Happy Tuesday, Fort Sill Leaders! Here’s your weekly ACS Update, all the Soldier and Family Readiness news you can use to support the personnel in your organization. Contact us at 580-442-4916 if we can be of assistance. If we can’t assist you immediately, we’ll make an appointment for you to discuss the issue with one of our providers. Like our logo says, we are here to support you with real life solutions for successful Army living!

Community Information Services

1. Join Fort Sill ACS for an AFTB—Community Resources Discussion with ACS Master Trainer, Merilee Nevins, on 27 August at 1030 via Facebook Live. Learn all the resources the Army and the Lawton Fort Sill community have to offer! Download the free Army Family Team Building app from your app store and take the Level K (Knowledge) quiz in Military Benefits and Entitlements, review Military Resources A-Z in the next module of the app, and then join us for an in-depth spouse-to-spouse discussion on accessing those resources, both on the Installation and in the surrounding community. Message us through our Facebook page to join the discussion!

2. What does an ACS Specialist do? Good question! An ACS Specialist helps our authorized clients (Service Members, Retirees, DoD Civilians and their Families) complete an Intake, Assessment, and Prioritized Service Plan. The Specialist then helps our clients access all the resources necessary to complete their Prioritized Service Plan, whether that’s at ACS, on-post, in the surrounding community or through a National Resource such as Military One Source, and they regularly check-in with our clients until all the goals on their Prioritized Service Plan are achieved. So whether you are trying to find your way around Lawton Fort Sill, want to borrow a few things from the Lending Closet, need help finding Spouse Employment, want to join in on one of the New Parent Support virtual playgroups, or need a second set of eyes on your Family’s Spend Plan, contact an ACS Specialist at 580-442-4916. We here with Real Live Solutions for Successful Army Living!

3. The Commanders Ready and Resilient Council (CR2C) cares about what you think and wants to develop a deeper understanding of issues related to quality of life, health, safety, and readiness here at Fort Sill. Your input is valued. Take the Ft. Sill Community Strengths and Themes Assessment and let your voice be heard. [https://usaphcapps.amedd.army.mil/Survey/se.ashx?s=25113745218B31B9](https://usaphcapps.amedd.army.mil/Survey/se.ashx?s=25113745218B31B9)

4. The AMEDD Community Resource Guides are a great resource for both new and experienced community members. Check out Fort Sill’s resources listed in the AMEDD CRG at [https://crg.amedd.army.mil/guides/tradoc/sill/Pages/default.aspx](https://crg.amedd.army.mil/guides/tradoc/sill/Pages/default.aspx)

5. The Oklahoma 211 system is another excellent place to identify resources in the Lawton Fort Sill area. Check out their website at [https://www.211oklahoma.org/](https://www.211oklahoma.org/)

6. Join the American Red Cross for the Pillowcase Project! A free program for 3rd to 5th grade children to help increase awareness of natural hazards and encourage emergency preparedness actions. The program features interactive lessons focused on home fire prevention, tornado
safety, coping skills and more! Thursdays at 4 p.m. thru August. Please email KSOKPrep@redcross.org to register.

7. Mark your calendars now for virtual COVID-19 Resilience Workshops offered on 1, 9, or 19 September. This free, confidential Red Cross program offers stress management and relaxation techniques. Live, interactive, virtual workshop. The Red Cross invites Active Duty, National Guard, Veterans and their families to participate. Soldier and Family Readiness Group, Key Spouse Teams, Ombudsmen.... they can set up workshops just for you! Read to attend or schedule a workshop for your command, group or family? Contact the Red Cross at laura.arias@redcross.org or samantha.hand@redcross.org to set up your workshop today!

**Employment Readiness**

1. The Military Spouse Employment Partnership will be hosting a LinkedIn Live social media discussion on 27 August at 12:00 CST. A hiring manager from AppleOne will be going live on the MSEP LinkedIn page to connect directly with military spouses and discuss open employment opportunities. AppleOne is one of the largest, privately-held, full-service staffing companies in North America, and is actively hiring for a number of open positions. Visit [https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/home/eventdetails](https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/home/eventdetails) for information on registering for this event.

2. Use the MSEP Job Search on the MySECO portal to find more job opportunities with MSEP employers. 143,000 military spouse have been hired by MSEP since June 2011 and you could be next. The portal currently lists 283,811 Active Jobs for Military Spouses with MSEP Partner Companies, many of them remote. Learn more at [https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/msep/jobsearch](https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/msep/jobsearch). This is why one of the first things we do to assist Military Spouses who come to ACS is ensure they’ve enrolled with a career coach!

3. The SECO Career Coaches routinely advise that increasing ones skills will lead to better, higher paying jobs. That’s easy to do with free on-line resources like [GCFLearnFree.org](https://gcflearnfree.org). A program of the Goodwill Community Foundation. GCFLearnFree.org offers more than 200 topics, including more than 2,000 lessons, more than 1,000 videos, and more than 50 interакtives and games, all free.

4. Those seeking employment locally will want to check out Oklahoma Job Match through the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission website [https://oesc.ok.gov/](https://oesc.ok.gov/). The website which features an OSEC Virtual Agent to guide you through the process of filing a claim, applying for unemployment, as well as exploring available jobs in all fields and a host of training resources. Want to connect with employers seeking Veterans and Military Family Members? There’s a section for that as well.

5. The Soldier for Life Transition Assistance Program at Fort Sill is also an excellent resource for MilSpouse job-seekers. Check out their weekly virtual offerings on their Facebook page, [https://www.facebook.com/FortSillSFLTAP/](https://www.facebook.com/FortSillSFLTAP/)
6. The USO Pathfinder Program on Fort Sill, also serves MilSpouses as well as transitioning service members. You’ll find information and announcements from the USO Pathfinder Program on their social media page [https://www.facebook.com/USOOklahoma/](https://www.facebook.com/USOOklahoma/).

7. Transition is nearly a constant with Military Life. Military Spouses, whether transitioning into, through, or out of Military Life are encouraged to enroll in DoD’s MySTeP. Created by military spouses, MySTeP is a self-directed, online learning tool that guides military spouses through the available resources, benefits, programs and tools for your entire military journey [https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/content/view/8656](https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/content/view/8656).

**Exceptional Family Member Program**

1. The DoD Exceptional Family Member Program launched an online tool, EFMP & Me, providing 24/7 support to military families with special needs. Through tailored checklists, EFMP & Me users can navigate services, connect with resources and advocate for themselves or a family member with special needs. Visit EFMP & Me [https://efmpandme.militaryonesource.mil](https://efmpandme.militaryonesource.mil).

2. Don’t forget to join our EFMP Facebook group for all the updated information and activities designed just for Exceptional Families assigned or attached to Fort Sill, like EFMP Social Connections happening virtually on 15 September at 2:30 pm. Ask to join at [www.Facebook.com/FortSillACS](http://www.Facebook.com/FortSillACS).

**Family Advocacy Program**

1. Join Fort Sill New Parent Support team for a weekly Parent’s Table Talk lead by an NPSP Home Visitor. This registered event occurs virtually each Thursday. NPSP hosts the series 1:30 pm during what we hope is nap time for the littles, and a coffee break for our parents. To learn more, or to register for the event, message the New Parent Support Program via our facebook page. [https://www.facebook.com/pg/FortSillACS](https://www.facebook.com/pg/FortSillACS).

2. Join Fort Sill’s New Parent Support weekly Exploring the Park! This event includes a drive thru every Monday to pick up a craft kit for Tuesday’s virtual on-line group session. Participants drive thru Co-Op Park on Monday from 9:30-10:00am where our NPSP Home Visitors safely pass out kits while parents and children stay in their cars. Masks on, and extra cool points for fun ones! Then, participants join the virtual group on Tuesday from the comfort and safety of their homes while Home Visitors guide them through activities such as story time, crafts, dancing, and/or singing. Home Visitors are always available to answer questions related to age appropriate activities and growth and development. **REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED** for resource pick-up and attendance in the virtual group. To register send a message through the Fort Sill Army Community Service Facebook page, include your email address. [https://www.facebook.com/pg/FortSillACS/events/](https://www.facebook.com/pg/FortSillACS/events/).

3. Join New Parent Support Program (NPSP) staff for a virtual Baby Massage group every Wednesday at 11:00 am. Registration is required to attend. Please message our page to speak with NPSP staff for access information. You will be able to massage your baby (birth to crawling) from the comfort and safety of your
own home while our Home Visitor guides you through group video chat through the process. Baby Massage can relax, soothe, reduce colic, aid digestion and strengthen your bond with your baby. You will need a soft blanket, massage oil or lotion of your choice and of course your sweet baby. Learn more on our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/pg/FortSillACS/events/. Don’t forget to register!

4. Tutor.com for U.S. Military Families, funded by the U.S. Department of Defense and Coast Guard Mutual Assistance, is a program that provides on-demand, online tutoring and homework help at no cost to eligible service members, civilian personnel, and their dependents. With live, expert tutors available 24/7, military-connected students can receive academic help at their moment of need—anywhere they have an internet connection. Learn more at https://military.tutor.com/home

5. Fort Sill’s Re-Connect is hosting the Five Love Languages by Gary Chapman, facilitated by CH (MAJ) David and Sarah Chapman for Fort Sill connect military couples interested in developing closer, more supportive relationships. The sessions will be on Wednesdays beginning 30 September and conducted by Zoom from the comfort of your own home! To register contact Robert.m.plush.civ@mail.mil or call (580) 442-1875.

6. Virtual or In-Person, Here's How to Make Injury Prevention Part of Your Back to School Plan, from our friends at Safe Kids Worldwide/ https://www.safekids.org/blog/back-school-blog-0

1. Have you tried to apply for a loan and received a higher than expected interest rate, or wondered why your score is different at one place than another? Or maybe you want to learn how to boost your credit score without paying exorbitant fees to do so. Your Financial Readiness Team at ACS is offering a free Understanding Your Credit webinar on 25 September, 10:00-11:30 am. During this training we will explain what affects your credit score and how it is affected, ways to increase your credit score, and ways to keep your credit worthiness on track. Please register for the Invite online with Tra Cardwell at pfc1.sill.usa@zeiders.com or call (580) 574-2183.

2. Need help with remote education costs? AER can help out with a 0% interest loan, a grant, or a combination of a loan/grant depending on the situation. Before using a high interest credit card to pay for the expenses associated with educating your child, check out the Home School and Remote Learning Assistance Program info on our website to learn more!

3. Fort Sill’s Financial Readiness Team is your one-stop-shop for financial training within your organization. Whether you are looking to inform your organization about TSPs, the Blended Retirement System, vehicle or home-buying, or debt reduction the FRP Team has you covered with 3 Personal Financial Counselors and the ability to tailor a virtual training to your organization’s specific needs. See the attached training request form for more information or contact FRP Manager, Ken Lewis, at 442-4916, kenneth.a.lewis4.civ@mail.mil to schedule your unit’s training session.
5. Fort Sill’s Re-Connect will be hosting Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace Military Edition beginning on Wednesday evenings beginning on 30 September, 6:30 pm—8:00 pm at Frontier Chapel. The Chapel will be set up to accommodate social distancing and masks will be required. To register contact Robert.m.plush.civ@mail.mil or call (580) 442-1875.

6. Military Personal Financial Counselors can help Commanders, Service Members, and Family Members on everything from budgeting to investments to consumer protection issues. Fort Sill ACS is lucky enough to have 3 Personal Financial Counselors within our Financial Readiness Program. Learn more by downloading the program guide at [https://finred.usalearning.gov/assets/downloads/FINRED-PFC-G.pdf](https://finred.usalearning.gov/assets/downloads/FINRED-PFC-G.pdf) or give us a call at 580-442-4916.

**Non-Medical Counseling**

1. Everyone experiences challenges now and again, but if you feel like yours are about to overwhelm you, that’s the time to reach out for some assistance! ACS is honored to count the 8 Military Family Life Counselors assigned or attached to Fort Sill among our staff. Each is a licensed professional, able to work independently and anonymously with individuals or couples, and able to conduct presentations on a wide variety of military family life topics within your organizations. MFLCs are great for assisting those trying hard to improve their relationships, manage their stress, adjust to deployment, cope with marital discord, parenting issues, grief or loss. Best of all, they are providing telehealth services so location, childcare, travel time, anonymity, or lack of transportation are no longer barriers to service! And neither is cost, as this is a service DoD provides to Military Families who wish to use it. Give us a call today at 580-442-4916 to get connected with one of the Fort Sill MFLCs. Learn more about this DoD funded program at [https://www.militaryonesource.mil/confidential-help/non-medical-counseling/military-and-family-life-counseling](https://www.militaryonesource.mil/confidential-help/non-medical-counseling/military-and-family-life-counseling).

2. Our Fort Sill assigned MFLCs are backed up by 24/7 Masters Level Counselors available through the Military One Source Non-Medical Counseling service which can be accessed at any time by calling 1-800-342-9647. So if you are feeling a little down reach out!

3. Child and Youth Behavioral (CYB) Military Family Life Counselors (MFLCs) are assigned to all of Fort Sill’s Child and Youth Services (CYS) Facilities and most of the surrounding area schools that military children attend. If you believe your child would benefit from speaking with a Non-Medical Counselor about self-esteem issues, communication and relationships at home or at school, life skills such as adjustment or problem solving, behavioral issues such as bullying or anger management, or changes at home including deployment, reunion, divorce, or grief, contact Fort Sill’s School Liaison Officer, Augelica Fleming at augelica.a.fleming.naf@mail.mil.

**Relocation Readiness**

1. Plan My Move is the Military One Source “go to” location for all your PCS timelines and checklists. Answer a few simple questions about your Family
demographics and the location you’ll be moving to, and it will provide you with all the checklists you need to get yourself organized. The site works in concert with Military Installations to populate calendars, an extremely helpful function. Check it out at https://planmymove.militaryonesource.mil

2. Don’t be fooled by private, out of date websites for contact information at your gaining installation. Know before you go with Military Installations. Download your next duty station’s welcome packet, including a .pdf guide of all the important facilities, contacts, and hours of operation from the official Defense Installations Management Systems (DIMS). This database is updated quarterly by DoD information and referral specialists around the globe and housed on Military One Source. Find your next “home base” at https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/

3. The Fort Sill Lending Closet, full of regular household items available for loan, is now open through a “low-contact” process. If you are scheduled to PCS this summer, whether in-coming or out-going, please contact ACS immediately after you schedule your move with transportation. We’ll discuss your family needs, your timeframe to borrow the common household items we have in the lending closet, and then get the sanitized items packaged for a scheduled, curb side pick-up. Call us at 580-442-4916. Please note that all ACS services, including the Lending Closet, are available by appointment only. Call ahead to help us help you!

4. The Household Goods (HHG) smartphone application provides updated information on Soldier's and service provider's requirements, entitlements and polices. The HHG app provides essential knowledge and tips designed to educate Soldiers, Families, and the Department of the Army Civilians on moving HHG under a Permanent Change of Station (PCS). It’s free in your app store.

5. If you’re new to the area and looking for the inside scoop on all that the state has to offer there’s no better place to start than the Travel OK website https://www.travelok.com/ Whether you are looking for shopping, restaurants, fun things to do or places to stay the website, which is divided by region, not only offers insider recommendations you can save yourself a buck or two by checking out the deals and coupons section! Oh, did I mention the downloadable maps and brochures. Or the fact that they’ve got an app. Check it out!

Soldier and Family Readiness

1. Sample SFRG SOPs are available on MilSuite. The SOPs were created with guidance from Army Directive 2019-17 (Changes the Family Readiness Group to the Soldier and Family Readiness Group Program); which establishes policy changes to fundraising, reporting, and informal funds activities for the Soldier and Family Readiness Group (SFRG) Program. Visit https://www.milsuite.mil/book/docs/DOC-857725 to download the samples. Additionally, Fort Sill’s SJA offers a localized SFRG sample for Commanders. Commanders and SFRG Representatives are encouraged to contact their Brigade Legal Officer.

2. Family Care Plan Checklists and Forms are also available on MilSuite. A Family Care Plan prepares the Soldier and the family in advance for the Soldier’s deployment and reassures a deployed Soldier that everything is taken care of at home, minimizing family-related stress and enabling the Soldier to concentrate

3. Military families now have FREE access to SitterCity.com, a subscription-based service that provides a national database of more than one million background-checked caregivers nationwide. Candidate-caregivers can also be interviewed through the service, and you can verify their references prior to hire. Please note, participants must pay for any child care services provided, but this is a free subscription (normally $35 per month) to the SitterCity.com database of providers who have been pre-vetted/background checked. Program-eligible participants can obtain a free access code by logging into your Military OneSource account. https://www.militaryonesource.mil/family-relationships/parenting-and-children/military-childcare-services

4. Mark your calendars now for the next Army Family Team Building class on 22 September at 1:00 pm. Fort Sill volunteer trainers will be offering Customs, Courtesies, Ceremonies and Traditions because military ball season is just around the corner. This class will be held virtually. Please e-mail Merilee.k.nevins.civ@mail.mil to register.

Survivor Outreach Services

1. National Grief Awareness Day occurs on 30 August. Learn more about how to support those experiencing grief at https://www.militaryonesource.mil/family-relationships/survivor-casualty-assistance/understanding-grief/understanding-grief-the-essentials

2. Gold Star Families wishing to attend the Mommy and Me Tea, 10 am—12 pm on 19 September at the Fort Sill Patriot Club are invited to RSVP James Powers by 16 September at James.k.powers.civ@mail.mil. The Mommy and Me Tea will feature sandwiches, scones, desserts, a make-and-take craft and tea with Princesses Ariel and Jasmine.

3. Sunday, 27 September is Gold Star Mothers and Families Day. Learn more about how you can honor those who have lost a son or daughter in service to this country by contacting Survivor Outreach Services at 580-442-4916.

4. Fort Lee SOS is hosting a 10 Year Anniversary of the Fort Lee "Virtual" Run for the Fallen, 12-13 September 2020 and the whole Army is invited! The event is intended to be shared nationwide for participants, regardless of where they are located, to take part in the virtual run to honor and remember the Fallen and their Families. For more details, visit https://lee.armymwr.com/programs/virtualrunforthefallen.

Thank you so much for your help in sharing the resources contained within this ACS Update with those who may benefit from it. I truly believe that Personal and Family Readiness are foundational to Resilience. Please take a minute to tell us how we’re doing and what else we might assist you with by filling out an ICE comment card. That’s it for this week.

Optimism is a Force Multiplier! #AskACS
Lisa Jansen-Rees, MSW, ACSW
Director, Army Community Service