

# Military Family Programs OUTREACH TOOLKIT



for Public Affairs

**As a public affairs officer, you play a major role in providing timely, accurate and relevant information to service members, their families and survivors.** You are responsible for ensuring consistent messaging about your service's various family programs and services and ensuring alignment with the Office of the Secretary of Defense family program messaging. Given the challenges of your position, we hope that the information below will assist you in speaking to the changes in family support policy and better understanding the need for consistent messaging about the Family Readiness System and family programs.

Since the original Department of Defense Instruction 1342.22, "Family Centers," was published in 1992, the need for robust family support programs has increased dramatically. As you know, today's force is much more geographically dispersed and is operating at a higher tempo than it was in 1992.

The Department of Defense responded to these challenges by updating its policy to better meet the needs of today's service members and their families. The reissuance of Department of Defense Instruction 1342.22, "Military Family Readiness," (<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/134222p.pdf>) published July 3, 2012, updates policy and provides a new framework for delivering family readiness services. The Family Readiness System approach integrates policy for many family readiness services into a single source and focuses on coordination and partnerships among all of those who support military families.

The Family Readiness System approach means service members, families and survivors can reach out to an entire network of support through a variety of access points. In person, by phone and online, the system is available to every service member, their family and survivors, regardless of activation status or location. To help you convey this message to military families, we have created a toolkit full of resources and information you can use to engage your installation audiences. Your toolkit includes:

1. **Policy Fact Sheet** - The fact sheet summarizes changes to the Department of Defense Instruction.
2. **Sample Article** - The article is intended for use in installation newspapers or other publications to inform service members, their families and survivors about the Family Readiness System.
3. **Sample Advertisement** - These are examples of what might be included in an installation newspaper, program newsletter, website or blog. The advertisements can be used as-is or as a starting point to develop an individualized advertisement consistent with approved family program messaging.
4. **Social Media Tactics** - The social media content includes several Facebook and Twitter updates to disseminate through installation, program or family center social media outlets.

We appreciate all of the hard work you do to meet the growing demands of our military families. Your work is critical to our military's success and we hope this toolkit becomes a valuable resource for you.