

Coping With Deployments

Psychological First Aid for Military Families Course



American Red Cross

The Coping With Deployments course was developed by the American Red Cross specifically to address the stresses and strains that deployments place on the families of service members. The Red Cross worked closely with subject-matter experts from all service branches—along with National Guard and Reserve components—to complement what is offered in their courses.

What will I learn? The course provides important information on resiliency strategies for adults and children, as well as explaining the steps required in performing psychological first aid (PFA) for others under stress. It contains an adult module, a children's module and a comprehensive resource and referral section.

How long is the course and what does it cost? The entire course lasts four hours, but it can be divided into an adult module (2 ½ hours) or a children's module (1 ½ hours), which teaches adults how to deal with their children's needs during deployments. There is no cost for attendees and, like all Red Cross courses, it is taught in a confidential environment.

Who teaches the course? Actively licensed and specially trained Red Cross mental health professionals teach the course.

Who can take the course? The course is available to the family members of Reserve, National Guard and active duty service members, including spouses, older children, parents, siblings and significant others, as well as to service members who take it with their family. Veterans and their family members are also eligible.



The course is not available to the general public.

Why this course? This is the only national-level course specifically designed for military family members, including parents and significant others, that bridges all lines of service and provides hands-on tools to help families cope with deployments.

Can my Family Readiness Group take the entire course or individual modules? Yes, the entire course or individual modules can be taught at Family Readiness Group meetings; Family Day events; briefings before, during and after deployments; and at many other activities.

Is the course available where I live? Beginning in October 2008, the course is available in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. The Red Cross plans on making the course available to the rest of the country by late spring/early summer 2009.

To enroll in the course, contact your local Red Cross chapter in the states where the course is offered or contact the Red Cross liaison at the state National Guard headquarters for more information.

