

## **FAMILY ASSISTANCE COUNSELING**

### **Message:**

**Pre-paid counseling services are being made available to families to support them in coping with the stress of increased deployments related to Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.**

1. Access is available through Military OneSource, a DoD sponsored 1-800 telephone service answered 24/7 by a master's level consultant, or through installation designated family support staff.

2. Service members and their families will be provided the name and telephone number of a licensed counselor in their local community who will provide up to five pre-paid face-to-face counseling sessions per issue within a given year. on situational, non-medical issues such as readjustment to family and marital life, communication, and parent-child issues.

### **Key Points:**

- We are prioritizing the availability of the counseling program to installations most heavily involved in deployments.
- Emphasis is on reaching two-thirds of the active duty families who live off the installation, the Air National Guard, and Reserve Component who may not have access to these services on the installation.

### **Possible Questions:**

#### **1. How soon will this be available?**

- Telephonic assistance is already available 24/7 for the Army, Marine Corps active duty force, and for all Guard and Reserve personnel. It is being phased in for Navy and Air Force personnel beginning February 2004.
- Face-to-face counseling is already available via the 24/7 telephonic family assistance program, Military OneSource, for the Army, and we anticipate that it will be available for the other three Services by May 2004.

**2. What if the person receiving face-to-face counseling needs more sessions?**

- If more sessions on the same issue are needed, the provider will give the person a list of other community resources, such as installation resources that do not charge a fee, such as a family support center or chaplain, TRICARE, or to a provider who may charge a fee. If more sessions are needed for a different issue that has arisen, five more pre-paid sessions will be available.

**3. Will the counseling be confidential?**

- Both telephonic consultation and face-to-face counseling will be confidential in accordance with current Service guidelines. Those requesting information or counseling will be informed of the guideline before they begin discussion.

**4. Can a family member obtain face-to-face sessions without the sponsor's knowledge?**

- The legal family member of a service member or guardian of a service member's dependents can obtain face-to-face sessions without the sponsor's knowledge.