Daycare Connections and Moves

Connections to daycare providers can be helpful to children’s academic success when they get a few years older. Whether you are new to an area or well-established, building relationships with teachers, childcare providers, and local libraries are a key way to prepare your children for a school environment. Volunteering is a great way to meet other parents and build connections in the community.

The relationships with day care providers can be an oasis of stability during times of transition or deployment. For those in daycare settings, providers can be an extra set of eyes and ears for parents to rely on, and often they see are the first to see changes in behavior or performance. Getting to know providers, sharing updates with them about deployments, and having their contact information close at hand can be invaluable. Consider sharing some of the resources on page two with your child’s providers, so they can become more aware of ways to connect military families’ experiences throughout the day.

Although many of military children report that traveling and meeting new people is a great part of military life, moving can be one of the toughest parts of military life, especially when children start a new school. Babies and toddlers are not at the school age yet but they may have a hard time with their routines being interrupted. Preschool age children may fear abandonment in a new setting. Consider local community programs or libraries as a way of making new community connections.

Promoting School Readiness

According to one recent study, finding time to read together while a parent is deployed can be a challenge. However, this reading time is crucial to children’s development. Those children who read with their parents are more likely to have advanced language skills and learn reading more easily than those who don’t read together.

One resource for military families is the program Tell Me a Story: Making Connections and Finding Support Through Literature. This program chooses books to share with military children that promote optimism and resilience, build parent-child relationships and promote community. Parents and children read these books together and discuss them.

Some great books to read together with babies and toddlers include:
- Little Chicken’s Big Day by Katie and Jerry Davis
- Moo, Baa, Laa Laa Laa by Sandra Boyton
- My Face Book by Star Bright Books
- Red Sled by Lita Judge
- Goodnight Gorilla by Peggy Rathmann

Your Baby/Toddler:
- Is forming close attachments with his/her caregivers.
- Relies upon adults for physical and emotional care.
- Is learning about emotions from adults around him/her that will lay a foundation for future coping.
- Will become increasingly independent and want to do things for him or herself.
- Throwing temper tantrums may be common.

Parent Tips:
- “Transitional objects” like teddy bears or blankets can be used to represent mom or dad during deployment or moves. Introduce the transitional object early on. So it can be a comfort object during transition.
- Photographs and scents (like perfume or cologne) can be attached to soft objects for the child to cuddle during a move.
Academic Resources

Military Youth on the Move
Offers advice on moving, social life and school to military kids.

Tutor.com
FREE homework help for students from military families is available 24/7.
http://www.tutor.com/military

School Quest
This site provides information about schools in all 50 states and college planning. Students and parents have the opportunity to create a profile and securely store school information and history.
http://www.schoolquest.org/

Student Online Achievement Resources
Supports service parents in being involved in their child’s education by providing resources and connecting parents to each other.
http://www.soarathome.org/

ADAPT is gearing up for the next wave of the project. You can help us better understand reintegration in military families and have a say in future resources and services provided to reintegrating military families!

If you live in Minnesota, are a parent of a 5-12 year old, and have been deployed (or your spouse/partner has been deployed) since 2001, we want to hear from you!

To learn more about the ADAPT project, go to www.cehd.umn.edu/fsos/adapt. For more information, you can call us at 612-624-4830 or e-mail us at adapt@umn.edu.

"Like" us on Facebook!
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http://www.cehd.umn.edu/fsos/adapt