

What Can I Do to Be Truly Supportive of Returning Troops?

When you see or meet a Service Member, thank him or her for their service--even if they served years ago. They never tire of hearing it.

If you see a Service Member in the airport, treat him or her to lunch or a snack. It will be a welcomed surprise and deeply appreciated, no matter what the rank of the Service Member.

Send care packages through one of the groups listed here. You can't send one on your own, unless it is to a specific Service Member at their specific address, because of security risks.

Make donations to a local Family Readiness Group (FRG)--there is one attached to most units and on all military bases. FRGs supports the families before, during, and after deployments.

Reach out to a Blue Star family in your neighborhood--a family whose family member is deployed overseas. They often fly the Blue Star flag in their front window. Offer them support. Ask how their loved one is doing. And make sure you are on their emergency call list, if something happens.

Contribute to the USO. They provide all kinds of important services to Service Members all over the world. Get involved with any of the organizations listed below, whether it is to spread the word about them, donate to them, or volunteer your time to help.

Learn everything you can about their experience. Rent *The War Tapes*; go see the new documentary, *Fighting for Life*. Read books written by Service Members about their experience. Face these realities fearlessly. After all, if 20 year old kids can live them, you should be able to at least read about them.

Fly the US Flag...and do so correctly (see above)

Join the military yourself! There's no better way to support the troops than to get in there and work side-by-side with them. If you're in any of the medical fields and you are physically fit, the Army will take you well into your 50's!