

Parenting During Deployment

Parenting from afar can be challenging. While parenting in person is already difficult, the obstacles that come with being away from home can feel even more overwhelming.

Reach out to the EAP for resources and support during military deployments.



Expectations for parents and children dealing with military deployment:

While everyone's experience with deployment is unique, there are several common challenges and emotional responses that many people face. **Here are some typical things to expect:**

- **Emotional Rollercoaster:** You may experience a wide range of emotions that can shift from day to day.
- **Communication Challenges:** Communication may be limited or sporadic. Expect delays in responses due to time zone differences, mission priorities, and technological limitations.
- **Changes in Routine:** The absence of a parent can disrupt daily routines and responsibilities.
- **Worry and Stress:** It's natural to have concerns about your loved one's safety and well-being.
- **Resilience:** Despite the challenges, you may discover strengths and capabilities you didn't know you had.
- **Uncertainty:** Deployments often bring uncertainty about what the future holds.
- **Practical Considerations:** Managing household responsibilities may fall entirely on your shoulders.
- **Homecoming Preparation:** Anticipation of your loved one's return can bring mixed emotions.

Tips for effective parenting when dealing with military deployment:

- **Keep Communication Open:** Maintain open, honest and age-appropriate communication with children.
- **Establish Routines:** Create routines to provide stability and security during times of change.
- **Stay Connected:** Facilitate regular communication between children and the deployed parent.
- **Build a Support Network:** Lean on family, friends, and others who understand what you're going through.
- **Maintain Parental Roles:** Strive to keep both parents' roles involved in decision-making and discipline.
- **Spend Quality Time:** Plan activities and outings to create positive memories and strengthen your bond.
- **Promote Honesty:** Be honest with children and encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings.
- **Stay Informed:** Stay involved in school, activities, and social life to offer your children continued support.
- **Celebrate Milestones:** Find ways to celebrate milestones, even if one parent can't be there in person.
- **Prepare for Homecoming:** Involve your children in preparing for the return of the deployed parent.
- **Seek Support for Yourself:** Managing your own stress will better equip you to support your children.
- **Educate and Normalize:** Help kids understand deployment while validating their feelings and experiences.