

PARENTING FOR VETERANS

A Facilitator's Guide



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

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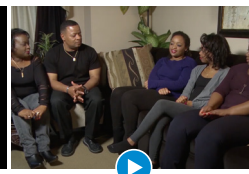
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Communication



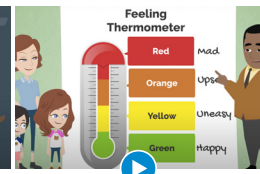
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and Behavior



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INTRODUCTION

[Parenting for Veterans](#) is a free online resource that helps parents deal with everyday problems, as well as family issues that are unique to the military and Veteran lifestyle. It is one of several resources available at veterantraining.va.gov.

The self-guided website provides information and tools to strengthen parenting skills and reconnect families. Parents can find:

- Information on how emotions and behavior affect relationships
- Effective approaches to discipline
- Relaxation tools to use when feeling frustrated or stressed
- Positive communication techniques for improve relationships with children
- Strategies for parenting with emotional and physical challenges
- Downloadable parenting tip sheets and worksheets

Parenting for Veterans features real-life stories from families who have faced similar challenges. Since it is available online, it can be explored in the privacy of the home and at the pace of the individual's choosing. Veterans can pick and choose which modules are most applicable to their family or visit sections over time as situations arise. The website does not require log-in or registration and is completely anonymous. No personal information is ever requested or stored.

Parenting for Veterans

- Free online resource
- Built for veterans; available to anyone
- Age-specific advice for each stage of child development
- Parents choose which tips and tools they need
- Completely anonymous – no login or registration required

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide is intended to assist anyone – clinician, peer, or family member – who would like to encourage a Veteran, Veteran’s spouse, or anyone in a parenting role to access the parenting tips and skills available in Parenting for Veterans. This guide is not intended to train providers in delivering parenting counseling. Its goal is to help facilitate engagement with Parenting for Veterans by providing detailed information about this resource.

Questions about Parenting for Veterans can be directed to Parenting@va.gov.



Parenting for Veterans is ideal for individuals who are most comfortable working on a desktop or laptop, but it is possible to view the modules from a smartphone or tablet. A [Parenting2Go iOS app](#) is also available for download on a smartphone or tablet. It’s a convenient way to access parenting tips on-the-go—alone or in combination with the Parenting for Veterans website.

ABOUT PARENTING FOR VETERANS

WHO BUILT THIS RESOURCE?

Parenting for Veterans was originally built in 2014 by [VA Mental Health Services](#) in partnership with the Department of Defense National Center for Telehealth and Technology as part of a coordinated public health initiative to help Veterans and Service Members. Many partner organizations, parenting counselors, and child development experts made generous contributions to the development of the program.

In 2020, the second-generation Parenting for Veterans website was produced and released. In addition to reorganizing the content based on user feedback, the site can now be viewed more easily on mobile devices.

Citations, references and full project team information can be obtained by visiting the Parenting for Veterans’ [About the Project page](#).

WHAT ARE THE TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS?

Parenting for Veterans can be used on any laptop, desktop, or mobile device with internet. It has closed captioning and can be used with assistive devices. Speakers or headphones are also recommended to access audio and video content.

Additionally, a [Parenting2Go iOS app](#) is available for download on a smartphone or tablet. It's a convenient way to access parenting tips on-the-go—alone or in combination with the Parenting for Veterans website.

HOW SHOULD PARENTS USE THIS WEBSITE?

Parenting for Veterans does not need to be completed in any order. Parents can go at their own pace and select the topics that are most helpful to them. They can skip content that may not be relevant.

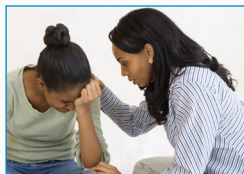
Many parents may already be feeling overwhelmed. When introducing Parenting for Veterans, be sure to underscore that this resource is intended to help, not give them more tasks or additional burdens. Instead, let them know that the easiest way to approach Parenting for Veterans is to identify what is most important to them and focus on one concept at a time.

WHAT'S IN PARENTING FOR VETERANS?

The first step toward recommending Parenting for Veterans is taking a few minutes to become familiar with its contents. The website offers videos, interactive content, and tip sheets organized under five topics that reflect key parenting challenge areas:



Communication



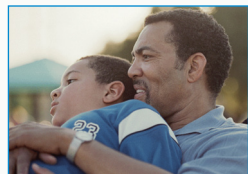
Emotions and Behavior



Discipline



Managing Stress

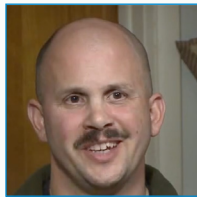


Emotional and Physical Challenges

The lessons offer strategies for effectively parenting children at each stage of development, from toddlers through teenagers.

Video Content

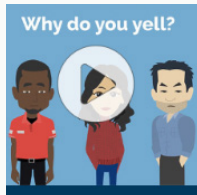
Matt and Edwin are a Veteran and Service member who face not only the challenges experienced by all parents, but also issues unique to the military lifestyle. Watching videos featuring their families normalizes these common experiences and provides a more specific look at how course concepts can be applied in real life.



Matt is a Veteran who served as an E6 with the Army Corps of Engineers in Afghanistan from 2008 - 2009. He and his wife, Crystal, have been married for 14 years and have two daughters together: 13 and 9. Matt's son from a previous relationship lives with them and is 18.



Edwin is a Sergeant Major in the Army who was deployed three times: Desert Storm for 7 months, Operation Iraqi Freedom for 15 months, Operation Enduring Freedom for 14 months. He and his wife Cynthia have been married for 27 years and have three daughters: 21, 19, and 15.



The course also features animated Veteran characters, Erin, Victor and Patrick, who offer tips and strategies for better parenting and self-care.

- Erin, whose mild TBI and PTSD symptoms are affecting her ability to parent
- Victor, a divorcee who is coping with stress
- Larry, who is dealing with unhealthy thoughts about his son's behavior
- Patrick, whose PTSD symptoms are having a negative effect on the whole family

Interactive Content

Each topic within Parenting for Veterans includes interactive assessments, activities, and games to practice applying the information and skills learned to users' families. As the activities are completed, the course provides feedback to reinforce learning and correct misunderstandings. Many of these tools offer options by developmental stage (infant, toddler, preschool, school age, and teenage), which provides opportunities for users to customize the course to their children's ages. Remind users to click "Learn More" to open the next topic within a section.

Supplemental Materials

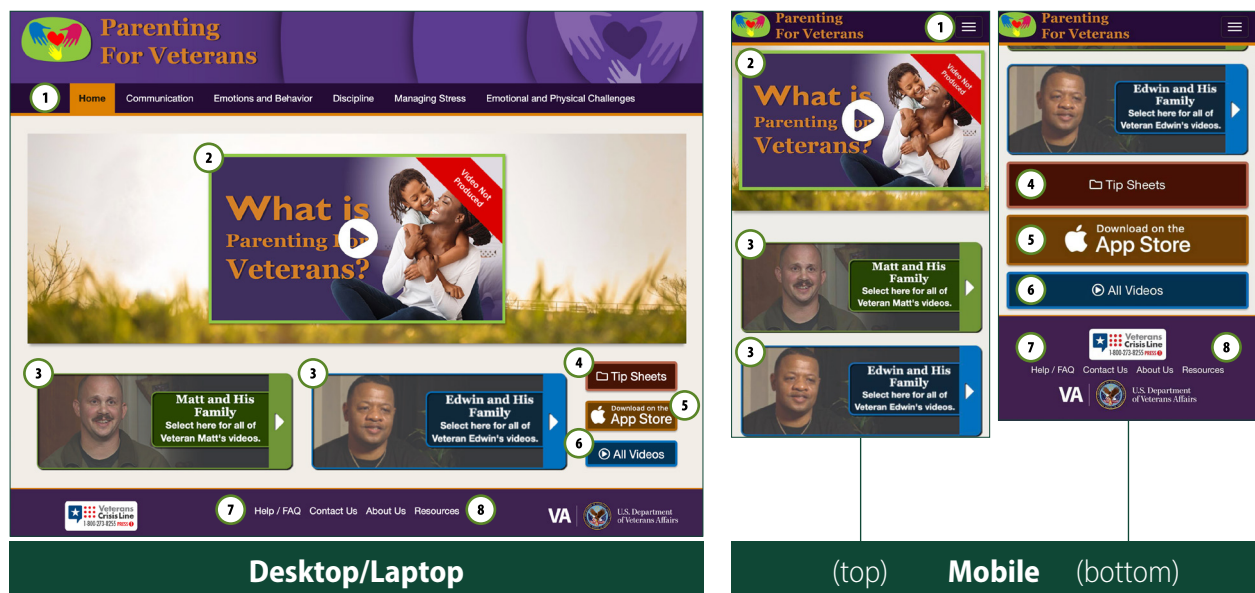
Each topic is accompanied by worksheets and tip sheets that users can print to review and share with their families.

PARENTING FOR VETERANS NAVIGATION

Use the following diagrams to learn how to navigate the Parenting for Veterans website. You can use these diagrams to help introduce the website to Veterans.

HOME PAGE

The home page is a launchpad to all resources and areas of the course. The page layout differs based on the device being used (i.e., computer vs mobile device), but the content is exactly the same. Users can bookmark this page in their browser for quick access.



- ① **Main Menu:** Select the topics—**Communication, Emotions and Behavior, Discipline, Managing Stress, Emotional and Physical Challenges**—to view the materials in each section.
- ② **Intro Video:** Select the play button to watch a short introductory video.
- ③ **Matt & Edwin Boxes:** View a full listing of videos featuring each family.
- ④ **Tip Sheets:** Find links to all downloadable Parenting for Veterans tip sheets.
- ⑤ **Download on the App Store:** Link to the downloadable Parenting2Go iOS app.
- ⑥ **All Videos:** Access a searchable directory of all Parenting for Veterans videos.
- ⑦ **Help/FAQ:** Find information on program features and system requirements.
- ⑧ **Resources:** Access an index of all videos and tip sheets.

TOPICS PAGES

Parenting For Veterans

Home Communication **Emotions and Behavior** Discipline Managing Stress Emotional and Physical Challenges

Emotions and Behavior

In this section, you will learn how to interpret your child's emotions and behaviors.

The learning objectives for this section are:

- 1 Explain the impact of your own emotions on your child and your parenting decisions.
- 2 Explain the connection between how your child behaves and how they are feeling inside.
- 3 Identify three effective strategies to help your child cope with strong emotions.
- 4 Identify when you may need to get help.

Introduction

Your emotional challenges may impact your parenting. These challenges may also cause your child to react to your unique conditions. Often a child's difficult emotions and behaviors are their way of asking for help.

Select the Play Button to hear Matt's son talk about why he began acting out while his dad was deployed.

Matt and his Family

0-1 1-3 3-6 6-12 12-18

Behavior: Infant is fussy and not sleeping well

What is your child trying to tell you?

- ☐ Reacting to changes with your return
- ☐ Is just spoiled
- ☐ Is in pain from teeth coming in

Submit

Select the Learn More Button for more information on your child's behaviors.

Summary and Conclusion

There is no "right" way to help your child cope with their emotions. Everyone is different, and your family will need to find the strategies that work for all of you.

If you are unsure about how to help or talk with your child at any time, remember it's always okay to get support from others.

If you teach your child(ren) how to handle difficult times now, they will know how to deal with the challenges that happen throughout life.

Feel free to download and use these Tip Sheets.

- The Impact of Your Emotions on Parenting
- How to Manage Your Own Emotions
- Benefits of Managing Your Emotions
- Helping Your Child Cope with Difficult Emotions
- Getting Help for Your Child and Your Family
- Support Resources
- Communicating Your Feelings

1 Learning Objectives

Each topic includes Learning Objectives that set expectations for what parents can learn by exploring the materials in that section.

2 Introduction

Each section includes an introduction and introductory video.

3 Interactive Content

Interactive games and activities give users a chance to practice the topics they are learning and receive feedback on their responses. Some interactive features, like this one, allow parents to customize the content they view by selecting the age-range tab that fits their children's ages.

4 Learn More Button

The Learn More buttons open the next section of the topic. When selected, the window drops down to reveal more information, videos, and activities.

5 Summary and Conclusion

The bottom of each topic includes a summary and conclusion that offer encouragement and a list of that section's printable tip sheets.

RECOMMENDING PARENTING FOR VETERANS

WHO IS A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR PARENTING FOR VETERANS?

Parenting for Veterans is designed to be especially useful for Veterans and Service members who may be experiencing parenting challenges. However, anyone in a parenting role can benefit from the tips and information included on the site.

“At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child’s success is the positive involvement of parents.”

Parents who may benefit the most from this resource may be facing challenges, such as:

- Adjusting to the transition from military to civilian life
- Balancing work and family life
- Having trouble understanding children’s behavior

Parenting for Veterans is also a useful tool for providers. For those who may not have familiarity with the subject, the website contains information for understanding the challenges Veterans may be facing in their home life. Providers do not need to be trained to work with families to recommend this resource to Veterans.

WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER BEFORE RECOMMENDING THIS RESOURCE?

- Parenting for Veterans is not intended to replace professional care, nor is it appropriate during a crisis. It can be used with in-person counseling.
- There is no help desk dedicated to the Veteran Training web courses. Individuals who need assistance can contact us at Parenting@va.gov for additional information about the website and limited technical assistance. This support does not offer immediate or instant responses.

- The course offers an assistive technology option for Veterans who have sensory impairments. Explain that checking that box (top right-hand corner of the page) offers access to an alternate version of games and activities that can be played using assistive technology.

HOW SHOULD I INTRODUCE PARENTING FOR VETERANS?

If you think a Veteran could benefit from this website, consider these talking points for introducing the website and setting expectations:

- Parenting is difficult and all parents can use support. Taking time to learn and practice parenting tips can improve the life-long relationship with their children.
- Parenting for Veterans is an anonymous online resource they can access in the privacy of their home. Its resources are designed specifically for Veterans and Service members.
- Parenting for Veterans gives parents tips for examining and enhancing their own behavior, not just the behavior of their kids.
- If possible, pull up the course on your computer and show the website to them. Share some of the information in the “What’s in Parenting for Veterans” section of this guide ([pages 4-5](#)) to help them become familiar with the course contents.
 - If they are not tech savvy, review the navigation diagrams on [pages 6 and 7](#) of this guide to help them become familiar with how the website works.
- Explain that parents can choose the content fits their family situation. Suggest they consider the website’s topics, decide what’s most important to them, and start there (for example, managing stress).
 - Encourage them to focus on one topic at a time.
 - If you have the time, help them determine what content fits their situation by reviewing the Parenting for Veterans At-a-Glance in the next section of this guide together.

After introducing Parenting for Veterans, you can print and give them the following handout to serve as a reminder to get started: https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/parenting/media/ParentingFactSheet_high_res.pdf.

PARENTING FOR VETERANS AT-A-GLANCE

The following pages offer an overview of the contents in each section of the Parenting for Veterans website. Descriptions of interactive components are described here. For additional information on each video, please see the [video appendix](#) at the end of this guide.





TOPIC: COMMUNICATION

The Communication section teaches parents how to effectively practice positive communication. Users are reminded that engaging in positive communication strategies with their children is a process. The key is to make the effort to improve communication within your home and help your family stay strong together.



Watch: Edwin and his wife explain how their differences in parenting complement each other.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe your personal approaches for communicating with your children.
- Describe ways to improve your methods for communicating with your children.
- Identify important considerations when discussing difficult topics with your children.

TIP SHEETS

[Communication Self Check](#)
[Essential Communication Strategies](#)

SUBTOPIC	KEY VIDEOS & ACTIVITIES
Introduction	Video How Did You Reconnect with Your Kids? (1:50, Matt)
Reintegration	Video Communication & Behavior (2:03, Matt) Interactives Recognize Invitations from Your Child: Review a common scenario based on your child's age and choose how you would respond. Get Involved: Learn how you can be involved in your child's day-to-day life based on their developmental stage. Work Together on Long-term Projects: Find ideas for activities you and your child can try together.

SUBTOPIC	KEY VIDEOS & ACTIVITIES
Positive Communication	<p>Interactives</p> <p>What Is Your Communication Style: Take a short survey to learn more about the way you communicate and how that may be perceived by your children.</p> <p>Devise Ways to Manage Your Stress: Identify self-care activities that help you have more energy for parenting.</p> <p>True or False Game: Test your knowledge of appropriate expectations based on a child's age in this Jeopardy-style true or false game.</p> <p>TIP SHEETS</p> <p>Infant Development Stage</p> <p>Preschooler Development Stage</p> <p>School-Aged Children Development Stage</p> <p>Teenage Development Stage</p> <p>Toddler Development Stage</p>
Communication Strategies	<p>Videos</p> <p>Ways to Express Your Love Video (Animated, 1:07)</p> <p>Helping Your Child Become an Adult Video (1:19, Matt)</p> <p>Interactives</p> <p>Active Listening: Learn to recognize common barriers to actively listen to your children.</p> <p>Giving Positive Reinforcement Audio (1:34, 1:11)</p>
Difficult Conversations	<p>Videos</p> <p>Different Communication Styles (2:47, Edwin)</p> <p>Difficult Questions from Your Child (1:39, Edwin)</p> <p>Interactives</p> <p>Anticipating Really Hard Questions</p> <p>Identifying What Your Child Really Wants to Know: Understand the underlying concerns behind common questions children may ask.</p> <p>Communication Strategy</p> <p>Creating a Parenting Plan: Build a printable plan for addressing common parenting concerns.</p>



TOPIC: EMOTIONS AND BEHAVIOR

In this section, parents learn how to interpret their child's emotions and behaviors. There is no "right" way for a parent to help a child cope with their emotions. It is important to keep in mind that everyone is different, and each family will need to find the strategies that work for them.

How Emotions Can Impact Your Family



Watch: An animated explanation of how children are impacted by their parents' emotions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Explain the impact of your own emotions on your child and your parenting decisions.
- Explain the connection between how your child behaves and how they are feeling inside.
- Identify three effective strategies to help your child cope with strong emotions.
- Identify when you may need to get help.

TIP SHEETS

[The Impact of Your Emotions on Parenting](#)

[How to Manage Your Own Emotions](#)

[Benefits of Managing Your Emotions](#)

[Helping Your Child Cope with Difficult Emotions](#)

[Getting Help for Your Child and Your Family](#)

[Support Resources](#)

[Communicating Your Feelings](#)

SUBTOPIC	KEY VIDEOS & ACTIVITIES
Introduction	Video Difficulties Related to an Absence (1:35, Matt)
Understand Your Child's Behavior	Videos Problem Behaviors or a "Phase" (1:22, Edwin) It's Okay to Cry (1:42, Matt) Interactives Understand Your Child's Behavior: Practice identifying the underlying emotions of common behaviors for each developmental stage. Strategies That Can Help: Review helpful strategies that you can use to help your child cope with difficult emotions.

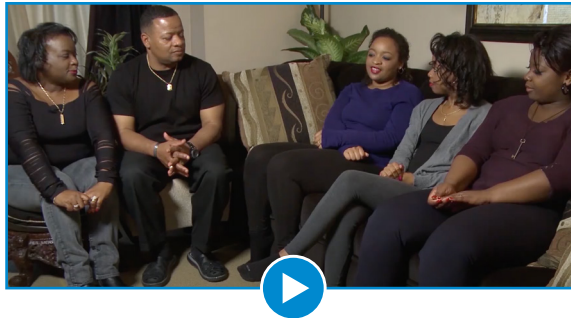
SUBTOPIC	KEY VIDEOS & ACTIVITIES
How Emotions Impact Others	Interactives Molly's Reaction to Her Child's Behavior (Audio, 0:28, 0:34): Listen to a parent react to her child's behavior. The Impact of Your Emotions on Your Child's Coping Skills.
Managing Emotions	Videos How Emotions Can Impact Your Family (Animated, 1:27) How to Use the Feeling Thermometer (Animated, 1:20) Interactives Manage Your Own Emotions: Learn three common strategies to manage your emotions.

“Your child looks up to you. You are the North Star when they are lost. When they are in the dark, you are their light.”



TOPIC: DISCIPLINE

In this section, users learn how to practice effective discipline. Children make mistakes. Parenting for Veterans emphasizes a positive approach to discipline that can help children learn essential life skills that will help them face tomorrow's challenges.



Watch: Edwin's daughter explains her view on discipline and its effect on her life.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify the basis of effective discipline.
- Distinguish between positive and negative approaches to discipline.
- Explain effective strategies to discipline your child.
- Identify when you may need to get help.

TIP SHEETS

[Attention, Praise, and Rewards](#)

[Ignoring](#)

[Effective Time Out Techniques](#)

[Setting Limits](#)

[Taking Responsibility](#)

[Withdrawal of Privileges](#)

[A Positive Approach to Discipline](#)

[The Basis of Effective Discipline](#)

SUBTOPIC	KEY VIDEOS & ACTIVITIES
Introduction	Video The Positive Impacts of Discipline (1:11, Edwin)

SUBTOPIC	KEY VIDEOS & ACTIVITIES
A Positive Approach to Discipline	<p>Video Positive Approach Avoids Spanking (0:32, Matt)</p> <p>Interactives What is a Positive Approach? Use green and red paint to identify positive and negative approaches to discipline. A Good Foundation for a Positive Approach: Find recommendations for how to improve your relationships with your loved ones and emotional awareness. A Positive Approach Considers Age Differences: Review discipline guidelines by developmental stage. The Professional Opinion (Audio, 1:19)</p>
Effective Discipline Strategies	<p>Video Supporting Each Other When Following Through on Consequences (2:04, Edwin)</p> <p>Interactives Attention and Praise Checklist: Build a list of age-appropriate rewards you can use to strengthen your relationship with your child. Using Positive Consequences and Praise Using Negative Consequences: Explore strategies to address negative behaviors.</p>

“Discipline is a tool. Learn to use it effectively to help shape your child’s future.”



TOPIC: MANAGING STRESS

Stress impacts everyone. Managing it not only models important life skills, but can also create a safe, healthy, and loving environment for families. This section of Parenting for Veterans guides users through how to recognize stress symptoms and find which self-care strategies work best for them.



Watch: Victor explains the stressors in his life and how he copes.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Explain how to deal with unhelpful thoughts.
- Identify ways to manage stress as a parent.

TIP SHEETS

[Managing Parental Stress](#)

[Thought Replacement Worksheet](#)

[Pleasurable Activities](#)

[Dealing with Unhelpful Thoughts](#)

[Larry's Thought Replacement Worksheet](#)

[Calendar Template](#)

[Common Signs of Stress](#)

SUBTOPIC	KEY VIDEOS & ACTIVITIES
Introduction	Video Recognizing Stressors and How to Handle Them (1:03, Matt)
Managing Your Parental Stress	Videos Victor's Story: Coping with Stress and Making Healthy Choices (Animated, 0:34) Victor's Self-Care Plan (Animated, 1:02) Interactives Stress Reduction Strategies: Identify effective ways you can manage your stress as a parent. Relaxation Techniques

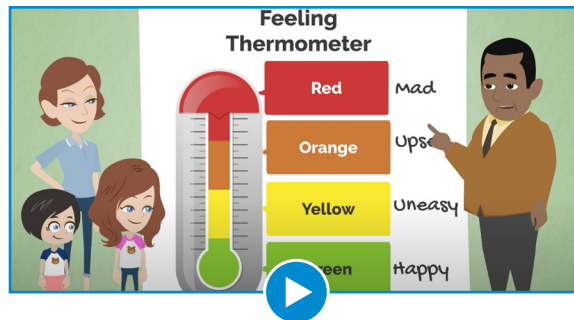
SUBTOPIC	KEY VIDEOS & ACTIVITIES
Managing Your Thoughts	<p>Video Larry's Story: Dealing with Unhelpful Thoughts (Animated, 0:28)</p> <p>Interactives Be Aware of Your Unhelpful Thoughts: Learn to identify thinking errors that lead to negative emotions and reactions. Use Thought Replacement Handout: Find strategies to replace unhelpful thoughts with more positive and helpful thinking.</p>

“Finding ways to navigate stormy parenting seas will help you and your family set the course for smooth sailing.”



TOPIC: EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL CHALLENGES

Living with emotional and physical injuries can affect the level of stress in the home and impact parenting. This section offers self-care tips for reducing stress and strategies for parenting while facing these challenges.



Watch: Learn how Erin and her family should use the Feeling Thermometer.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify more effective ways to parent with mental and/or physical challenges.
- Identify at least five self-care activities you could put into practice in your life.

TIP SHEETS

[Common Children's Reactions](#)

[Feeling Thermometer Worksheet](#)

SUBTOPIC	KEY VIDEOS & ACTIVITIES
Introduction	Video Getting Help (2:51, Edwin)
Parenting with Emotional and Physical Challenges	Videos Patrick's Story: Living with PTSD (Animated, 0:46) Patrick's Story: Parenting with PTSD and the Effect on the Family (Animated, 1:58) Patrick's Story: Identifying Triggers & Using the Feeling Thermometer (Animated, 0:55) Erin's Story: Parenting with Emotional and Physical Challenges (Animated, 1:14) How Erin's Condition Affects Her Parenting (Animated, 1:58) Erin's Story: Using the Feeling Thermometer (Animated, 1:52) Interactives The 4 Phases to Recovery: Learn about steps you can take to improve your parenting while coping with emotional challenges. Audio: Recognizing Feelings and Strengthening Relationships (0:30; 0:33; 0:36; 0:34) Taking Time for Self-Care Activities: Good parenting requires self-care. Find examples of ways you can take time for yourself.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional resources for Veteran and military families include the following:

- **[Military OneSource](#)** is a confidential resource for Service members and their families that provides information and short-term, non-medical counseling by telephone, online or in the community.
- **[Make the Connection](#)** connects Veterans and their friends and family members with information, resources, and solutions to issues affecting their lives.
- **[Behavioral Health Treatment Services](#)** is an online locator to find community mental health treatment facilities and programs in your area for adults, families and children.
- **[VA Facility Locator](#)** While the focus is on the Veteran, VA medical centers and clinics may offer family services.

REFERENCES

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- Cozza, S.J. FOCUS-CI: A Preventative Intervention with Children and Family of the Combat Injured. Unpublished research. Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.
- National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families. (n.d.). Military Family Projects. Retrieved from Zero to Three website www.zerotothree.org.
- Sherman, M.D., Bowling, U., & Anderson, J., & Wyche, K. (2011). Veteran Parenting Toolkit. South Central Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC) and Oklahoma City VA Medical Center. Oklahoma City, OK. www.ouhsc.edu/VetParenting.

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- Greene, C., Fenstermacher, S., & Petty, K. (2020). Parenting for Veterans (Version 2.0). [Web-based self-help course]. Retrieved from <https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/apps/veteranparenting/index.html>.

APPENDIX: TIP SHEETS

Communication Tip Sheets

- [Communication Self-Check](#)
- [Essential Communication Strategies](#)
- [Infant Development Stage](#)
- [Preschooler Development Stage](#)
- [School-Aged Children Development Stage](#)
- [Teenage Development Stage](#)
- [Toddler Development Stage](#)

Emotions and Behavior Tip Sheets

- [Benefits of Managing Your Emotions](#)
- [Communicating Your Feelings](#)
- [Feeling Thermometer Worksheet](#)
- [Getting Help for Your Child or Your Family](#)
- [Helping Your Child Cope with Difficult Emotions](#)
- [How to Manage Your Own Emotions](#)
- [Support Resources](#)
- [The Impact of Your Emotions on Parenting](#)

Discipline Tip Sheets

- [A Positive Approach of Discipline](#)
- [Attention, Praise and Rewards](#)
- [Effective Time Out Techniques](#)
- [Ignoring](#)

- [Setting Limits](#)
- [Taking Responsibility](#)
- [The Basis of Effective Discipline](#)
- [Withdrawal of Privileges](#)

Managing Stress Tip Sheets

- [Calendar Template](#)
- [Common Signs of Stress](#)
- [Dealing with Unhelpful Thoughts](#)
- [Larry's Thought Replacement Worksheet](#)
- [Managing Parental Stress](#)
- [Pleasurable Activities](#)
- [Positive Thought Replacement Handout](#)
- [Thought Replacement Worksheet](#)

Emotional and Physical Challenges Tip Sheets

- [Common Children's Reactions to a Parent with PTSD](#)
- [Feeling Thermometer Worksheet](#)

APPENDIX: ALL VIDEOS

Videos

Each section of Parenting for Veterans includes videos featuring the stories of Veteran parents. Videos by topic can be found in the Course Contents section of this guide. To view a sortable listing of all videos online, [click here](#).

Matt's Family

- [A Son's Perspective](#) - Matt's son talks about his regrets for not fulfilling what he felt were his responsibilities during his father's deployment.
- [Communicating about Stress](#) - Matt talks about his stressors and how he tries to help his children with their stressors.
- [Communication & Behavior](#) - Matt explains the struggles his daughter Ashley had with her emotions and needing her father in her life.
- [Connecting with Your Kids Through Sports](#) - Matt's son explains how he uses sports to connect with his father.
- [Difficulties Related to an Absence](#) - Matt's son explains why he caused trouble when his dad was deployed.
- [Fitting Into the Family Hierarchy](#) - Matt describes how his wife held all of the family responsibilities while he was gone and his struggles with finding where he was needed in the family.
- [Getting Involved with School](#) - Matt's family discusses how the first integrational responsibility Matt took on when coming back was the children's schooling.
- [Helping Children Express their Feelings](#) - Matt discusses how he and his wife help the children to express their feelings.
- [Helping Your Child Become an Adult](#) - Matt talks about how he is involved in life planning with his children.
- [How Did You Reconnect with Your Kids?](#) - Matt's wife explains how their children were affected by Matt's deployment.
- [How Helping Veterans Can Be Therapeutic](#) - Matt describes how his work with other Veterans helps him with his anxieties and stressors.

- [It's Okay to Cry](#) - Matt explains how he handles his children crying by telling them it's okay for them to express their emotions.
- [It's Okay to Show Emotion](#) - Matt's wife describes why it is okay for the children and Matt to show their emotions.
- [Managing Your Roles within the Family](#) - Matt describes how he handles being a husband and father given his anxieties.
- [Positive Approach Avoids Spanking](#) - Matt's wife discusses the fact that her children are too old for spanking.
- [Negative Consequences: The Withdrawal of Privileges](#) - Matt's wife discusses how the only thing that works in disciplining their children is to take away their electronic devices.
- [Parenting and Discipline](#) - Matt and his family talk about various ways to discipline the children.
- [Recognizing Stressors and How to Handle Them](#) - Matt and his wife explain how they handle times when Matt is stressed.
- [Recognizing Triggers & Stressors: A Child's Perspective](#) - Matt's children discuss how they interact with him and recognize warning signs.
- [Reconnecting and Making Parental Decisions](#) - Matt's wife talks about how she makes most of the parental decisions.
- [Reconnecting: Changes in Roughhousing with Dad](#) - Matt's son describes how it was difficult to play or roughhouse with his father after he came back from a long absence.
- [Seeking Advice from Dad](#) - Matt's son talks about seeking advice and guidance from his father.
- [Switching Gears: Retraining](#) - Matt discusses how he struggled with slowing down to match the pace of his family when he was still used to the fast-paced schedule of his deployment.
- [Talking About Injuries with Family](#) - Matt discusses how he hasn't really communicated his mental and physical injuries with his family other than in a broad sense. Matt's wife talks about how she communicates his injuries with the children.
- [The Double-Edged Sword in Communication](#) - Matt and his wife talk about how it is easier for the family to communicate with Matt than for Matt to communicate with the family.
- [The Impact of Emotional and Physical Challenges on Parenting](#) - Matt talks about how his anxiety and stress impact his parenting.
- [Understanding & Managing Stress at Home](#) - Matt's wife talks about how she and the children recognize and handle his warning signs and stressors.

Edwin's Family

- [Balancing Parental Decisions](#) - Edwin and his family talk about parental decision-making upon returning from a deployment.
- [Creative Ways to Re-establish Communication with Your Kids](#) - Edwin talks about the strategy he used to re-establish communication with his children.
- [Different Communication Styles](#) - Edwin and his wife explain how their differences in parenting complement each other.
- [Difficult Questions from Your Child](#) - Edwin's daughters talk about the questions they had about their father's deployment.
- [Discipline and Testing Boundaries](#) - Edwin talks about how he disciplined his children as they grew up and how his children tested boundaries.
- [Discipline: Setting Limits When Kids are Young](#) - Edwin relays that although his children are well-disciplined, they still push boundaries from time to time.
- [Family Interactions and The Reunion](#) - Edwin and his family discuss their interactions and feelings upon his return after a long absence.
- [Finding the Most Useful Consequence](#) - Edwin's children talk about the tools their parents use to discipline them, specifically taking away their electronic devices.
- [Fitting into the Family Hierarchy: Edwin's Family](#) - Edwin describes the impacts to the family unit (the hierarchy) upon returning from a long absence.
- [Getting Back into Routines](#) - Edwin tells about the methods he used to reintegrate with his daughters after being absent for a long period of time.
- [Getting Help](#) - Edwin and his wife explain how using the programs available to help with PTSD positively affected Edwin.
- [Handling Discipline During A Leave](#) - Edwin's children tell how their mother used to warn them that she would tell their father about their actions when he was deployed and how effective it was in disciplining them.
- [Handling PTSD as a Family](#) - Edwin's children discuss his diagnosis of PTSD and how they support him.
- [Identifying Red Flag Behaviors](#) - Edwin talks about the red flag behaviors he noticed with his children.
- [Listening \(A Dad's Perspective\)](#) - Edwin discusses how he listens to his daughters, and they talk about their perspectives.

- [Listening \(A Mom's Perspective\)](#) - Edwin's wife talks about how she listens to her family.
- [Managing Expectations](#) - Edwin talks about not having high expectations when coming home after a long absence, because it may result in disappointment.
- [Managing Your Anger and Reconnecting with Family](#) - Edwin discusses why he sometimes gets angry.
- [Parenting Doesn't Come with a Handbook](#) - Edwin talks about the different parenting approaches he used with his daughters.
- [Passing On Life Lessons to Your Kids](#) - Edwin explains that he now realizes how fragile life is and that there are no issues too big to handle.
- [Problem Behaviors or a "Phase"?](#) - Edwin's wife explains that one of her daughters became withdrawn due to their father's deployment.
- [Promoting Positive Interactions](#) - Edwin and his wife describe how they show their daughters they love them through positive interactions.
- [Recognizing Lack of Communication as a Red Flag](#) - Edwin's wife says a lack of communication with her family is an indicator that something may be wrong.
- [Reducing Problem Behaviors with Increased Communication](#) - Edwin uses daily communication to reduce the number of issues with his family.
- [Sharing Positive Experiences from Your Deployment](#) - Edwin talks about how he would tell his family the good things that happened while he was deployed.
- [Supporting Each Other When Following Through on Consequences](#) - Edwin explains how he and his wife support each other when disciplining their children.
- [Tackling the Tough Questions About an Absence](#) - Edwin describes answering his family's difficult questions about his deployments.
- [Teaching Your Kids about Managing Emotions](#) - Edwin uses his experiences to help teach his children how to interact with others and manage their emotions.
- [The Benefits of Communication During an Absence - Part I](#) - Edwin and his daughters talk about the importance of communication while deployed.
- [The Benefits of Communication During an Absence - Part II](#) - Edwin and his wife talk about how communication methods evolved over his three deployments.
- [The Benefits of Getting Help](#) - Edwin describes the benefits and liabilities of getting help for him and his family.

- [The Benefits of Setting Limits With Your Kids](#) - Edwin's wife and daughter discuss what would happen if one of the children was told "no" by mom, but "yes" by dad.
- [The Positive Impacts of Discipline](#) - Edwin's daughter explains her view on discipline and its effect on her life.
- [Understanding Children's Unique Traits When Disciplining](#) - Edwin talks about the differences in his children's behaviors.
- [Work/Life Balance Strategies](#) - Edwin discusses the importance of not bringing work home.

Animated

- [Communication Styles and Family Dynamics](#) - An animated video of an interview with a child struggling with school and communication in his family.
- [Erin's Story: Parenting with Emotional and Physical Challenges](#) - An animated explanation of Erin's family and her problems with TBI and PTSD.
- [Erin's Story: Using the Feeling Thermometer](#) - An animated explanation of how Erin and her family should use the Feeling Thermometer.
- [How Emotions Can Impact Your Family](#) - An animated video of an interview with a child struggling with his father's emotional issues.
- [How Erin's Condition Affects Her Parenting](#) - An animated video of how Erin's condition negatively affects her family and how she feels about it.
- [How to Use the Feeling Thermometer](#) - An animated explanation of the Feeling Thermometer.
- [Larry's Story: Dealing with Unhelpful Thoughts](#) - Larry explains how his unhelpful thoughts effect his emotions.
- [Parenting with Stress](#) - An animated video of three parents explaining what stressors lead to them yelling.
- [Patrick's Story: Identifying Triggers & Using the Feeling Thermometer](#) - Patrick explains his hot spots and triggers and how he rates them with the Feeling Thermometer.
- [Patrick's Story: Living with PTSD](#) - An animated explanation of Patrick and his family, and Patrick's struggles with PTSD.
- [Patrick's Story: Parenting with PTSD & the Effect on the Family](#) - An animated conversation between Patrick's children and how Patrick's behavior negatively affects them.

- [Victor's Self-Care Plan](#) - Victor explains how he schedules some time to care for himself and why it would benefit his children.
- [Victor's Story: Coping with Stress & Making Healthy Choices](#) - Victor explains the stressors in his life and how he copes in an unhealthy way.
- [Ways to Express Your Love](#) - This video contains a list of ways to express love to a child.

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