

# Supporting Military Children

# through Trauma & Loss



As of 2008, more than one million military-connected children have been affected by deployments, separations, death, injury, or illness of a parent or sibling. These are children living in their own new normal. Concerns about military children dealing with the impact of these profound challenges prompted the MCEC to develop the Living In the New Normal: Supporting Children Through Trauma and Loss (LINN) initiative. This comprehensive system was created through careful research and collaboration with experts in the fields of trauma and grief, resilience, health and well-being, child development, and education.

Living In the New Normal: Supporting Children Through Trauma and Loss encourages families to ensure their children have the tools to weather life's storms, provides educators and other concerned adults with valuable information and resources to help them support children during challenging times, and fosters homefront efforts to support military children through community training.

Living In the New Normal: Supporting Children through Trauma and Loss™ (LINN™)  
Programs and Resources:

- Living In the New Normal (LINN) Public Engagement™
- Living In the New Normal: Supporting Children through Trauma and Loss Institute (LINN)™
- Living In the New Normal (LINN) Practicum™
- Living In the New Normal (LINN) Selected Book List and Online Resources can be accessed at [www.MilitaryChild.org](http://www.MilitaryChild.org)

*“I will keep in mind the factors military children face and work with them to get involved in our schools, clubs, and activities.”*

- Participant

LINN Institute, Twenty-Nine Palms Marine Corps Base



## We Support Military-connected Children through Trauma and Loss

### Living In the New Normal (LINN) Public Engagement:

One component in the Living In the New Normal: Supporting Children through Trauma and Loss system is Public Engagement. Public Engagement is a community-based process that encourages the HOMEFRONT of local partnerships to enhance and synchronize their assets, resources, and sustainable outreach for children and their families who may be experiencing trauma or loss. Families and loved ones who have borne the ultimate sacrifice may find themselves in the gap between a rigorously-organized military support structure and the “New Normal.”

For military-connected communities, this “New Normal” has been intensified by extended deployments to war and the resulting injuries or death to members of the Armed Forces. This day-long, MCEC-facilitated process helps the participating communities to identify and effectively, efficiently integrate the support services communities can provide to assist children and families in the ongoing process of confronting and dealing with their trauma and loss. State and local leaders participate as subject matter experts from a defined list of appropriate community functions including faith-based, education, health care/well-being, service providers, businesses, service clubs and organizations and community leadership.

Five successful LINN Public Engagements have been held in North Carolina, Texas, and the National Capital Region with more planned for 2009.

*“[LINN Public Engagement] brings together all sectors of the community, starting with the civic leaders, to include health care leaders, schools, faith communities, employers... as well as the public and private organizations - they come together to dedicate a period of time to learn.”*

**Brigadier General Loree Sutton**

Director of The Defense Center for Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury

### Living In the New Normal (LINN) - Supporting Children Through Trauma and Loss Institute:

The LINN two-day, graduate level and CEU-qualified institute is designed to provide community professionals, educators, military leaders, and other concerned adults with tools and information to support military-connected children during times of uncertainty, trauma, and grief. The institute fosters an understanding of the intensity and severity of stressors related to the deployment of a parent(s), the potential for trauma or grief as a result of the illness, injury, or death of a loved one, and the appropriate responses to identify strengths and build resilience in children. Carefully selected textbooks, materials, and documents representing more than three years of research, development, critical and scientific review, and piloting are incorporated into the comprehensive curriculum. Participants experience realistic scenarios, identify local resources, and create a model for a sustainable homefront for military children.

### LINN TRAINING EVENTS HAVE OCCURRED IN:

Arizona	Phoenix
California	Camp Pendleton, Carlsbad, Los Angeles
Colorado	Fort Carson
Hawaii	Fort Shafter, Schofield Barracks
Indiana	South Bend
Kansas	Fort Riley
Kentucky	Fort Campbell
Louisiana	Fort Polk
Minnesota	Roseville
New Hampshire	Concord
Texas	Fort Bliss, Fort Hood, Grapevine, Killeen, Lubbock, San Antonio
North Carolina	Camp Lejeune, Fort Bragg/Fayetteville
Virginia	Arlington
Germany	Heidelberg
Italy	Vicenza



**Living In the New Normal (LINN) Practicum:**

The one-day accredited Living In the New Normal Practicum is tailored to military parents, family readiness personnel, professionals, and practitioners on the frontlines of identifying and supporting children who may be grieving or experiencing the effects of a changed parent. Participants acquire basic knowledge, using unique, practical resources and activities focused on building resilience and providing sustained support in children who may be affected by military/combat-related illness, injury, or death of a parent. The LINN system is predicated on the belief that children are courageous and resilient and that these skills can be developed through deliberate encouragement by the adults in their lives. Since its launch in 2008, 96 professionals have attended the LINN Practicum, in Killeen and Grapevine, Texas, and Arlington, Virginia.

**LIVING IN THE NEW NORMAL – PROFESSIONALS TRAINED**

	2007 Events   Attendees	2008 Events   Attendees	Total Events   Attendees
LINN Institute	2   90	21   840	23   930
LINN Practicum		2   96	2   96
LINN Public Engagement	3   300	2   200	5   500

*“The Living In the New Normal training meant so much to me because it [helping children through trauma and grief] is the hardest part of my job, the least frequently brought up, and the most necessary.”*

Participant in a MCEC Professional Development Institute  
San Diego, CA, Spring 2007



**“STILL THINKING OF YOU”**

by Katie, Grade 6

*Standing at a chain link fence  
Is a little girl holding onto its links  
With icy cold hands.*

*She stares across the frozen meadow  
To the other side  
Where her daddy used to work.*

*Tears are falling down her face,  
For the man she’s wishing to come home  
Is in a faraway place.*

*He’s just a man to many, but she loves him most,  
For her dad’s her hero throughout her heart  
And for that they will never part.*

**Of the roughly 808,000 parents deployed since 2001, more than 315,000 have deployed twice or more.**



**The MCEC Science Advisory Board:**

The mission of MCEC's Living In the New Normal: Supporting Children Through Trauma and Loss Science Advisory Board is to advise the LINN committee and the MCEC on the full spectrum of effects – to include resilience, growth, and achievement, multiple deployments, trauma, and loss – living a military lifestyle has upon military children, as well as to ensure the efficacy of the knowledge base and enhance the ethical and professional credibility of LINN.

**Patty Shinseki**

Military Child Education Coalition Board Member, Co-chair for the Science Advisory Board, and Living In the New Normal: Supporting Children Through Trauma and Loss Initiative Chair

**Colonel Steve Cozza, M.D. USA, Retired**

Co-chair for the Science Advisory Board; Associate Director, Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress, Child and Family Programs, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (MD)

**Ken Ginsburg, M.D.**

Pediatrician specializing in adolescent medicine at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. In cooperation with the American Academy of Pediatrics, author of *A Parent's Guide to Building Resilience in Children and Teens: Giving Your Child Roots and Wings*

**Major General Elder Granger, M.D., USA**

Deputy Director and Program Executive Officer of the TRICARE Management Activity, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs), Washington, DC. Serves as the principal advisor to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) on DoD health plan policy and performance

**Harrison Keller, Ph.D.**

Vice-Provost at the University of Texas at Austin

**Major Keith Lemmon, M.D., USA**

Member of the Adolescent Medicine and Pediatric Faculty at Madigan Army Medical Center, Fort Lewis, WA



**Michael Matthews, Ph.D.**

Professor of Engineering Psychology, United States Military Academy (NY); American Psychological Association Region 19 past president

**Ron Palomares, Ph.D.**

American Psychological Association, Assistant Executive Director for Policy and Advocacy in Schools

**Lieutenant Colonel Becky Porter, Ph.D., USA**

Behavioral Health Officer, Healthcare Delivery Operations J3, Joint Task Force National Capital Region Medical

**Paula Rauch, M.D.**

Director of Child Psychiatry Consultation Service to Pediatrics at Massachusetts General Hospital and founding director of the MGH Cancer Center Parenting Program: Parenting at a Challenging Time; Co-author of *Raising an Emotionally Healthy Child When a Parent is Sick*.

**Brigadier General Loree Sutton, M.D., USA**

Director of the Defense Center for Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury

**Philip "Uri" Treisman, Ph.D.**

Professor of Mathematics and Public Affairs, Executive Director of the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin, MCEC Senior Juror for Research Initiatives, MCEC National Advisor

**Colonel Doug Waldrep, M.D., USA, Retired**

Assistant Professor of Uniformed Services, University of the Health Sciences; Medical Director of Yahweh Center Children's Village, Wilmington, NC

**Mary M. Keller, Ed.D.**

Military Child Education Coalition Executive Director