YELLOW RIBBON REINTEGRATION PROGRAM®

# Creating a Communication Plan for Deployment

## Facilitator Guide

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# Creating a Communication Plan for Deployment

Facilitator Note:

*The following two symbols are used as indicators:*
💻 *(computer) indicates it is time to advance the slide on the associated PowerPoint;*
✋ *(hand) indicates there is an exercise associated with the content.*

*Essential class content is noted in* ***bold****.*

*All class handouts are available for download on the YRRP website at www.yellowribbon.mil/cms/event-handout. Unless otherwise specified as online only in the Materials section below, all handouts should be printed for distribution to class participants.*

## Class Description:

This class examines the importance of effective communication and discusses how to develop a communication plan to be used during deployment.

## Stage:

Pre-deployment

## DoDI:

1342.28 DoD Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP)

The content of this class has been developed for the Department of Defense Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. The Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State has reviewed the class and is responsible for content management.

If you have additional information or updated research to be considered for inclusion in this class, please send your suggestions to yrrp@psu.edu.

## Audience:

YRRP attendees

## Time:

45 minutes

## Equipment:

- Projector
- Laptop
- Flip Chart
- Markers
- Pens

## Materials:

- Facilitator Guide
- Core Material Checklist
- PowerPoint Presentation
  1. Creating a Communication Plan for Deployment
  2. Objectives
  3. What Are the Challenges?
  4. Deployment: A Challenge for Everyone
  5. The Service Member
  6. Adults on the Home Front
  7. Children
  8. Example Scenario: Preparing for Deployment
  9. Communication Options During Deployment
  10. Delayed Communication
  11. Immediate and Interactive Communication
  12. Other Forms of Communication
  13. Example Scenario: Review of Options
  14. Communication During Deployment
  15. Example Scenario: Communication Goals
  16. Develop a Communication Plan
  17. Review of Objectives
  18. Creating a Communication Plan for Deployment
- Handouts
  1. Communication Plan

## Exercises:

1. What Are the Communication Challenges?
2. Develop a Communication Plan

## Objectives:

After completing this class, participants will be able to do the following:

1. Identify concerns about deployment that may affect communication.
2. Identify the pros and cons of communication options available during deployment.
3. Identify communication goals and needs during deployment.
4. Begin developing a communication plan for deployment.

# Introduction

## SHOW Slide 1: Creating a Communication Plan for Deployment

Facilitator Note:

*Introduce yourself as the facilitator. State your name, military experience or affiliation, and perhaps one additional brief bit of relevant personal information that establishes your credibility (i.e., your professional training or experience).*

*Please limit your personal introduction to no more than 2 minutes to maximize the time attendees are able to engage with course content, practice skills, and participate in self-reflection activities.*

Welcome! In this class, we will discuss concerns Service members and loved ones have about communication during deployment. We will also highlight the pros and cons of different communication methods and help you identify conflicts in each other's communication goals and strategies. We will then develop a communication plan based on available communication methods and each person's needs and goals.

## SHOW Slide 2: Objectives

Let's look at our objectives. After completing this class, you will be able to do the following:

1. **Identify concerns about deployment that may affect communication.**
2. **Identify the pros and cons of communication options available during deployment.**
3. **Identify communication goals and needs during deployment.**
4. **Begin developing a communication plan for deployment.**

# Communication Challenges

## SHOW Slide 3: What Are the Challenges?

## EXERCISE 1: What Are the Communication Challenges?

Facilitator Note:

*Handout 1 will be used. The purpose of this exercise is for participants to recognize communication concerns. Participants will complete Rows 1 and 2 of the table on the handout. This should take approximately 6 minutes.*

All Service members are likely to communicate with someone during deployment, yet a known challenge of deployment is keeping in contact with each other (Carter & Renshaw, 2016a; Meadows, Tanielian, & Karney, 2016; Sayers & Rhoades, 2018; Wilson & Knobloch, 2016). For all Service members, there is a high likelihood that there will be a desire to communicate with at least some family members, friends, and other loved ones. What kinds of concerns do you have about communication during deployment? Turn to **Handout 1: Communication Plan**, and fill out the first row by adding two people with whom you intend to develop a communication plan.

*PAUSE for one minute.*

Now, consider what kinds of concerns you have about communication during deployment. Complete Row 2 of the table on your handout. Then, I will capture some of your responses on this flip chart.

*STOP the participants after about 3 minutes, capture some responses on a flip chart, and then ask the following questions:*

What communication challenges were the same among family members and loved ones? What were some differences?

*PAUSE for responses.*

There may be differences in communication concerns or issues before deployment among family members and loved ones, but you may also notice many common communication concerns (Knobloch & Wilson, 2015; Yablonsky, Barbero, & Richardson, 2016).

**A significant consideration about communication during deployment is maintaining operations security**. When you are developing a communication plan for

deployment, you may consider using social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) to keep in touch with family and friends. It is critical that you protect yourself, your family, and your loved ones and **avoid sharing specific details that relate to a current deployment. You may also consider avoiding details about your family and loved ones.** Consider talking about events that have happened or about information that has been released to the media, but you should not give away location or mission details in the process (Navy.mil, n.d.). For instance, if a Service member was talking with a loved one about a recent mortar attack that was discussed in the news and said, "Yeah, those mortars fell close to where we are stationed," the loved one would now have this information, and other bad actors could now potentially have intel necessary for locating where you are. For more information, visit the Chief Information Officer Social Media Education and Training website at https://dodcio.defense.gov/Social-Media/SMEandT.

## SHOW Slide 4: Deployment: A Challenge for Everyone

As the Service member prepares to deploy, what concerns, other than communication, may family members and loved ones have?

*PAUSE for responses. (Possible answers: concerns about safety, what it will be like to be separated for a long time, what may go wrong)*

Individuals may have different concerns and worries. **Try to recognize the perspectives of each person, even young children** (Galinsky, Ku, & Wang, 2005; Goldstein, Vezich, & Shapiro, 2014; Knobloch, Pusateri, Ebata, & McGlaughlin, 2015). Now, we will briefly discuss what these perspectives might look like for various people impacted by the deployment.

## SHOW Slide 5: The Service Member

The Service member who will be deployed may experience reservations and concerns. First, **he or she may be preoccupied with the mission and will need to stay focused and concentrate on the job ahead. However, the Service member also faces the challenge of how to stay connected with loved ones at home** (Carter & Renshaw, 2016a; Hinojosa, Hinojosa, & Hognas, 2012; Knobloch & Wilson, 2015). The Service member may wonder: Who will do the things I do around the house? Who will my family turn to when there are problems? How will I remain a presence in the lives of my loved ones? When I get home, will my relationships be different?

Do we have any Service members here who are worried about some of these issues?

*GET a show of hands.*

**Such concerns are natural for anyone undergoing a transition like extended separation or deployment**; however, it may be comforting to remember that thousands

of military families and loved ones have successfully managed these or similar challenges. **While Service members may be worried and concerned, it is possible to also experience positive feelings when preparing for an upcoming deployment. For example, Service members may be excited about the ability to use skills for which they have been trained or contribute to a larger mission**.

## SHOW Slide 6: Adults on the Home Front

In anticipation of the deployment, adult(s) at home may be worried about feelings of loss or loneliness, but he or she (they) may also have other concerns. For example, adult **family members or loved ones at home may worry about having to shift roles in the family to cover those previously held by the Service member, such as taking care of finances and an increase in household responsibilities.** In families with children, the parent or guardian at home may now find himself or herself fulfilling multiple parental roles and may feel pressured for time and patience. If the deployed Service member is headed for a combat zone, there are also concerns about safety (Rodriguez & Margolin, 2011; Sahlstein, Maguire, & Timmerman, 2009; Yablonsky et al., 2016).

How many family members or loved ones here today are worried about these topics?

*GET a show of hands*.

Again, such concerns are expected for anyone experiencing a transition like extended separation or deployment.

## SHOW Slide 7: Children

Children have their own anxieties regarding deployment. Like adults, they may feel sadness, anger, and/or resentment regarding the separation. Similar to their non-deployed parent, guardian, or other family member, children may feel **concerned about their deployed parent's safety and may feel an increased burden of responsibility as roles within the family shift**. **Children may find themselves needing more support and assurance from the remaining parent or guardian, who may not be in the position to provide support due to his or her own stress levels** (Alfano, Lau, Balderas, Bunnell, & Beidel, 2016; Chandra, Martin, Hawkins, & Richardson, 2010; Esposito-Smythers et al., 2011).

Deployment may affect younger and older children very differently. Younger children (ages 0 through 5) may become more clingy and demanding or may experience increased anxiety including separation anxiety (Barker & Berry, 2009; Mustillo, MacDermid Wadsworth, & Lester, 2016). School-age children, who are old enough to understand the gravity of deployment, may have trouble sleeping, be anxious, and have

difficulties in school (Lester et al., 2010; Mustillo et al., 2016). Preteens and teenagers may also report that deployment is an opportunity to become more mature and help out at home (Knobloch et al., 2015). **For children of all ages, deployment separation is almost always stressful and can affect them socially, emotionally, behaviorally, and academically** (Cunitz et al., 2019; Lester et al., 2010; Wilson, Chernichky, Wilkum, & Owlett, 2014). **These reactions are generally time-limited and do not typically cause long-term adverse impacts**.

## SHOW Slide 8: Example Scenario: Preparing for Deployment

Facilitator Note:

*Additional scenarios are available in the class folder on the YRRP website at www.yellowribbon.mil/cms/event-curriculum. Facilitators may choose either the original scenario below about a family's communication plan or one of the alternate scenarios. If an alternate version is chosen, all applicable text below should be adjusted accordingly. Whichever scenario is chosen will be discussed at various times throughout the remainder of this class.*

To give you some insight into a family who is facing deployment and their communication strategies, we will follow the Duncan family as they prepare for deployment. Let me give you some background information about the Duncan family.

Ted Duncan and his wife, Clara, have three children. Erica is 14, Josh is 7, and Michelle is 2. Ted and Clara are concerned about changes in their family and how they will communicate during Ted's absence. Let's go through their concerns.

(Ted's Concerns) Ted was very busy training and preparing in the weeks prior to his departure and felt the need to stay focused on his job. Nonetheless, he and Clara made a point of talking about his deployment and what it would mean for each of them and for the family. Ted and Clara made separate lists of their primary concerns about deployment. Ted shared that he felt guilty about leaving Clara with all of the family responsibilities. He was worried about her managing their finances since paying the bills was usually his responsibility. He was also worried about her parenting the kids alone, especially Josh, who was a handful and who listened to him better. Finally, he was worried that Michelle would forget him.

(Clara's Concerns) Clara was worried most about Ted's safety. She said that she was not afraid to manage the house and kids while he was away, but she was very frightened of Ted being killed or seriously injured, and she was afraid of being left a widow and the children being left fatherless. Clara also expressed concerns about losing touch with Ted while he was away.

(The Children's Concerns) Ted and Clara had several opportunities to discuss their concerns with their children as a family. They discussed what the children were thinking regarding their dad's deployment and asked the kids what ideas they had for keeping in touch with dad while he was gone. Erica wondered who was going to do all of her dad's jobs around the house and said she was worried about not being able to help her mom enough. Josh said he would miss spending time with his dad in the evenings and wondered who would play video games with him. Like their mother, both children expressed concerns about their dad being hurt.

Each family member has his or her own concerns. However, each family member also shared many of the same worries and anxieties. Notice, some of Ted and Clara's concerns were the same as the ones we discussed earlier. We will continue to follow the Duncan family throughout the class as they create a communication plan.

## Communication Options

### SHOW Slide 9: Communication Options During Deployment

Thanks to technology, many options for communication during deployment are available. In addition to exchanging old-fashioned letters and care packages, people now have other options, such as the phone, email, instant messaging, social media applications, Skype, and other web-based video communication software.

Let's talk about the pros and cons of each of these communication options. **The communication channel used may vary depending on the type of deployment**. Keep in mind that **each person has a different communication style and may prefer one method over another. It is also common that individuals may choose to use multiple communication channels simultaneously** (Carter & Renshaw, 2016a; Wilson et al., 2018). Such channels are typically distinguished as either delayed or immediate and interactive. **Delayed communication, such as emails and letters, typically involves the passage of some period of time, which allows one person to send a message without the other having to be there immediately to receive it. Immediate and interactive communication, on the other hand, such as phone calls and video chats, allows for instantaneous back-and-forth communication** (Carter & Renshaw, 2016b). As we will discuss in further detail, each option has different benefits and may address distinct needs (Carter & Renshaw, 2016a). Developing a communication plan will help identify each person's preference.

### SHOW Slide 10: Delayed Communication

Letters, care packages, and emails are considered delayed communication options because those types of communication between the deployed Service members and

their loved ones are not typically experienced right away (Carter & Renshaw, 2016b). When using this form of communication, there is a delay between the time the message is sent by the sender and the time it is received by the receiver. That is, communication is not immediate.

What do you think are the pros of sending and receiving letters and care packages?

*PAUSE for responses.*

**Letters** are a tried-and-true method of communication among the military community. One benefit is that because they are not instant forms of communication, letters **give each person a chance to reflect on what he or she wants to say and how he or she says it and, then, edit the letter before it is sent**. This may help prevent impulsive or poorly thought out communication.

**Care packages** are also nice to send. They may contain pictures, videos, or other mementos from home and **may make a deployed Service member feel loved, appreciated, and included in life at home** (Carter & Renshaw, 2016a).

What do you think are the cons of sending and receiving letters and care packages?

*PAUSE for responses.*

**A drawback is that because letters are not instant forms of communication, it may take time for letters to be received. As such, they are not ideal for communicating about time-sensitive matters**. Relatedly, letters may become outdated quickly. Because of the delay in delivery of letters through the postal system, something communicated in today's letter might not be true or relevant when it is received several days or weeks later.

**Care packages typically flow one way from home to the Service member; therefore, care packages alone do not really help with dialogue between the Service member and loved ones** (Carter & Renshaw, 2016a). But, Service members sure like to receive them!

Email is another common communication method that has replaced letter writing for many people and is frequently used by Service members and their loved ones during deployment.

What are some of the pros of email communication?

*PAUSE for responses.*

**Some benefits of email** include the following: **faster and easier than letter writing; allows for dialogue, though not usually immediate, between individuals; and can**

**be retrieved from almost anywhere** using computers, tablets, and smart phones. **Email may be a good alternative to phone calls where phone time is limited and conversations may lack privacy** (Carter et al., 2011; Carter & Renshaw, 2016b). **Studies have found that increased frequency of emails and other types of delayed communications have been associated with increased psychological well-being and relationship quality in both deployed Service members and their at-home romantic partners** (Carter & Renshaw, 2016b; Meek, Totenhagen, Hawkins, & Borden, 2019). Emails, just like other forms of delayed communication, **allow loved ones on the home front to initiate contact with the deployed Service member**. Email may be a better modality to express concerns about stressors happening at home compared to discussing them with the Service member via immediate, interactive communication options because responding to an email can offer individuals more time to reflect on their personal thoughts and feelings. (Carter & Renshaw, 2016b; Meek et al., 2019).

What are some of the cons of email communication?

*PAUSE for responses.*

Email also has its drawbacks. First, it is easy to push the send button before you have thought through or even reread your message. The convenience means that hasty, poorly considered messages may be sent. These messages may express thoughts, feelings, or ideas that the sender later regrets. Also, **emails lack audio, video, and non-verbal cues that can help frame and facilitate communication** (Carter & Renshaw, 2016a).

## SHOW Slide 11: Immediate and Interactive Communication

Improvements in satellite communication mean that even when a family member or loved one is on another continent, phone, video, and online voice communications (e.g., Skype, Google Hangouts, FaceTime, WhatsApp, Facebook, Snapchat) are often options for communication. Phone and video calling are considered immediate and interactive modes of communication given that they allow for interaction to occur in real time (Carter & Renshaw, 2016b).

What are some pros of phone and online voice communications, like Skype?

*PAUSE for responses.*

Phone calls allow for real time conversations without the delays of letters or even emails, and **it can be reassuring to hear the Service member's voice** particularly if everyone on the home front has been worried about him or her. Communicating through online methods via an instant messaging service, like Skype or Google Hangouts, offers an additional advantage over the phone because loved ones can see and hear each other. This may allow the deployed Service member to take part in activities such as a

birthday party or other important events. For situations in which there is a young child involved, **visual contact might particularly help young children keep the deployed Service member present** (McClure & Barr, 2017).

What are some cons of phone and online voice communications?

*PAUSE for responses.*

As you may be aware, phone access in deployed regions may be very restricted. The **Service member may not be able to talk on the phone often or may have a time limit on calls.** Some information cannot be discussed because of security reasons (Hinojosa et al., 2012). In addition, there may be a lack of privacy, or a schedule for calls could be inconvenient or difficult. Furthermore, **loved ones may hear or see things that make them worry for the Service member's safety, and sometimes these services are cut off suddenly, which can cause additional worry** (Hinojosa et al., 2012).

## SHOW Slide 12: Other Forms of Communication

Are there any other forms of communication you may use to stay in touch? Try to think about ways that you currently like to communicate with family and friends. These methods may fit into the categories we talked about, or they may be new or different ways of communicating.

What are some of these ways?

*GENERATE a list of these forms of communication. (Possible answers: social media – Facebook, online blogs, photo sharing sites)*

**Some ways you can stay connected include the following:**

- **Social networking**
- **Storytime apps**
- **Shared whiteboards**
- **Real-time digital picture frames**
- **Online scrapbooking and games**
- **Voice or video recordings**
- **Shared calendars**

**For children:**

- **Sesame Street for Military Families**
- **Military Kids Connect**

Consider some of the pros and cons we discussed for delayed and immediate/interactive types of communication. What are the pros and cons of these methods?

*PAUSE for responses taking turns asking pro and then con*.

## SHOW Slide 13: Example Scenario: Review of Options

Let's revisit our scenario and look at the Duncan family's communication methods.

Ted and Clara reviewed many ways they could keep in touch while Ted was deployed. Ted had been briefed that he would be able to make 30-minute phone calls home about once a week, and email and Skype options would be available on unit computers on a limited basis. Though Ted and Clara do not like to write letters, Ted said he would like to receive letters from the children occasionally. Clara said she would try to have the children write letters once a week, and Ted agreed to write back. Also, Clara told him that, at least once a month, she would try to send a care package with pictures of the kids and little mementos from home, such as their homework papers and artwork.

What do you think of Ted and Clara's ideas?

*PAUSE for responses*.

## SHOW Slide 14: Communication During Deployment

**Different family members and loved ones may want and need to communicate about different things** during deployment (Carter et al., 2018). One way to look at communication topics that may arise during deployment is to **consider the type of message to be communicated**. This may include, but is not limited to, **problem talk (e.g., discussing minor, day-to-day problems or major problems, love talk (e.g., expressing love, affection, appreciation, encouragement), and friendship talk (e.g., discussing shared interests, positive events**) (Carter et al., 2018). Now, let's review some common communication goals, needs, and challenges.

Everyone's Goal: Keep in Touch

Most loved ones **share one common goal: stay in touch**. However, this **may mean very different things to different people** (Knobloch & Wilson, 2015). **When these goals are defined differently, conflict and communication failure may arise. This, in turn, may cause frustration, disappointment, and stress** (Greene, Buckman, Dandeker, & Greenberg, 2010; Hinojosa et al., 2012; Maguire, Heinemann-LaFave, & Sahlstein, 2013).

Goal Conflicts: Agree to Disagree

**Once everyone's goals are clarified, it is easier to see where disagreements might arise regarding what to communicate about during deployment.** It is important for **family members and loved ones to discuss how to handle these disagreements in a way that meets everyone's needs** (Knobloch, Knobloch-Fedders, & Yorgason, 2018; Merolla, 2010). **These are called your communication rules**. For instance, a spouse and Service member may disagree on discussing potential dangers the Service member may face. One possible solution is for the individual who wants to discuss the potential dangers to find someone else with whom to discuss this topic. Loved ones may also disagree on what type of communication method to use. One person may like to write and receive letters; another might prefer phone calls.

Miscommunication: Putting Out Fires

Given the challenges of deployment for everyone and the fact that no communication option is perfect, some miscommunication will probably occur (Hinojosa et al., 2012).

For example, someone might say something he or she does not really mean, or someone might misinterpret another family member's communication (e.g., the tone of an email might be misinterpreted or taken out of context). Someone might also be upset by rumors or by inaccurate or incomplete information.

Loved ones need to discuss the possibility of miscommunication before it occurs. **Be aware that miscommunication may happen, and agree to double check confusing, inconsistent, or upsetting information before making conclusions. Instead of placing blame, figure out a way to repair it quickly** (Drummet, Coleman, & Cable, 2003; Knobloch et al., 2018).

## SHOW Slide 15: Example Scenario: Communication Goals

Let's look at communication goals for the Duncan family.

Ted and Clara identified several communication goals that they shared. For example, they agreed that a major goal is to keep the children in touch with their father and help everyone feel that Ted is actively involved in their lives. To this end, they worked out a plan in which Clara will email Ted regularly and keep him current on events happening with the children in school, sports, and other extracurricular activities. Ted will, then, be able to talk about these topics on the phone with the kids. In addition, Ted packed a few small children's books to take with him, so he can read them to Michelle during Skype sessions. This way, Michelle will be able to hear and see him and will be less likely to forget him while he is away.

Ted and Clara discussed how often they would like to be in touch and what their communication goals are. They recognized that there were several points of conflict in their goals. Clara said she wanted to be able to share her worries and concerns about Ted's safety in the war zone; Ted said that he did not want to talk about this because it might distract him. So, they agreed that Clara will, instead, share these concerns with her sister. Ted, on the other hand, wanted to be kept informed of problems with the household or the kids, especially Josh, but Clara felt this was pointless. She pointed out that he could not discipline Josh or fix problems with the house while he was away, and this would be an unnecessary distraction for him. Instead, they identified several nearby friends who might be able to help Clara if she feels overwhelmed with household responsibilities.

How does the Duncan's plan sound?

*PAUSE for responses.*

## SHOW Slide 16: Develop a Communication Plan

## EXERCISE 2: Develop a Communication Plan

Facilitator Note:

*Handout 1 will be used. The purpose of this exercise is for participants to create a communication plan. Participants will complete Rows 3-8. This should take approximately 15 minutes.*

What do you think should be included in the communication plan based on what we have discussed today?

*PAUSE for responses. (Possible answers: best ways to communicate; what method will be used and how often; what will they discuss; what will they avoid discussing [rules])*

**A communication plan outlines the goals, rules, and activities for each person and states the type of communication he or she will use; how often he or she will communicate; and recognizes the limitations of communication. It is important that the plan be specific but also flexible** since many things can happen that may limit or upset communication (Merolla, 2010; Owlett, Richards, Wilson, DeFreese, & Roberts, 2015). **It is recommended that the plan outlines the following for each person**:

- **What are my communication goals?**
- **What rules or limits do I need to be aware of** (i.e., to respect the other person's goals)?

- **What specific activities will I do to carry out this plan?**
  - Method of communication (e.g., email, Skype)?
  - Frequency of communication?
- **What will I communicate about** (i.e., how will this meet my goals and the goals of the other person; will I engage in problem talk, friendship talk, and/or love talk)?
- **What will my back-up plan be** (i.e., if my first plan does not work)?
- **How will I handle communication problems** (i.e., to avoid misunderstandings or hurt feelings)?

Now that you know the components of a communication plan, you can work on creating a tailored plan using **Handout 1: Communication Plan**. Please complete Rows 3-8 of the table on your handout. Make sure to consider and write down your communication goals and rules. If you are having trouble identifying your goals, consider the types of answers that came up during the previous exercise in which we shared our communication goals. Think about your preferred methods for communication. When you communicate during deployment, what topics will you talk about? Lastly, consider developing a back-up plan in case these options are not available.

*CONTINUE exercise for 5 minutes.*

Now, I would like you to talk to the person you came with today (or someone sitting near you) about your goals, preferred methods of communication, and what you would like to talk about when you get a chance to communicate during deployment. After you have each shared your responses, think about what changes you might need to make to your communication plans to respect the communication goals of others. Make these changes part of your communication rules. After you have discussed your rules, discuss how you will handle any communication problems and how a back-up plan might help.

*LET partners discuss for 5 minutes.*

Now that you have thought about your own communication plan, would anyone like to share some of the highlights regarding your communication style, rules, goals, or methods of communication? By sharing your plan, we may help others think about how to improve their own communication plans.

*PAUSE for responses.*

Does anybody have any helpful tips or feedback on communication strategies that have worked for you, especially for those of you who have deployed multiple times?

*PAUSE for responses.*

Great. Thank you. I hope that you have considered each other's communication goals

and rules, and this exercise has helped you think through what you want to communicate about during deployment and how to address miscommunication.

If you and your loved ones feel that you may need more support in finding ways to effectively communicate, consider reviewing the following online YRRP classes: Do You Hear What I Mean? (general) and Experiencing Deployment (deployment-cycle). Both classes are available on the YRRP website at www.yellowribbon.mil/courses.

## Summary

## SHOW Slide 17: Review of Objectives

Let's see if we met our objectives:

1. **What are some concerns you might have about deployment that may affect communication?** *PAUSE for responses.*
   *(Possible answers: how to communicate; how often; what to communicate; how to avoid miscommunication; staying connected with each other; how to solve problems that come up; how to keep the deployed Service member part of the family)*

2. **What are the pros and cons of different communication options available during deployment?** *PAUSE for responses.*
   *(Possible answers: letter, care packages, email, phone, voice and video calling – pluses and minuses for all methods were mentioned during class; also other communication methods discussed)*

3. **What are some communication goals and needs during deployment?** *PAUSE for responses.*
   *(Possible answers: everyone wants to stay in touch; what people want to communicate may be different; agree that some information will not be discussed; come to an agreement on what type of communication will be used; instead of letting misunderstanding fester, face the miscommunication)*

4. **Did everyone begin to develop a communication plan for deployment?** *PAUSE for responses.*

As we discussed today, communication during deployment has its challenges. By recognizing that each family member and loved one has different concerns about deployment that may affect communication, you might be able to work out any conflicts or disagreements early. Deciding on the method of communication that works best is the first step. Use this information, and develop a communication plan for use during deployment.

What questions do you have about what we talked about today?

*PAUSE for responses.*

## SHOW Slide 18: Creating a Communication Plan for Deployment

Thank you, and please complete your evaluation for this class.

# References

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