



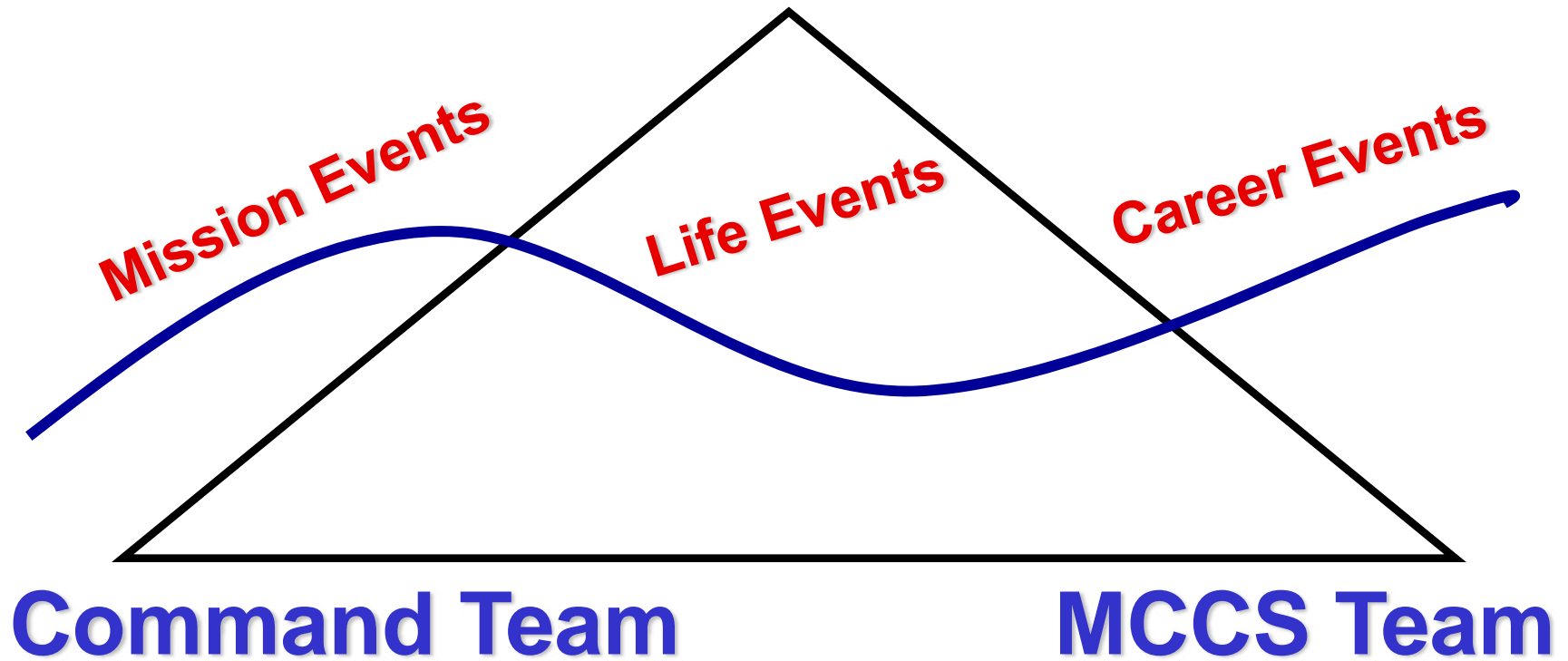
# **Transitioning Family Readiness Programs**

**Kim Gates  
Section Head,  
Marine Corps Family Team Building  
HQMC**



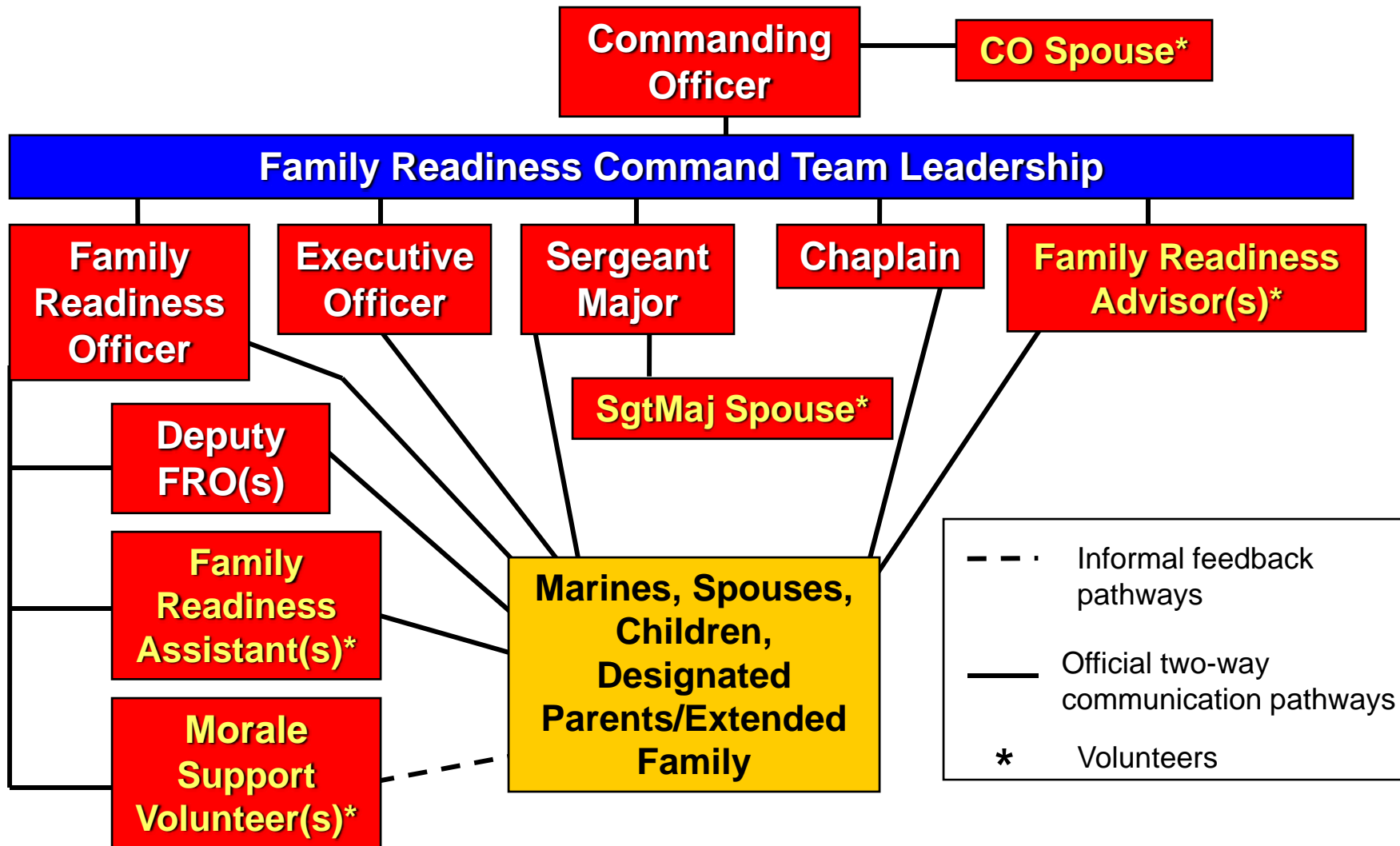
# Family Readiness Concept

Marine, Spouse, Child, Parents



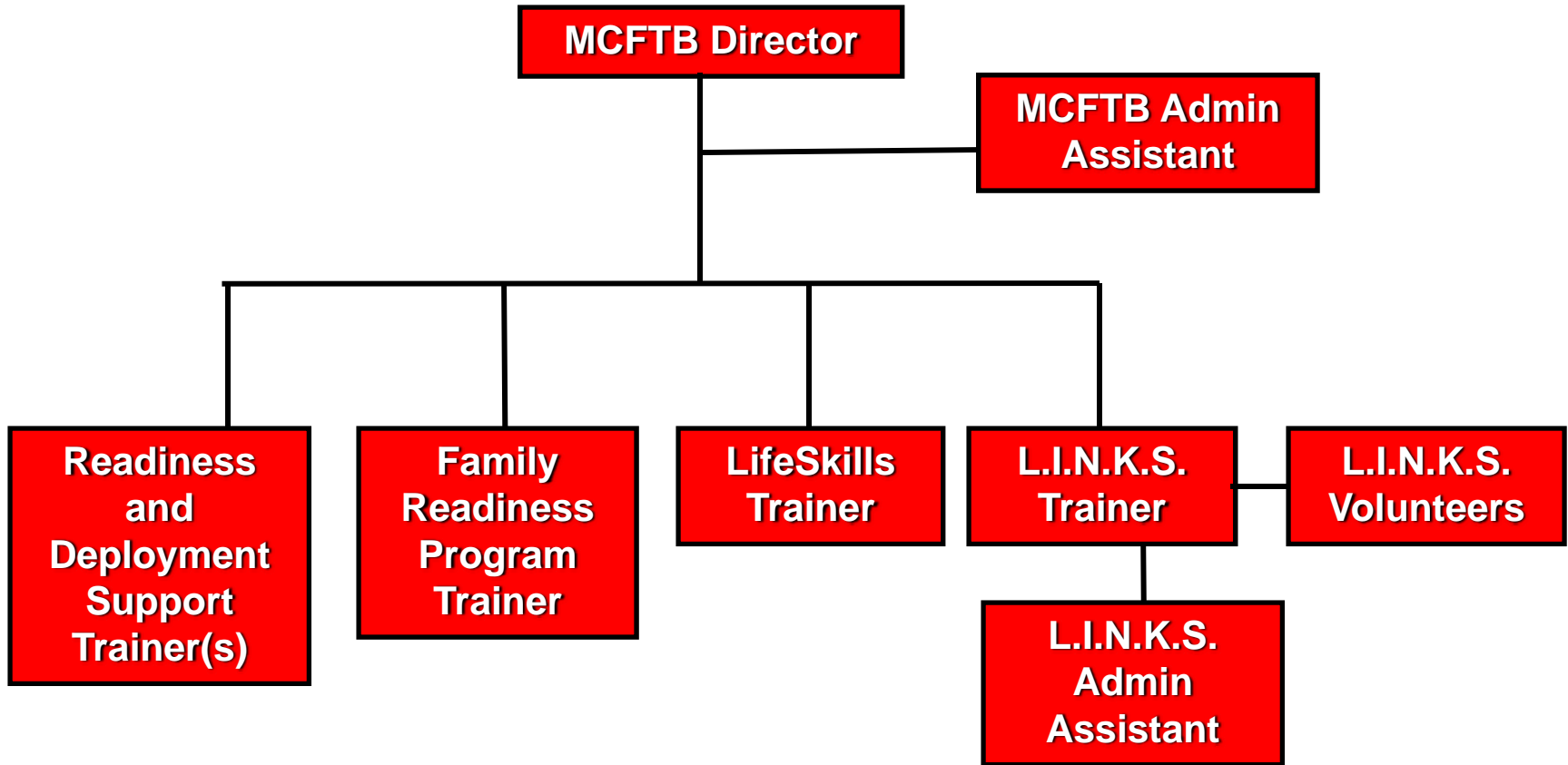


# Family Readiness Command Team





# MCFTB Staff





# Refresh of Training Materials

- Working Group in Jan 08
  - Participants included COSC representatives and psychiatrist from UCLA
  - New Concept “Beyond the Brief”
  - How to Cope with Deployment
    - Effects of Combat Operational Stress on Marines and Families

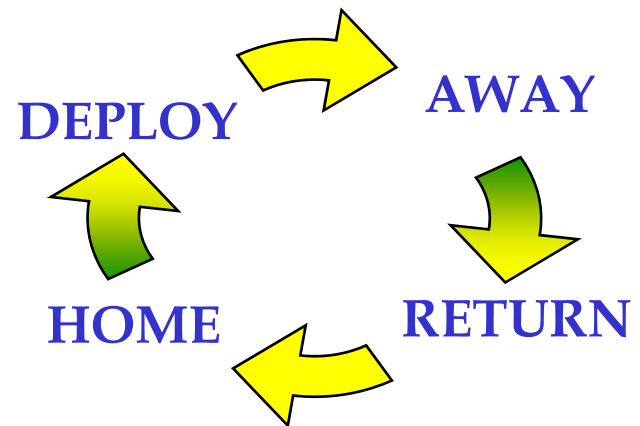


# Beyond the Brief: Week 1

## Deployment Stress and Coping

### Workshop Goals:

- Understanding Stress and Coping
- Understanding the Deployment Cycle
- Common Stress Sources and Problems
- Stress Continuum
- Managing Stress
- Available Resources





# Common Stress Symptoms for Families

## READY

- Confident and competent
- Getting the job done
- In control of emotions
- Sense of humor
- Sleeping enough
- Eating well
- Working out, staying fit
- Playing well
- Active socially
- Coping well
- Functioning well in school, at work and home
- Relating well with Marine

## REACTING

- Anxious, irritable, short tempered
- Fighting, tantrums, opposition
- Unusual sadness or crying
- Trouble sleeping
- Aches and pains
- Eating too much or too little
- Loss of interest
- Keeping to self, not socializing
- Negative, pessimistic
- Loss of confidence
- Developmental regression
- Problems with school or work performance
- Communication breakdown



# Common Stress Symptoms for Families

## INJURED

- Persistent sadness or irritability
- Attacks of panic or rage
- Can't fall or stay asleep
- Persistent loss of appetite
- Social avoidance or isolation
- Inability to enjoy activities
- Severe misbehavior
- Recurrent nightmares
- Persistent aches and pains
- Severe deterioration of school or work performance
- Misuse of alcohol or drugs, or other addictive behavior
- Other significant symptoms of depression, anxiety, or misconduct

## ILL

- Stress injury symptoms that persist
- Symptoms that get worse over time instead of better
- Symptoms that get better for awhile but then come back worse
- Suicidal or homicidal behavior



# Discussion Scenario One

A spouse of a deployed Marine lives on base with her ten year old daughter and six year old boy. She makes sure everything is taken care of at home, and she continues to make preparations for the upcoming deployment. However, she is getting increasingly short with her children and is not sleeping well.

- Which stress zone (green, yellow, orange, or red) is she in?
- What should be done?



# Beyond the Brief: Week 5- COSC

## Workshop Goals:

- To understand the deployment stress continuum and sources of deployment-related stress
- To recognize deployment-related stress in yourself and your Marine
- To understand how deployment-related stress affects your Marine and family members and how to manage it





# COSC Skills for Spouses

- **Recognizing stress injuries in your Marine**
  - Personality changes (emotional regulation, temperament, over-reaction, withdrawal)
  - Problems with sleep, nightmares, hyper vigilance
  - Increased destructive, dangerous, or addictive behavior
- **Knowing when to get professional help for stress injuries**
  - Affecting sleep, motivation, judgment, etc
  - Affecting ability to function socially or on the job
- **Helping them understand that a stress injury is an injury**
  - Deserves to be fixed like any physical injury
  - Incurred in dedicated service, deserves to feel better
  - Needs to get back on track for self, buddies, family
- **Recognizing secondary traumatic stress in the family**



# Challenges of Homecoming for Spouses

## Marital Relationship Issues

- Your Marine spouse has changed
- You have changed
- Getting to know (and trust) each other again
- Difficulty getting the relationship back to where it was
- Disillusionment when the reunion doesn't go so well
- Sadness & fear that the marriage will never be the same
- Bitterness over not being appreciated

## Communication Issues

- Marine spouse wanting to spend time with buddies
- How much should you ask? How much can you listen?
- Anger that military spouse is communicating (or not communicating) with children inappropriately

## Home Management Issues

- Fitting Marine spouse back into family routines
- Money problems: "Where did it all go?"

All compounded by stress problems in either of you!



# COSC Priorities for Spouses

- **Self Care**

- Preparing yourself for each phase of deployment cycle
- Protecting and restoring your own psychological health (PH)

- **Family Care**

- Preparing your children for each deployment cycle phase
- Protecting and restoring the PH of your children
- Protecting and restoring the PH of your spouse

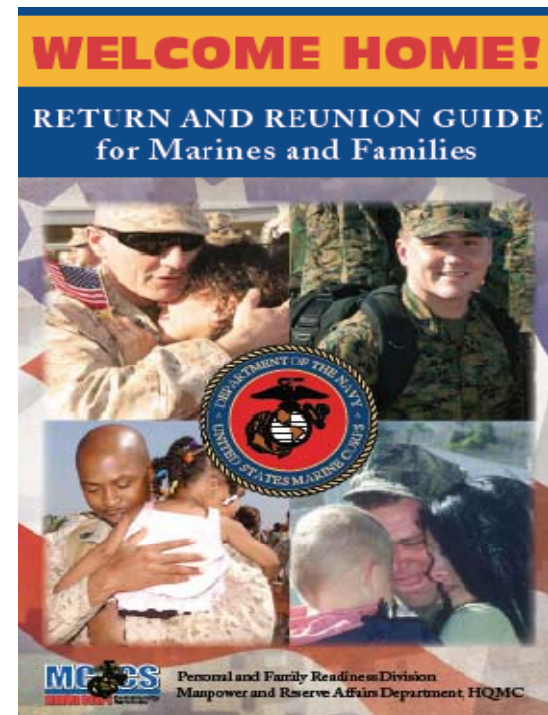
- **Buddy Care**

- Supporting other spouses/families throughout deployments
- Providing leadership for spouse and family communities



# Return and Reunion

- **Return and Reunion Guide**
  - Updated 3/07
  - Includes:
    - “Healing from Stress Injuries” chapter
    - Homecoming Tips chapter





# Questions



**Kim Gates**  
**703-432-9574**  
**[kimberly.a.gates@usmc.mil](mailto:kimberly.a.gates@usmc.mil)**