Prepared to return

The reunion of your family can be a building block or a stumbling block. There are things you can do as a parent and as a family to prepare for your return.

Use the checklist below as a guide to help prepare you and your family for your return.

AS A PARENT, I:

___ Write a letter to each child to plan a special event.

___ Remind each child how much I have missed him or her and that I look forward to coming home.

___ Reassure my children that my love for them is constant, even if other things have changed.

___ Talk about my feelings about returning home with others.

___ Think about the mixed emotions I have about coming home.

___ Think about my children and how each might react to my return.

___ Realize that a new child born during my deployment will need time to know and adjust to me.

___ Think about how I’ll make the transition from soldier to parent again, and that I need to treat my family as a family and not as a military unit.

___ Think about the problems I left behind and how I will cope with them when I return.

AS A FAMILY, WE:

___ Plan a reunion celebration.

___ Talk about not expecting a perfect reunion.

___ Talk about everyone in the family changing in some way while I’ve been away.

___ Talk about how stressful change is for everyone.

___ Recognize that it might take time for all of us to readjust.