



**children's home + aid**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Children's Home + Aid Opens New Support Group**

**NEW RESOURCE FOR MILITARY FAMILIES BEGINS IN FEBRUARY**

CHICAGO (**January 6, 2011**) -The stresses of military service can take its toll on parents and children. To compound the difficulties, many military families are often spread out in communities and isolated from each other and from the family resources of a military base. To provide help and support for military parents and caregivers, Children's Home + Aid announces the opening of a new support group for military families. The group, *Military Parents and Caregivers Parents Care + Share Support Group*, will meet weekly on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Alexian Brothers' Roncoli Center, 600 Alexian Way, **Elk Grove Village, Illinois**, beginning February 1, 2011.

The support group is offered through a partnership between Children's Home + Aid and Alexian Brothers Vet Center. "The challenges and stress encountered by our nation's military families can be intense," said Nancy B. Ronquillo, President and CEO of Children's Home + Aid. "Long and repeated deployments, physical and emotional injuries and uncertain futures can put even the strongest families in crisis. The new Parents Care + Share Support Group for military families will help address the special needs of those who make significant personal sacrifices to keep our country safe."

Kathleen Prunty, Chief Workforce and Community Development Officer for Alexian Brothers Medical Center said "This support group is another example of the Alexian Brothers commitment to the community and to their values center belief in partnership." Russ Hopkins, Founder of Chicagoland Military Families and a collaborator in the development of this group, sees this group as a much needed resource. "Our military parents and caregivers need this opportunity to meet conveniently on a weekly basis to share their parenting experiences and knowledge and establish personal relationships with neighbors who share a common bond—raising a military child."

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This support group is free for anyone parenting a military child, including civilian spouses and caregivers. Group meetings are open to parents and caregivers affiliated with all service branches including the National Guard, Reserves, Veterans, and those currently in active duty status.

In the *Military Parents & Caregivers Parents Care + Share Support Group* military families will be able to connect with other military families to receive support and strategies for dealing with their parenting challenges. The group will help parents and caregivers learn to cope effectively with the stresses of parenting caused by military service and reintegration into civilian life.

The group offers a free children's program led by trained Children's Program Specialists who will provide fun activities for the children while their parents and caregivers are in group. Dinner is also provided free for everyone each week as part of the program. "One of the great things about this group," said Earl Kloppmann, program manager for Children's Home + Aid's Parents Care + Share program, "is that parents and caregivers don't have to worry about trying to find child care or fix dinner. They can bring their children to group with them and get to know other military families by sharing a meal with them." The Parents Care + Share program has over 50 parent support groups in Illinois, and has been providing support groups for parents since 1989.

Those who want more information about the group are invited to attend a free information meeting on January 25, 2011 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Alexian Brothers Vet Center. Free child care will be offered as well as a meal for parents, caregivers and children, catered by Sweet Baby Rays Barbecue Restaurant of Elk Grove. Those who plan to attend the information meeting, or who want more information about the group, should call Carolyn Dixon, Children's Home + Aid's Parents Care + Share coordinator, at 312-513-9650

Children's Home + Aid is a leading child and family service agency in Illinois. Each year, it protects, educates and counsels nearly 40,000 children, youth and families to improve their lives. Since 1883, Children's Home + Aid has been a compassionate advocate helping to shape public policy in child welfare, early childhood and juvenile justice. Children's Home + Aid is recognized for establishing best practices and achieving outstanding results through its programs and services that focus on child abuse prevention, healthy child development and strengthening families.

For more information about Children's Home + Aid visit [www.childrenshomeandaid.org](http://www.childrenshomeandaid.org).