Reuniting Through the Arts

Offering Creative Arts Experiences that Support Families of Returning Wounded Troops

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Society for the Arts in Healthcare
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Roland Hamand, son a U.S. Army soldier, and his drawing, titled "Proud to Be Part of a Military Family"
Overview

- Military families
- Emotional Cycle of Deployment
- Adult family members
- Children
- Creative arts experiences
Marriage Rates

• More likely to be married than civilian population
  ▪ Army—56%
  ▪ Navy—57%
  ▪ Air Force—61%
  ▪ Marines 49%

• Dual-military marriages—7%
Divorce Rate

- About the same as civilian population
- Exception: Women troops
Nearly 8% of all military members are single parents.

- Army—11%
- Navy—8%
- Air Force—6%
- Marine Corps—5%
Age Range of Children

- Birth–5: 500,000
- 6–11: 300,000
- 12–18: 200,000
- 19–23: 100,000
“Deployed”
Emotional Cycle of Deployment

1. Anticipation of departure
2. Detachment and withdrawal
3. Emotional disorganization
4. Recovery and stabilization
5. Anticipation of return
6. Return adjustment and renegotiation
7. Reintegration and stabilization

National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder of the U.S. Department of Veterans’ Affairs
Caregiver’s Possible Feelings

- Grief
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Isolation
- Fear
- Guilt
Taking Care of You

James Johnson assists his son, Pfc. Alex Johnson, 19, with exercises to maintain arm strength.
What children may be thinking...

- That the injured family member will no longer be able to care for or play with the child
- That the injury was punishment for being bad
- That he or she will “catch” the family member’s injury
Preparing for the Visit

- Description of what the child will see, hear, smell, etc.
- Reassurance that the injured family member is still the same person
- Description of how the child might feel when seeing the injured family member
- Something to bring to give to the injured family member
Combat-Injured Service Members and Child Distress

- Changes in
  - Living arrangements
  - Schedules
  - Parenting practices
  - Amount of time spent with parents

- At risk for distress
Research Findings

- High pre-injury deployment-related distress
- High family disruption post-injury
- No association:
  - Injury severity
  - Parent age
  - Number of years married
  - Number of children

Six-Word Memoirs
Arts activities supporting families of returning wounded troops...

- allow for processing of emotions
- enhance effective communication, and provide social support
- foster reconnection, adjustment, and role renegotiation
- build positive memories and hope
- help sustain health and well-being; model self-care while under stress
- highlight strengths and resilience, while promoting growth
Family-Focused & Subgroup Activities

The Walter Reed Arts Program
Incorporating the Arts into the Support of Veterans, Wounded, Ill and Injured Warriors, Active Duty Service Members and the People who Care for Them.

Open Art Sessions
for Adults, Kids and Families

Tuesday 09:30-11:30
Pop-Up Session: Adult Focus
Physical Therapy Waiting Area
(America Building, First Floor)
In collaboration with Operation B.R.A.V.E. Families and Resiliency

Thursday 09:30-11:30*
Pop-Up Session: Adult Focus
Physical Therapy Waiting Area
(America Building, First Floor)
In collaboration with Operation B.R.A.V.E. Families and Resiliency

Join us on Facebook! View our virtual art gallery, get the latest news, see where we are: www.facebook.com/WalterReedArts

POC: Seema Reza, Program Coordinator 301-319-2858 seema.reza@med.navy.mil
Sample Adaptive, Multisensory Arts Materials to Ensure Access & Inclusion

American Printing House for the Blind, Inc.’s DRAFTSMAN Tactile Drawing Board

For more on adaptive arts resources, see http://thesah.org/doc/ArtsAccess_Resources.pdf.

ArtStream’s Allies in the Arts

An Artists-in-Residence Project Currently Serving Wounded Troops, Their Families, and Military Hospital Staff on the 4th Floor at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center

Allies in the Arts Logo Design for ArtStream, Inc.: Nancy Gurganus
Project Goal & Objectives

**Goal:** To extend creative arts opportunities for wounded service personnel hospitalized in a military hospital setting (i.e., Walter Reed), their families, and staff

**Objectives:**

- To enrich the daily lives of wounded service members
- To increase self-identity and self-efficacy to help wounded service members to cope more effectively with their injuries and hospitalization
- To provide opportunities for family members to engage in creative experiences as a means of coping with the stress of their situation and normalizing relationships
- To provide opportunities for hospital staff to engage in creative experiences to facilitate coping

Allies in the Arts Professional Artists

- Visual artist
- Creative writer/poet
- Musician
- Improvisational storytelling/narrative expression in multimedia artist

Hand Color-Tinted Photo for A “Personal Retreat”
Allies in the Arts artists completed...

- An intensive general arts-in-healthcare course
- A supervised internship in an area hospital
- A minimum of two years of experience working in a hospital setting
- A special orientation course (on military life, combat, common injuries of OEF and OIF, impact of these issues on wounded troops and their families, and implications for arts experiences)
- American Red Cross orientation and requirements
- Mental Health First Aid training
Collaged Box Created by Family Member Holds Mementos of Important Stories
Talking Stick Created by Teen Offers A Means for Ongoing Reconnection
Mobiles, Chimes, Punched Tin Lanterns, and Embossed Metal Projects Enhance Hospital Room Décor and Serve as Gifts

Photos/Photographic Arrangement and Arts Project Development and Facilitation: Nancy Gurganus
Personalized Scrolls Created as Gifts Help to Strengthen Family Ties

Photos: Nancy Gurganus  Arts Project Development and Facilitation: Nancy Gurganus and Rosanne Singer
ALLIES in the Arts

is pleased to present an "OPEN STUDIO"
evening of creative writing & artistic design.

Join us Tuesday, November 29th
anytime from 6:00 to 9:00 PM
in the 4th Floor Conference Room
to meet with our artists,
Rosanne & Nancy.

You will be guided to
express thoughts or ideas
in lines of poetry or
simple verse. Your words
can then be transferred
onto a fabric or paper
scroll for hanging, to keep
or to give as a unique gift.

This drop-in workshop is entirely free and open to
all Warriors, family, friends and staff.
No prior experience is necessary!

Flyer Design for ArtStream, Inc.: Nancy Gurganus
Institute for Therapy through the Arts’/ITA’s Operation Oak Tree (Music Institute of Chicago)

Get Ready, Get Set
Pre-Mobilization Programming for Military Families

The mission of the Pre-Mobilization Programming is to strengthen family and individual resilience and readiness in advance of the dislocations caused by a service member’s mobilization. Through the creative arts, children have an opportunity to identify and express their feelings both verbally and nonverbally. Art experiences are designed to help children formulate different strategies surrounding a local move and prepare to strategies methods that may be useful to them throughout the deployment period. These strategies may include ways in which the family will remain connected during mobilization and ways in which individual family members will communicate their concerns and interests to one another.

During the summer of 2010, ITA served at a deployment event at Naval Station Great Lakes in Lake County, IL. ITA staff facilitated a welcome and engagement activity as well as introduced arts therapy groups for approximately 45 children from Navy families.

Deep Roots, New Leaves
Reintegration Programming for Military Families

ITA’s mission is to provide community family support services to bridge the gap between deployment and reintegration for active-duty service members and their families. The Creative Arts Therapists works as the primary provider during the transition period and in a face-to-face ability to promote healing and wellness during the adjustment period of family members. The program also helps to create a “family” upon which to build the family’s own new normal.

ITA staff served 14 Yellow-Ribbon Reintegration events between September 2009 and July 2010. During this time, the program grew and changed with the addressed emotional needs of the families.

Growing Strong, Branching Out
Programming for Families of a Deployed Service Member

ITA’s mission is to help families cope with a service member’s extended deployment and to grow and re-establish strategies garnered during Pre-Mobilization services. To maintain the needs of all the members and the family, they adjust to the adjustments, and to help the family remain connected and communicating throughout the experience. Creative arts therapists will facilitate self-expression and insight to provide awareness of feelings and behaviors associated with the mobilization of a loved one. Therapists will help families structure ways in which they can support their loved one in their new role and readjust to their lifestyle.

Looking Back, Reaching Forward
Programming for Families of Fallen Military Service Personnel

ITA’s purpose is for families of fallen military service personnel who have parents or siblings through the process of grief toward a celebration of the life of the fallen military personnel and to help family members who serve, while paraphrasing honoring veterans and deceased, to communicate. ITA hopes to create a community of families who mourn a similar loss, and who may share this experience as they accept toward a new normal. ITA will involve creative arts therapy to heal emotional expression throughout the phases of mourning.

ITA served an event for families of fallen service personnel at Campground Park in September 2010, presented by the Illinois Families of Fallen Soldiers Members Task Force. Opening and closing ceremonies were led by an ITA music therapist and families participated in drama and art activities facilitated by ITA therapists in the park throughout the afternoons. ITA therapists provided art services at an event presented by Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors and Operation Support Our Troops Illinois, a 24-hour retreat for families mourning the loss of a loved one.

The Mosaic Wall

ITAfacilitates the ongoing creation of a memorial mosaic wall for families mourning fallen soldiers. This awe-inspiring work of collaborative art is a venue for expression and connection for families who share the experience of grieving for a service member lost in any of America’s military operations.

Operation Oak Tree Brochure: courtesy of Jennifer Rook, MT-BC, LPC, Clinical Director, Institute for Therapy through the Arts; see http://www.musicinst.org/military-family-services
Operation Oak Tree’s Mission

“To empower individual expression in order to...

• foster personal growth
• deepen interpersonal roots between and among family
• strengthen coping strategies so that families may more easily weather challenges inherent in each season of the [deployment] cycle
• make it easy for families to branch out into their communities for support”

Operation Oak Tree’s reintegration program (Deep Roots, New Leaves) “aims to create a scaffold upon which a family can build a new normal,” with “the Creative Arts Therapies [serving] as the delivery system for communication tools provided....”

Deep Roots, New Leaves Tier 1 “Act Up, Act Out” Drama Therapy Protocol

Photo courtesy of Jennifer Rook, MT-BC, LPC, Clinical Director, Institute for Therapy through the Arts; see http://www.musicinst.org/reintegration-programming
Deep Roots, New Leaves Tier 2 “Found Object Sculpture” Art Therapy Protocol

Photo courtesy of Jennifer Rook, MT-BC, LPC, Clinical Director, Institute for Therapy through the Arts; see http://www.musicinst.org/reintegration-programming
Family members serve, too....

Resources - Children’s Books (sampling)


Resources - Organizations/Initiatives

Joining Forces
www.joiningforces.gov

American Red Cross
www.redcross.org

USO (United Service Organizations)
www.uso.org

National Military Family Association
www.militaryfamily.org

Operation: Military Kids
www.operationmilitarykids.org
Organizations/Initiatives - cont’d.

Our Military Kids
www.ourmilitarykids.org

National Guard Child and Youth Programming
www.guardfamily.org/youth

Blue Star Families
www.bluestarfam.org

Operation Homefront
www.operationhomefront.net

Fisher House™ Foundation, Inc.
www.fisherhouse.org
Organizations/Initiatives - cont’d.

Easter Seals  
www.easterseals.com

Yellow Ribbon Fund, Inc.  
www.yellowribbonfund.org

*Serving Together: Troops, Veterans & Family Care Project* - see www.mhamic.org/html/index.html

Military Child Education Coalition  
www.militarychild.org

The Military Family Research Institute at Purdue Univ.  
www.mfri.purdue.edu
Organizations/Initiatives - cont’d.

ZERO TO THREE® - Military Family Projects
www.zerotothree.org

Sesame Workshop - “Talk, Listen, Connect”/T.L.C.
www.sesameworkshop.org

The Institute for Therapy through the Arts/ITA (Music Institute of Chicago) - “Operation Oak Tree”
www.musicinst.org/military-family-services

ArtStream, Inc. - “Allies in the Arts”
www.art-stream.org/allies

“Deployed”