

## HOMEcomings AFTER DEPLOYMENT: TIPS FOR REUNION A National Center for PTSD Fact Sheet

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Reunion is part of the deployment cycle and is filled with joy and stress. The following tips can help you have the best possible reunion.

### Tips for Soldiers:

- Support good things your family has done.
- Take time to talk with your spouse and children.
- Make individual time for each child and your spouse.
- Go slowly when reestablishing your place in the family.
- Be prepared to make some adjustments.
- Romantic conversation can lead to more enjoyable sex.
- Make your savings last longer.
- Take time to listen and to talk with loved ones.
- Go easy on partying.

### Tips for Spouses for Reunion:

- Avoid scheduling too many things.
- Go slowly in making adjustments.
- You and your soldier may need time for yourself.
- Remind soldier he or she is still needed in the family.
- Discuss splitting up family chores.
- Stick to your budget until you've had time to talk it through.
- Along with time for the family, make individual time to talk.
- Be patient with yourself and your partner.

### Tips for Reunion with Children:

- Go slowly. Adapt to the rules and routines already in place.
- Let the child set the pace for getting to know you again.
- Learn from how your spouse managed the children.
- Be available to your child, both with time and with your emotions.
- Delay making changes in rules and routines for a few weeks.
- Expect that the family will not be the same as before you left; everyone has changed.
- Focus on successes with your children; limit your criticisms.
- Encourage children to tell you about what happened during the separation.
- Make individual time for each child and your spouse.

Source: US Department of the Army. Homecoming after Deployment: Tips for Reunion. US Army Medical Department Center and School, Combat Stress Actions Office, Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio Texas. Modification of materials prepared by 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division Mental Health Section for the Persian Gulf War (1991).