

DECEMBER 2017 - APRIL 2018

# ACTIVITY GUIDE 2018

*A Program Resource for the Defence Community of CFB Esquimalt*



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A Division of CF Morale & Welfare Services  
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# There's an App for that

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Let's be honest for a moment; deployments suck. You or someone you love is gone for days, weeks, or months. Contact between you is spotty at best. Everyone's emotions are running high. And, no matter how many times it happens, you always feel unprepared when the next one comes around.

To help you navigate your next deployment, the Esquimalt MFRC has created an app that will give you tips and checklists to follow whether you are the member who is leaving, or the parent or partner on the home front. The app has everything you need, and, because nobody knows what it's like to prepare for and live through a deployment like someone going through one, it even has the option for you to share your knowledge and advice with others.

Some of the treasures it has are the Countdown Clock (which also tracks sleeps left, garbage days left, and recycling days left—although it doesn't remind you when they come to pass, so don't expect your phone to ding and tell you to take out the trash), tons of tips, checklists to make sure you don't forget to do something leading up to the deployment, and links to other resources that the MFRC has to offer (such as the Deployment Support Book or YouTube videos).

Because the creators of the app are aware that deployments are overwhelming enough as it is, they even added in a few features to en-

sure you're not overwhelmed by the tips. The tips are divided into four categories: Pre-deployment, During Deployment, Anticipation of Homecoming, and Post Deployment. You can only access the different tips when you're in different stages of the deployment. For instance, you can only read the tips that will help you during the deployment, once the deployment has already started. However, if you are one of those people who wants to know everything ahead of time, fear not; there is also a sneak-peek button that will show you the tips ahead of time.

The checklists are also great. There are a lot of items on them that I personally would not have thought of until it was too late (like getting your member to sign some medical claim forms before they leave so you have them when you need them). The pre-set lists are also customizable, so you can hide items that don't apply to you, or add new items that are not there. Each checklist changes colour the more filled out it is, and it shows you what the percentage of completion is, so you know at a glance which

ones you still have to work on.

While this app is fantastic in so many ways (it's colourful, it's easy to use, it's filled with helpful information, you can tailor it to whether or not you have children, you get awesome badges), it's not perfect. One of the downsides of it is that you can only track one deployment at a time. On one hand, this makes sense; your member is only going to be going on one deployment at a time, and they cannot be in two places. But, if you are a parent, you might have multiple children in the military who can be gone at the same time.

It also isn't able to cope with back to back deployments, or work-up and trials before the actual deployment. So you can't program that your partner is going to be gone for two days next week, four days the week after, three days the following week, and then for six weeks straight after that. This means it doesn't



have advice for coping with those short spans of time when your partner is home, but about to leave again. It also means you can't schedule your vacation to visit your partner into it.

One other thing that's a little annoying is the app doesn't send you reminders for anything: the items on your checklist, recycling days, or sleeps left until he or she returns home. So it's up to you to be on top of the items and actively checking the app for the information you need.

All in all, I think that this is a great and super-useful aid for anyone who has a deployment coming up. As with most new things, I believe there is room for it to grow. But if you or your loved one is heading out soon, I'd consider downloading this app onto your phone. That way, all of your checklists are in one place and you don't have to worry about trying to come up with everything you need to do all on your own.

