



## eXtension – Military Families Monthly Report

*Reporting Period: March/April 2012*

❖ **MFLN** = Military Families Learning Network; **PF** = Personal Finance; **CC** = Child Care; **FD** = Family Development; **NL** = Network Literacy; **WW** = Wounded Warrior; **PD** = Professional Development (web conferencing)

### 1. Significant Activities:

- **All Staff Meeting – MFLN:** The contracted staff with the MFLN met (4APR). This included all PIs, Co-PIs, Concentration Leaders, Content Specialist, Network Literacy leadership, and primary MFLN leadership. Agenda items discussed were:
  - New staff – John Dorner, Kara Newby
  - Social media & blogging
  - Professional development review
  - Communication plan
  - MilitaryHOMEFRONT/OneSource merger
  - National eXtension Conference MFLN pre-conference
  - Final project reports
  - Future of MFLN
  - Report outs
- **NL Webinar:** A professional development webinar was conducted (4APR) by the NL CoP titled ***Creating Your Own Learning Network*** (<http://learn.extension.org/events/471>). This was the first in a series of three offered by the NL team. The presenters were Stephen Judd from the University of New Hampshire and Bob Bertsch from North Dakota State University.
- **FD Webinar:** A professional development webinar was conducted (5APR) by the FD team titled ***Balancing Work and Family: A Focus on Building Military Family Resilience*** (<http://learn.extension.org/events/464>). The presenters were Dr. Angela Wiley from the University of Illinois and CDR David Shirk, U.S. Navy Chaplain, Camps Johnson and Lejeune, North Carolina.

- **PF Webinar:** A professional development webinar was conducted (5APR) by the PF team titled *Implications of Relatives Raising Children While Parents are Deployed* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/458>). The presenter was Dr. Sandra Bailey from Montana State University.
- **NL Webinar:** A professional development webinar was conducted (11APR) by the NL CoP titled *RSS Feeds and Feed Readers* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/472>). This was the second in a series of three offered by the NL team. The presenters were John Dorner from North Carolina State University, Stephen Judd from the University of New Hampshire, and Bob Bertsch from North Dakota State University.
- **PF Webinar:** A professional development webinar was conducted (12APR) by the PF team titled *Financial Implications of Divorce* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/456>). The presenter was Dr. Barbara O'Neill from Rutgers University.
- **NL Webinar:** A professional development webinar was conducted (18APR) by the NL CoP titled *Finding and Following on Online Networks* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/473>). This was the third in a series of three offered by the NL team. The presenters were John Dorner from North Carolina State University, Stephen Judd from the University of New Hampshire, and Bob Bertsch from North Dakota State University.
- **CC Webinar:** A professional development webinar was conducted (25APR) by the CC team titled *Using Books in Child Care to Connect with Military Children's Lives* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/488>). The presenters were Dr. Dan Weigel from the University of Nevada - Reno and Dr. Jane Lanigan from Washington State University - Vancouver.
- **PF FAQs:** Copyediting has been completed on 275 FAQs and the process is underway to get them published in eXtension. Another 100 FAQs are being developed.
- **CC Online Learning Module:** Work is underway collaborating with Eddy Mentzer to create a military culture CC online learning module. Progress has been slowed awaiting additional DoD feedback to further initial efforts.
- **CC Interactive Book Database:** The format for this deliverable has been finalized as well as the procedure for identifying books to be included. A preview was shared during the 25APR webinar. Books are currently being identified and reviewed. Anticipated release of the database is scheduled for early fall 2012.

- **Social Media Strategy Planning:** Weekly planning meetings between MFLN leadership and the pilot project Concentration Leaders continue.

2. *Current deliverable(s), activity, goals/objectives:*

- **Military Families Learning Network (MFLN):** Significant activities related to deliverables for the MFLN are presented according to the Concentration Areas/CoPs.
  - **Personal Finance:**
    - 1) **Re-purpose Content/Establish Ask an Expert Resource:** The FAQs are copyedited and in the process of being published to eXtension.
    - 2) **Engage the Target Audience Through Social Media:** Four blogs were posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (*Implications of Relatives Raising Children When Parents Deploy [Announcement]; Implications of Relatives Raising Children While Parents are Deployed Webinar [Re-cap]; Compensation and Benefits Mobile App for Wounded Warriors; Resources from the "Financial Implications of Divorce" Web Presentation*). Engagement and interaction on DoD sites continues.
    - 3) **Provide Professional Development Opportunities Through Web Conferencing:** As stated in *Significant Activities*, two PD web conferences were offered in April 2012. Attendance peaked at 160 and 166, with a little over half representing the military. Over 500 AFCPE CEUs were have been granted so far. Other sessions are planned as follows:
      - ◆ Tuesday, 8MAY2012, @ 2:30pm ET – *Home Ownership, When Is The Right Time?* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/509>)
      - ◆ Tuesday, 26JUN2012, @ 2:00pm ET – *9 Skills of Couples Communication About Money* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/529>)
      - ◆ Tuesday, 10JUL2012, @ 2:00pm ET – *Retire Ready: Financial Planning for Later Life* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/530>)
    - 4) **Make Available and Distribute Current Research and Trends in Personal Finance:** The list continues to be updated (<http://www.extension.org/pages/18203/financial-security-for-all-research>).
  - **Child Care:**
    - 1) **Re-purpose and Create New Content:** Two articles on how child care providers can understand and respond to war play among

military children were published:

<http://www.extension.org/pages/63345/reflections-of-military-life-in-childrens-pretend-play>;

<http://www.extension.org/pages/63346/ensuring-that-childrens-war-play-is-healthy-safe-and-positive>. An FAQ on children's books was published: <http://www.extension.org/pages/63772/i-care-for-a-2-year-old-boy-whose-military-family-has-received-pcs-orders-and-is-preparing-to-move-th>.

- 2) **Engage the Target Audience Through Social Media:** Two blogs were posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (*Meeting Military Families' Need for Flexible Child Care; Meet the Children's Book Author: Dorinda Williams*). Engagement and interaction on DoD sites continues. The Facebook page ended the reporting period with 111 Likes, and a reach of 656 – all significant increases (<http://www.facebook.com/childcareandmilitaryfamilies>). Twitter followers were up 37 to 159 and there are 59 members (up 20) in the LinkedIn group, Early Care & Education for Military Families.
  - 3) **Create a Searchable List of Children's Books:** The format for this deliverable has been finalized as well as the procedure for identifying books to be included. Books are currently being identified and reviewed.
  - 4) **Create Online Training Course:** The work team for the online course met with the DoD partner Eddy Mentzer (13APR) to discuss the content of an online training course on Military Culture for community-based child care providers. Work is ongoing.
  - 5) **Provide Professional Development Opportunities Through Web Conferencing:** As stated in *Significant Activities*, one PD web conference was offered in April 2012. Attendance peaked at 85 with a majority of attendees coming from community child care situations and Extension.
  - 6) **Create a Comprehensive Listing of State Online Training Approval Requirements:** No activity at this time.
- **Family Development:**
- 1) **Identify, Promote, and Make Available Content (Re-purpose, Create New, and Disseminate Content):** No activity at this time.
  - 2) **Develop a Military Family Professional Commons (Engage the Target Audience Through Social Media):** Two blogs were posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (*Parenting at a Distance: There's an App for That!; Helping Military Dads Stay Connected*).

- 3) **Provide Professional Development Opportunities Through Web Conferencing:** As stated in *Significant Activities*, one PD web conference was offered in April 2012. Attendance peaked at 131, with over 40% representing military professionals.

○ **Network Literacy:**

- Three blogs were posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (*Perspectives on Privacy - Foundation; What is Open Source?; The Timing of the One Purple Tweet*).
- Thirty-two pieces of content (articles and FAQs) were published (see: [http://www.extension.org/network\\_literacy](http://www.extension.org/network_literacy)).
- Social media has been active for this reporting period with Alex NetLit tweeting (35 + 80 followers), #netlit hashtag (123), Google+ (9 posts, 40 followers), Facebook (5 posts, 51 likes).
- Professional development:  
As stated in *Significant Activities*, three PD web conferences were offered in February 2012.

○ **Wounded Warrior/Family Caregiving CoP:** Although not funded with Partnership dollars, this CoP has been active in the work of the MFLN.

- Three blogs were posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (*Effects of Visible and Invisible Parent Combat Injuries on Children; Caregivers Battling Suicide on the Homefront; Compensation and Benefits Mobile App for Wounded Warriors*).
- Four articles were published (<http://www.extension.org/pages/60576/military-family-caregiving>).

- **Evaluation:** Our overall numbers were static or down in March (product of no professional development/webinar sessions) and are back up in April (7 PD/webinars). PD/webinar evaluations are ongoing.

○ MFLN Facebook Metrics:

Metric	Dec 2011	January 2012	Feb 2012	March 2012	April 2012	% change
Total Likes	442	469	502	525	549	+ 4.6%
People Talking about this	30	54	63	50	60	+20%
# of Stories created	38	81	87	70	97	+24%%
Engaged Users	43	71	91	na*	74	-19%
Total Reach	634	629	890	718**	1060	+48%
Viral Reach	347	306	498	370	761	+106%

\*data not available this month for reasons unknown \*\* used an average

- MFLN Google Analytics:
  - Pageviews, were relatively static since February (4,006 with a 68% bounce rate and average time on page of 2:02.
  - The MFLN blog continues to be an important resource (<http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies/>) as there were 2,126 views in March and 2,461 views in April. Visitors are spending about 2 minutes at the site.
- MFLN Twitter Metrics:
  - The MFLN Twitter account has 263 followers, with a total MFLN reach 22,452 in March and 65,778 in April. About 20% of followers are international.

○ Total Activity for MFLN and its CoPs:

Metric	Type	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	March 2012	April 2012
Reach	Tweets	226	271	228	266
Engagement	reTweets	114	113	93	143
Reach	Twitter Followers	438	479	526	562
Reach	Facebook Likes	631	693	731	816
Engagement	Facebook People talking about this	76	95	73	120
Reach	Facebook Total Reach	824	1450	1031*	1950
Reach	Total Posts	98	115	38	68

\*incomplete data due to Facebook anomaly so an average was used

3. Action still needed to complete the current deliverable(s)

- **Partnership Project Assistance:** There is a need for feedback with direction on the Health Literacy Journal from West Virginia State University.
- **CC Online Learning Module:** More feedback and content is needed to complete this deliverable.
- **Network Literacy Reach:** This is simply an ongoing conversation with our Partners to explore how to further the reach of this important information to the military family service professionals.
- **PF & CC Professional Development/Webinar Topics:** Topics are being developed and will be forwarded to DoD for approval for Summer and Fall 2012 offerings. These will be available in May.

#### 4. Relevant challenges that need attention from DoD/NIFA

- N/A

#### 5. Success stories that would be of interest to USDA and or DoD Leadership

- **Guest Blogging:** There has been a substantial increase in guest blogging outside of the staff of the MFLN and that is exciting as much of this is due to requests from others to post on our site.
- **National Association for Family Child Care:** After a contact to advertise at their the NAFCC (<http://nafcc.org/>) July national conference, a request was received to present a workshop and to write a series of articles for their quarterly national newsletter.
- **CC Twitter:** The National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (<http://naccrra.org/>) is now following @milchildcare on Twitter (that's our MFLN Child Care account). They only follow 61 accounts total and are followed by over 1,000 others. Additionally, Military Avenue ([www.militaryavenue.com](http://www.militaryavenue.com)) is also now following us and they have nearly 7,750 followers. Something more may result from this particular (Military Avenue) relationship as there is interest in exploring other ways to collaborate.
- **National Award Winning Teacher Interviewed by CC:** To simply explore as many perspectives on how to serve military dense communities in the area of child care, Kathy Reschke was able to interview Amy Riddlebarger, the recipient of the Terri Lynn Lokoff National Child Care Teacher Award. The information Kathy was able to glean from Amy on an April 10<sup>th</sup> interview at Wright-Patterson AFB has enhanced her work as an MFLN Concentration Leader, looking to serve those that provide child care for military families both on installations and in communities.