

Army Reserve Child, Youth & School Services

EIGHT THINGS SCHOOL LEADERS CAN DO TO OFFER SUPPORT, BUILD CONNECTIONS, AND PROMOTE ACADEMICS WITH MILITARY FAMILIES

1. Establish a buddy program for military children at each school. The buddy is a friendly face; a key source of information about the school, its programs, extracurricular activities, sports, expectations, and traditions; and someone to sit with at lunch and at athletic events. The Junior Student to Student and the Student to Student transition programs developed by the Military Child Education Coalition (www.militarychild.org) are effective models.

2. Encourage parents and guardians to be active in the school. Their presence in the school may provide a sense of comfort to ease their child's transition. Encourage their involvement in the PTA, on committees, and on school and district planning teams. In addition, parents may be able to share some insights into how the school can make their child feel more connected. Publicize volunteer opportunities in school newspapers and on the school and district websites.



3. Promote student participation in extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities are an excellent way for students to meet classmates and quickly feel a part of the school, so help them explore all the options. Encourage teachers and coaches to find a place for them.



CONTINUED ON 

CYSS Mission : To support readiness and quality of life by reducing the conflict between military mission requirements and parental responsibilities



This information has been provided by Army Reserve Child, Youth & School Services.
For more information on resources and programs, please visit:
WWW.ARFP.ORG/CYSS

Fort Family Outreach & Support Center assistance is available 24/7
at 866-345-8248 and/or WWW.ARFP.ORG



4. Encourage parents, guardians and students to become involved with national organizations. Involvement in national organizations such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, 4-H, etc. will help families connect to the community and a sense of continuity if they need to move.



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

girl scouts



5. Schedule workshops for educators that focus on understanding the unique challenges of military children. Topics might include establishing a safe and stable classroom environment, recognizing signs of stress, and sending positive messages.

6. Provide counselors trained specifically in helping military families deal with change, deployment and grief. These counselors should understand the challenges of families who are in transition, who may be reluctant to ask for help in dealing with emotions, and who are hesitant to make connections that they will have to break two years down the road. The Military Child Education Coalition (www.militarychild.org) offers several institutes.

7. Make exceptions...be compassionate.

For example, allow additional excused absences for children to visit with a parent or guardian who has just returned from deployment, is on leave, or is getting ready to deploy. Understand that student misbehavior may be a response to stress or anxiety about the safety of a parent in combat.



8. Keep records of the military parents' units and plans for deployment. Check them regularly and let teachers and other staff know if a student's parent is preparing to deploy. That should be a signal for them to prepare to offer additional academic and emotional support if necessary.

Information adapted from the AASA Toolkit: *Supporting the Military Child* (2009) which was prepared by Randy Collins, Superintendent of the Waterford Public Schools in Connecticut and Past President of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA).



This information has been provided by Army Reserve Child, Youth & School Services.
For more information on resources and programs, please visit:
WWW.ARFP.ORG/CYSS

Fort Family Outreach & Support Center assistance is available 24/7
at 866-345-8248 and/or WWW.ARFP.ORG

