

Military Programs

Relevance

Texas Agrilife Extension Service and the United States military have worked hand-in-hand to meet the needs of military families since 1987. Currently, Extension staff at Fort Bliss, Fort Hood, and Fort Sam Houston are providing educational programs to help provide assistance to military families as they face the many uncertainties of war.

Response

Extension agents in all programming areas are providing the programming essential to families. The Family Advocacy Program (FAP) at both Fort Bliss and Fort Hood have provided classes on the effects of deployment on children and spouses and the challenges of reintegration. Some of the programming that has been developed includes: Changes in Relationships, Communication with Children, Reconnecting with My Children after Deployment, Marital Assessment Tool, Relationship Inventory, and Alternatives to Stress. Many other classes were developed as requested by family members, soldiers, and professionals in the military community. Family Advocacy provided these classes in addition to their regular mission of providing educational programming and activities for the prevention of family violence.

The Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) at both Fort Hood and Fort Sam Houston work with the Risk Reduction program. This program assists commanders by assessing indicators that have been identified as risks and then providing educational programming in response to the findings. ASAP is also required to provide educational programs to all soldiers on a quarterly basis to prevent substance abuse. They stay up to date on all the latest trends and substances that affect individuals. Suicide prevention programs have been added to the curriculum that is provided by trained Extension staff within the ASAP program.

The Employee Assistance Program is also part of ASAP. They provide educational programs and referrals for assistance to the employees and family members to meet their individual concerns. In 2008, The Fort Hood Army Substance Abuse Program was named the Department of Defense Program of the Year.

Military families, like all other Texas families, are facing challenges to their financial wellness. Extension provides programming in the Financial Readiness Program at Fort Bliss. An agent provides educational programming in the areas of budgeting, insurance, saving and investing, home buying, prevention of identity theft, and protection against scams.

Programming at Fort Bliss and Fort Hood are also available in the areas of Relocation Assistance, Information and Referral, Employment Readiness, Army Family Action Program, Army Volunteer Program, and Mobilization and Deployment. All of these programs work to meet the needs of military families and provide extra assistance to programming needs as they arise. All Extension employees at the military installations have worked extra hours to help families, meet planes, and provide pre-deployment briefings. They give the extra effort willingly to help our military.

Results

Each program stands alone to provide service to soldiers and family members, but joint programming efforts are continually developed to better meet the emerging needs of the military community. Whenever a new initiative is introduced in the care of soldiers and families, Extension staff, working together with their military partners, have met the challenge to provide quality programs, activities, and resources to assist the military soldier and family in whatever they require.

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