KEY SPOUSE PROGRAM

Key Spouse
Reference Guide

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Air Force Key Spouse Program. The Key Spouse Program is a formal unit program that offers informal peer-to-peer/Wingman support to families. Imperatives for revised emphasis on this program are clear: Impact of the long war's TEMPO, force reduction, and the Community Action Information Board feedback shows signs of spouse stress with increases in domestic situations and suicidal gestures and attempts.

The Key Spouse Reference Guide recognizes that everyone on the unit's team—Commander, Key Spouse mentor, First Sergeant, Key Spouse, and Airman and Family Readiness Center (A&FRC)—impacts the unit's culture and contributes to its ability to accomplish the mission at home and abroad.

This guide will help you define your role as a Key Spouse and provide information and referral resources that may be tailored to include local information. This guide summarizes the Key Spouse training program's six modules:

- Module I: Making Connections
- Module II: Building the Team: Roles and Responsibilities
- Module III: Resources
- Module IV: Responding to the Call
- Module V: Supporting Families During Deployments
- Module VI: Ready Set Go!

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Key Spouse program was developed as a Quality of Life Initiative out of concern for the Air Force Families. Forerunner: Navy Ombudsman Program. AF tested similar programs at five bases ('96-'98). Voluntary implementation was encouraged Air Force-wide as part of AF family support outreach program ('99). For many years, the program has been base or command-specific. The AF standardized and deployed the Key Spouse Program, March 2009.

WHY IS THE KEY SPOUSE PROGRAM IMPORTANT

- Promotes individual, family, and unit readiness
- Establishes continuous contact with spouses/families
- Encourages peer-to-peer Wingman support
- Links to leadership
- Provides an informal sounding board
- Strengthens leadership's support team
- Vital to building strong AF communities

KEY SPOUSE PROGRAM BENEFITS

- Increased awareness of installation/community resources
- Identified/resolved issues at lowest levels
- Enhanced up/down information flow
- Prepared/supported families during separations
- Increased sense of unit support
- Improved Quality of Life among unit families
- Increased readiness and retention
- Enhanced family resiliency

MODULE I: MAKING CONNECTIONS

Key Spouses will interface with many personality types. Don Lowry created the metaphor, True Colors ™, to translate complicated personality and learning theory into practical information we can all understand and use. He developed an easy and entertaining way to identify individual strengths and weaknesses.

Personality types are defined in terms of color--gold, blue, green, orange. The best word to describe Gold is conventional. Golds have high respect for authority and like to establish and maintain policies, procedures, and schedules. Blues are compassionate and sensitive to the needs of others. Greens are conceptual, have an investigative mind and are intrigued by questions. Oranges are courageous and act on a moment's notice. True Colors ™ will help you understand what motivates you and improve communication.

WWW.TRUECOLORSCAREER.COM

MODULE II: BUILDING THE TEAM: ROLES & RESPONSIBLITIES

The KEY SPOUSE Program is a volunteer resource that operates within a military framework to enhance unit family readiness. The chain of command and its "chain of communication" work in much the same way. It allows for effective communication and for issues resolution at the grassroots level. Identifying the Key Spouse team and understanding the 5 Ws will equip you for success: WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE and WHY.

WHO IS ON YOUR TEAM?

Commander (CC)

The Key Spouse Program is a Commander's program. The Commander establishes and maintains the program within the unit. The team is comprised of the Commander, the Key Spouse Mentor, the First Sergeant, the Key Spouse, and the Airman & Family Readiness center (A&FRC).

- Establishes & maintains the unit's Key Spouse program
- Selects/appoints/replaces Key Spouse
- Sample appointment letter, Appendix A
- Provides resource support
- Encourages unit spouse participation
- Supports Key Spouse meetings/functions

First Sergeant (CCF, Shirt, 1st Sgt)

The First Sergeant monitors the KEY SPOUSE Program and is the commander's "go to" point of contact. Specifically, the First Sergeant:

- Primary point of contact
- Link between CC and Key Spouse
- Assists in recruiting/selecting Key Spouse
- Meets with Key Spouses regularly
- Assists with administrative and logistical support
- Provides access to updated rosters

The unit maintains a roster of assigned unit families that generally includes names, addresses, and phone numbers. What is included in the roster will vary from unit to unit, and may require the Key Spouse to make additional enhancements. The First Sergeant or the CC's designee will provide the Key Spouse with a sanitized list of names with "need-to-know" information. The roster is limited to Key Spouse assigned families and is to be used for Key Spouses' duties only. When providing these official services, Key Spouse volunteers are, IAW 10 USC 1588, considered to be employees of the Federal Government for purposes of the Privacy Act (see 10 USC 1588(d)(C)). As a result, giving them access to Privacy Act information (rosters) is not a prohibited disclosure so long as the disclosure is in connection with the performance of their volunteer services as Key Spouses.

Key Spouse Mentor (KSM)

- Mentors junior spouses
- Takes strategic vs. tactical program perspective
- Advocates unit concerns
- Attends trainings
- Encourages spouse/family interactions with each other/unit
- Recognizes contributions of Key Spouse

If the CC chooses to appoint a KSM, he or she may choose whomever they feel is most qualified for the position. The KSM acts an advocate and supports KS initiatives. Because of implied experience, the KSM is a valuable asset to KSs.

Airman and Family Readiness Center (A&FRC)

A&FRCs are the primary "go to" agency. Specifically, the A&FRC:

- Provides oversight & assistance
- Facilitates Key Spouse training
- Provides information & referral support
- Provides continuing education and training opportunities

WHAT IS YOUR KEY SPOUSE ROLE?

A Key Spouse is the face of unit leadership to families. A Key Spouse provides peer-to-peer Wingman support, informs, and refers family members. Caring for families on the home front allows the war fighter to focus on his/her mission at home and downrange.

The Key Spouse's performance directly impacts unit families' morale. The Commander and First Sergeant rely on the Key Spouse's judgment, reliability, and positive attitude to accomplish program goals. Key Spouse role/responsibilities:

- Trained volunteer
    - Interviewed and chosen by the Commander in writing
    - Minimum 1-year commitment
- Official unit representative
- Works directly with the First Sergeant
- Role model for family members
- Visible at unit/group/wing, and A&FRC events
- Track and report trends that affect family readiness—"big picture" snapshot
    - Shares potential issues and concerns with unit leadership
- Maintains professional image at all times
    - Reference Protocol handout, Appendix N
- Key Spouse Job Description, Appendix J
- Keeps current roster/database of unit family members
- Establishes and maintains contact with
    - All unit families
    - Incoming unit family members
    - Deployed members' families

The unit maintains a roster of assigned unit families that generally includes names, addresses, and phone numbers. What is included in the roster will vary from unit to unit, and may require the Key Spouse to make additional enhancements. The First Sergeant or the CC's designee will provide the Key Spouse with a sanitized list of names with "need-to-know" information. The roster is limited to Key Spouse assigned families and is to be used for Key Spouses' duties only. When providing these official services, Key Spouse volunteers are, IAW 10 USC 1588, considered to be employees of the Federal Government for purposes of the Privacy Act (see 10 USC 1588(d)(C)). As a result, giving you access to Privacy Act information (rosters) is not a prohibited disclosure so long as the disclosure is in connection with the performance of your volunteer services as Key Spouses.

Key Spouses

Are:	**Are Not:**
Volunteers	Counselors
Trained	Babysitters
Active	Taxi drivers
Visible	Gossips
Available	Fundraisers
Team players	To assume leadership authority
Conduit of information	Working alone
Official unit representative	

Unit Team Relationships

The exact nature of Key Spouse and the Team relationships may vary from unit to unit. The diagram below defines the Key Spouse relationship with the unit team and families.

ROLE	RELATIONSHIP WITH KEY SPOUSE
CC	Establishes, maintains, and determines the direction of the Key Spouse Program; provides resource/logistics support, appoints in writing, and dismisses Key Spouses.
KSM	Provides mentorship and support to Key Spouse; more of a strategic vs. tactical view.
First Sergeant	The point of contact for the overall coordination of the Key Spouse Program. The first to contact on squadron-related matters. CC will clarify other protocols.
A&FRC	Provides training, information and referral, and program guidance.
Unit Families	Interacts with Key Spouses and unit team as needed.

WHEN AND WHERE DO YOU ACCOMPLISH YOUR TASKS?

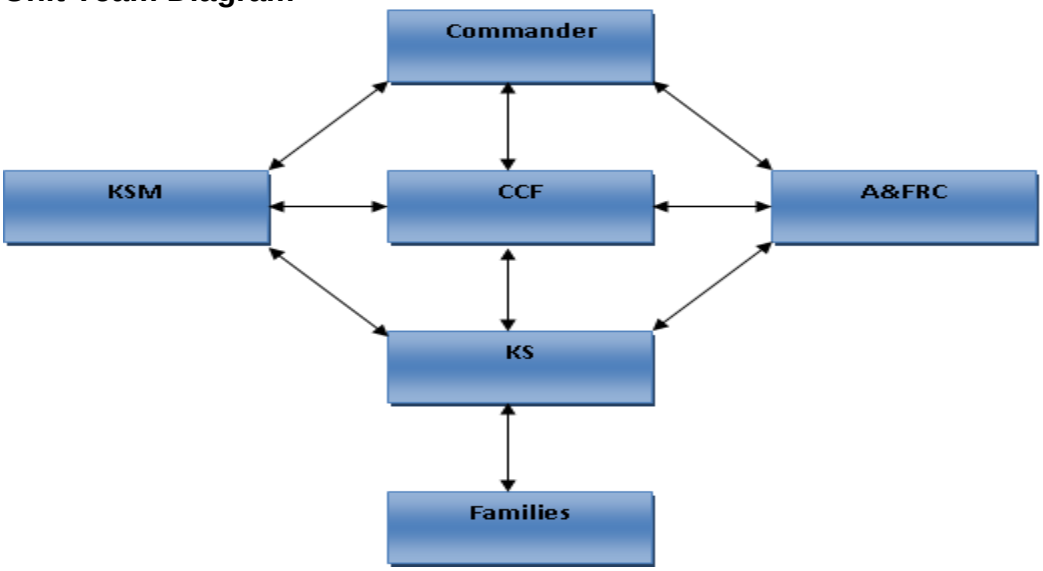
- Meetings/Events
  - Official and unofficial
  - Scheduled and unscheduled
  - Formal and informal
- Home Office
- Unit Office
- Anywhere

WHY ARE YOU IMPORTANT TO THE MISSION?

Meeting with Unit Leadership

The Key Spouse contacts the First Sergeant to schedule a meeting with the unit team. Prepare for the meeting by reviewing "Meeting with Unit Leadership: Suggested Questions" checklist, Appendix C.

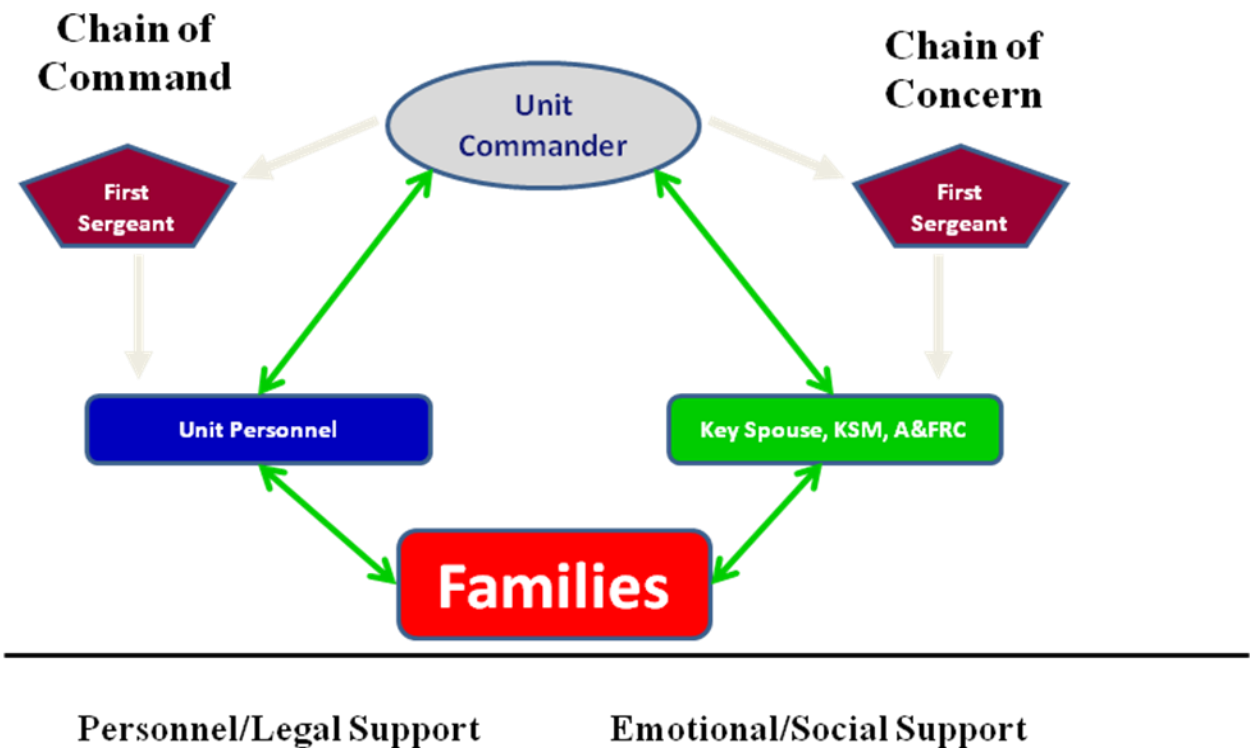
Unit Team Diagram



TEAM COMMUNICATION IS CRITICAL

TEAM COMMUNICATION

KEY SPOUSE PROGRAM MODEL



MODULE III: RESOURCES

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

The Key Spouse is a conduit for base and community information/programs that helps families deal with military lifecycle challenges. The A&FRC is the primary agency to educate the Key Spouse on base/community resources. Other methods should be employed to remain current:

- Peruse base news outlets (newspaper, CC's channel)
- Attend Town Hall meetings and other base/community venues
- Network—when utilizing base agencies; ask about services that benefit unit spouses
- Learn from others' experiences
- Supplement your resource guide with community calendars, flyers, on- and off-base special interest programs or events, etc.

Informal Resources

- Family, friends, co-workers, neighbors
- Publications

Formal Resources - Local/Community/National

- Installation Support
    - Medical (Mental Health, Family Advocacy, Health and Wellness Center)
    - Chaplain
    - Sexual Assault Prevention and Response
    - Military Family Life Consultants
    - Airman & Family Services
    - Community Action Information Board/Integrated Delivery System

Community Action Information Board (CAIB) is a cross-functional body to resolve issues that impact the readiness of Air Force members, families, and the community. The CAIB:

- Promotes collaboration among helping agencies
- Identifies gaps in services
- Reduces duplication of effort
- Facilitates pooling of resources for cross-organizational activities in support of the readiness of the base

Integrated Delivery System (IDS) is a working group that serves as the "action arm" of the CAIB. The IDS primary responsibilities are:

- Identify and assess community issues
- Coordinate and implement prevention and education activities

Information Tools (complete list with websites, AF Family Resource Guide)

Airman and Family Readiness Center
Chaplain Services
Family Advocacy
Legal Office
American Red Cross
Military Family Life Consultant
Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC)
Mental Health
Health and Wellness Center (HAWC)
Family Member Programs
Victim Advocate
United Way
Military Child Education Coalition
National Military Family Association
America Supports You
Operation Home Front
Universities, Colleges, Technical Schools
Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee
Victim Advocate

OTHER INFORMATION TOOLS

Military OneSource: "Serving the American Military and Their Families"
www.militaryonesource.com

- Military OneSource: available to all branches of US military
- Available stateside (1-800-342-9647)
- Available from overseas locations (country access code + 800-3429-6477)
- Spanish-speaking consultants available CONUS (1-877-888-0727)
- Wide range of topic areas from plumbers in their local area to the cost and availability of child care in Germany for an upcoming family's PCS
- Translation services available; written and spoken; immediately available or by appointment
- Personal and family education resource tools available ranging from printed pamphlets to electronic information to web classes/workshops
- Up to twelve Face to Face counseling sessions with a civilian provider at no cost to military member/family member(s)
- Referral for counseling is made directly by Military OneSource consultant after discussing issue with caller (referral is NOT made by A&FRC or other base helping agency)
- Follow-up with caller about civilian counseling is provided by Military OneSource
- Free online tax service available to Active Duty personnel and their families

Military Homefront: DoD Resource for Relocating Families
www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil

- Extensive Information on Military Installations and Local Communities
- Updated locally every 90 days
- Provides current, updated relocation resource information.

AF Crossroads: http://www.afcrossroads.com/

- Separation and Readiness
- Child and Spouse Education
- Financial Planning
- Spouse Employment
- Stress Management
- Spouses, Teens, and Youth Forum

GATHERING INFORMATION

In addition to information from formal resources, informal methods may also provide great value to the success of the unit's readiness.

- Develop your own system to organize resource information
    - Printed or electronic
- Invite on- and off-base agency guest speakers to working group meetings
- Compile a resource notebook

Key Spouse Support Tools

- Communicate requirements to the unit and the A&FRC. The only required tool is a phone; however, other tools may include:
    - Computer/printer
    - Business Cards
- Maintain rosters:
    - Unit
    - Deployment
    - Newcomers

The unit maintains a roster of assigned unit families that generally includes names, addresses, and phone numbers. What is included in the roster will vary from unit to unit, and may require the Key Spouse to make additional enhancements. The First Sergeant or the CC's designee will provide the Key Spouse with a sanitized list of names with "need-to-know" information. The roster is limited to Key Spouse assigned families and is to be used for Key Spouses' duties only. When providing these official services, Key Spouse volunteers are, IAW 10 USC 1588, considered to be employees of the Federal Government for purposes of the Privacy Act (see 10 USC 1588(d)(C)). As a result, giving them access to Privacy Act information (rosters) is not a prohibited disclosure so long as the disclosure is in connection with the performance of their volunteer services as Key Spouses.

AF Family Resource Guide

- AF Family Matters developed a comprehensive tool to help identify formal resources
- Provides quick reference for frequently used community agencies and services
- Contains most commonly referenced regional and national resources with a description of activities and services
- Includes educational grant / scholarship information
- Provided electronically and allow flexibility to add locale-specific information
    - Key Spouses are encouraged to disseminate this tool to all unit families

MODULE IV: RESPONDING TO THE CALL

COMMANDER-DIRECTED CALLS

The Key Spouse is an ambassador for the unit and every opinion or comment becomes an "official" message. When the Commander or First Sergeant call:

- Write and repeat message verbatim
- Do not add your perspective, opinion, or additional comments
- Do not speculate about message content
- Stick to the message verbatim; once everyone is called, go back and answer questions
    - Ensure follow-up on all questions deferred as quickly as possible
- If necessary, ask for help

RUMOR CONTROL

- Disseminate official information communicated only through authorized channels
- Encourage families to be patient with the process
- Urge spouses to question source reliability
- Discourage rumors
- Contact the CC/First Sergeant for help in dispelling rumors

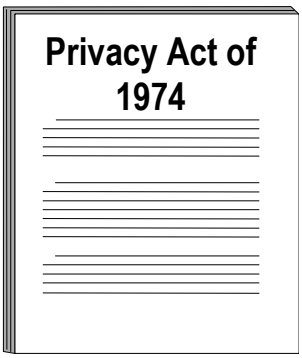
RECORDING CONTACTS

- Record information immediately or as soon after the call as possible
- Establishes trend data
    - How often contacted
    - Family Issues
- Ensures accuracy of dates, times, and means of communication
- Informal Meeting at Unit/Wing event
- Provides record or referrals
- Allows for consistent follow-up

PROFESSIONAL PRIVACY ISSUES

The Key Spouse has an obligation not to divulge personal information shared by unit families. Safeguarding private, sensitive information shows respect for a family's privacy and protects the credibility and integrity of the KEY SPOUSE Program.

PRIVACY ACT OF 1974



The Privacy Act of 1974 limits access to personal information that Airmen provide to their command. The information the command provides must be relevant and necessary to accomplish the mission. Key Spouses may receive some of this personal information protected by the Privacy Act because they are command-appointed representatives who need this

information to perform their duties. A copy of the Privacy Act of 1974 is located at Appendix H.

Disclosing Information

A Key Spouse may disclose information about Airmen and their families ***only*** to the CC or First Sergeant, except in situations where mandatory reporting is required (for rules on mandatory reporting, see "Calls the Require Mandatory Reporting"). If contacted by outside agencies, the Key Spouse will refer agency or special interest group to the CC or First Sergeant.

In addition, the Key Spouse is prohibited from divulging phone numbers and addresses of families to include other unit families. Key Spouses may not use lists for personal gain. For example, the roster cannot be used as a source of potential clients for a business.

Helpful guidelines to handle privacy information:

- Do not disclose a caller's name or any personal information without the caller's permission, unless required by law or regulation
- Do not repeat general information without the caller's permission
    - General information may include number of children, housing area, work section, type of vehicle, etc.
- Protect written notes regarding the call
- Protect a caller's privacy; do not use the caller's name when checking on the availability of a resource. If the caller starts discussing issues that require disclosure, state that Key Spouses are mandated reporters—encourage reporting and offer referrals
- Remember, families aren't bound by privacy act/disclosure rules
- Be careful about sharing personal information in order to show empathy

Failing to protect private information is grounds for immediate dismissal.

STEPS IN HANDLING CALLS

The ultimate compliment you can pay to another person is "being-in-the-present" while interacting over the phone or in person. To facilitate this connection, remove as many distractions as possible. This enables the Key Spouse to really listen. Below are five steps in handling routine calls:

- **Greeting**
    - Greet families in a genuinely upbeat, positive manner
    - Note, 90% of calls are initiated by the Key Spouse
- **Record Keeping**
    - Request identifying information and record on unit family call log, Appendix G
    - Recommend a Course of Action
    - Once you understand the situation, take action by making the referral
    - Determine if the caller has already contacted another agency
    - Explain the agency or service, any documents the agency or service needs, and what will happen once the person makes contact (*too many referrals may be confusing*)
    - Don't be afraid to take time to think about a referral. It's permissible to tell the caller that you'll do some research and call back, unless the safety of an individual is at stake

Nature of the Call

- Identify reason for the call
- Engage in active listening
- Listen to feelings behind the words
- Be non-judgmental
- Show Empathy
- Avoid saying “I know what you mean”
- Ask questions to clarify
- Paraphrase to check your understanding

Develop an Action Plan

Ask the caller if he or she has any questions. Confirm information and clarify caller’s understanding of “next steps”. Never make specific promises regarding an agency’s services.

Closing

- Provide an “open door” policy for families to call. You may need to be cautious with repeat callers
- Close by encouraging caller to call if an issue surfaces between scheduled calls or agreed upon follow-up
- Complete unit family call log, Appendix G

Follow Up as Needed

The Key Spouse may want to follow up in a few days to see if the caller was able to get desired service, or determine if another referral is necessary

TYPES OF CALLS

Information Calls

Information calls are the most common type of calls. Callers will usually have questions about types of services available, hours of operation, etc. For example, a spouse may call with a question about services the Air Force Aid Society offers.

Complaint/Grievance Calls

In this type call, someone generally complains about a service. People may call the Key Spouse because they've already tried normal channels with little success.
The Key Spouse can work with that person through the chain of command and/or base agencies to resolve the problem.

Recurring Calls

Spouses may call repeatedly because they are lonely or have something they want to complain about. Some common calls are problems with children and missing their geographically separated spouse.

This type call may require a firm, but kind approach. Limit phone time or arrange for a "phone buddy", someone who enjoys talking on the phone and welcomes the contact.

Request for Assistance Calls

Service request calls are, "I need a babysitter today" or "I need a ride to the doctor's office." Although emergencies do happen, these are generally not the kind of services the Key Spouse provides.

It is important for the Key Spouse to understand why the person is calling and what kind of referral is needed in any situation.

Crisis Intervention

Not all calls will be routine. Other call types are:

- Crisis (personal or family)
- Emergency (life-threatening)
- Suicide (threats of personal harm)
- Homicide (threat to harm others)

IMPORTANT:

The Key Spouse is not a trained counselor! The goal in these calls is to make the appropriate referral as quickly as possible. Based on the situation, immediately contact emergency services, 911, Security Forces, etc., and then notify the Unit Commander or First Sergeant. Maintain contact with the individual until help arrives. Typically, the CC or First Sergeant is notified FIRST!

Crisis Calls

A person may call for several reasons, including:

- Unit accident with fatalities
- Chronic illness
- Marital distress
- Financial difficulties

Crisis calls may involve one person, a family, or the whole unit. In a crisis, the caller feels unable to cope with the situation. The caller needs information, emotional support, and reassurance the issue is taken seriously and steps are taken to help resolve the issue.

Keep in mind the caller may be overwhelmed by emotion. The caller may experience a range of feelings:

- Anger – a common emotion which may be expressed overtly or covertly. The anger is normally directed at another, turned inward and, if not resolved, may result in depression.
- Helplessness – manifests itself when an individual feels unable to cope or has nowhere to turn.
- Anxiety – a combination of worry and uncertainty. Anxiety is a normal response to challenging situations, but when it gets out of hand, anxiety can lead to confusion, poor judgment, questionable decisions, and self-defeating behaviors. It can immobilize a person.
- Lowered self-esteem – the person doesn't feel competent to respond appropriately.

If the caller is overwhelmed by emotions, assure caller these feelings are normal when facing challenging events. Be sure to gauge caller's emotional state. Make a referral immediately. Allow unit leadership and other professionals decide intervention referral services.

The concept of crisis is relative. One person's crisis may be an ordinary event to someone else. Maintain your objectivity and do not over-identify with the caller. The Key Spouse is not responsible for another person's crisis or individual refusal to take action.

Suicide Calls

Tips for handling emergency calls also apply to suicide calls. In each of these calls, the Key Spouse has mandatory reporting obligations. Take immediate action to inform the appropriate authority. Contact established emergency response numbers.

Other contingency intervention tips are:

- Always take the threat of suicide seriously
- Don't make promises that everything will be all right
- Get the person's name, location, and phone number in case he or she hangs up

- Get help. Try to keep the caller on the phone while someone else calls the police. If another person is in the house with you, give him or her a note to phone for help

Emergency Calls

An emergency call is often a life-and-death situation involving a serious or terminal illness, injury, or death. Immediately contact emergency services (e.g., 911, Security Forces, etc.,) and then notify the Unit Commander or First Sergeant.

The Key Spouse needs to be sensitive to feelings involved and facts of the situation. Remain positive and assure the caller of immediate and competent assistance. The referral should be very specific.

CALLS THAT REQUIRE MANDATORY REPORTING

Although protecting sensitive information is one of the most critical components of a Key Spouse's job, there are times when sensitive information must be shared with the CC and First Sergeant and appropriate referral agencies.

These situations include, but are not limited to:

- Mission sensitive information
- Child abuse or neglect
- Spouse abuse
- Illegal drug use
- Suicidal ideations
- Homicidal tendencies

EMERGENCY FAMILY ASSISTANCE CONTROL CENTER (EFACC)

A significant catastrophic event, either natural or man-made, has the potential to damage or destroy Air Force installations and communities around those installations and impact military members and their families. A catastrophic event could produce mass casualties and displace members of AF communities from their homes, schools, and places of employment. Community services normally available could be disrupted or rendered insufficient to handle support during recovery. The A&FRC is a focal point for helping the Air Force community address, prepare for, and respond to crisis situations regardless of the source.

Activation of an (EFACC) may be necessary in those situations where the anticipated needs are beyond the capability of the agencies primarily tasked to provide immediate crisis intervention.

General EFACC Guidelines:

- Consolidated staging area where military members and their families obtain
  - Disaster relief assistance and support
  - Current leadership information
  - Contingency services
- 24/7 activation during significant catastrophic event
  - Natural: floods, hurricanes, tornados, typhoons, etc.
  - Man-made: toxic spills, nuclear/enemy attacks, noncombatant evacuation operations (NEO) and repatriations, etc.
- A&FRC coordinates EFACC activities
- EFACC location directed by command authority

CONTINGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Unfortunately, accidents and contingencies can occur whether a unit is deployed or not. Word will spread quickly through a unit, and media coverage may bring more confusion and misleading information. Having a plan for communicating before a contingency is crucial.

After a unit contingency, an official message will be released as soon as possible. However, the message may be delayed until there is:

- Verification of the correct unit or individuals involved
- Official notification of immediate family members

Follow unit leadership's plan for communicating.

IMPORTANT:
Depending on the contingency and at the Installation Commander's discretion, the Airman and Family Readiness Center will activate an Emergency Family Assistance Control Center (EFACC). The EFACC is a family support system that allows agencies to respond collectively to wartime contingencies and peacetime emergencies to ensure personnel and their families receive effective support.

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

The Air Force, or a particular unit, may be in the news because of a contingency situation or a deployment. The media may approach a Key Spouse.

Follow these tips for handling media inquiries:

- You have no obligation to speak with or provide information to the media
- Refer the media representative to the Public Affairs Office
- If someone persists, get their name, affiliation, organization, and questions and forward the information to the Public Affairs Office

- Notify the Commander or the First Sergeant of media contact

When the Key Spouse is in doubt about whether/whom to report confidential information, the following people can offer advice:

- Commander
- First Sergeant
- A&FRC
- Official base agencies such as Life Skills Support Center, Family Advocacy, etc.

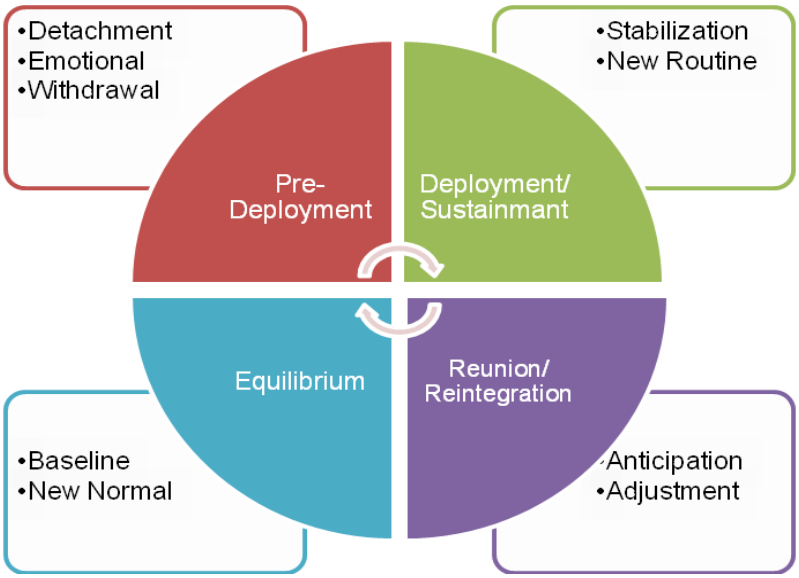
MODULE V: SUPPORTING FAMILIES DURING DEPLOYMENT

The Air Force lifestyle is punctuated by separations due to deployments, mobilizations, TDYs, remotes or crisis situations. Whether family separations are planned or unexpected, the Key Spouse assists families by keeping the lines of communication open and providing assistance in finding resource information.

DEPLOYMENT TERMINOLOGY

- Readiness: A military concept embedded in the community's culture to denote a state of preparedness, and the ability to anticipate a situation before it occurs
- Equilibrium: New normal, baseline family/work activity
- Pre-Deployment: Before member departs for deployed location. This is a time of preparation and planning
    - Complete Pre-deployment checklist, Appendix I
- Deployment/Sustainment: Member is carrying out their duties at the deployed location; family members maintain the home front
- Reunion/Reintegration: Member returns from deployment and reintegrates into home, family, work, and community
- Joint Expeditionary Taskings (JETS), aka, "In Lieu of Taskings": Characterizes the AF combat-focused mindset and joint posture; AF support of the fight however and whenever tasked
- Bands/Blocks: A System That Allows the Air Force to Posture Forces in timelines to Conduct Military Operations…Band refers to the ratio of time home vs. time deployed
- AEF Cycles/Buckets: Air Expeditionary Force Cycles provide predictability in deploying members; replaced by bands/blocks; however, you may still hear AEF reference

THE CYCLE OF DEPLOYMENT



STAGES OF DEPLOYMENT

Stage 1: Pre-Deployment

Prior to deployment, spouses will feel anticipation. This generally occurs 4 to 6 weeks before the member deploys. The remaining spouse feels tense, selfish, and guilty about not wanting the member to go. There is also frustration because the member is putting in extra hours to get the unit ready to deploy, while so much needs to be done to prepare the household for the separation. Both the member and the spouse are physically and mentally exhausted. There may be unacknowledged anger about the situation which can trigger depression or physical problems. Spouses may become more distant and they may stop sharing their thoughts and feelings. Feelings of disorganization and sadness are common. Children may react by withdrawing or misbehaving.

Stage 2: Deployment

Most people are in this stage for the majority of the separation. It is characterized by relative calm. A sense of emptiness sets in when separation occurs. Old routines are gone. Spouses will begin to feel confident that they can handle their daily affairs. However, if a contingency occurs, people can be thrown back into states of withdrawal and depression.

Stage 3: Reunion/Reintegration

This last stage can be the most difficult. Getting the house and family ready for the member's return often exhausts the spouse. Members are also exhausted and excited by their return and spend a lot of time sleeping, which can be frustrating to the spouse. Both the spouse and the member are happy to be reunited, but they have to work out accumulated tensions and reestablish the rules for living together.

The Key Spouse can use these stages to assure spouses that their responses and feelings are normal, given the situation. These general stages can also be useful in spotting a problem. They are a norm against which behavior can be measured. Someone whose reactions appear extreme, when measured against these stages, may need a referral.

IMPORTANT:
The Airman and Family Readiness Center will assist family members experiencing difficulties during deployment.

KEY SPOUSE ROLE

Pre-Deployment

- Establish and maintain contact with families
- Encourage family attendance at unit or A&FRC briefings
- Participate in pre-deployment activities

Deployment/Sustainment

- Ensure 100% contact with separated families to include
- 30-365 day Deployments/TDYs/Remote assignments
- Encourage families to notify their Unit Leadership Team Member when leaving the area for an extended time
- If unable to contact family, call the First Sergeant or Commander

Reunion/Reintegration

- Participate in welcome home activities
- Encourage attendance at briefings

On-Going

- Respond to verbal requests for help
- Learn to identify non-verbal requests

Preparing for Separation

- Organize Documents
    - Deployment checklist
    - Power of attorney
    - Wills and benefits (Service Member's Group Life Insurance – SGLI)
    - Family care plans

- Family and household responsibilities
    - Vehicle/house maintenance
    - Finances
    - Child/Family member/pet care
    - School

PREPARING FOR SEPARATIONS

Managing Stress

Stress has widespread implications that threaten the well-being of all Airmen, military, civilians, and families. Eliminating all sources of stress may not be realistic; however, increasing awareness of work, life, and social stressors can facilitate implementation of intervention strategies.

- Talk About Concerns
- Work Out Solutions *Before* Member Departs
- Exercise a Sense of Control
- Connect with Resources
- Communicate, Communicate, Communicate
- Maintain a Sense of Humor--Have a Good Attitude

Children and Deployments

- Tend to Mimic Parent's Behavior
- May "Act Out" Feelings

Some Helpful Hints

- Keep Children Informed and Share Feelings
- Maintain Stable Environment
- Talk about What Will Happen when Parent Leaves and What Will Be Different When Parent Returns
- Foster a Sense of Security—Be Consistent in "Kind But Firm" Discipline Practice
- Engage in Family Reintegration Activities

REUNION/REINTEGRATION

- Well-Planned Reunions Yield Good Result
- Be Flexible and Adapt to Change in Plans
- Involve Everyone in Planning the Reunion
- Reintegration is a Process--Not an Event
- Change Happens (Each Separation is Different)
- Take It Slow in Reestablishing Relationships
- Different for Each Member of the Family
- Avoid Generalizations Such As "Should"
- Communicate Changes
- Allow Time to Readjust

Note: Uncharacteristic behavior may need to seek assistance through available resources

READINESS RESOURCES

- Base helping agencies
  - Airman & Family Readiness Center, Family Member Programs, Chaplains, Family Advocacy Program, Health And Wellness Center, Mental Health, Sexual Assault Prevention Response, Legal
- Child Care Programs
  - Give Parents a Break, Extended Duty Care, Returning Home Care
- Separation support groups
- Military Family Life Consultants, non-clinical counseling
- AF Aid Society community enhancement programs
- Unit/wing/community activities
- Military OneSource: www.militaryonesource.com

READINESS SUPPORT WRAP-UP

- Military family separations are a reality
- Understanding stages of deployments will help family members prepare and manage separations
  - Before member departs
  - While member is gone
    - Notify someone when family member leaves the area
  - When member returns
- Proper planning reduces family stress
- Connect with on- and off-base resources
- Careful planning equals a successful reintegration

MODULE VI: READY, SET, GO!

GETTING STARTED

Become Familiar with Key Spouse Continuity Binder

- Read the Key Spouse Reference Guide
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of each team member
- Log volunteer hours, Key Spouse Data Spreadsheet, Appendix M

Complete Key Spouse Training

- Initial
- Heart Link
- Suicide Awareness (CBT)

Review "Getting Started" Checklist, Appendix L

Sign Volunteer Agreement, DD FM 2793, Appendix B

Schedule an appointment with your Unit Leadership Team (CC, Mentor, CCF)

- Schedule appointment with unit leadership team
- Meeting with Unit Leadership: Suggested Questions, Appendix C
- Schedule appointment with the A&FRC Community Readiness Consultant (CRC)
  - One meeting with both in attendance is recommended.
  - Establish time frame for periodic meetings
  - Establish reporting procedures
  - Discuss leadership expectations of your attendance at Commander's calls, welcome briefs, Hail & Farewells, Sq functions, etc.
  - Ask for introductions to squadron senior leaders (Chiefs, OKS Officers, Section heads, Duty Shirt, Commander's Secretary…)
  - Discuss how you will obtain unit rosters

Schedule an appointment with your unit Community Readiness Consultant

- Identify and fill in blank or missing CB information
- Discuss reporting volunteer hours/family contact numbers
- Discuss Key Spouse business cards and how they will be obtained
- Obtain Key Spouse posters/flyers

Acquiring/Maintaining Roster of Assigned Families

The unit maintains a roster of assigned unit families that generally includes names, addresses, and phone numbers. What is included in the roster will vary from unit to unit, and may require the Key Spouse to make additional enhancements. The First Sergeant or the CC's designee will provide the Key Spouse with a sanitized list of names with "need-to-know" information. The

roster is limited to Key Spouse assigned families and is to be used for Key Spouses' duties only. When providing these official services, Key Spouse volunteers are, IAW 10 USC 1588, considered to be employees of the Federal Government for purposes of the Privacy Act (see 10 USC 1588(d)(C)). As a result, access to Privacy Act information (rosters) is not a prohibited disclosure so long as the disclosure is in connection with the performance of your volunteer services as a Key Spouse.

Some examples of official use are reaching unit families with a message from command, morale calls to spouses of deployed/TDY/remote personnel, and new arrivals.

Rosters should not be left on the hard drive of the family computer nor may the roster be exchanged via non-secure e-mail. Save it to a disk or CD and secure the file.

Shred outdated rosters.

Sending Welcome Letters

Units often introduce the Key Spouse to newly assigned families by sending welcome letters, sample at Appendix D. Units may desire to use their personalized templates. Ideally, the family receives a letter from the CC and the Key Spouse. The letter should be personalized to fit Key Spouse and unit's personality.

Making First Contact with Spouses

Generally, the Key Spouse follows up on the initial welcome letter by making a phone call to the new family within 7-10 days. Here are some tips for making this call:

- Make the first-contact call when you are feeling enthusiastic and upbeat
- Do not take it personally if someone isn't interested in the Key Spouse Program or has had a bad experience. Assure the person that he or she is welcome as part of the unit
- People who have no phones should be contacted by e-mail/letter
- E-mail is a follow-up option after the initial contact; request e-mail address during initial contact with member or spouse

Using the Unit Family Information Sheet and Unit Family Call Log

The Unit Family Information Sheet is designed to supplement the unit's roster. The Unit Family Information Sheet allows families to provide privacy information. The Key Spouse reports changes or discrepancies to the First Sergeant (for example, address).

If families resist giving this kind of personal information, the Key Spouse respects their decision and notifies the First Sergeant. Again, allows families to set their own boundaries. This may or may not be a red flag. Let families know <u>why</u> you are gathering personal information.

The Unit Family Call Log, Appendix G, is used to record spouse contacts. The Key Spouse annotates all attempts to reach a family.

The information sheet and call log may provide the Commander and First Sergeant important trend data or change information, for example, what appears to be recurring family questions or issues. Positive trends are as important as noting negative trends.

TRANSITIONS

- Begin with the end in mind
- A Key Spouse transitions for several reasons
    - Permanent change of station
    - Spouse assigned to another unit
    - Change in family situation
    - Personal goals inconsistent with unit requirements
- Return sensitive information to leadership
- Ask leadership for a letter of recommendation
- Develop a resume with A&FRC assistance

There are situations that require the Commander/First Sergeant to ask a volunteer to resign, e.g., a breach in confidentiality, failing to perform duties within an agreed-upon timeframe, or basic philosophical differences.

Smooth transitions help maintain unit integrity and ensure families are protected.

MAKE MY DAY!

We have focused on support to others; now let's turn our attention to you as the KS volunteer, a valued member of the unit's team. We appreciate your service, and we want to stress the importance of you taking care of you. The FISH video was filmed at the famous fish market in Seattle. The bottom line - have fun, be present, make their day,

Remember, you are not alone. You have a team to support you.

Appendix A

SAMPLE APPOINTMENT LETTER

Organization's Letterhead

Date

MEMORANDUM FOR (Organization Address)

FROM:

SUBJECT: Key Spouse Appointment Letter

1. The following individual is appointed as the (name of unit) Key Spouse. This appointment is contingent upon completion of Key Spouse Program training and expires in one year, effective training date.

Name	Address	Phone Number

2. The Key Spouse acts in an official capacity and may be given access to Privacy Act information to carry out certain tasks. The (unit name) will assign duties and provide supervision.

(Commander's signature block)

cc: CSS
Key Spouse

Airman and Family Readiness Center use only.

VERIFICATION OF TRAINING

The above named unit spouse volunteer completed the Key Spouse Training Program and is officially recognized as (unit name) Key Spouse. Continuing education/training offered, at a minimum, quarterly.

_____ _____

(Name) Date
Community Readiness Consultant
(Installation Name) Airman and Family Readiness Center

Appendix B

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT FORM

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT FOR

☐ **APPROPRIATED FUND ACTIVITIES** ☐ **NONAPPROPRIATED FUND INSTRUMENTALITIES**

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

AUTHORITY: Section 1588 of Title 10, U.S. Code, and E.O. 9397.

PRINCIPAL PURPOSE(S): To document voluntary services provided by an individual, including the hours of service performed, and to obtain agreement from the volunteer on the conditions for accepting the performance of voluntary service.

ROUTINE USE(S): None.

DISCLOSURE: Voluntary; however failure to complete the form may result in an inability to accept voluntary services or an inability to document the type of voluntary services and hours performed.

PART I - GENERAL INFORMATION

1. TYPED NAME OF VOLUNTEER *(Last, First, Middle Initial)*	2. SSN	3. DATE OF BIRTH *(YYYYMMDD)*

4. INSTALLATION	5. ORGANIZATION/UNIT WHERE SERVICE OCCURS

6. PROGRAM WHERE SERVICE OCCURS	7. ANTICIPATED DAYS OF WEEK	8. ANTICIPATED HOURS

9. DESCRIPTION OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES

PART II - VOLUNTEER IN APPROPRIATED FUND ACTIVITIES

10. CERTIFICATION

I expressly agree that my services are being provided as a volunteer and that I will not be an employee of the United States Government or any instrumentality thereof, except for certain purposes relating to compensation for injuries occurring during the performance of approved volunteer services, tort claims, the Privacy Act, criminal conflicts of interest, and defense of certain suits arising out of legal malpractice. I expressly agree that I am neither entitled to nor expect any present or future salary, wages, or other benefits for these voluntary services. I agree to be bound by the laws and regulations applicable to voluntary service providers and agree to participate in any training required by the installation or unit in order for me to perform the voluntary services that I am offering. I agree to follow all rules and procedures of the installation or unit that apply to the voluntary services I will be providing.

a. SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER	b. DATE SIGNED *(YYYYMMDD)*

11.a. TYPED NAME OF ACCEPTING OFFICIAL *(Last, First, Middle Initial)*	b. SIGNATURE	c. DATE SIGNED *(YYYYMMDD)*

PART III - VOLUNTEER IN NONAPPROPRIATED FUND INSTRUMENTALITIES

12. CERTIFICATION

I expressly agree that my services are being provided as a volunteer and that I will not be an employee of the United States Government or any instrumentality thereof, except for certain purposes relating to compensation for injuries occurring during the performance of approved volunteer services and liability for tort claims as specified in 10 U.S.C. Section 1588(d)(2). I expressly agree that I am neither entitled to nor expect any present or future salary, wages, or other benefits for these voluntary services. I agree to be bound by the laws and regulations applicable to voluntary service providers, and agree to participate in any training required by the installation or unit in order for me to perform the voluntary services that I am offering. I agree to follow all rules and procedures of the installation or unit that apply to the voluntary services that I am offering.

a. SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER	b. DATE SIGNED *(YYYYMMDD)*

13.a. TYPED NAME OF ACCEPTING OFFICIAL *(Last, First, Middle Initial)*	b. SIGNATURE	c. DATE SIGNED *(YYYYMMDD)*

PART IV - TO BE COMPLETED AT END OF VOLUNTEER'S SERVICE BY VOLUNTEER SUPERVISOR

14. AMOUNT OF VOLUNTEER TIME DONATED				15. SIGNATURE	16. TERMINATION DATE *(YYYYMMDD)*
a. YEARS *(2,087 hours = 1 year)*	b. WEEKS	c. DAYS	d. HOURS		

17.a. TYPED NAME OF SUPERVISOR *(Last, First, Middle Initial)*	b. SIGNATURE	c. DATE SIGNED *(YYYYMMDD)*

DD FORM 2793, FEB 2002 PREVIOUS EDITION IS OBSOLETE. Reset Exception to Standard Form 50 granted by Office of Personnel Management (OPM) waiver.

Appendix C

MEETING WITH UNIT LEADERSHIP: SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

The purpose of this document is to provide suggested talking points for meeting with the Commander and First Sergeant.

1. **The Squadron's mission and how it relates to the Wing's mission:**

_____

_____

2. **The Commander's/First Sergeant's expectations and priorities for the KEY SPOUSE Program:**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. **The role of the First Sergeant:**

_____

_____

_____

4. **The points of contact for information and support:**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. **Frequency of roster updates; System of notification for new arrivals:**

6. **The Commander's expectations in responding to emergency/crisis situations:**

7. **Types of situations, statistical data, the Commander wants reported:**

8. **Administrative support (e.g., access to phone lines, newsletters, answering machines, e-mail, etc.):**

9. **Logistics support available to include desk, computer, phone, etc., if required:**

10. **Request unit tour!**

Appendix D

WELCOME LETTER

Date

Hello,

Welcome to (base name)! I hope your stay here will be one of the best experiences of your military career. As the Key Spouse for the (unit/organization name), I'm here to answer questions and assist you and your family as you acclimate to the area. The Key Spouse Program is a great way to stay "in touch" with unit, base, and community happenings.

I realize that the first few days and weeks can be hectic. Feel free to call me if you need anything, or would just like to visit with someone who's been here a while. My number is _____.

If you don't hear from me within two weeks, please give me a call. It may be that I have an incorrect telephone number and can't reach you. I really look forward to meeting you and welcoming you in person!

Sincerely,

Appendix E

UNIT FAMILY INFORMATION CHECKLIST

The following is a checklist you can use for your first telephone contact with a spouse:

- ❑ Hello, this is _____. May I speak to _____?
- ❑ State that you're a Key Spouse
- ❑ Explain what the KEY SPOUSE Program is and the tasks you do
- ❑ Ask if the address you have is correct
- ❑ Fill out the Unit Family Information Sheet, if possible (see Appendix D)
- ❑ Relate any unit news/invite them to any upcoming unit and base events
- ❑ Give them your phone number (and/or e-mail address)
- ❑ Let them know you can assist them by offering resource information and referrals. (You also have access to the A&FRC for military-related concerns)
- ❑ Ask if they have an alternate contact phone number
- ❑ Ask them if they mind a follow-up call or if they'd prefer to be contacted via e-mail
- ❑ Provide personal information about how long you've been in the area, etc. This will relax the person on the other end and give you a discussion lead-in for the next call or contact

Appendix F

UNIT FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

	Spouse	Member
Name		
Military Status		
Rank		
Home Phone		
Work Phone		
Mobile Phone		
E-mail		
DEROS		
Special Needs		

Children

Name	Gender	Age	School/Daycare	Special Needs

Other Household Members

Name	Gender	Relationship to Household	Special Needs

Pets

Name	Gender	Age	Type of Pet	Special Needs

Appendix G

UNIT FAMILY CALL LOG

Key Spouse Call Log

Date	Name	Phone	Sponsor	Reason for Call	Action Taken	Follow Up

Appendix H

PRIVACY ACT OF 1974

Limits access to personal information.

Information must be relevant and necessary to accomplish the mission.

The Privacy Act states, in part,

No agency shall disclose any record which is contained in a system of records by any means of communication to any person, or to another agency, except pursuant to a written request by, or with the prior written consent of, the individual to who the record pertains . . . .

There are specific exceptions for the record allowing the use of personal records:

- For statistical purposes by the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics
- For routine uses within a U.S. government agency
- For archival purposes “as a record which has sufficient historical or other value to warrant its continued preservation by the United States Government”
- For law enforcement purposes
- For Congressional investigations
- Other administrative purposes

The Privacy Act mandates that each United States Government agency have in place an administrative and physical security system to prevent the unauthorized release of personal records.

The Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Act of 1988, P.L. 100-503, amended the Privacy Act of 1974 by adding certain protections for the subjects of Privacy Act records whose records are used in automated matching programs. These protections have been mandated to ensure:

- Procedural uniformity in carrying out matching program;
- Due process for subjects in order to protect their rights, and
- Oversight of matching programs through the establishment of Data Integrity Boards at each agency engaging in matching to monitor the agency’s matching activity.

Appendix I

DEPLOYMENT CHECKLIST

Emotional Preparations:
Separation from a spouse or partner is hard, whether it's for 6 weeks or 6 months. If you know what to expect and come up with a plan for taking care of your household and yourself, you can be better prepared to handle the strong emotions that often come with a deployment. Everyone reacts to the news of a deployment differently. You may feel:

- angry
- sad
- confused
- nervous
- a strong sense of denial

Some people may also start to withdraw from their spouse or partner to try and make the transition easier. All of these are normal reactions to a deployment. But there are things you can do to feel better and get ready. You can:

- ***Find out as much as you can about the deployment***. Where will your spouse be? How long will the deployment last? By learning as much as you can about where your partner will be and what he or she will be doing, you may be able cope better with feelings of uncertainty. Try to remember that in some cases, you may not be able to get as much information as you'd like because of security issues.

- ***Agree on a plan for communicating***. Find out how you'll be able to communicate. Talk about whether you'll stay in touch by telephone, e-mail, or letters, and how often or at what times you'll communicate. Will you be able to send a letter or e-mail each day, or will it be once a week? How soon can you expect to get a response?

- ***Make a plan for being alone***. Family members who are at home while a loved one is serving in the military may be able to deal with anxiety and fear if they make plans to take classes, pick up new hobbies, or spend time doing things they wouldn't normally do. Set some personal goals to work toward during the deployment.

- ***Talk about your feelings with your partner and encourage him or her to do the same***. Share your fears and concerns about the deployment and work together to come up with a plan for handling them.

- ***Find support for yourself***. Many branches of the service offer support in the form of social groups, counseling, or advice. Look into what is available for you as a military family member.

- ***Reach out to other people who are going through or have already gone through a deployment***. Participate in any pre-deployment activities offered by your unit. Military families who have already experienced a deployment may have valuable tips and advice about handling the separation. By reaching out to other people who are preparing for a deployment, you may be able to build a support system for the coming weeks or months.

- ***Spend special time together as a couple and as a family***. Take the time to be alone with your spouse or partner before they leave. It's also important for children to have individual time with a parent in the days leading up to a deployment. Make time to be together as a family even if it's just for an ordinary activity like taking a bike ride or playing a game.

Preparing your home and life for deployment. The absence of a family member may mean that you'll have to do things differently at home and in the rest of your life. If you take the time to prepare for these changes, you may find it easier to adjust. Here are some things you should think about when you're preparing for deployment:

- ***Review child and elder care arrangements***. If you need help covering your child or elder care needs, contact any services that may be available to you through the military, in your community, or through another employer for support and resources. If you already have a child care plan in place, review it to make sure that the absence of a family member will not be a problem.

- ***If there are certain chores or duties that the deployed family member always does, make sure you know how to do them, too***. In some families, one person is responsible for maintaining the car or for grocery shopping. If this is the case in your family, make sure you feel comfortable taking on that responsibility on your own.

- ***Update and check legal and financial documents and details***. This should include updating wills and medical directives, creating powers of attorney documents, and ensuring that family members have access to accounts and documents.

- ***Make sure all important contact numbers are easy to find***. Gather information about how to reach the deployed family member, including numbers for contacting appropriate military officials for information and updates. Make sure you also know how to contact your spouse's family.

- ***Create a family emergency plan***. Talk about what you'd do in the case of an emergency, including where you'd go and how you would get in touch. Involve children and other family members in these discussions in appropriate ways.

- ***Talk about how you'll handle finances during the deployment***. If your deployed spouse typically takes care of the family finances, make sure that you feel comfortable assuming these responsibilities. Make sure that you agree on a plan for accessing and using all checking, savings, or investment accounts as well as safety deposit boxes. Go over all bills that will need to be paid during the deployment period, including taxes. If it's necessary, make arrangements for the direct deposit of the paycheck of the person who will be deployed.

Helping children prepare for deployment: It's important to involve children in the preparations for deployment and explain to them exactly what a deployment involves in a way that they will understand. You may also want to:

- ***Go over the "house rules."*** Explain to your child that rules will not change during the deployment just because a parent or family member is gone. Enlist older children to help around the house by taking over a chore or duty that the missing parent or family member always did.

- ***Encourage younger children to talk with older children who have already been through a deployment***. If you don't have older children, help your child make connections with the children of relatives, friends, or other military families who are familiar with deployment.

- ***Make time for the family member or parent who will be deployed to spend "alone time" with each child in the family***.

- ***Take lots of pictures or make videotapes of your child and the parent who will be deployed doing everyday activities***. Document ordinary things, like getting ready for bed, reading a story, eating dinner, or playing a game. Put these pictures in a small album for your child or display them somewhere your child can easily see them. Many families also make recordings of the parent or loved one who will be deployed reading favorite stories so that children can listen to their voices when they are gone.

- ***Give your child a special gift before the deployment begins***. This could be anything -- a diary, a scrapbook, a watch, or a bracelet -- as long as it's something your child can hold and look at when he or she is missing his/her parent or family member.

- ***Make sure your child understands that he or she will be able to stay in touch with the deployed parent or family member by writing letters, talking on the phone, or sending recordings or drawings***. Sometimes children have trouble understanding the idea of a temporary separation, and they may think that they won't be able to talk to or communicate with their deployed loved one.

- ***Come up with a way to count down the time that the parent or family member will be gone that children can understand***. Some families create calendars and mark off the days while others may come up with other ideas like filling up a jar with a chocolate or a sticker for each day the loved one will be gone. If you're not sure how long the parent will be gone, you can mark the passage of time by making a paper chain and adding a link each day that the parent is gone, and then use the chain as a decoration when they return.

The time you spend preparing for a deployment pays off down the road. You'll find that you are better able to handle the stress of the separation and take care of yourself and your family.

(Provided by Military OneSource, April 2006, www.militaryonesource.com)

Appendix J

KEY SPOUSE POSITION DESCRIPTION

(Optional Use at Unit Discretion)

PURPOSE: The primary purpose of this position is to work with unit leadership to plan, coordinate, and execute the unit's KEY SPOUSE Program. This program impacts mission readiness and retention by ensuring families have appropriate information and resources to meet their needs. The Key Spouse is appointed, in writing, by the Unit Commander.

The unit maintains a roster of assigned unit families that generally includes names, addresses, and phone numbers. What is included in the roster will vary from unit to unit, and may require the Key Spouse to make additional enhancements. The First Sergeant or the CC's designee will provide the Key Spouse with a sanitized list of names with "need-to-know" information. The roster is limited to Key Spouse assigned families and is to be used for Key Spouses' duties only. When providing these official services, Key Spouse volunteers are, IAW 10 USC 1588, considered to be employees of the Federal Government for purposes of the Privacy Act (see 10 USC 1588(d)(C)). As a result, giving them access to Privacy Act information (rosters) is not a prohibited disclosure so long as the disclosure is in connection with the performance of their volunteer services as Key Spouses.

ELIGIBILITY: Spouse of a unit member

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Provides peer-to-peer support to unit families
- Serves as a link between unit leadership and families
- Provides information and referral assistance to families during crisis
- Welcomes families and cultivates relationships within the unit
- Maintains and updates community resources and services
- Actively participates in unit's Hails & Farewells, squadron functions, spouses' group functions, and A&FRC meetings/training
- Tracks and maintains a unit family call log; records action taken and provides feedback regarding family readiness issues
- Troubleshoots issues and reports back to families and/or unit team
- Serves as a role model/mentor for unit spouses
- Attends scheduled meetings with the Unit Commander and/or First Sergeant and provides feedback regarding family readiness issues
- Record volunteer hours and information disseminated on a data spreadsheet

Other Duties May Include:

- Provides newsletter input
- Distributes unit's newsletter to families
- Performs other unit-related duties as determined by unit leadership

Desired Skills: Good communicator. Optional, knowledgeable of Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Publisher. Professional; person of integrity and standards; adheres to privacy and confidentiality guidelines, and loyal to leadership.

Required: 12 hours of training (KEY SPOUSE Program Course, Heart Link Orientation, and Suicide Awareness). Continuing education to remain current on Air Force and command trends/issues.

Appendix K

LETTER OF RESIGNATION

DD MMM YY

MEMORANDUM FOR [Unit CC]

FROM: [Key Spouse's Name]

SUBJECT: Key Spouse Resignation Letter

1. I hereby resign my appointment as Key Spouse for (unit name), effective (DD MMM YY) for the following reason(s):

a. Permanent change of station
b. Personal reasons
c. Health issues
d. New child
e. Other (please specify)

2. Please accept my heartfelt thanks for the opportunity to volunteer in this capacity and serve the (unit name) men and women.

[Key Spouse signature block]

cc:
CCF
Airman & Family Readiness Center

Appendix L

KEY SPOUSE (KS) "GETTING STARTED" CHECKLIST

First Things First

____ **Review KS Continuity Binder**

____ **Identify Unit Team**

Commander _____ **Phone #**_____

Commander's Spouse _____ **Phone #**_____

First Sergeant _____ **Phone #** _____

CRC _____ **Phone #**_____

KS Training/Appointments

___ **Completed Initial Training on** _____

___ **Signed Volunteer Agreement, DD Fm 2793**

___ **Started Volunteer Hours Log**

___ **Completed Initial Suicide Awareness on** _____

___ **Completed Heart Link on** _____

___ **Completed Unit Team Appointment on** _____

___ **Completed Unit CRC Appointment on** _____

___ **Schedule Initial Commander's Call Attendance** _____

Resources

____ **Obtain KS Business Cards (Airman & Family Readiness Center)**

____ **Obtain/post Key Spouse poster/flyer for unit bulletin board (Unit)**

____ **Obtain Alpha Roster (Unit)**

____ **Obtain Deployment Roster (Unit)**

____ **Obtain Newcomers Roster (Unit)**

____ **Prepare Newcomers' Welcome Letter (Template, KS Continuity Binder)**

Appendix M

KEY SPOUSE DATA SPREADSHEET

YEAR:	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Phone Calls												
Emails												
Meetings												
Other Correspondence												
Miscellaneous												
Total Volunteer Hours:												
Yearly Volunteer Hours:												
# of New Members to Squadron												
# of New Members Contacted												

Appendix N

PROTOCOL

As Key Spouses you may need to represent your squadron at various squadron functions. Most events will not have a dress code, so you will need to use common sense. (Don't wear a suit to a BBQ, or cut offs to a promotion ceremony.) Also consider the construct and demographic of those attending. You need to well represent squadron leadership while not alienating the squadron member. If in doubt, ask the senior, shirt or chief spouse.

You may even end up being the host if you organize an event. If you are in doubt and organizing an event that involves the base/group command level, ask your senior spouse or the Base Protocol office. For most KS events, simple and informal is the best rule.

GUIDELINES:

- Communicate with senior unit spouses whenever possible. Get dates for unit functions on the wing calendar after conferring with the wing/cc's spouse. *AVOID* CONFLICTS WHENEVER POSSIBLE.
- Invite senior spouses and guests for some unit functions. Remember to include the wing/cc's spouse in farewells, special functions, etc.
- Greet the hosts and honored guests ASAP upon arrival at a function.
- Before leaving, make a point to say farewell to the honored guest and the host/hostess.
- When you are hosting an event, assign escorts to meet/greet the VIP guest. (One escort per guest/couple). Knowing drink preference ahead of time is nice.
- Communicate with your senior spouse. He/She may have ideas, suggestions, and requests unique to your situation.

When to stand

- On the first note of the National Anthem (all countries). Civilians - Indoors and Out - stand at attention. Place right hand over heart at first note. Military in uniform stand at attention, salute only when covered (always outdoors). Stand at attention only for other nations.
- First note of Ruffles and Flourishes
- When the colors passing in review are six paces before you - remain until they are six paces behind you.
- When you are introduced stand as courtesy to the audience.
- When a toast is made all stand to drink. Ladies too! Not "toastee".
- When someone is presenting something to you - flowers, gifts, awards, etc.
- When asked to stand!

Invitations (Envelopes, etc.)

- Answer (RSVP) within 24 hours or as promptly as possible. Regrets as promptly as possible tool
- Use black ink
- Send 2 weeks prior - can be as early as three weeks
- No abbreviations - spell out all except Mr. or Mrs. and RSVP
- To address to male military member and wife: Colonel and Mrs. John Clark Doe
  Female member and husband: Master Sergeant Jane Clark Doe and Mr. John Doe
  Two military members (highest rank first): Major Jane Clark Doe and Captain John
  Doe Civilians: Mr. and Mrs. or Doctor and Mrs. John Doe
  Married Woman: Mrs. John Doe or Jane Doe
  Unmarried Woman: Miss, MS. Sue Clark or just Sue Clark
  Widow or Divorced: Mrs. Jane Doe
- If you have a houseguest, decline but say why. The hostess is then free to invite your guest if she chooses. You pay for your guest even if your dinner is complimentary.

Dress Official Function Military/Civilian

- MESS DRESS/TUXEDO - Ladies wear cocktail or dinner dress for evening
- SERVICE DRESS, UNIFORM OF THE DAY/BUSINESS SUIT -ladies wear daytime suit or dress

Dress Unofficial Functions

- BUSINESS SUIT - Ladies wear cocktail or dinner dress for evening
- COAT & TIEIINFORMAL - Ladies wear daytime suit or dress
- CASUAL - Usually slacks and a nice shirt. If in doubt call the host/hostess.

Introductions

- The name of the person receiving the introduction is said first then the name of the person being presented.
- Say the honoree's name first then the name of the person being presented: position or rank, older, female. Example: Mrs. Honored, Mrs. Old, or Mrs. Female, may I present... may I introduce... I'd like you to meet...this is Mrs. Neighbor, daughter, Beth, or Mr. Doe.
- When introducing a newcomer to the group, say his/her name first then the names of the others in the group.

Receiving Line

- Order of line at official function: (Protocol officer or aide), Host. Hostess, Ranking Honored Guest, Spouse of Honored Guest, Second Rank...
- Shake hand with all except Protocol/aide who begins a line
- Air Force officer/civilian enters line 1$1 at official functions
- Name tag on the right

- SHAKE AND GO!!

Seating, etc.

- HONOR is to the RIGHT. (Car is back right) When host and hostess sit head and foot, female honor sits to the right of the host, 2" honor sits to the left. Male honor sits to the right of the hostess, 2" honor sits to the left and so on.
- Honor is right, pass right. Begin with female honor, end with host.
- Place cards - handwritten. Use 1st names of spouse only if 2 couples have same last names, otherwise: Spouse of military - last name only. Example: Colonel John Doe, Mrs. Doe; Master Sergeant James Edwards, Mrs. Edwards
- Spell out rank - Use CHAPLAIN not Colonel, COLONEL not Doctor. Do not use abbreviations: 2"" Lt., Lt. Col, SMSgt, MSgt, etc.
- When you're toasted, don't drink. Return the toast.
- Allow 24" per place setting. Circumference of a circle = Pi (3.14) times the diameter
- American "I'm finished" position - utensils on plate
- Clear table of salt and pepper before dessert is served
- Hostess gift is appropriate if you are a guest of honor or weekend guest. Ideas: unusual basket, plant, potpourri, raffia for bottle bow, clever books (napkin folds, desserts, etc.)

Appendix P

KEY SPOUSE QUICK CRISIS REFERENCE GUIDE

This is a quick reference guide to identify who to call in a particular situation.

9-1-1:
1. Immediate spouse or child abuse situation
2. Reference to suicidal actions

Immediately call the First Sergeant to inform him/her of a 9-1-1 referral. The First Sergeant will then take the appropriate action.

First Sergeant:
1. Suicidal or homicidal thoughts
2. Child abuse, molestation or rape
3. Suspected spouse abuse
4. Family death
5. Depressive symptoms

Unit Command:
1. The First Sergeant is the primary point of contact
2. If you are unable to reach the First Sergeant, contact the unit commander

Airman and Family Readiness Center:
1. Family needs financial help – Air Force Aid Society
2. Parent is stressed – Give Parents A Break
3. Automobile trouble – Air Force Aid Society
4. Stay at home parent – playgroup/volunteer opportunities
5. Couple relationship issues – Military Family Life Consultants
6. School-age issues – School Liaison

Family Advocacy:
1. New Parent Support
2. Parenting Classes
3. Special Needs Family – Special Needs Identification Assignments Coordination Program

If in doubt, call the unit's First Sergeant. **In an emergency situation, the Command Post can contact the Commander or First Sergeant 24/7.**