

Is Your School District Military Friendly?



Tips on Supporting Military Families

Topics

- **Who are the children of military families?**
- **What challenges do military children face?**
- **What is the deployment cycle and how do children react to it?**
- **What special rights do children of military families have?**
- **What are schools required to do to support children of military families?**
- **What does a District Military Education Coordinator (DMEC) do?**
- **Who can help you?**
- **Are there some resources you can use?**
- **What is Month of the Military Child?**
- **What is a Purple Star School and how can your schools become one?**

Who are the children of military families?

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ACA 6-4-302: “a school-aged child(ren), enrolled in Kindergarten through Twelfth (12th) grade, in the household of an active duty member

BUT.....



Who are the children of military families?

ACA 6-18-107 (c) states “This subchapter shall apply to minor dependent children of members of the active and activated reserve components of the uniformed services”



What challenges do military children face?

Academic Challenges

- **Multiple transitions during K-12 (6 to 9 are typical)**
- **Adjustment to new school setting**
- **Transfer of special education services**
- **Incompatible graduation requirements**
- **Redundant / missed testing**
- **Transfer of coursework and grades**
- **Transfer of records**
- **Exclusion from extra-curricular activities**



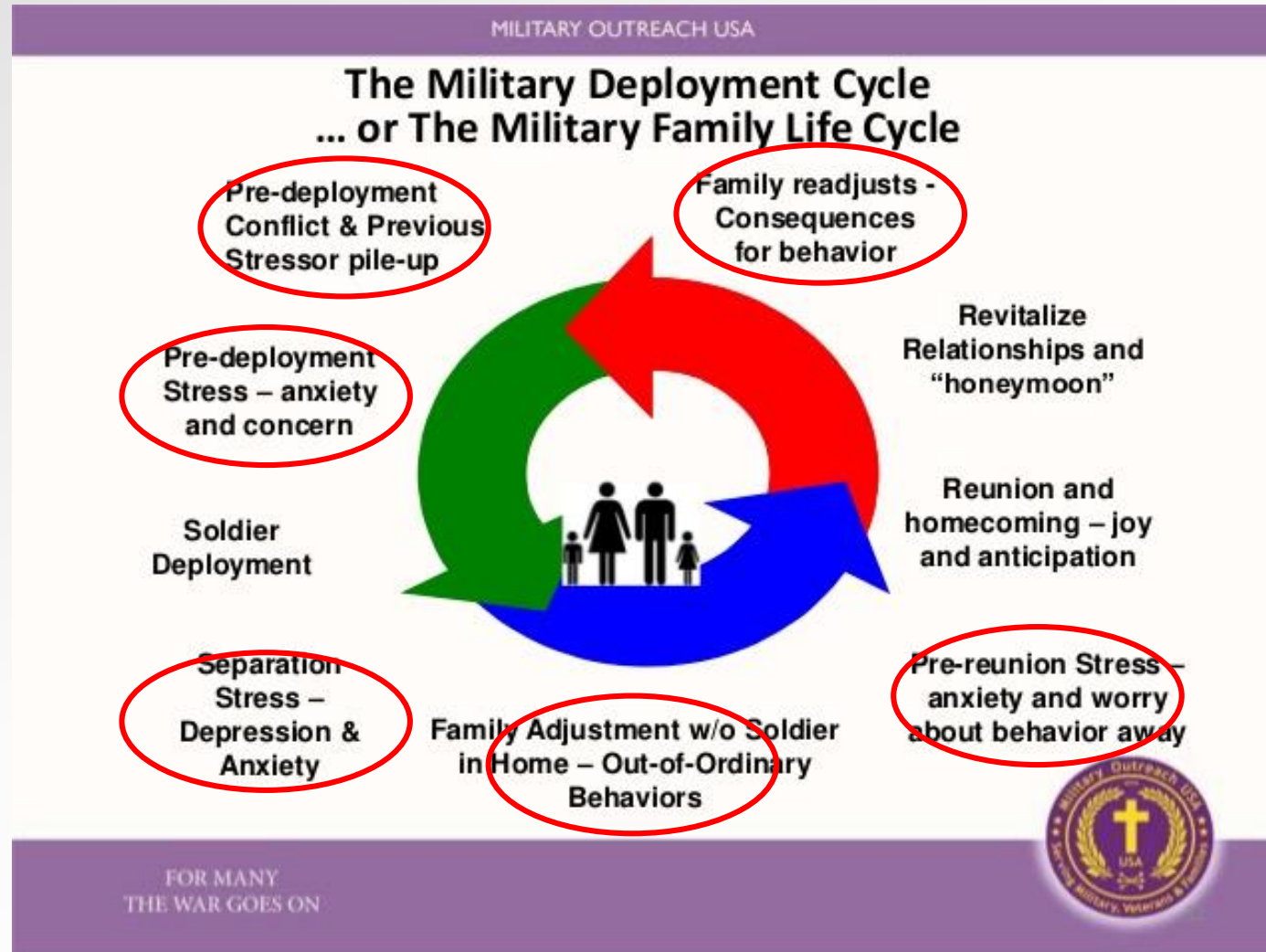
Social and Emotional Challenges

- **New friends/peers**
- **Loss of status**
- **Deployments can be sudden / no notice**
- **Deployment lengths vary from 45 days – 1+ yrs**
- **Worry about absent parent**
- **Reunion issues when the military member returns**
- **Non-deploying parents may cope poorly due to increased work load and worry**



**What is the deployment cycle
and how do children react to it?**

The Deployment Cycle



Potential Stress Reactions to Deployment Preschool Age (3-5 Years Old)

- **Fearfulness**
- **Bed-wetting, baby talk, asking for a bottle**
- **Clinging to caretakers**
- **Uncontrollable crying**
- **Irritability and acting out**
- **Changes in appetite and sleep patterns**



Potential Stress Reactions to Deployment Elementary School Age (6-11 Years Old)



- **Increased irritability and acting out**
- **Anxiety**
- **Increased complaining**
- **Poor concentration**
- **Decline in grades**
- **Withdrawn from family and friends**

Potential Stress Reactions to Deployment Adolescents (12-18 Years Old)

- **Withdrawing from family, friends and activities**
- **Irritability and agitation**
- **Self-esteem issues**
- **Engaging in high risk behaviors**
- **Decline in grades, skipping school**



Possible Responses to Parental Separation Children 6-8 years of Age



- **Frequently experience sadness and grief**
- **Regression to more childish behavior**
- **Excessive complaints of pains or stomach aches**
- **Poor attention span and difficulties in school**
- **May feel deprived of attention and display clinging**

Possible Responses to Parental Separation Children 9-12 years of Age

- **Anxiety**
- **Anger and resentment**
- **Possible withdrawal**
- **Increased aggression and antisocial behaviors (boys especially)**



Possible Responses to Parental Separation Children 13-18 years of Age

- **May have limited coping skills**
- **May distance themselves from others or feel resentful**
- **Boys have greater school/peer problems during deployments**



Reactions to Reunion Pre-School and Elementary School Age (3-11 Years Old)

- **Very proud of returning parent**
- **Mixed feelings about soldier's return**
- **May want all of soldier's attention**



Reactions to Reunion Adolescents (12-18 Years Old)



- **May test boundaries**
- **May feel self-conscious about sharing their feelings**
- **May withdraw or act out**
- **Girls tend to have greater difficulties when the deployed member returns home**

What are schools required to do to support children of military families?

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- **Appoint a District Military Education Coordinator (DMEC)**
- **Implement specific procedures in support of children of military families who transition to and from the public school**
- **Facilitate timely enrollment, including advance enrollment, of children of military families**



What are schools required to do to support children of military families?

- **Ensure children are not disadvantaged due to difficulty in the transfer of education records from a previous public school**
- **Facilitate student placement so children of military families are not disadvantaged by variations in attendance requirements, scheduling, lesson sequencing, grading, course content, and assessment**
- **Facilitate qualification and eligibility for enrollment, educational programs, and participation in extracurricular activities**



What are schools required to do to support children of military families?

- **Facilitate the on-time graduation of children of military families**
- **Facilitate advance enrollment of children of military families**
- **Allow children of military families residing on a military base to submit school choice transfer requests within 15 days of the parent's arrival at the base**



What does a DMEC do?

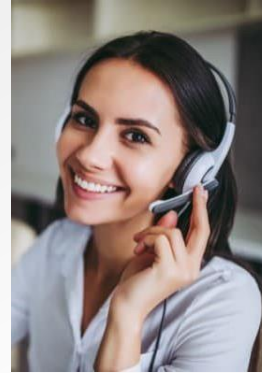
What does a DMEC do?

- **Serve as the primary point of contact for each child of a military family and his or her parent or legal guardian (ACA 6-4-309(2)(A))**
- **Have specialized knowledge regarding the educational needs of children of military families and the obstacles that children of military families face in obtaining an education (ACA 6-4-309(2)(B))**



What does a DMEC do?

- **Ombudsman for military families**
- **District staff policy advisor**
- **Advocate for children of military families**
- **Professional development resource**
- **Transitional facilitator**
- **Recognition coordinator**
- **Activities planner**
- **Public awareness superstar**



Who can help you?

Your Local School Liaison Office (SLO)

- **Primary POC at a military installation for school-related matters**
- **Represent, inform, and assist Commands**
- **Assist military families with school issues**
- **Coordinate with local school systems**
- **Forge partnerships between the military and schools**
- **Identify barriers to academic success and develop solutions**
- **Promote parental involvement and educate local communities and schools regarding the needs of military children**
- **Provide parents with the tools they need to overcome obstacles to education that stem from the military lifestyle**
- **Contact through LRAFB**
<https://www.littlerock.af.mil/Units/Airman-and-Family-Readiness/>



The Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3)

- Compact includes all 50 states + DC
- Provides uniform statutory framework for resolving transitional issues
 - Covers ACTIVE DUTY families only, but...
 - Arkansas law extends coverage to Guard and Reserve families
- Overseen nationally by a Commission
- State Compact Commissioner and Council are primary authority within each state
- <http://www.mic3.net/>



Arkansas MIC3 State Council

- **Responsible for implementing the interstate compact within Arkansas**
- **Includes representatives from**
 - **Military-impacted school districts**
 - **Professional educational associations**
 - **Federal and state military installations**
- **Meets regularly in person and via web-based conferencing**
- **Hosts an annual forum for military families to provide feedback**
- **<http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/legal/military-families-and-veterans/arkansas-state-council-of-the-military-interstate-childrens-compact-commission>**

**Are there some resources
you can use?**

Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

- **Military and Veterans Page**
- **Links to helpful organizations**
- **Downloads**
- **Webinars and podcasts**
- **Suggested reading**
- **<http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/legal/military-families-and-veterans>**



Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)

- **Non-profit organization that seeks to ensure inclusive, quality educational opportunities for all military-connected children affected by mobility, transition, deployments and family separation**
- **Hosts webinars and training events for parents and educators**
- **<https://www.militarychild.org/>**



Military Impacted Schools Association (MISA)

- National organization of school superintendents
- Serves school districts with a high concentration of military children
- Works on funding (Impact Aid), legislation, partnerships and programs for military families on the move
- Offers resources for families and schools
- <https://militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org/>



National Military Family Association (NMFA)

- **Non-profit created by military spouses**
- **Offers scholarships for military spouses**
- **Conducts recreational programs and camps for children of military families**
- **<https://www.militaryfamily.org/>**

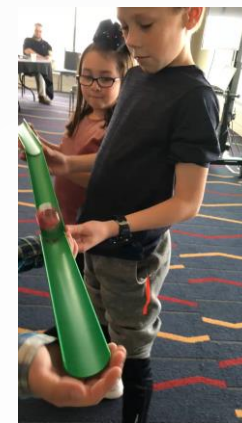


NATIONAL
MILITARY FAMILY
ASSOCIATION

Together we're stronger®

ARNG Child & Youth Program

- **FREE** events across Arkansas throughout the year
- Promotes community, leadership, and resilience in Arkansas National Guard connected children and youth
- <https://arkansas.nationalguard.mil/Families/youth/>



Camp Alliance

- **State/National 501c# organization**
- **Supports DoD unit and family readiness programs**
- **Offers several programs for children and family members:**
 - **Kids in Drill**
 - **Career and resource readiness**
 - **Purple Up! For Military Kids**
 - **Silver Star Gift Programs**
- **Sponsors fundraisers for unit family programs**
- **<https://www.campallianceinc.org/>**



Our Military Kids

- **Nonprofit that supports children in the 5th thru 12th grade**
- **Must be deployed National Guard or Reserve Service member**
- **Grant helps pay fees for athletic, fine arts, tutoring**
- **Not eligible are child care, school tuition, and religious trips**
- **<https://ourmilitarykids.org/>**



Military OneSource

- U.S. Department of Defense program
- Provides resources and support to active-duty, National Guard and Reserve service members and their families
- Available world-wide, 24-7
- Offers toll-free call center/helpline
- Completely free to users
- <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/>

MILITARY
ONE SOURCE

National Child Traumatic Stress Network

- Created by Congress in 2000
- Purpose: to raise the standard of care and increase access to services for children and families who experience or witness traumatic events
- Learning Center provides many print and video resources for parents and educators
- Includes a section specifically for military families
- <https://learn.nctsn.org/course/index.php?categoryid=10>



What is Month of the Military Child?

Month of the Military Child

- **Created by the Department of Defense in 1986**
- **Observed nationwide every April**
- **Intended to recognize and honor children of military families**
- **Schools districts can implement a range of activities**



What is a Purple Star School and how can your schools become one?

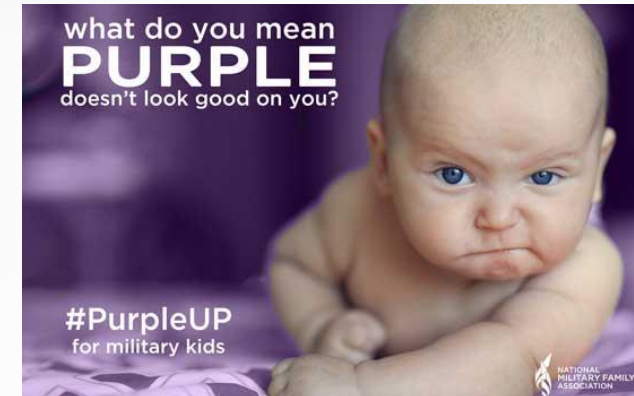
Purple Star School Award

- **Recognizes schools that show a major commitment to serving military students and families**
- **Schools must meet six basic requirements**
- **Applications are submitted online at [ADE website](#)**



What are your questions?

John I. Kaminar
Military and Veterans Liaison
Arkansas Department of Education
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
MIC3 Compact Commissioner for Arkansas
501-683-5188
john.kaminar@arkansas.gov



April Cooper
Fiscal Support Manager
Arkansas Department of Education
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Military Family Education Liaison for Arkansas
501-683-5219
april.cooper@arkansas.gov

Thank you for all you do for military children!

