

# In Touch

Idea update for military families facing separations

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

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July 2009

Issue 19 - Summer



## Meet me in Motown at the NG Convention!

Summer is upon us and it's looking like a busy one. Kids are out of school, they're screaming for "sleepovers" and rides to the mall - which is probably better than "vegging out" in front of the TV all day. In my recent travels I've also encountered families who are getting ready for deployments at the same time other families are getting ready for their loved ones to come home. It's a tense and confusing time for both. I was presenting at a NG State Volunteers Conference this past weekend, and there was a humorist presenting the day before. At one point he said "Sitting over here is my good friend Elaine, who has written a couple of books for military families. The first one is "Honey, Come Home" followed by her most recent release, "Honey, Get the hell out of here!" It brought a huge laugh, which you can imagine, because of the amount of truth that's in that statement! My assistant Jenn says that soon after her husband comes home from deployment, it's only a matter of time before she's yelling "Stop touching my stuff."

It's my job to help everyone find the resources and ideas to make ALL transitions – both to and from deployment – as easy and comfortable as possible. So enjoy this newsletter and if you're at the National Guard convention this month in Dearborn, MI, please come say "Hi" and attend one of the three breakout sessions I'm presenting on **Wednesday, July 29th!** In the meantime, have a wonderful summer and try telling someone in your family one thing they do that you like. It's amazing what a difference that little idea can make for your relationship.

### What's up at:

[www.ImAlreadyHome.com](http://www.ImAlreadyHome.com)

1. **Readiness Training** tab for program descriptions currently available.
2. **Blog link** directly to a blog where you can read and comment on ideas.
3. **Flat Daddy®** page to bring you photos and status of the program.
4. Access all archived issues of the **InTouch** newsletter.

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### Are you a MilitaryOneSource.com member?

If not you should know that membership entitles you to these great things:

- Free articles, educational materials and even books!
- Webinars and newsletters
- Discussion board and other interactive tools
- Online scheduling for appointments.

You should also know that a few months ago, Military One Source increased the number of non-medical behavioral counseling sessions offered for service members and their families from 6 to 12 sessions, per person, per issue.

Sign up today to reap the rewards of Membership at:

[www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com)



## 10 Things Military Teens Want You to Know



Ever wonder what your teenager really thinks about having a deployed parent? Now you can know for sure. The Operation Purple Camps have gathered the thoughts and input of their campers and consolidated it into one easy to read document. "10 Things Military Teens Want You to Know." This eye opening publication from the National Military Family Association provides insight as well as tips and strategies to support your teen through the deployment and reunion process. We promise it's worth a few minutes, to learn what our kids really think about deployment, war, reunion and reintegration. Visit <http://www.nmfa.org> and click on the "10 Things Military Kids Want You to Know" link on the right hand side of the page.

This month, you can learn the story behind the beautiful quilt that graces the cover of *The Road Home*. Just visit Quilter's Newsletter online. The quilt's story as well as the **free pattern** to make one of your own, are both available online.

<http://www.quiltersnewsletter.com/index.html>

# Our Military Kids Activity Grant



Do you have school-aged children who play sports? Or do they take dance, music or arts classes? Maybe they would they like to try something new? Could your child benefit from a tutor to stay at grade level? If the answer is YES to any of these questions, the "Our Military Kids" grant program may be able to help. Our Military Kids pays the fees for children of deployed Reserve and National Guard members to participate in youth sports, fine arts, and tutoring programs as a way of recognizing the sacrifices the entire family is making while their soldier is deployed overseas.

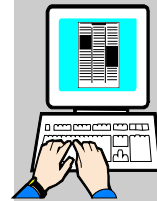
The process is simple: fill out an application and send it in with a copy of the deployment orders and a flyer or other information that lists the activity and the fee for the activity. A child is limited to one grant for one activity which covers up to six months of instructions, lessons, or tutoring with a maximum award of \$500 per child, depending on available funding (funds are paid to the organization and the family is notified).

For more information, contact Our Military Kids, 6861 Elm Street, Suite 3F, McLean VA 22101, 703-734-6654, [www.ourmilitarykids.org](http://www.ourmilitarykids.org)



# Some of Our Favorite Things!

National Guard Volunteers, jewelry and great ideas!



Bookmark  
These  
Websites

## Destination: Detroit

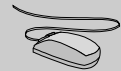


I am thrilled to let you know that I have been invited to provide training at the National Guard Family Program Volunteer Workshop in Dearborn, Michigan July 27-29, 2009. I will be providing breakout sessions based on my new book, *The Road Home: Smoothing the Transition Back from Deployment*.

I realize many of you know first hand the amount of commitment and effort required to make reunion and reintegration go smoothly. I can't wait to tell you what I've learned about it when I'm in Detroit. Hope to see you there!

[www.familyfun.com](http://www.familyfun.com)

Visit this site for thousands of craft and activity ideas to keep your kiddos occupied this summer!



[www.RealWarriors.net](http://www.RealWarriors.net)

Psychological health has become a huge focus as the military works to reduce the stigma associated with using mental health resources.

The real warriors campaign features real service members who have sought treatment and are continuing to maintain successful military and civilian careers.



[www.4MCA.org](http://www.4MCA.org)

Are you an FRG leader searching for giveaways or resources? Check out Military Community Awareness' online Catalog!



### Honor your Hero

This month we've discovered some beautiful jewelry that allows you to honor your service person. This yellow ribbon pin is just one choice from [www.belovedkeepsakes.com](http://www.belovedkeepsakes.com). This company can customize a keepsake for you to honor your own hero and Beloved Keepsakes is owned and operated by a military wife!

### Kristin from Michigan shares our favorite new idea:

"When my husband was deployed our children really had a hard time without his hugs and kisses at bedtime. We filled a large, restaurant style cheese shaker with handwritten X's and O's (a.k.a. hugs and kisses). Every night I would sprinkle the kids with daddy's hugs and kisses (they didn't really come out of the shaker) but the magic of those X's and O's helped them sleep."



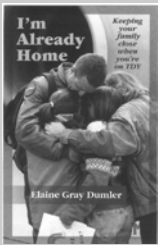
X O X O X O



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**We're on the web:  
[www.ImAlreadyHome.com](http://www.ImAlreadyHome.com)**

**Chocolate Bananas**

Bananas  
Chocolate chips  
Miniature marshmallows  
Whipped cream or ice cream

- Preheat BBQ Grill
- Using a sharp knife, make a slit along most of the length of the unpeeled banana skin and almost through the bananas.
- Push chocolate chips and marshmallows into the slits then pull skin closed. Wrap banana tightly in foil.
- Place the banana packets on the grill rack and cook for 10 minutes, turning the packets after 5 minutes. Remove from the grill. **Carefully open the banana packets** and remove the cooked bananas from the aluminum foil. Serve in the peel.
- Serve with either whipped cream or ice cream.

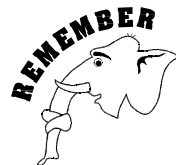
"The military recruits...the family retains."

**Book Club Corner:** we want to make sure you know about these 2 great books!



Our favorite new book for adults is *Your Military Family Network*. This hugely comprehensive resource covers everything you need to know about the military but were afraid to ask. It is 650 pages chock full of great information gathered and compiled by the knowledgeable military experts at [MilitaryFamilyNetwork.com](http://MilitaryFamilyNetwork.com). Elaine is in the process of partnering with them to provide even more wonderful information for military families.

As we mentioned last time, our favorite children's' book authors Kathleen Edick and Paula Johnson have completed their second book, *We Serve Too! 2*. This companion book focuses on the process of reunion and reintegration from a child's perspective. We know you'll love it!



...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](http://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.

**Summer fun ideas straight from the pages of *The Road Home***

**Idea #67**– Pick a day and go find something to celebrate! With the long days of summer stretching before you, you don't have to celebrate only on the popular holidays. Pick a day where your family can spend some time together and then do so in a fun and creative way. (Wear silly hats, have a water balloon fight, go on a treasure hunt) These days it seems every month or day celebrates something. From National "Chili Cook-Off Day" to National "Bring your Teddy Bear to Work Day" we're sure there are celebrations that are right for you. Better yet, start your own celebration tradition! Have a backyard campout or revisit a favorite place you've been to in the past. You could even try something new, like visiting somewhere you've driven past 100 times but never stopped at. Whether it's a new park or a tourist attraction, you can make any day special if you try!



**Idea #134**– Have a Daddy Date or Mommy Date with each of your kids individually. Children love this one on one time, and whether you are preparing for deployment, or reuniting, the extra time invested in your kids can strengthen your connection.