

What's Inside:

-  Take-Home Messages
-  Family Activities
-  Questions for Discussions



FACILITATOR GUIDE

Deployments, Homecomings,
and Changes

Welcome, Providers!

This facilitator guide will provide you with the tools you need to encourage communication, offer emotional support, and share practical, engaging tips and activities to aid families and children as they change and grow. In addition, it will help you celebrate the strength and resilience of the families and children you work with.

The activities in this guide are easily adaptable for a variety of situations, including family readiness groups, child care, medical rehabilitation, and other such programs providing support to military families and their children.

Within each section, you'll find:

 Take-Home Messages (key points to convey)

 Family Activities

 Questions for Discussions



Deployments

Together with families, explore the many phases of deployment, including pre-deployments, deployments, and homecomings. Work together to build strategies that will help families to support one another and stay connected throughout these many transitions.

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Family Puzzle

1. Photocopy the "Family Puzzle" on page 4 (one per family). Use card stock for durability.
2. Encourage parents and children to decorate one or more of the puzzle pieces. They can work together on the pieces if they like!
3. Ask family members to cut the pieces apart and work together to put the puzzle back together again.
4. As children work on the puzzle with their families, encourage them to talk about the activity and what each piece represents. **Ask:**



What does your puzzle look like?

How do you feel when someone has to go away?

How might the puzzle help everyone to stay connected?

How does it feel when the whole family is together and the family puzzle is complete?

5. When one member of the family must go away, each person can take care of a piece of the puzzle. When they reunite, they can have fun making it whole once again.

Take-Home Messages

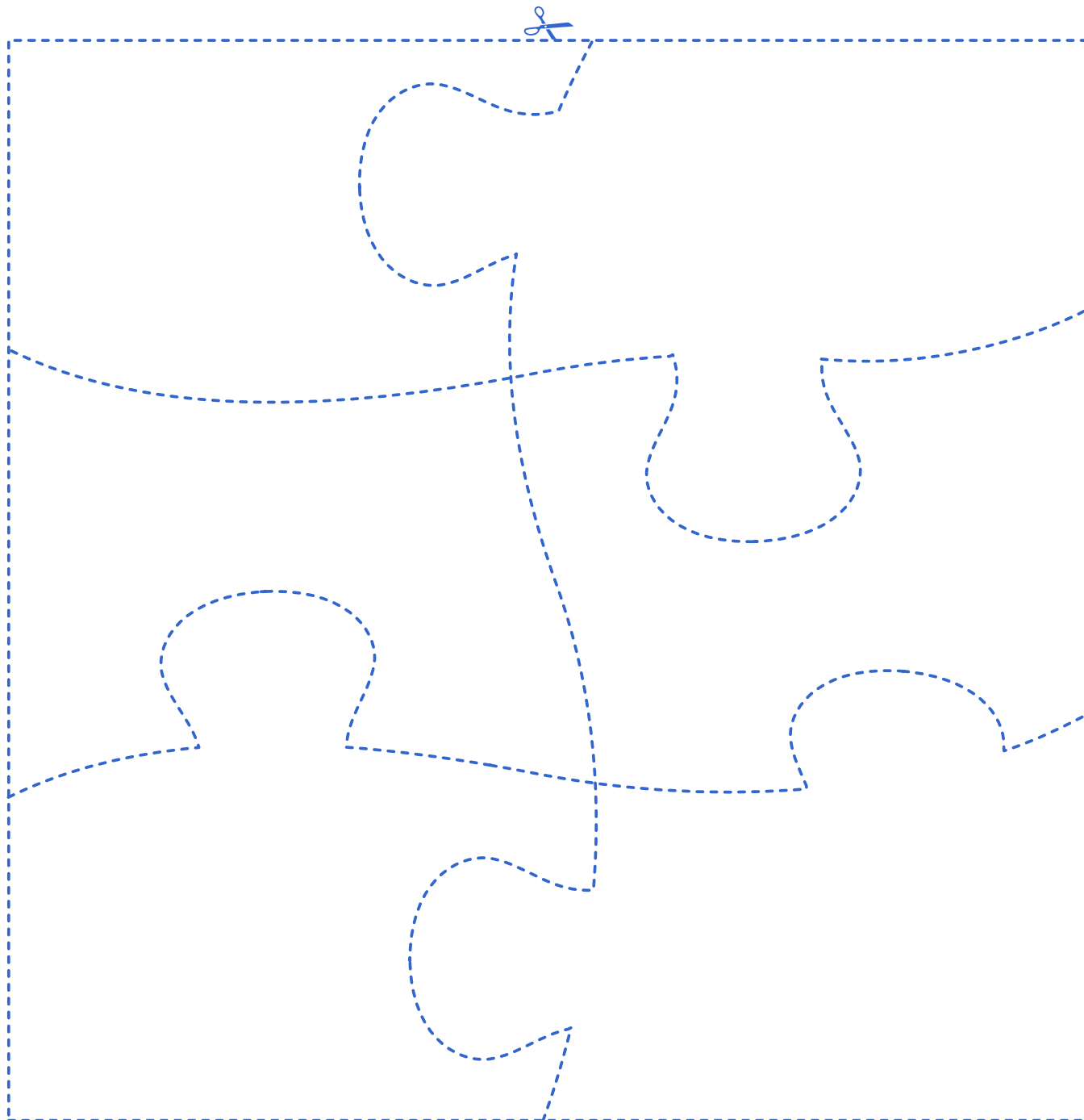
- ✧ There are many ways to stay connected before, during, and after deployment.
- ✧ Routines and support systems are key to all phases of deployment.



 FAMILY ACTIVITY

Family Puzzle

Together, decorate the puzzle pieces. Then cut the puzzle apart and work as a team to put it back together again.



Reconnecting

Explore with families and children the many emotions that may surround a parent's homecoming and help them develop strategies that will aid families in reconnecting after a reunion.

FAMILY ACTIVITY

The "Things We Do Together" Book

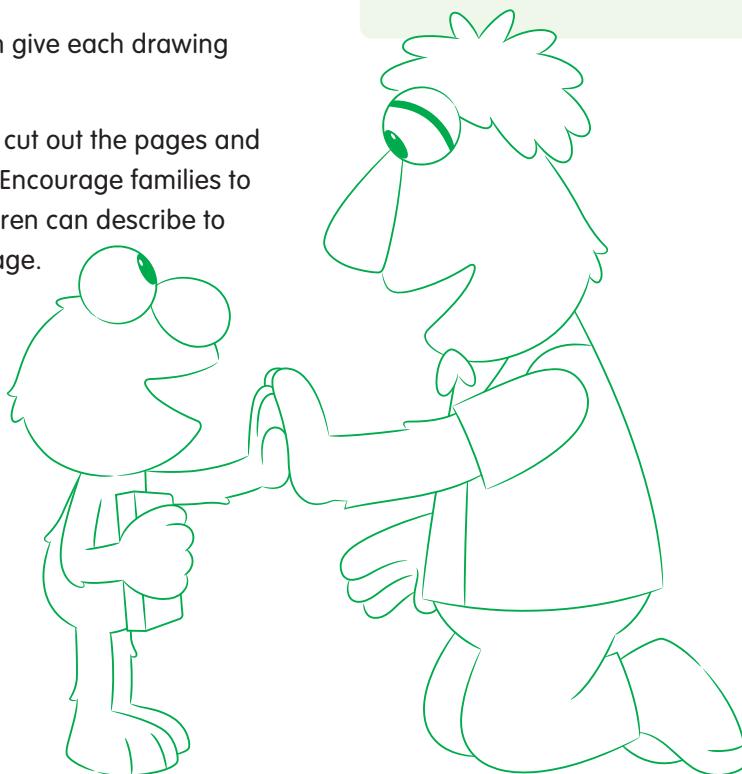
1. Photocopy page 6 (one per family).
2. Encourage families to draw, on each page of the book, a routine or activity that they have done with the returning parent. **Have parents ask children:**



What do you like to do together as a family?

Children can illustrate and parents can give each drawing a heading.

3. Now ask parents to help their children cut out the pages and staple them together to make a book. Encourage families to look through their book together. Children can describe to parents what is happening on each page.



Take-Home Messages

- ✧ Though exciting, it takes time to adjust and reconnect after each homecoming.
- ✧ Patience, support, and communication are important during this time as children navigate new family dynamics and changing routines.



The “Things We Do Together” Book

On each page, draw and write a routine or activity your family has done together since Mom or Dad returned. Cut apart the pages and staple them to make a book.

The Things We Do Together  By _____	

Redeployments

Express and discuss the feelings associated with redeployment. Help everyone to feel pride in their strength and their commitment to support each other through this challenge.

FAMILY ACTIVITY

We Can Do It!

1. Photocopy "We Can Do It!" on page 8 (one per family).
2. Encourage children to think of a morning routine, an afternoon routine, and an evening routine that they can do together with the parent who is home and any siblings.



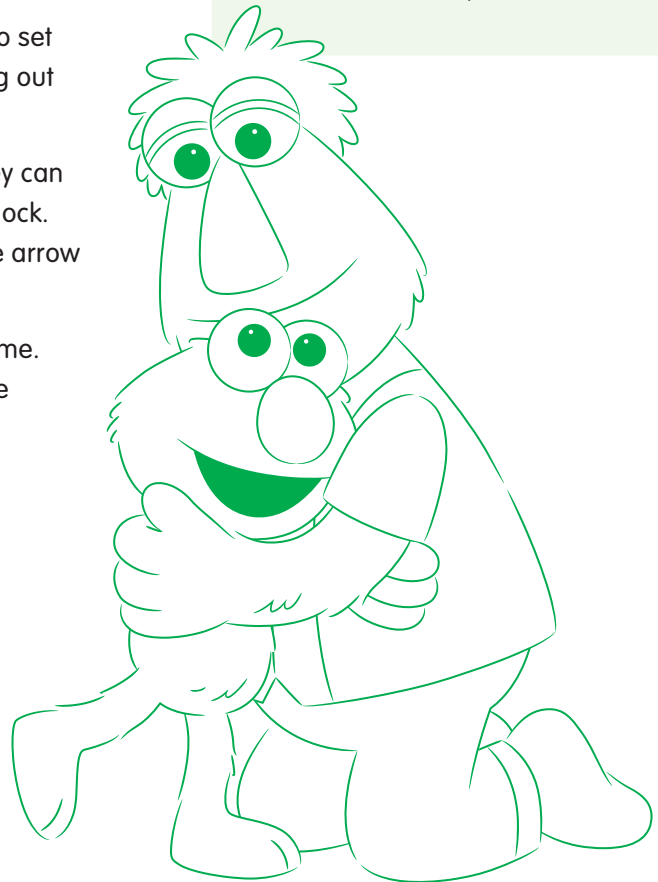
What can they do when they first wake up?

How about before dinner: Can they help to set the table by counting out napkins or laying out placemats for each person?

3. Ask children to draw a picture for each routine. They can place these routines at various points around the clock. Now ask parents to cut out the clock and attach the arrow with a metal fastener.
4. Encourage families to take their "routine clocks" home. They can move the hand on the clock to remind one another of the many things they will do together throughout the day.

Take-Home Messages

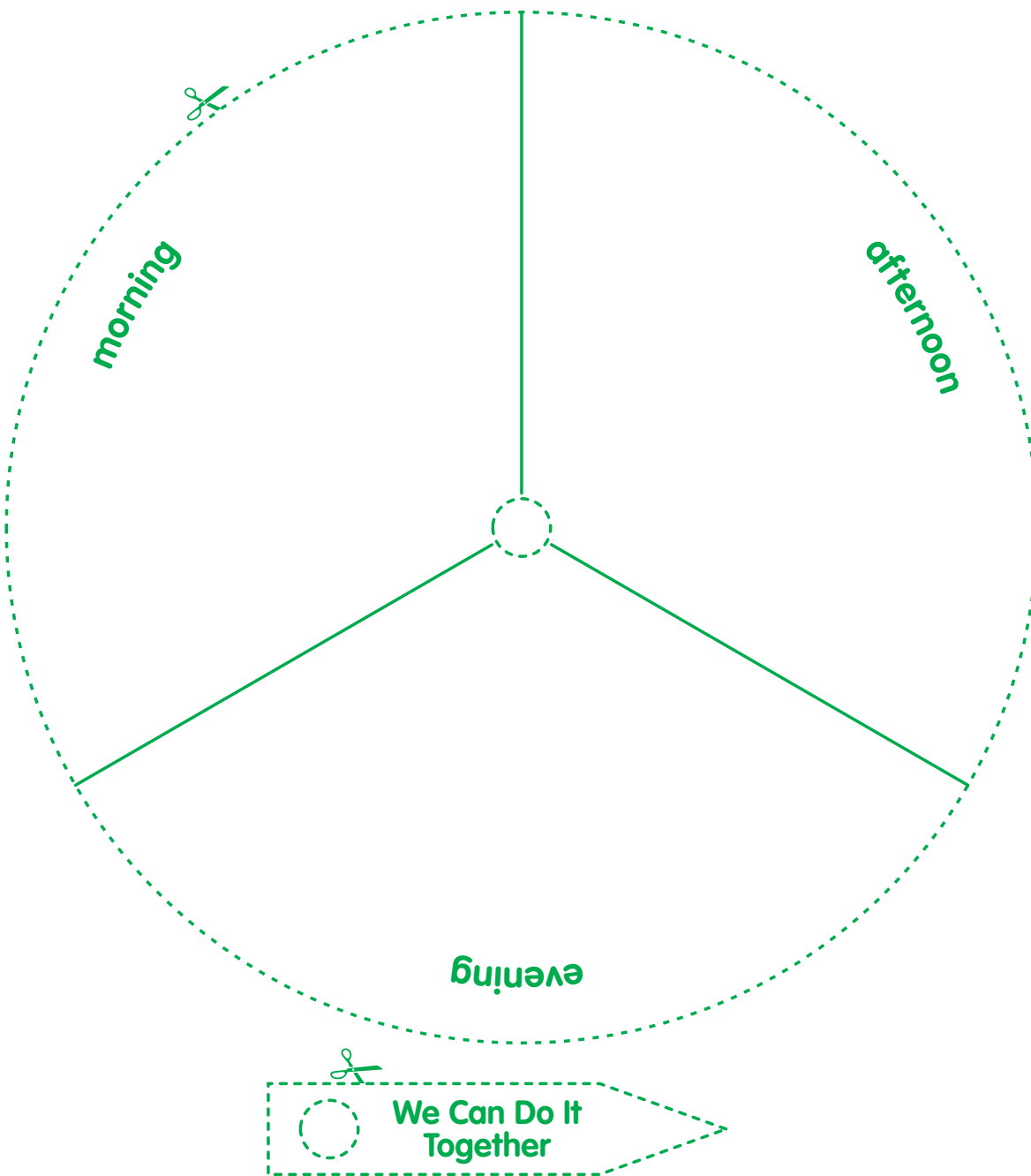
- ✧ Although redeployment presents many challenges, families can do it together.
- ✧ Families can find support in extended family, friends, and community.





We Can Do It!

Draw pictures of a morning, afternoon, and evening routine you do together when Mom or Dad has gone away. Cut out the circle and attach arrow with a metal fastener.



Things Are Different

Talk together about the many feelings and transitions that occur when a parent returns changed due to an injury, whether visible or invisible.

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Feeling Flowers

1. Photocopy the "Feeling Flower" on page 10 (one per family).
2. Using precut paper flower petals, encourage parents to help their children write down the many emotions they have felt surrounding the changes that have taken place in their families (one emotion per petal). Children can illustrate the back of each petal.
3. As children draw, parents can encourage them to discuss their picture.



What is it?

Does it have a story behind it?

How does it make them feel when they look at it?

4. Families can then help children glue the petals together to make flowers. Invite each family to share their flower. Encourage families to take their flowers home and display them.

Take-Home Messages

- ✧ When appropriate, it is important to talk together with children about the changes that have taken place.
- ✧ Parents can offer hope by reassuring children that all family members can help one another through change and that they can do it together.



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A “New Normal”

Talk together about the many feelings and transitions that occur when a parent returns changed due to an injury, whether visible or invisible.

FAMILY ACTIVITY

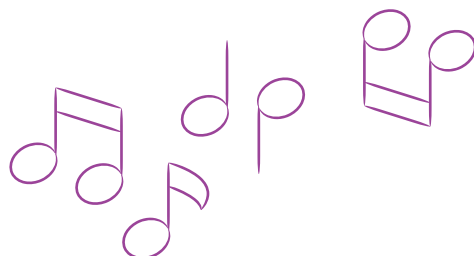
Picture This

1. Photocopy “Picture This” on page 12 (one per family).
2. Encourage families to imagine new activities or altered routines that they can do together with the parent who has sustained an injury. For instance, if they liked to dance together and now a parent uses a wheelchair, how could they dance together in a new way?
2. Encourage children to think of favorite family moments. Have them tell their parents how these moments could be reimagined. **Parents can ask children:**



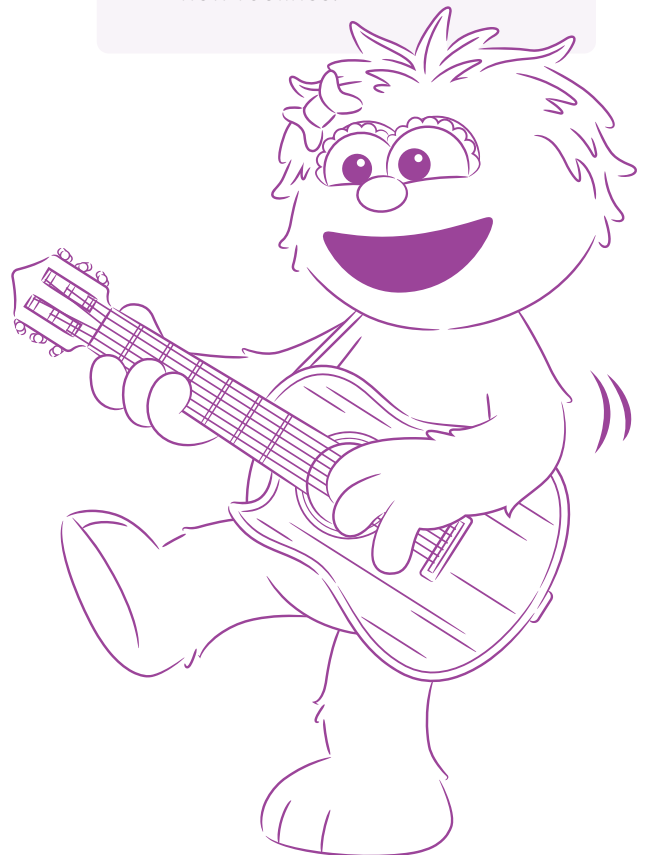
What are some new and special activities that you are excited to try together?

4. Parents and children can work together to draw pictures of each new routine in the empty snapshots.
5. Encourage families to take their snapshots home.



Take-Home Messages

- ✦ Though changes have occurred, over time families will establish a “new normal.”
- ✦ Patience and support are crucial to this time of transition.
- ✦ Children can play active roles in helping to establish new routines.



 FAMILY ACTIVITY

Picture This

Draw pictures of the new routines your family has begun since Mom or Dad returned home.
Add your own captions.

