



# FROM THE HOMEFRONT

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER CREATED TO KEEP FAMILIES CONNECTED

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## A Note From the Director, Family Programs



Did you know that Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) go all the way back to the Revolutionary War and were known as “coffee groups”? They were formed to support family members during combat times. Fast forward over 200 years, in the 1980’s when FRGs were formally acknowledged as Family Support Groups. From humble beginnings, our FRGs were activated only during combat periods; today they are active, robust, and year round. Our

FRGs are part of the fabric that is our military.

FRGs that are a part of the Reserve component: National Guard and Reserves (Army, Navy, and Marine) provide invaluable service to our veterans, service members and their families. For the National Guard, we are geographically dispersed and the connection the FRGs provide our families is often a lifeline. The FRGs are manned by volunteers-very hardworking, dedicated volunteers-that are spouses, parents, and siblings. We also have military retirees who continue to serve in a FRG capacity as well as community partners who are passionate about taking care of our families.



When we are not in a deployed status, our FRGs fundraise so they can provide family days and holiday parties for their unit. They educate our families on the benefits and services available to them. When our service members are deploying, our FRGs step up and listen, provide support and encouragement to their families.

Effective communication is critical during deployments and cannot be overstated. Family Programs wants to hear from our FRGs: leaders, telephone tree coordinators, etc. as to how we can better communicate with you so you can focus on your families. Where can we improve and help you?

If you would go to our “How are we doing” survey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VT-FP> . You can put “FRG” in the other box for Question 1; then place any suggestions you have for us to better communicate in Question 12. We know we cannot do it alone-we rely on our stellar FRGs volunteers to help us take care of our families.

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Military & Family Support Center  
888-607-8773



Check us out on Facebook!  
<https://www.facebook.com/VTNGFamilyPrograms/>



## Calendar of Events

**FEB 15**  
PRESIDENTS DAY  
Nationwide

**FEB 3**  
KS&CB WEBINAR  
Wrap up the year by doing your taxes

**MAR 3**  
KS&CB WEBINAR  
Employment Strong: Virtually from Start to Finish



**This February be sure to safely meet your basic needs during an electrical outage. Find out how inside.**

## Airman and Family Readiness Manager



### Greetings from your Airman and Family Readiness Office.

With Valentine's Day right around the corner, take time to reflect on the people who mean the most to you in your lives. **Reach out** to your children, your spouses, significant others, parents and anyone else who makes a tremendous difference in your life and let them know that. Most people, especially children, like to be told how much **they are loved**. We all get so busy in our lives and we tend to take for granted those most special to us.

Over 100 VTANG Airmen went to Tyndall AFB in Florida for training in January with our F-35's. This opportunity affords our airman some important training on our new Jets bringing us closer to being mission ready for 2022.



There are approximately 70 of our airmen that are currently deployed overseas for 6 months at various locations. Some left in September/October timeframe, and more just left over December. Please keep them and their families in your thoughts.

Finally, February brings us to the beginning of tax season, and I would like to remind you that there is **FREE** tax preparation and filing services through Military OneSource's website ([www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil)). If you have any questions about locating the free tax services, contact Marcie Caulfield, our Military One Source Representative at 802-338-3164. Any Tax questions can be directed to the Military One Source H&R Block tax consultants at 1-800-342-9647, or Megan Sather, VTNG Personal Financial Counselor at 802-318-2507.



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## Military OneSource

### REPAIR, REKINDLE, OR RESET YOUR RELATIONSHIP



Every relationship could use help from time to time — and military life carries its own unique challenges. Whether you're a military couple looking to reinvigorate your bond, rebuild connections or retool your relationship skills — we're here to help and support. Join the thousands of people who have found more rewarding, more resilient

relationships with our services, resources and expert guidance.

For the complete article, visit [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil)

For more support and wellness tips, contact Military OneSource at 800-342-9647 or visit [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil).

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**Do you have flashlights fully charged in an easily accessible space in your home?**

## Kitchen Spoons & Combat Boots

### February 3, 2021 at 7PM – Deployment From the Homefront: What You Need to Know

Is your service member deploying? Want to be a warrior on the Homefront? Not sure how? Join the Kitchen Spoons & Combat Boots team on **Wednesday, February 3rd at 7PM for our webinar "Deployment From the Homefront: What You Need to Know."** We will be discussing ways to maintain connection and open communication with your deployed service member and how your Rear Detachment point of contact can help. Get on the call and share your experience for a more peer-to-peer support atmosphere.

Register in advance for this meeting:  
<http://bit.ly/2Wp9ubP>

NOTE: Please join the meeting from your personal computer, tablet or smartphone (Government computer access is NOT permitted)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Zoom meeting.

To join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone, click on the link below!  
<https://militaryonesource.zoom.us/j/3015674328>  
(Please utilize the "chat box" to be heard). To access audio, dial by phone: 1 (646) 876 9923

Meeting ID: 301 567 4328

**Questions: Call Marcie Caulfield at 802-338-3164, Candice Bryan-Broe at 802-338-3652, or Michaela LaCoss at 802-338-4317**

## Upcoming Shows

**Wednesday, Feb 17 @ 1pm**  
2020:Wrap up the Year by Doing Your Taxes

**FEB 17**

**Thursday, Feb 18 @ 7pm**  
2020:Wrap up the Year by Doing Your Taxes

**FEB 18**

**Wednesday, March 3 @7pm**  
Employment Strong: Virtually from Start to Finish

**MAR 03**



**ANGER (IN A RELATIONSHIP)**

Throughout my years of providing counseling for service members and their families, I have had the opportunity to work with many couples that have sought help for a variety of reasons and needs. The hope is always that both the timing of their seeking help and the nature of their presenting problems afford an opportunity for meaningful work and significant benefit.

Many couples wait to seek help until it is the last stop before the lawyer’s office. Other couples might contact a therapist at the first signs of difficulty in their relationship, when one or both realize that the time to address the problems is sooner, rather than later, before destructive patterns of relating become entrenched and, therefore, harder to modify.

Not surprisingly, anger is quite a common emotion in couples work, but the degree to which it exists, the ways in which it gets expressed, and the ability of an angry partner to control or contain his or her anger, becomes central to the quality of the therapeutic work that lies ahead.

In your relationship with your partner make sure that if and when you become angry, you use the anger to strengthen your communication and accomplish something that benefits the relationship. Avoid causing (irreparable) damage to a relationship by losing control of yourself and using your anger as a “weapon of mass destruction.” Hopefully, that realization alone will help you to avoid saying something harmful and regrettable and enable you to work productively together toward a much-improved partnership.

**Vermont Veterans Outreach**



**Ken Musgrave – Vermont Veterans Outreach Specialist**

Ken was born and raised in Framingham, Massachusetts, and moved to Vermont in 1980. He graduated from Newbury College in Boston with an Associate’s Degree in Management before spending forty-five years in domestic and international transportation and logistics working in sales and operations.

Ken’s military career started with active duty serving as a squad leader with the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea. Later he joined the Vermont National Guard Mountain try team leader, then transferred to the Aviation Unit to spend 18 years as a crew chief on Hueys and Blackhawks. Ken retired in 2001 with 515 flight hours, at the rank of Sergeant First Class. Later as a contractor, he served as Mobilization and Deployment Program Manager, then as a Call Center Program Manager, before finding a home as a Specialist in the Outreach team.

As someone who has always enjoyed working with people Ken says, “Providing solutions that benefited the customer and the company I represented have always kept me motivated and fulfilled. Serving in the Vermont National Guard as a soldier and then as a contractor is an honor and the highlight of my career.” I look forward to being a member of the Outreach Team. Ken lives in Essex with his wife Bonnie and three children.



*We’re Listening!*

**Having trouble finding affordable high-quality child care?**



**We need to hear from our families! Please complete this short survey and share!**

[surveymonkey.com/r/TJNNRD8](https://surveymonkey.com/r/TJNNRD8)

**We want to meet your needs and we know finding accessible child care is one of the biggest challenges many families face every day.**

**Create a power outage plan. Make sure you have specific goals for before, during and after an outage to lessen the impact an emergency will have on your family.**



**BEFORE A POWER OUTAGE**

- Build your preparedness kit
- Charge cell phones and devices
- Fill your gas tank
- Purchase Ice to keep food cold longer



Check us out on Facebook! <https://www.facebook.com/vtvfot/>

## Thoughts From Our State Youth Coordinator



Throughout our lifetime we have MANY experiences. All of those experiences have an impact, either positive or negative on our development. Hopefully most of them are positive, but some will not be. In this brief article we will look to define what Adverse childhood experiences are, and how they might impact child development.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that could hinder a child's healthy development and could create long-lasting, negative effects as she or he develops into adulthood. Some of those negative experiences may include physical, emotional or sexual abuse; divorce or imprisonment of parents; or growing up with a parent who has a mental illness, a history of drug or alcohol abuse.

Researchers have long been trying to better understand how those ACEs connect to negative health outcomes, like obesity, heart attacks, alcoholism, and depression. A study conducted by Moore et al. (2014) looked to establish the occurrence of ACEs and determine, on average, how many ACEs people encounter. The study determined that nearly one (1) out of every two (2) children in the United States have encountered at minimum one (1) adverse experience. Furthermore they determined that, as children age, the frequency of undergoing more adverse experiences increased.


It is important for parents and caregivers to be aware of kiddos physical and mental well-being and to work diligently to provide them with a stable and loving environment. It is your responsibility to assist your/that kiddo in building resilience if they are exposed to an adverse environment and help him or her form safe and secure attachments that can foster a sense of security and belonging.


To learn more check out the infographic, and this video learn more about how you can help to minimize ACEs in your family and community: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gm-lNpzU4g>

Moore, K., Sacks, V., Bandy, T., & Murphey, D. (2014). Adverse childhood experiences: National and state-level prevalence. Bethesda, MD: Child Trends. Website "Joining Forces For Children" (2021). What are ACEs?. <https://www.joiningforcesforchildren.org/what-are-aces/>

In the Spirit of Adventure,

Brian Stoudnour  
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 Download the "ARNG CYS" Mobile App for Apple & Android!

 Check us out on Facebook!  
<https://www.facebook.com/VTNGCYP/>

# Youth Deployment Resource Binder

## Register for yours today!

**VTNG Child & Youth Program has created a "binder" full of resources specifically for youth, and families with youth of deploying/deployed VTNG Service Members.**

*Here is what you will find in the binder:*

- \* **Top Deployment Specific Resources**-The best of the best resources for families with children who will be experiencing a deployment
- \* **Emotional Health Resources**-Helping support any age youth with the journey that is deployment
- \* **School Resources**-Ways to help create two-way communication between you and your child's schools
- \* **State Specific Resources**-Local resources to connect you to support services that are near you
- \* **DIY Youth & Family Activities**-Activities to better prepare youth and families for deployment and beyond

**Register to receive your digital copy by following this link:**  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WGLG6HK> or by following the QR Code



**\*\*To request a physical copy please contact us!\*\***



Got questions? Please contact Brian Stoudnour, Lead Child & Youth Program Coordinator  
[brian.r.stoudnour.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:brian.r.stoudnour.ctr@mail.mil) or phone: 802-310-6745





### TAX PREP CHECKLIST

Happy New Year, welcome to the beginning of tax season. We made it through the holidays and now need to start getting ready for filing taxes. The hardest part of getting ready to file taxes is all the paperwork you need to gather, so let's start with the basic information you need.

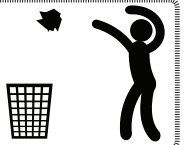
1. **Last year's taxes:** Make sure you have a copy of last year's taxes to have an idea of all the income and deductions you were eligible for last year and could be again for this year.
2. **Income Sources:** You need to have your W-2 and various 1099 forms that report other income you have received.
3. **Personal information:** You need to make sure you have the information about whoever is filing, who else is covered in that tax return, and if there is a refund where you would like the money to go.
4. **Adjustments to your income:** These are things like the various 1098 Forms, IRA contributions, and Medical Savings Account contributions.
5. **If you itemized your deductions:** This is where last year's tax return comes in handy; make sure you revisit each of the deductions you received last year.
6. **Records of Taxes paid:** Above and beyond what shows on your W-2, things like real estate taxes paid, estimated tax payments made during the year.

Once you have gathered all the paperwork, you are ready to get started.

In case you haven't heard Military One Source is doing the free tax preparation and e-Filing software program again this year. MilTax Preparation and e-Filing Software will be available starting Jan. 19 through mid-October. Powered by an industry-leading tax service provider, it's designed to address situations specific to the military. This easy-to-use, self-paced tax software walks you through a series of questions to help you complete and electronically file your federal return and up to three state tax forms. Calculations are 100 percent accurate – guaranteed by the software provider. <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/financial-legal/tax-resource-center/miltax-military-tax-services>

Megan Sather ~ Personal Financial Counselor (Contractor) ~  
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**WHEN IN DOUBT, TOSS IT OUT!**  
After an outage be sure to throw away any food that has been exposed to temps 40° F (4° C) for 2 hours or more.



### VTARNG JFHQ State Chaplain



#### Chaplain's Reflection:

New Year's resolutions often focus on ourselves such as dieting, getting fit, reading more, getting more sleep, watching fewer hours of TV and the list goes on. What if you changed your resolution to encourage and build others up?

As a Chaplain and pastor, I read articles regarding trends in our society so I know what people are thinking or doing. I read an article that saddened me. The author wrote this article in December 2011, and while the article is nine years old, the trend is accurate for today.

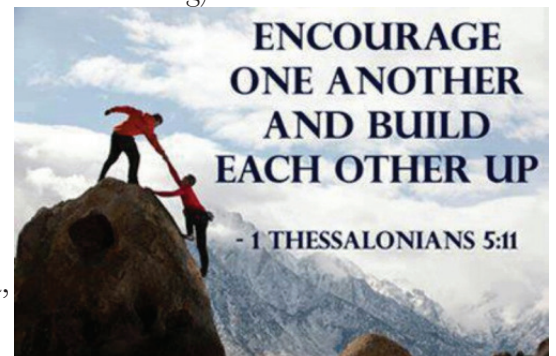
"Number of Real Friends Declining" by Hiyaguah Cohen, December 10, 2011 and published in Baseline of Health Foundation (<https://www.jonbarron.org/article/number-real-friends-declining>)

*Back when the Beatles were singing, "I Get By With a Little Help from My Friends," the average person in the US had at least three good friends to lean on. Now, help from those friends might be in short supply for many of us, despite Facebook networks numbering in the hundreds or even thousands. That's because the average person now has one-third fewer close friends than in the recent past. In the 25 years since 1985, the average number of close friendships has declined down to only two, according to new research from Cornell University.*

I encourage you to stay connected to your friends through social media, text, phone calls, and when possible face-to-face. One's trust level increases with a face-to-face meeting, rather than simply receive a "like" for a picture or comment on Facebook.

For God and Country-Live the Call.

- CH Brett Charsky



Check us out on Facebook!  
[www.facebook.com/VTNG-Religious-Affairs](http://www.facebook.com/VTNG-Religious-Affairs)



## Reminders from Vermont Employment Support Program

Many employers are now doing their best to reopen or return to their former level of activity, but they need good people to get the job done! Be sure to let us know if you need help with a job search or with your resume (service members and spouses too.) And watch the job ads, whether online or in local papers. Need a warm handoff? Contact Dave Wheel at [dwheel@amyx.com](mailto:dwheel@amyx.com) or 802-338-4190 as we are connected to great hiring managers around the state.



The Vermont Department of Labor holds job-type-specific virtual job fairs every Thursday! Go to: <https://labor.vermont.gov/event/virtual-job-fairs> to see what they are focusing on this week! You can register and attend virtually and view the companies present for that fair.

Be sure to register as a job seeker at: <http://www.vermontjoblink.com> and identify yourself as a veteran (also see job listings.) You can also contact the Vermont Department of Labor staff who can assist you in finding a job. Go to: [labor.vermont.gov](https://labor.vermont.gov) and learn about your local Career Resource Center. You can see the listing and your closest center at: <https://labor.vermont.gov/workforce-development/find-your-local-career-resource-center>.

Check the jobs listings on our ESP Jobs Facebook page: Go to: “Vermont Employment Support Program”, click on “Groups” and then “Job Opportunities.” The available opportunities will increase over time as employers become more knowledgeable of the site. Please share this information with your veteran friends as many aren’t aware of these great job search resources!

## Military and Family Readiness Centers



**2021 is well underway!** Although it is a new year, the Vermont National Guard continues its mission. As we are all aware, 2021 will see many comings and goings. The Military and Family Readiness team salutes all service members stateside, those preparing for a deployment, and those returning to the Green Mountain State. Your employer has sent out w2s, and it’s a good time to check for these and all other tax documents to ensure filing on time this year. Also, for those service members and federal employees with Social Security taxes deferred from Sept to Dec 2020, it is now time for the repayment to start. The good news is that the repayment period has been extended to December 2021. The balance due will be collected from

your wages in 24 installments between pay periods ending January 16 and December 4, 2021. You will be able to track the amount collected in each pay period and the remaining balance due in the remarks section of your “MyPay” LES.

Now, more than ever is time for a solid financial foundation and plan-especially if your soldier is deploying. As the holiday expenses arrive and taxes will be due, we begin to look to spring and all of the beauty it brings. The Military and Family Readiness team wants to remind you we are here to serve you and help you balance your military career and civilian lives at every turn. Do not hesitate to reach out to YOUR Military and Family Readiness Specialist for support!

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### DURING A POWER OUTAGE

- Use only flashlights, avoid candles
- Unplug Appliances to avoid any power spikes that may damage your devices
- Keep your fridge and freezers closed. An unopened freezer will keep food frozen for almost 24 hours!
- Don't use your oven for heat. Wear layers of warm clothes.
- Never use a generator near or in your home or garage.



### Contact Information

#### DIRECTOR, FAMILY PROGRAMS

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