

Dr. Maria Mouratidis Talks About Military Families

Credit: BrainLine.org (Produced by Victoria Tilney McDonough and Brian King)

Video Link: <http://www.brainline.org/content/multimedia.php?id=1079>

Dr. Maria Mouratidis: Military families are extraordinary. What we ask of the service member and by definition then their family is huge. They move around the country and overseas based on their duty assignments, they have to often tolerate prolonged separations, that can be indefinite sometimes and sometimes those dates change of when someone is coming home. Certainly with returning with injuries that are of course unanticipated and military families are really extraordinary in coping and in adjusting and adapting.

One of the things that make it difficult that they aren't necessarily where their social supports are because they have moved or they've relocated from the rest of their family and friends. So in those cases the larger military families rally around them and provide support for that patient and family as well. The impact of someone that has psychological brain or physical injuries on how that family functions can be dramatic.

Most of us have roles in our family and when somebody sustains an injury that can shatter, well it shatters your world view, what you thought you understood how the world works, your sense of safety, predictability and one day your life is different. Yesterday it was a certain way and today it's completely different and that family needs to find a way to readjust and reorganize it's priorities and it's goals. We work closely with the family at those different points of transition so that they can adjust, that they can also help their children adjust and help the child understand what is happening, how to help the child to interact with the injured parent that might be more difficult now than it was before and to deal with their concerns for their children.

So, it's a process of education and support and really finding what those strengths are for that particular family and helping to mobilize, adjust and adapt as well as possible.