

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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CONTACT:

Lori VanAuken, Deputy Executive Director  
Children's Institute, Inc.  
(585) 295-1000, x227  
lvanauken@childrensinstitute.net

Marianne Sernoffsky  
(585) 339-3308  
(843) 364-2654 (cell)

**PROGRAM TO AIDE MOMS OF MILITARY FAMILIES**

Rochester, NY, May 5, 2010 – With Mother's Day right around the corner, moms of military Families deserve a special salute. Marianne Sernoffsky is one military mom who knows all too well both the strengths and challenges of raising children in a military Family.

"Our lives were about transition and separation. We had to adjust to day-to-day life without my husband Max while he was deployed from 2005-2006 in Kuwait. The hardest part for me was helping my child deal with their feelings and worry, while at the same time feeling so very proud of Max's great service to our country." says Sernoffsky, who is also the Community Support Manager of Army Strong Community Center.

Children's Institute and Army Strong Community Center are sponsoring a brown bag "Lunch and Learn" series for those military parents interested in learning more about fostering resiliency in their children during their Families' time of service and transition. Three lunch discussions are scheduled with topics on building resiliency, typical worries and when to be more concerned, and connecting through children's mood and behavior changes. Lunches will be held May 20, June 3, and June 17 from 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. at Fort Rochester, Army Strong Community Center, 2035 Goodman Street North, Suite 103. All sessions are led by experienced facilitators from Children's Institute. Admission is free.

"I'm glad to be part of the planning of lunch series for military parents because I know first hand how important it is to have the support of your peers and the knowledge of experts who respect the uniqueness of your situation, who want to learn from you and who value the hard work of raising children," says Sernoffsky.

There are currently at least 1.85 million children with one or both parents in the military (active or reserve) and such children are more likely to report anxiety than other children, according to a study by the Rand Corporation. "Helping children cope with transitions in their lives is a challenge for schools, communities, and families that must be embraced," said Deborah Johnson, school psychologist and Director of National Services at Children's Institute.

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The Lunch and Learn series is part of a larger initiative led by Children's Institute called Same Sky Sharing. "The effort is designed to help children get the support they need from their communities," said Johnson. Same Sky Sharing includes support groups for children based on a research-based curriculum, and training for school personnel, parents, and those who interact with children to help them better understand children's needs throughout the Family's military experience.

Children's Institute is a national not-for-profit organization that works to improve the lives of children by strengthening their social and emotional health. Through sound research and evaluation, the organization develops and promotes effective prevention and early intervention programs, materials, and best practices for children, Families, schools, and communities. Children's Institute is affiliated with the University of Rochester and has served the community for over 50 years.

Fort Rochester's Army Strong Community Center is part of the Army's Virtual Installation Community-Based Pilot Program designed to support military Service Members and their Families by virtually connecting those geographically dispersed Families with support resources in their own community. The center is a information and referral office dedicated to assisting and supporting Service Members, Retirees, Veterans, and Family Members of all branches of the military, active, and reserve.

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