



eXtension – Military Families Monthly Report

Reporting Period: August 16, 2010 – September 15, 2010

Definition of Terms. For clarification, a basic definition of critical terms consistently used by eXtension is presented below:

- **Partnership.** The term *Partnership* will be used to refer to the overall and ongoing strategic relationships between MC&FP, USDA/NIFA, and the Lead and Sub-Award institutions.
- **Family service professional.** As the term “helping professional” is generally defined as a more exclusive sub-category of family/social service professionals who are more clinical in training and practice (medicine, psychotherapy, marriage and family therapy, psychological counseling, social work), the more general and inclusive term *family service professional* will be used to describe the intended target audience for this Partnership which includes non-clinical family and human service professionals (primarily education and prevention oriented) as well as helping professionals (primarily clinical and intervention oriented).
- **Military Families Community of Practice.** The *Military Families Community of Practice (CoP)* is a virtual team ultimately made up of content and support specialists, educators, researchers, member-partners in the Military Families Partnership, and eventually family service professionals serving military families. One goal of the Military Families CoP is to create opportunities for Cooperative Extension professionals and family service professionals serving military families to engage, discover resources, and collaborate around issues pertinent to the unique needs of military families and those serving them.
- **Military Families Community of Interest.** The *Military Families Community of Interest (CoI)* is identified as military family service professionals. These individuals serve military families through the Department of Defense, Service Branches, Cooperative Extension, other agencies and non profit organizations. A secondary group within the CoI is military families.

1. Significant Activities:

- **Environmental Scan:**

- Completed the initial collection of data for the Military Families Environmental Scan Survey (August 28). The InstantSurvey was closed and an initial screening and analysis of the data were conducted. Although significant effort was made to capture population data, the analyses indicate an incomplete scan of CES programs supporting/serving military families. The data are cross-sectional in nature and were collected during July-August, 2010. In spite of these limitations, the information collected is significant and useful.
- Initial findings report: Quarterly Lead Institution Meetings, Washington, DC (September 14-16). A preliminary results/analyses discussion was held at the Quarterly Lead Institutions Meetings including both quantitative and qualitative presentations. The report can be found under the **Various Reports** heading at: http://collaborate.extension.org/wiki/Military_Families

A brief summary of reporting follows:

- 149 respondents
- 202 programs reported
- 42 states/territories reporting
 - Self-reported Categories of Programs
- 18% Community Capacity Building
- 2% Workforce Development
- 67% Family & Youth
- 3% Child Care
- 5% Food & Nutrition
- 5% Personal Finance

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses are ongoing (qualitative analyses include nearly 30,000 words/101 pages of text). Additional reporting will continue in various formats and venues. Furthermore, contact as well as network information was collected to facilitate follow-up and further exploration of data gathered.

- **Resource Site:** A resource site, previously referred to as the 'intranet' site, (<http://militaryfamilies.extension.org>) has been established and continues to evolve. This site represents the focal point of internal communication and collaboration and provides a place to post project descriptions, news, and events of the Partnership and of the Military Families Communities of Practice. The intent of the site is to provide a space to enhance Partnership collaboration and communication as well as house critical tools, documents, links, information, and content. Though it is expected that most use of the resource site will come from the partners and the Military Families Communities of Practice, the information on the site is accessible for the public and can be used by the public and the

Military Families Communities of Interest to learn about the Military Families Partnerships and Military Families Community of Practice.

The resource site will house communications, marketing, outreach materials associated with the Partnership including, but not limited to, project request forms, graphic identity guide, templates for web pages, and project-related communications and marketing support. In addition, schedules for upcoming conferences, meetings, historical records (various organizational meeting minutes), and reports will be found at this site. The resource site will also include links for each of the Lead and Sub-Award projects and a place for partnering institutions to post timely information and announcements about their project. It will evolve as support content is collaboratively built and programs change. This site will also provide a place for partners and members of the Military Families Communities of Practice to connect and collaborate with each other.

- **CoP public Web presence:** Continued planning and organization occurs to establish a public Web presence and focal point for the Military Families CoP. The web site is not a stand alone product but will be considered as a hub for other online activities and engagement. The engagement on this site and in the social spaces (Facebook, Twitter [for example] and DoD authorized spaces such as Military One Sources) will be interconnected. This dynamic site will include relevant feeds from various resources, opportunities for social networking (Facebook, Twitter, shared bookmarks, etc.), blog posts, and developing, re-purposed, and current content that meets the needs of the CoP and Col.
 - Discussions and planning with eXtension, NIFA, and DoD staff continue to formulate the launch plan. Those discussions include the topics of:
 - Timing in unfolding concentration areas (*Personal Finance, Child Care, Family & Youth, Food & Nutrition, Community Capacity Building, and Workforce Development*),
 - Involvement of existing CoPs (Financial Security for All; Better Kid Care America; Just In Time Parenting; Families, Food, & Fitness among others),
 - The URL has been created but is not being advertised as there is no activity/content present at this time.
(<http://www.extension.org/militaryfamilies>)

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

- **Environmental Scan:** The preliminary report and analyses which was published and distributed at the Quarterly Lead Institutions Meetings (September) can be under the **Various Reports** heading at:
http://collaborate.extension.org/wiki/Military_Families

- **Resource Site:** The intranet site (<http://militaryfamilies.extension.org>) has been launched and continues to evolve to meet the needs of the Partnership. The **Project Request Form** is functional allowing for Lead and Sub-Award communications and marketing requests to be submitted. The **Style Guide** is also available on the resource site to guide branding decisions with materials.
- **CoP public Web presence:** A *Personal Finance* pilot project team meeting has been scheduled for the third week of September in Washington, DC to include staff from the OSD Office of Personal Finance, NIFA, the Financial Security for All CoP, and eXtension Military Families Partnership. This meeting is expected to springboard development and launch efforts.
- **Collaboration with Lead Institutions/Sub-Awardees for project Web support:** The Quarterly Lead Institution Meetings (including Sub-Award meetings) provided significant opportunity to engage, educate, and plan for eXtension support with the various projects in the Partnership. Continued interaction is ongoing to assist with these requirements outlined in the project proposals.

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

- **Environmental Scan:** More focused and extensive analyses to further determine the significant findings in the data collected to provide direction from results.
- **Resource Site:** Continued collaboration with WSU, eXtension engineering and content staff, with input from DoD and NIFA, to develop site specifications.
- **CoP Public Web presence:** Meet with *Personal Finance* work team and form and meet with *Child Care* work team to develop and implement launch plans for these concentration areas.
- **Continued/increased collaboration with Lead Institutions/Sub-Awardees for project Web support:** Continue conversations and seek out other Partnership projects where discussions haven't occurred to this point to plan for and implement eXtension support.

4. Relevant challenges that need attention from DoD/NIFA

- Ongoing conversation and input is needed for **developing the Military Families CoP**, especially in the area of making sure the CoP is "generating" the type of traffic, content focus and energy needed to attract military family helping professionals to engage and participate in the CoP.

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

- The environmental scan data have been collected.
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 - 202 programs reported
 - 42 states/territories reporting

Self-reported Categories of Programs

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Qualitative analyses include nearly 30,000 words/101 pages of text.

*Maybe most notably, there were **over 850** individual, professional, and organizational partners named that work with the 202 reported programs that serve military families identified in the surveys submitted.

- The Military Families CoP continues to grow with **81** members and leaders.