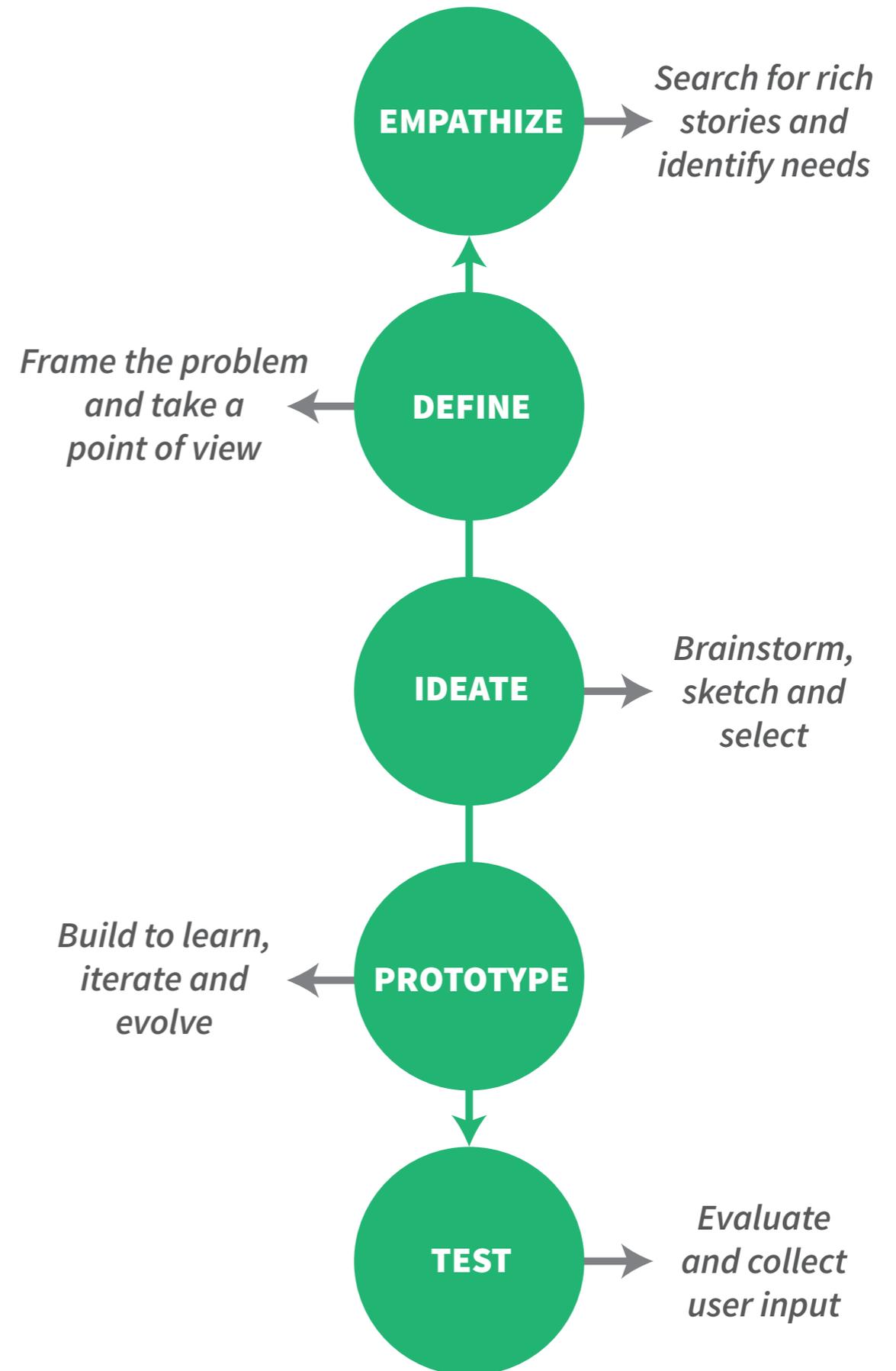




**MEET NEW FRIENDS**

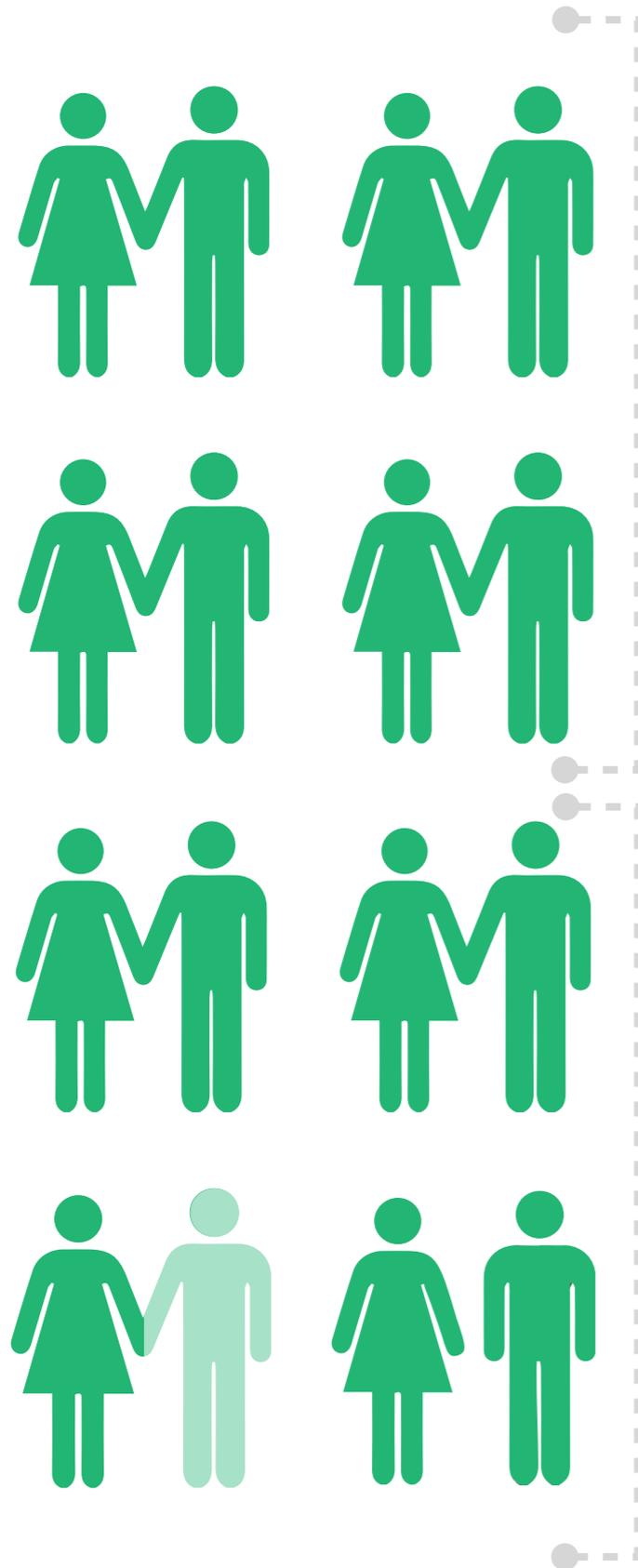
## Our team takes an empathic approach to design.

This approach relies on observation of target users as opposed to traditional market research, which relies on consumer inquiry through surveys and questions. Through observation, we are able to better empathize and identify underlying needs that lead us to design solutions that people don't know they desire or have difficulty envisioning.



# RESEARCH

*We observed and spoke with four active duty families at Fort Hood as well as two separated families, a reservist's spouse, and a marine and his sister in Austin. We also spoke with professional counselors and subject matter experts across the nation.*



# RESEARCH

“Believe it or not, it's been hard to make friends with people. I run into a lot of people who **say the same thing**. You sit there and talk about the reasons why. Maybe you move so much and you don't want to make good friends, I really don't know but **I've had a hard time making good friends**. I finally have a good friend next door.”

Faith, 38

*Active military spouse*

*Fort Hood*



# RESEARCH

“Just the distance and moving and all that has affected other relationships because it's just **exhausting and hard** to try and keep up. I think the **environment of the military** where you move and things are always changing. I had no idea. I thought I understood what it was kinda like when we thought we were going to get married.”

Joy, 26

*Active military spouse*

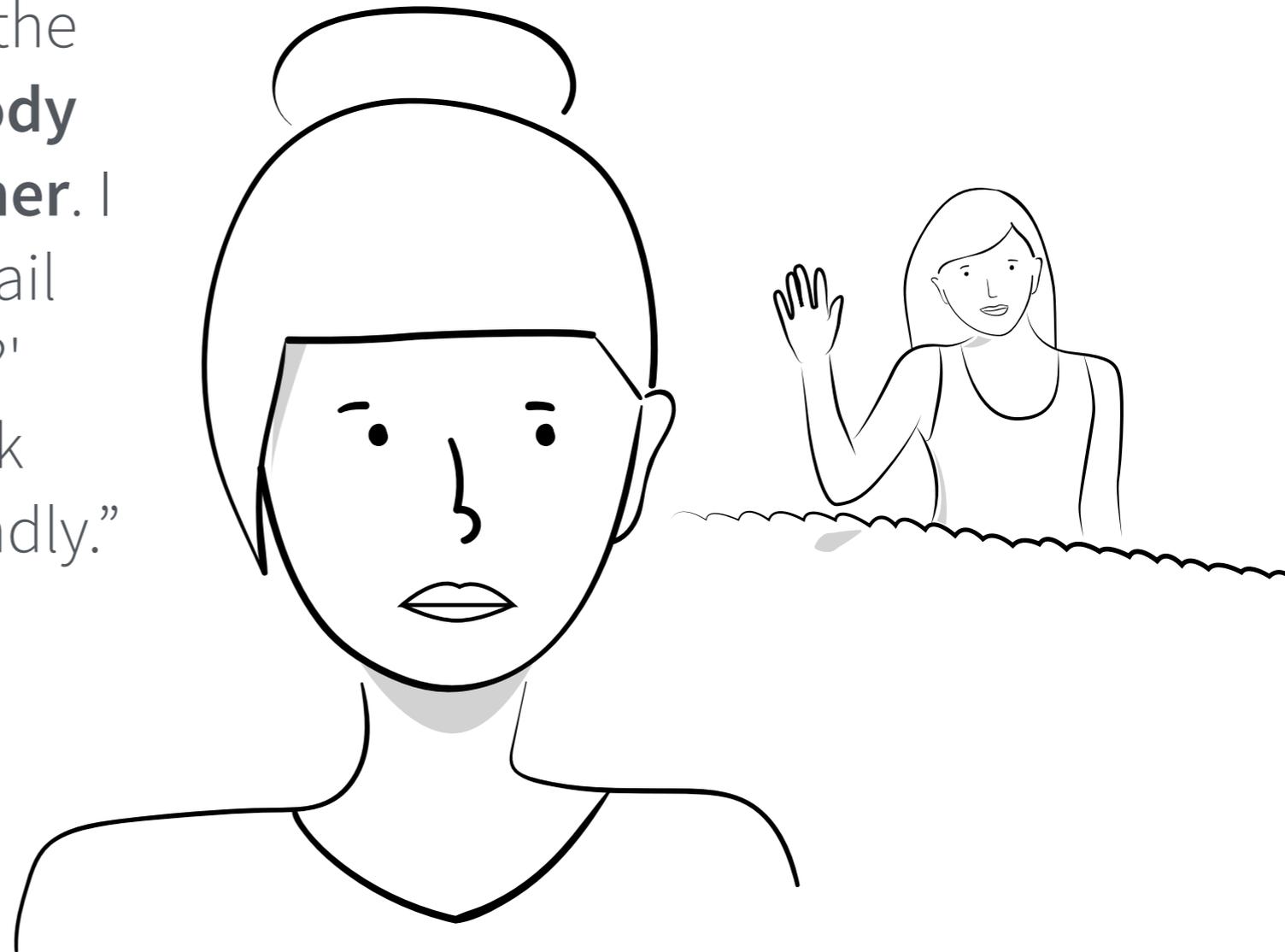
*Fort Hood*



# RESEARCH

“We move into the housing and the neighbors are not friendly. **Nobody really interacts with one another.** I would walk outside to get the mail and be like, 'Hey! How's it going?' and they'd snub you and go back inside. People were just not friendly.”

Denise, 34  
*Separated military spouse*  
*Schofield Barracks*



## GUIDING INSIGHT

The transience of military life leaves MilSOs **struggling** to build deep relationships vital to **security** and **reliability**.

# THE PROBLEM

*Military spouses face some unique experiences and challenges that make strong friendships even more important for this segment of population.*



**MilSOs move away from family support.** Military spouses of all ages end up living wherever their service member is stationed. This is often not close to their hometown community or where their family lives. If a spouse is new to military life, their family may not understand the loneliness they feel.

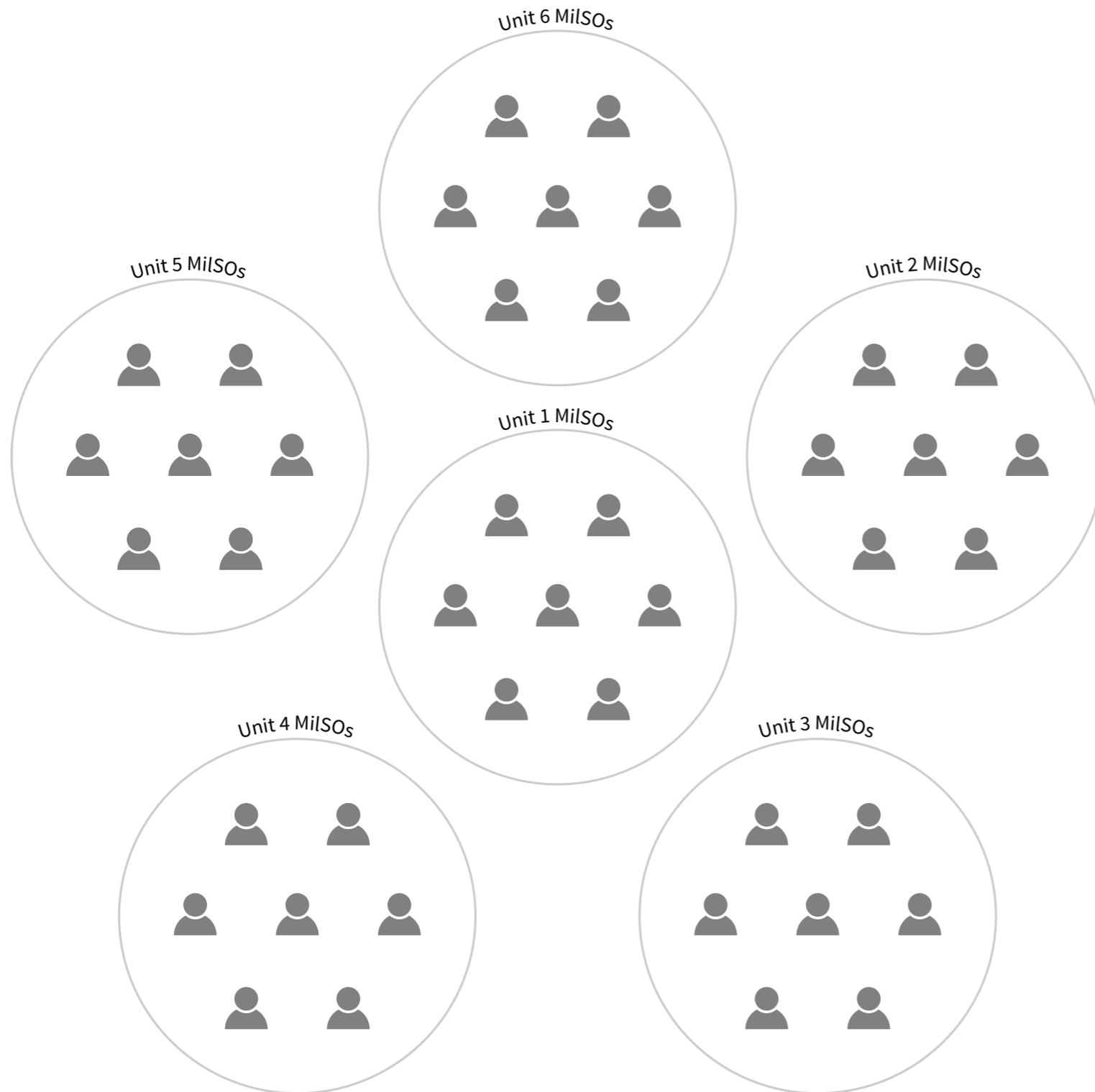


**MilSOs move away from other friends.** Military spouses have to consistently move away from childhood friends as well as friends from previous duty stations. While they may stay in touch, it can be hard to really be there in a time of need if they are not stationed in the same place.



**MilSOs are alone during deployment and do everything.** Military spouses have to be the backbone of the family and keep things in motion even when their service member is away on deployment or training. Sometimes you just need someone to talk to who understands these unique challenges.

# THE PROBLEM



## Family Readiness Groups

Every spouse is associated with a Family Readiness Group which is created as an avenue of mutual support and assistance for spouses.

Some of these FRGs have great leadership and are well organized, but others are not. It's really a game of chance whether a spouse becomes a member of a close-knit community or not.

# THE PROBLEM



## You need someone you can be yourself with

There is potential to meet new friends in the FRG, but since FRGs are structured by the service member's unit, there are professional boundaries that can get in the way. It can be hard to be yourself around the other spouses, let your guard down, and really talk about deep, intimate things.

These relationships often feel forced and have a hard time becoming truly reliable, loyal friendships.

# THE PROBLEM



## You need access to more compatible friends

Since lives are busy and families are consistently moving, it can be hard to identify and build friendships outside of the FRG, especially for those who are not incredibly outgoing.

There is potential for spouses to find more compatible personalities across the base, but there is no central platform to do so.

# THE PROBLEM



A screenshot of a Facebook post from a user named Michaella, dated January 21 at 9:42pm. The post text is highlighted in yellow. The text reads: "Totally going out of my comfort zone to do this so this is me reaching out to make some new friends because there's no way I can't have girl time. Lol I'll be 22 next week and have a 8 month old son. (points if you have a little one around his age for him to play with) we recently moved here, back in October and are both originally from Nevada. I know often times a lot of people comment on these posts and nothing comes of it, but I'm really hoping to be able to make some friends! BONUS POINTS if you are able to come just hang out and talk on the couch after hub us go to sleep since I have a night owl. Look forward to meeting some new friends. 😊". Below the text are icons for 'Like' and 'Comment'. At the bottom, it says '13 people like this.' and 'View 18 more comments'.

**Michaella**  
January 21 at 9:42pm

Totally going out of my comfort zone to do this so this is me reaching out to make some new friends because there's no way I can't have girl time. Lol I'll be 22 next week and have a 8 month old son. (points if you have a little one around his age for him to play with) we recently moved here, back in October and are both originally from Nevada.

I know often times a lot of people comment on these posts and nothing comes of it, but I'm really hoping to be able to make some friends! BONUS POINTS if you are able to come just hang out and talk on the couch after hub us go to sleep since I have a night owl. Look forward to meeting some new friends. 😊

Like Comment

13 people like this.

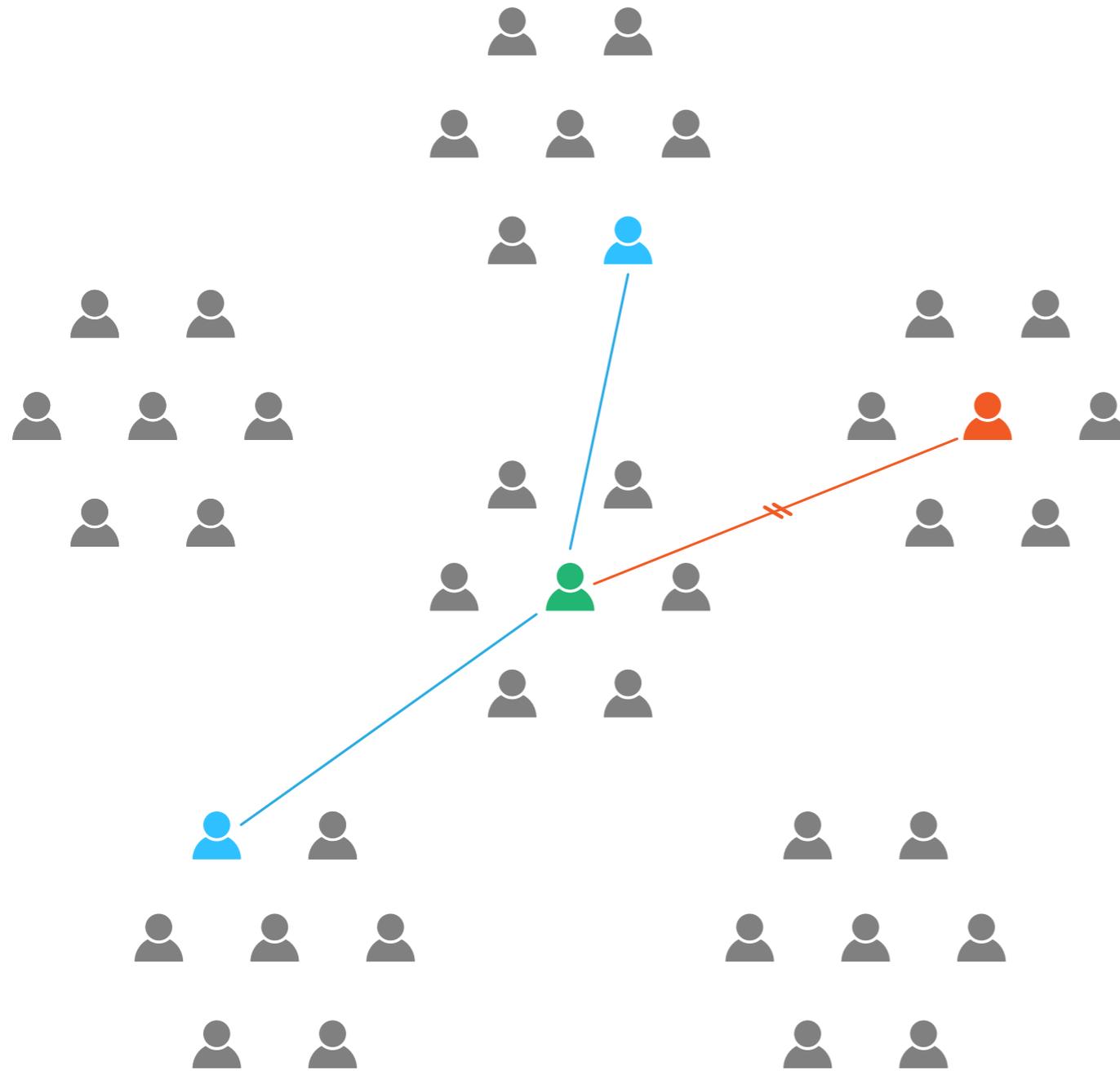
View 18 more comments

## Add me! Culture

Spouses are trying to identify more compatible friends across the base through military spouse Facebook groups, but more often than not they end up just collecting digital friends who they never meet face-to-face.

Since we know that relationships are often built by spending time together, **we need to give spouses a safe space that facilitates in-person interactions.**

# ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM



It is our hypothesis that if we give spouses more opportunities to meet other spouses in-person, then they will be more likely to find friends they are more compatible with and form deeper, long-lasting relationships.

This platform should be a closed community where spouses are familiar with military culture and the importance of building friendships quickly.

# THE CONCEPT

*Our concept is to provide a platform that will allow military spouses the ability to view other spouses at their duty station who are all ready and willing to make new friends. We aim to get people out and about spending time together and sharing experiences through low-pressure activities.*



**Finding compatible friends.** Military spouses will have the ability to view the community across their duty station. This will allow them more opportunities to meet different spouses and have an understanding that each of these spouses are also looking for new friends.

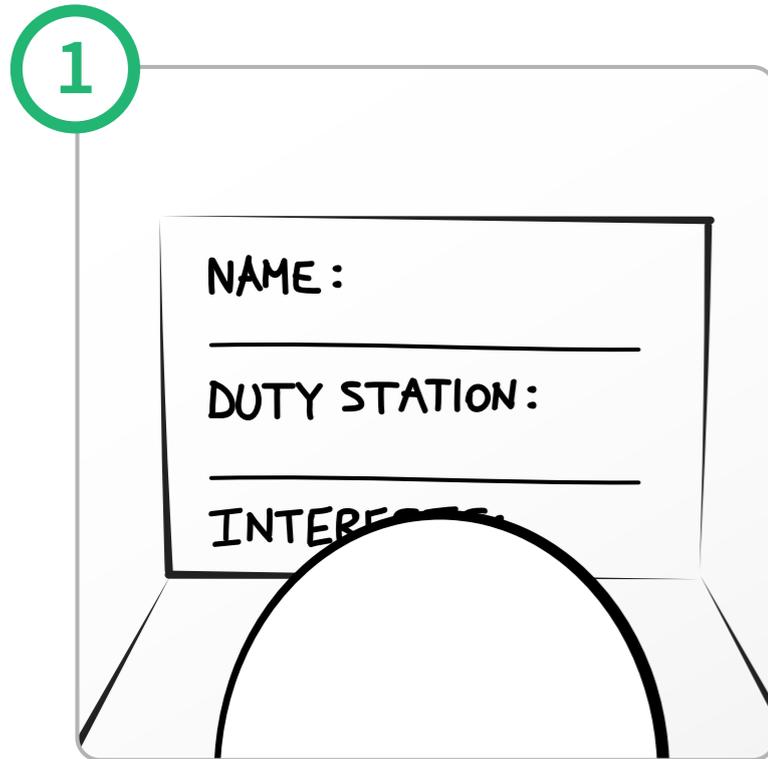


**Saying “yes” and showing up.** Military spouses will be able to designate what activities they like to do when meeting someone new and view what others enjoy doing. This will help find a mutually enjoyable interest and increase the chances they will say “yes” to an invitation and actually follow through with the meet up.

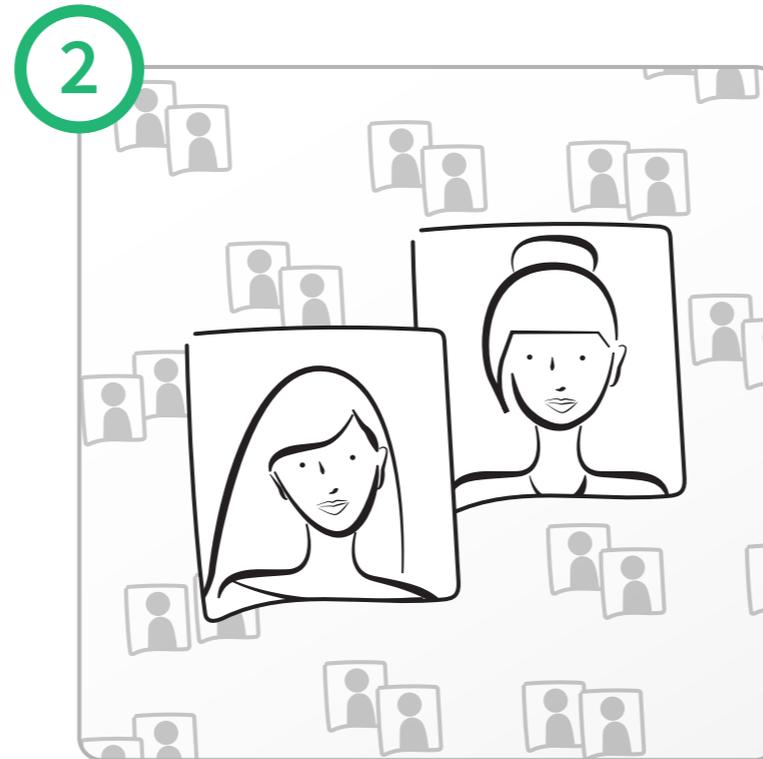


**Paying it forward.** Military spouses will have the ability to get their current friends, maybe those from previous duty stations, to leave them a friend reference and be able to view friend references on other spouses’ profiles in order to get a better sense of who they are and what others enjoy about them.

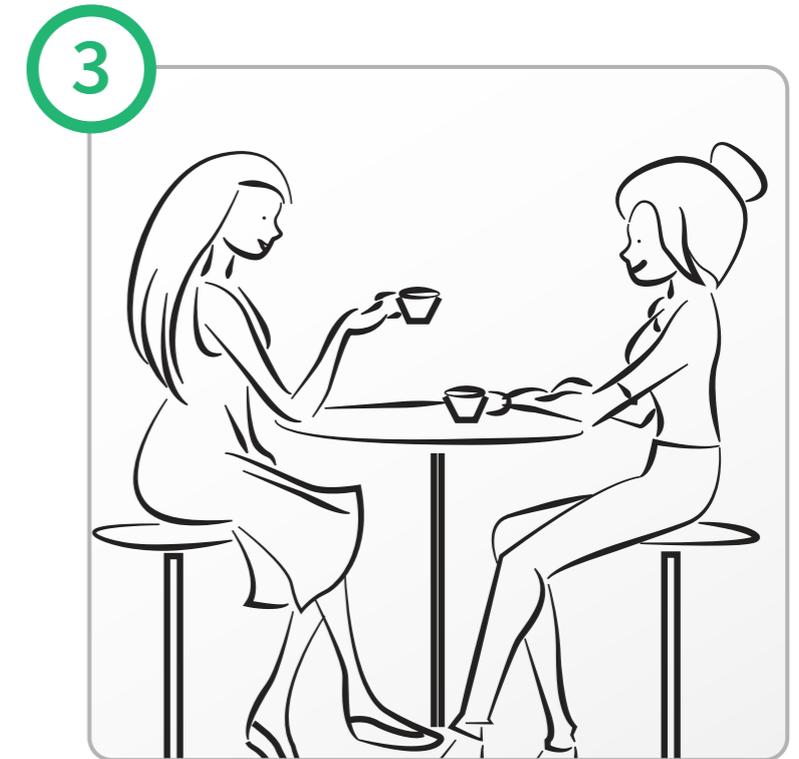
# TESTING THE CONCEPT: THE PROCESS



**Participants sign-up and tell us a little about themselves.**



**Participants view the community and invite others to activities.**



**Participants schedule a day and time and meet up with someone new.**

*While participants are empowered to reach out to anyone in the community, the Oh-hi team will also be suggesting meet ups between participants. After a meet up, participants will be asked to answer follow-up questions so that we may iterate and improve upon our concept. It is our intention to eventually develop an app and automate the process once we have tested our assumptions.*

Will **you** help us spread the word?

# TEAM



***David***  
***Bill***



***Miranda***  
***Hoffman***



***Kade***  
***Schemahorn***



**MEET NEW FRIENDS**

*Please contact Miranda with any questions or comments:*

***miranda@oh-hi.us***