

Deployment Sustainment Actions for Parents

Updated January 2026

KEEPING KIDS CONNECTED			
<i>Action Items</i>	Yes	No	N/A
1. Schedule a conference with your child’s teacher to check on academic and emotional progress.			
2. Visit the Military & Family Readiness Center (M&FRC) to pick up additional resources.			
3. Give each child one of mom’s or dad’s usual chores as a meaningful way to contribute to the family.			
4. Plan and schedule regular family activities, weekly hikes, monthly museum visits, craft projects, or other shared experiences.			
5. Set aside dedicated time for your own self-care; consider using the M&FRC “Give Parents a Break” or the FCC Expanded Childcare program.			
6. Create a Skype account and help your children stay connected with their deployed parent.			
7. Reach out to Child and Youth Services (CYS) and local youth programs—such as the Purple Up/Military Kids Social Media Campaign, 4-H, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Tutor.com and Operation Military Kids to help children build supportive peer connections.			
8. Explore School Age Services (SAS) for before- and after-school care for grades K–5, including homework help, recreation, and community service opportunities.			
9. Consider Family Child Care (FCC) for flexible, home-based care provided by trained professionals.			
10. Look into instructional classes that offer academic enrichment, life skills, and athletic training.			
11. Ask your M&FRC staff about deployment readiness specific workshops for parents and children.			
<i>Helpful Tips</i>			
1. Limit exposure to media coverage, especially graphic or violent content.			
2. Keep communication open—talk about your feelings and encourage your children to share theirs (fears, concerns, expectations).			
3. Maintain healthy routines with regular exercise, adequate rest, and balanced meals.			
4. Try new activities such as scouting, bowling, arts and crafts, youth sports, or youth tours.			
5. Help children look forward to the deployed parent’s return, and avoid using the deployed parent as a disciplinary tool			
6. Send cards, emails, photos, drawings, and schoolwork to the deployed parent/s to keep them involved.			
7. Create care packages together that can be sent back and forth.			
8. Video chat together using chat platforms. Contact the M&FRC if you need support setting this up.			
9. Make a photo album or scrapbook capturing memories and milestones the deployed parent may miss.			
10. Stay connected with professionals and community resources early. Support is most effective when accessed before stress builds.			