

STARS & STRIPES READY MOBILE APP

Karyn O'Neill

PROJECT OVERVIEW



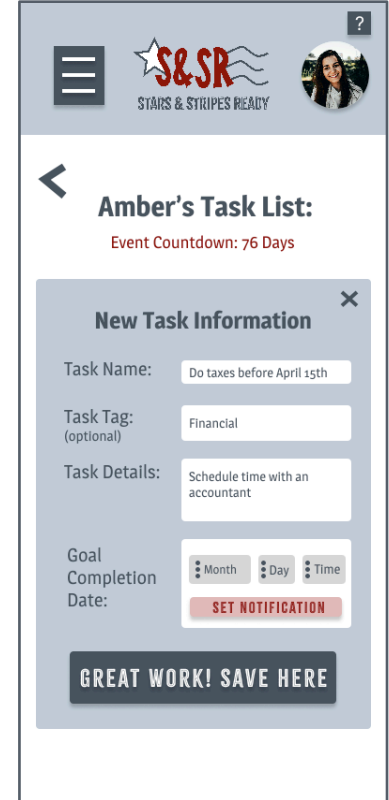
THE PRODUCT:

This mobile app product is geared to help military spouses and partners with preparing for a military-related life events, such as deployments and relocations. This app allows the capability of creating a personalized task list and offers other military-oriented resources.



PROJECT DURATION:

The mobile app project took a little bit more than 2 months to complete.



PROJECT OVERVIEW



THE PROBLEM:

- With this project, I was looking to solve the organizational issue military spouses and partners have when they encounter a significant military-related events and/or their service member's long-term absence.
- Also, I was looking to provide these spouses and partners with information about available resources to them and encouragement for going through this process.



THE GOAL:

- This project was intended to give military spouses and partners a way to write down and track their tasks needed to prepare for an upcoming military-oriented event.
- In addition, this project's objective was to provide helpful resources to military families as they experience these difficult events, such as when their service member deploys or when either their service member or the whole family relocates.

PROJECT OVERVIEW



MY ROLE:

As a student completing this project, I believe I fulfilled the role of a UX Generalist where I completed both research and design tasks.



RESPONSIBILITIES:

Throughout this project, I completed personas, user journey maps, a storyboard, user flows, wireframing, and low-fidelity and high-fidelity prototyping.

UNDERSTANDING THE USER

- **User research**
- **Personas**
- **Problem statements**
- **User journey maps**

USER RESEARCH: SUMMARY



During my mobile app's research, I completed a competitive audit where I reviewed other task organization mobile apps. I discovered that there are not a lot of these apps available for personal use. Many available are geared toward professionals in project management. In addition, the apps offered a lot of capabilities, but didn't seem to have very intuitive interfaces or instructions on how to use them. They also covered many general areas, such as wish-lists to to-do lists. So, I realized that a more simplistic app with helpful information around the military family lifestyle could be really useful to create!

I concluded that my target audience would be adults between the ages of 18 – 45 years old. These adults may have children and some may not. In addition, this target audience may be located in and out of the US. However, the users outside the US, would most likely be living on a military base.

USER RESEARCH: PAIN POINTS

1

I'm afraid I'll forget to do one of my many tasks.

The app's design will be organized and clear! The app will give a user the option to add or delete a task item!

2

I'm so overwhelmed with the numbers of tasks, I need additional help!

This will encourage the app's design to include a Resources section, which will have helpful articles for the user to read through and learn about services that are available.

3

I don't know where to begin with learning about moving.

The app's design will include an suggested task section to guide the user to possible items they aren't aware of or have forgotten.

4

I'm struggling to figure out where to go on a military base.

The app can help give a user a beginner's orientation of a few important locations to look out on a base through an article in the Resources section.

PERSONA: CHERYL EVERETT

Problem Statement:

Cheryl is an army wife and mom to three children, who is looking for a way to organize and track her household and family tasks because her husband is scheduled to deploy and she wants to make sure her family is well prepared for his absence.



Cheryl Everett

Age: 40 years old

Education: Associate's Degree

Hometown: Fair Haven, NJ

Family: Married, Mother of 3 children

Occupation: Freelance Photographer

“As an army wife, mom of three, and a freelance photographer, I am constantly on the go. I’m always on the lookout for tips and tricks for balancing it all!”

Goals

- I’m looking for an organizational tool to help me and my family prepare for my husband’s deployment.
- I’m looking for military family resources and activity ideas to use during this life event and transition.

Frustrations

- I’m overwhelmed with the amount of work and things to do.
- I don’t know if I need to seek additional help from my family.
- I feel alone with this process and wonder if I’m missing ways to help.

Cheryl has been an army wife for 15 years and she is a mom of three. She also owns a freelance photography business. Her husband has deployed a few times already, and he is about to go deploy again. Cheryl is looking for a way to organize all her tasks to be better prepared than previous deployments and wants to prevent herself from burning out.

USER JOURNEY MAP

- It was interesting to put myself in the user's situation to imagine her feelings while going through each step of using the app and not just her actions.
- I tried to think outside the box on ways to make this experience be positive despite the tough circumstances.

Map's Persona: Stacie Everett

Goal: Prepare her and her three children for her husband's upcoming 9-month army deployment.

ACTION	Create a To-Do List	Research Tasks	Start Working on To-Do List	Readjust To-Do List	Celebrate Tasks Completed
TASK LIST	Tasks: A. Write down tasks or things to do. B. Check with spouse about tasks or information they need before long term absence.	Tasks: A. Research ideas on what to do to help prepare for spouse's absence. B. Ask family and friends for help. C. Talk to other military spouses for advice.	Tasks: A. Work with spouse to complete tasks. B. Learn new household chores, responsibilities, and task's information for long term absence.	Tasks: A. Determine if anything needs to be added to or removed from the list. B. Check-in with spouse about progress made. C. Think of creative solutions to complete tasks in given time frame.	Tasks: A. Wrap up on completing the majority of list items. B. Create a plan of action for important items not completed.
FEELING ADJECTIVE	I'm overwhelmed with the number of tasks I need to do before my husband deploys. I'm busy with my job and my family, and I don't know how to balance it all.	I'm wondering if I'm missing any tasks that I should do to prepare for my husband's absence. I'm continuing to feel overwhelmed and scattered.	I've been able to complete a few tasks that I need to, but I still have a lot to go. I have a plan of action to complete my tasks though.	I'm satisfied with the progress I've made with completing a lot of my tasks. However, I'm exhausted and burnt-out from the mental weight of this plus the emotional toll the deployment has.	I'm happy I've completed as many tasks as I could! I feel bittersweet though knowing the deployment is coming up so quickly. I have made great progress so far though!
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Provide ways to organize tasks by priority and one place to keep the list. Offer deadline dates to use as a goal.	Suggest certain tasks that revolve around financial, legal, or mental health-related topics.	Offer praise for completed tasks and allow the user to edit their list by checking tasks off.	Offer praise for further completion of tasks. Provide resources to help with possible problem areas and continue to adjust task list.	Offer continued support for using the list feature during absence and adjust military event-date to when service member returns.

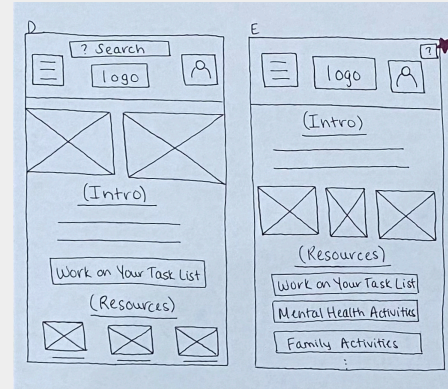
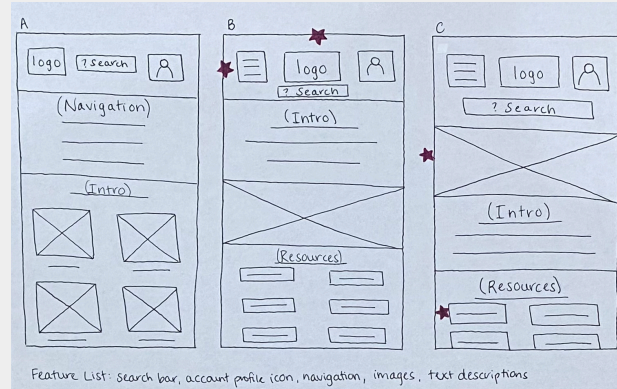
STARTING THE DESIGN

- **Paper wireframes**
- **Digital wireframes**
- **Low-fidelity prototype**
- **Usability studies**

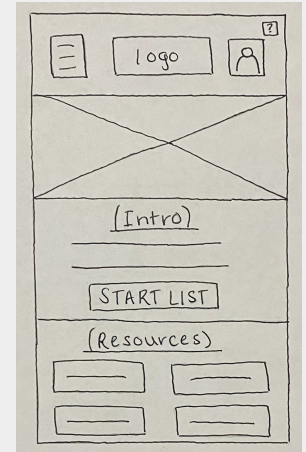
PAPER WIREFRAMES

- I wanted the layout to be easy to follow, so the user could know where to start the task list and where to find the resources' articles.
- I wanted to have a unique layout for related photos, too!

Initial Wireframes for S&SR App's Home Screen



Revised Wireframe for S&SR App's Home Screen



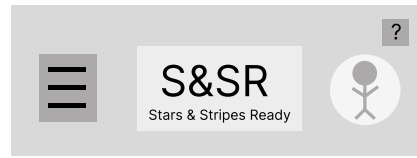
(*The stars indicate features' placement and shape that I wanted to use.)

DIGITAL WIREFRAMES

- At this point during the wireframing process, I wanted to make a simple layout, which the user could easily follow.
- I tried to leave enough white space between in feature, as well.

Here are clear instructions on how to add a task to the user's task list, which what users could really benefit from.

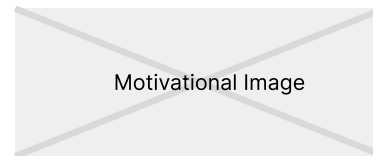
There is an image of a finished task list for a user to get an idea of what the list can look like.



Instructions for Task List



Ready to begin?

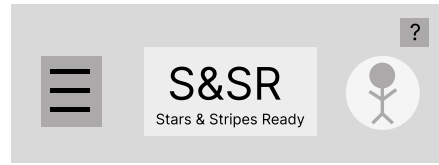
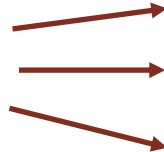


Here warm and friendly start option for the user to know exactly where to begin!

DIGITAL WIREFRAMES

- In addition, I wanted the app to have a consistent look and feel. So, I created rectangular boxes around many of the text fields of similar widths and lengths.
- I used the same text alignment and spacing for related fields.
- Overall, I tried to make this layout look as organized as possible to follow the app's mission!

These text fields were carefully created to allow a lot of customization and allow the user to see a concise hierarchy of information.

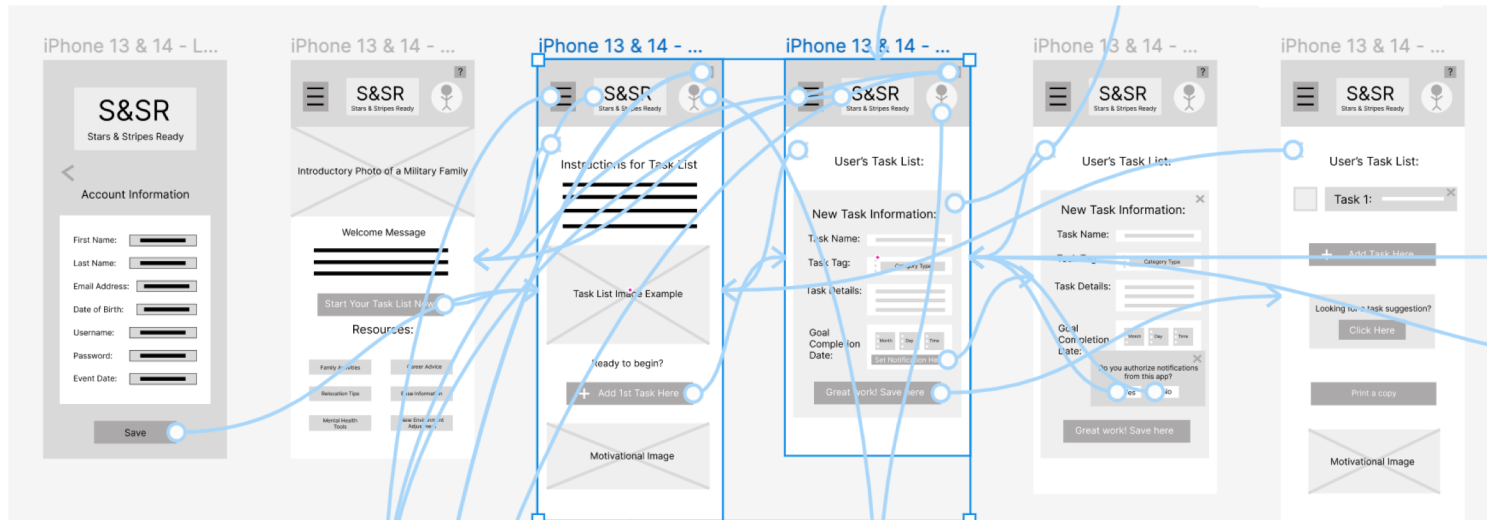


User's Task List:

This section shows the connection to the user's calendar to encourage better follow through with tasks.

LOW-FIDELITY PROTOTYPE

Here is a [link](#) to the Stars & Stripes Ready App's low-fidelity prototype. See below for a screen capture of some of the many connections between the first few pages of how to begin a task list and adding tasks to the list.



FIRST USABILITY STUDY FINDINGS

After the first user study finding, I discovered that the text size and thickness needed to be increased in some places. Also, there were a few key pages that needed to be added at the beginning of the user flow in order to log into the app and create a user profile.

ROUND 1 FINDINGS:

- 1 Sign in and out pages were needed
- 2 More descriptive information was needed on the print format pages
- 3 An event date would be helpful for countdown purposes.

ROUND 2 FINDINGS:

- 1 Action item buttons needed to stand out more
- 2 Text needed to be bolder and slightly larger.
- 3 User flow accidentally began at a later step

REFINING THE DESIGN

- **Mockups**
- **High-fidelity prototype**
- **Accessibility**

MOCKUPS

When I originally began my prototyping, I completely missed a log in page! After my first usability study, I added a log in page along with an account creation page.

Before usability study

The mockup shows a top navigation bar with a hamburger menu icon, the S&SR logo (Stars & Stripes Ready), and a user profile icon with a question mark. Below the navigation bar is a large placeholder for an "Introductory Photo of a Military Family". The main content area features a "Welcome Message" with three horizontal lines, a "Start Your Task List Now!" button, and a "Resources:" section with eight buttons: "Family Activities", "Career Advice", "Relocation Tips", "Base Information", "Mental Health Tools", and "New Environment Adjustment".



After usability study

The mockup shows a clean login page with the S&SR logo and "Stars & Stripes Ready" text. It includes a "Hi there!" greeting and a prompt to "Enter your account information below:". The form fields for "Username:" and "Password:" are highlighted with a white background. Below the fields is a "Sign In" button. At the bottom, there is a question "Is this your first time using Stars & Stripes Ready App?" and a "Create an Account" button.

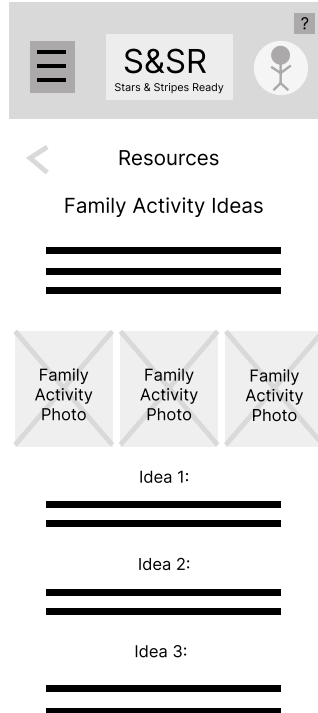
The mockup shows an account creation page with the S&SR logo and "Stars & Stripes Ready" text. It features a back arrow and the title "Account Information". The form fields for "First Name:", "Last Name:", "Email Address:", "Date of Birth:", "Username:", "Password:", and "Event Date:" are highlighted with a white background. A "Save" button is located at the bottom.

MOCKUPS

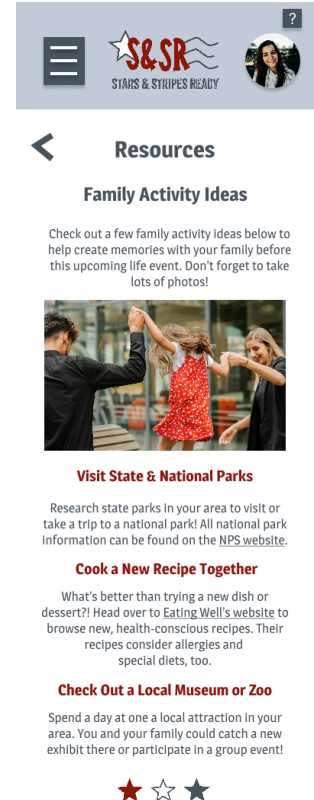
It came to my attention that some of my layout items were a bit too close to each other. Also, I had incorrectly guessed how much space I needed to display in a photo in a given area and I ended up needing a lot more space than I thought I would.

So, in areas where I wanted to show numerous photos and have a unique layout, I ended up having to keep more of a consistent layout with only 1 photo.

Before usability study



After usability study



MOCKUPS



STARS & STRIPES READY



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Welcome to Stars & Stripes Ready!

We're here to help with organizing everything you need prepare you for your family's next military deployment, relocation, or longterm training.


With the S&SR tasking list, you can create a completely customized to-do list that's easy and helpful to use!

START YOUR TASK LIST


If you're looking for additional resources on military family life, check out these links below!

- Family Activities
- Career Advice
- Relocation Tips
- Base Information
- Mental Health Tools
- Getting Settled





STARS & STRIPES READY



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Amber's Task List:

Event Countdown: 76 Days


New Task Information

Task Name:


Task Tag:

Task Details:

Goal Completion Date:



STARS & STRIPES READY





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Amber's Task List:


Event Countdown: 76 Days

Do Taxes Before April 15th





STARS & STRIPES READY





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Amber's Task List:


Event Countdown: 76 Days

Do Taxes Before April 15th





STARS & STRIPES READY





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Task List Printed!

We wish you much success with completing your task list goals.

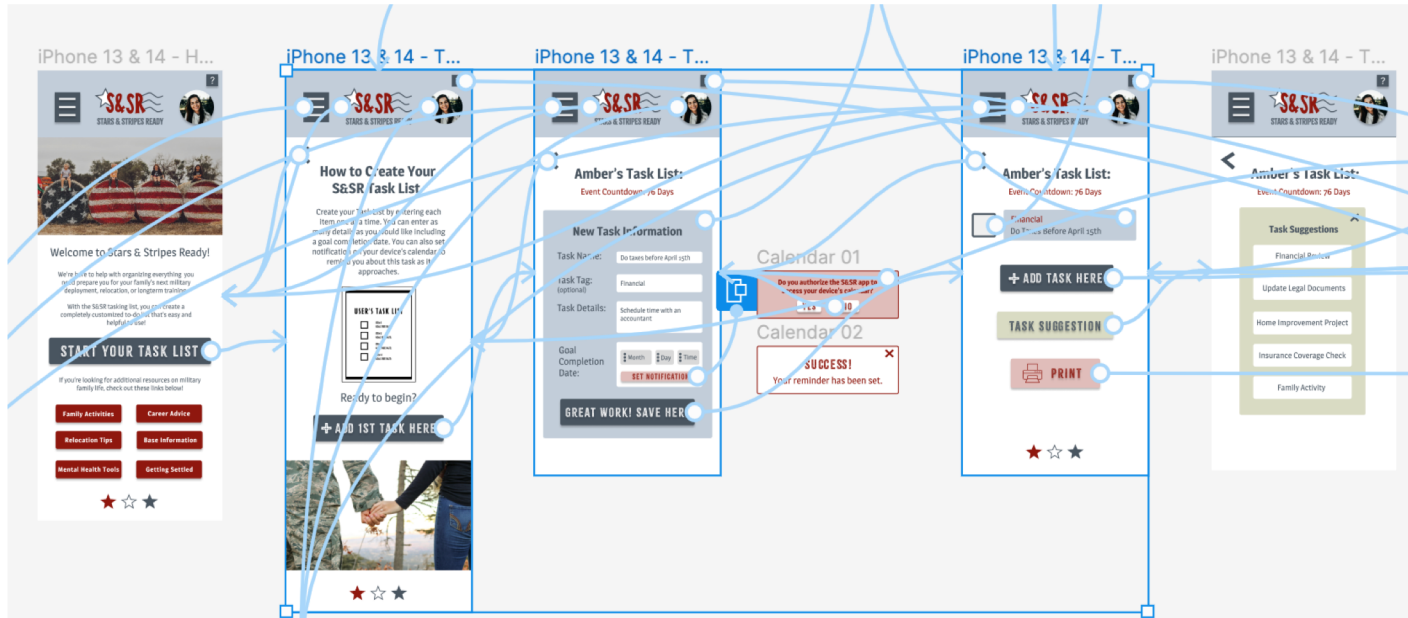
May you and your family enter this transition time with lots of kindness and grace.

All the best,
The S&SR Team



HIGH-FIDELITY PROTOTYPE

Here is a [link](#) to the Stars & Stripes Ready App's high-fidelity prototype. Like with the low-fidelity prototype, there are many connections between all the frames. This screen capture shows the initial steps of creating a task, adding a reminder through the user's calendar on their device, and viewing task suggestions.



ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

1

Large text size and high color contrast values were used in Stars & Stripes Ready to enhance visibility and provide accessibility to those with vision issues.

2

The Google typeface, Magra, that is used primarily in this app has very slight serifs and has a fair amount kerning between each letter, which further helps the text's visibility. (The typeface used in this presentation's text box is Magra, too!)

3

This app offers the ability to connect to a device's Bluetooth settings, which can be used to export a user's task list to a printer and view at a much larger size than on a device. It could also connect to another assistive device, which may be able to read the task list.

GOING FORWARD

- **Takeaways**
- **Next steps**

TAKEAWAYS



IMPACT:

I hope the Stars & Stripes Ready app can assist with organizational efforts and the spread of helpful information to military families as they work through significant, life-changing events.

DME 125.0001 Student Review:

“My husband grew up in a marine family and there are so many things to keep track of every time you move or a family member is deployed and I think a lot of people would find this very helpful. It's a great idea!”



WHAT I LEARNED:

Throughout this project, I learned the step-by-step process of how to access a user's problem, research this problem and determine what some of the overarching issues are in relation to this problem area, and design different iterations of a product solution to address these issues. I also learned what it was like to take into account a bunch of different users' emotions and perspectives while using a product and then, use their feedback to further improve the product's design.

NEXT STEPS

1

In the future, I would create a way to share the task list with other users, such as the service member, to further encourage productivity with the task list. Also, I think it could improve clarity on the task list items, too, with more family members have access to the list.

2

I would ensure that the app has a capability for screen readers to read everything on the screen. In addition, I would include speech-to-text option for users to have, who may benefit from this accessibility feature.

3

Another improvement that I would like to work on with this app is to make it responsive on other device sizes, especially for tablets. I believe this list could be even clearer on a slightly large device than on a cell phone and allow more family members to view the list at once.

CITATIONS

- A Text on a Letter Board. Taken by: Jorge Urosa on 10 August 2021: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-text-on-a-letter-board-9129536/>
- Family Spending Time Together on Street. Taken by: Anete Lusina on 1 August 2020: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/family-spending-time-together-on-street-5239963/>
- Family Unpacking After Moving. Taken by: Cottonbro Studio on 22 May 2020: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/family-unpacking-after-moving-4569340/>
- Girl Sitting on Hay Bale Painted in USA Flag. Taken by: Cherise Nicole on 26 August 2023: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/girl-sitting-on-hay-bale-painted-in-usa-flag-18138185/>
- Happy Mother and Children Hugging at Home. Taken by: Ketut Suiyanto on 17 May 2020: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/happy-mother-and-children-hugging-at-home-4474043/>
- Hands Forming Heart Shape. Taken by: Anna Shvets on 16 June 2020: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/hands-forming-a-heart-shape-4672712/>
- Printer Icon. Created by: @alexndz: <https://www.reshot.com/free-svg-icons/item/printer-DB35LG6ZM2/>
- USA Flags on Sticks on Wooden Table. Taken by: Brett Sayles on 4 May 2020: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/usa-flags-on-sticks-on-wooden-table-4504745/>
- USO Door Sign: Wright-Patt COVID-19 Response. Taken by: Wesley Farnsworth on 25 March 2020: <https://www.dvidshub.net/image/6525542/wright-patt-covid-19-response>
- Woman Holding Man's Hand. Taken by: Wyatt on 25 December 2017: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-holding-man-hand-794576/>
- Woman Working on Laptop at Home. Taken by: Teona Swift on 19 February 2021: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-working-on-laptop-at-home-6912829/>

Vector design of the red, white and blue stars and example templates of print options were created by Karyn O'Neill.

LET'S CONNECT!



Thank you for taking the time to review my work! I'd love to hear more from you, especially if you have any suggestions on improvements. I hope to continue to work on this app and would be thrilled to have other use and experience it!

Please feel free to email at: kaoneill@my.waketech.edu for any questions or feedback on my work. You're welcome to connect with me on [LinkedIn](#), too.

THANK YOU & BE WELL!