



## CREATING A FATHER-FRIENDLY MILITARY BASE

### Organization profile

The New Parent Support Program at Joint Base Lewis McChord in Washington state provides home-based parenting support and education, supported by the Family Advocacy Program. Family Advocacy’s mission is the prevention of domestic violence and child abuse. It was historically developed to provide soldiers and their families the needs to support the readiness state of their families. Home visitation services are provided to expectant and new parents, and families with children through the age of 3. Parenting education is also provided through classes, infant play groups, and Play Mornings.

### The Challenge

The New Parent Support Program faces challenges in getting sustained involvement from fathers in its programs due to their work-related absences (such as deployment) and transportation issues.

However, the base recognizes that involving fathers in the raising of their children in a positive, loving environment is a “best practice” in having their children turn out to be warm and loving themselves and becoming responsible, capable, and confident members of society. Involving fathers in New Parent Support Programs is also pivotal in maximizing their understanding of the ages and stages of child development, since they miss so much in their children’s lives during a deployment.

### The Solution

NFI worked with Joint Base Lewis McChord to educate and equip its parenting program staff and introduced the base to its abundance of fatherhood skill-building materials. This led to the development of on-base parenting programs designed specifically for fathers. Specifically, NFI trained the New Parent Support program to deliver both the 24/7 Dad® and Doctor Dad® programs. Doctor Dad® helps the base meet its need to help new and expectant fathers understand infant and child health and child development. 24/7 Dad® helps the base meet its need to provide father-specific parenting education for all dads. The general availability of an abundance of other skill-building materials, such as brochures and tip cards, creates opportunities for all dads to access materials, even if they can’t commit to a longer, in-depth course.

### The Benefits

Since implementing NFI’s fatherhood programs on base, the New Parent support program has received positive evaluations from fathers regarding the content and helpfulness of the material presented. The New Parent Support Program has become a place where fathers know they can go for fatherhood and parenting resources. They can meet other fathers, develop relationships, and provide support to each other when their wives are deployed. These same fathers are now encouraging other soldiers in their units to come to the base’s fatherhood specific classes.

### NFI Products and Services Used

- [24/7 Dad®](#)
- [Fatherhood brochures](#)
- [Fatherhood Resource Kiosk](#)