy!

"GOT YOUR BACK"

I am a small and precious child.
My dad's been sent to fight.
The only place I'll see his face,
is in my dreams at night.
He will be gone too many days
for my young mind to track.
I may be sad, but I am proud.
My daddy's got your back.

I am a caring mother.
My son has gone to war.
My mind is filled with worries
that I have never known before.
Each day I try to keep my thoughts
from turning dreadfully black.
I may be scared, but I am proud.
My son has got your back.

I am a strong and loving wife,
with a husband soon to go.
There are times I'm terrified
in a way most never know.
I bite my lip and force a smile
as I watch my husband pack.
My heart may break, but I am proud.
My husband's got your back.

I am a U.S. serviceman.
Serving proudly, standing tall.
I fight for freedom, yours and mine
by answering this call.
I do my job while knowing,
the thanks it sometimes lacks.
Say a prayer that I'll come home.
It's me who has got your back!