Military Child Month

March 24, 2014

Dear School Administrators and Counselors, School Liaison Officers and Military Families,

April 2014 is the Month of the Military Child. During April, the Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission (MIC3) along with many other organizations, non-profits, and public entities will underscore the important role children play in our military communities. Our military children and families help sustain our fighting force, on whom we depend for the security and safety of our nation's families and communities. It is important to emphasize and recognize the role that military children play while their service member parents are serving the nation. The MIC3 is committed to resolving the educational transition issues that are faced by these children and their families.

Across the nation, during the week of April 14-18, most states and communities will taking a day to “Purple Up! For Military Kids.” People are being encouraged to wear purple on that date to show support for our military kids and to thank them for their strength and sacrifices. Please check for events in your area for the appropriate day to “Purple Up!” and celebrate this month.

Military families move between postings on a regular basis, and while reassignments can often be a boon for career personnel, they can be difficult for the children of military families. The average military student faces transition challenges more than twice during high school, and most military children will attend six to nine different school systems in their lives from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The Interstate Compact seeks to make these transitions easier for the children of military families so they are afforded the same opportunities for educational success as other children and are not penalized or delayed in achieving their educational goals.

As part of the Compact, the Interstate Commission on Educational Opportunity for Military Children was established. To date, forty-six states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Compact and placed it in statute. The Commission continues to work with the Department of Defense, national organizations, and state leaders to bring the remaining states on board. As states join the Compact, these member states work to implement the State Councils and inform their school districts of the Commission’s work. Educational efforts for school personnel as well as military families are ongoing so they may work together to ensure the educational success of our military children.

Please take time this month to recognize the service of our military members and their families—and especially their children. They deserve our support!

Sincerely,

Kathleen F. Berg, Brig. Gen. (Ret.)
Commission Chairman
MIC3 Commissioner – Hawai’i
Military Families

Children of the Deployed


See Military Family Resources for additional information from organizations that support military families (http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/resources.shtml).

Given that Virginia is home to some of the nation's largest and most important military installations, it is not surprising that the commonwealth's schools educate more military children than almost any other state. In nearly every community in Virginia, there are children with parents or guardians on active duty with the armed forces.

As of December 2012, the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) estimates that there are 75,403 school age, and approximately 233,778 total, military-associated children of active duty members in Virginia. For more information about the demographics of service members and their dependents, please see the 2012 Demographics: Profile of the Military Community (PDF) report published by the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (http://www.doe.virginia.gov/home_files/leaving/rediect.cfm?url=http://www.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2012_Demographics_1.pdf).

Virginia's public schools are committed to the care and education of the children of the men and women of our armed forces. By partnering with school liaison officers, military leaders, educators, and non-profit organizations, VDOE provides resources about the unique support needed for military service members and their families during all stages of transition and deployment.


Guidance Documents & Training Materials

Virginia Laws Related to the Education of Military Children

School Liaison Officers Contact Information
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/school.shtml

Model Programs & Initiatives
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/model.shtml

Military Family Resources


PEATC Workshops and Events - April 2014

Tuesday, April 1, 2014 - Bullying Prevention Workshop, 6:30 pm-8:30 pm, Orange Hunt ES, Springfield, VA. Please RSVP at oohamps@cox.net.

Wednesday, April 2, 2014 - Exhibitor at Clarke County Public Schools Transition Fair, 5:00 pm-8:00 pm, Clarke County High School, 627 Mosby Blvd., Berryville, VA 22611. For further information, please contact Joanne Wolfe at 540.955.6130 ext 7439 or wolfejo@clarke.k12.va.us.

Friday, April 4, 2014 – IN SPANISH ONLY – “ENTENDIENDO EDUCACIÓN ESPECIAL (UNDERSTANDING SPECIAL EDUCATION)”, 7:45 pm- 9:00 pm, McLean Bible Church's Accessibility Summit 2014. Register here: http://accessibilitysummit.org/register/

Saturday, April 5, 2014 – Exhibitor at McLean Bible Church's Accessibility Summit 2014; exhibits open from 7:30 am-1:45 pm Register here: http://accessibilitysummit.org/register/

Tuesday, April 8, 2014 – “Bullying Prevention” workshop, from 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, Fauquier County Public Schools Parent Resource Center, 430 E. Shirley Ave, Warrenton, VA 22186. For more information or to register, please contact Marilyn McCombe at (540) 422-7116 or prc@fcps1.org.

Thursday, April 10, 2014 – “Active4Autism” peer education and teacher professional development Webinar; 2:00 pm-3:00 pm; Register at https://ec.readytalk.com/ccs/registrations/new?cid=ff214f6b174

Tuesday, April 15, 2014 – “KEEN Greater DC” webinar; time and registration information TBA.

Tuesday, April 22, 2014 – PEATC Cafecito — Guest Speaker: Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, 7pm-8:30pm, Location: PEATC Office, 100 N. Washington Street, Suite 226, Falls Church, VA 22046. To register, contact PEATC at 703-923-0010 or ancalle@PEATC.org.

Friday, April 25, 2014 – IN SPANISH ONLY – “Bullying Prevention – Everyone’s Responsibility, What Parents Can Do!” (A workshop in Spanish), from 10:00 am-12:00 pm, Location: Endependence Center Inc., 6300 East Virginia Beach Blvd., Norfolk, VA. To register for this event please contact Jasmine Lagos, Care Connection for Children at 608-8539. Space for this workshop is limited to 40 people and registration is first come first serve basis. The workshop is FREE (Materials will be provided).
Being part of a military family can be filled with many surprises, challenges, and opportunities. Part of the military life is moving to new locations every few years or even more frequently. This can be a bit more challenging when there’s a child in the family who has a disability. Lots of questions naturally arise:

Will special education services be available in the new location?
What about the types of therapists or expertise your child needs?
What do you need to do to get ready?
Fortunately, there is help available to make the family’s transition from one location to another a bit more smoothly. Below you will find organizations and resources that will be of help.

Specialized Training of Military Parents (STOMP)
STOMP provides information and help to military families (both in the U.S. and overseas) who have children with special needs. The STOMP staff is made up of parents of children with special needs who are trained to work with other parents of children with special needs. As spouses of members of the military, the staff understands the unique needs of military families. To contact STOMP, call or write:

STOMP
6316 So. 12th Street
Tacoma, WA 98465
1.800.5.PARENT (V/TTY)
Web: www.stompproject.org

Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA)
The office of the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) issues extensive guidance for military families with children who have special needs and who are receiving, or are eligible to receive, a free appropriate public education either domestically or overseas. Take a look online at: http://www.dodea.edu/Curriculum/specialEduc/index.cfm

DoDEA can be reached at:
Department of Defense Education Activity
4040 N. Fairfax Drive
Arlington, VA 22203
Telephone: 703.588.3104

Other Helpful Resources

Military OneSource
www.militaryonesource.com/skins/MOS/home.aspx
Offers help with parenting and child care, education, relocation, financial and legal concerns, and everyday issues.

Military Homefront
www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/
DOD’s website for official Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP) program information, policy and guidance designed to help troops and their families, leaders, and service providers.

National Military Family Association
http://www.militaryfamily.org/
Provides education and information regarding rights, benefits, and services for military families.

Courage To Care For Me
www.couragetocareforme.org/offline/
Provides fact sheets on timely health topics relevant to military life developed by military health experts at Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

Military Child Education Coalition
www.militarychild.org/
Helps military children cope with being transferred from school to school around the world.

NACCRRA
http://www.naccrra.org/military-families
Child care resource and referral agencies help parents find quality child care.

Readings and Activities

Little Listeners in an Uncertain World.
This 8-page book’s subtitle is: Coping strategies for you and your child during deployment or when a crisis occurs. It outlines what parents may see in their babies and toddlers during stressful times and offers concrete guidance and activities to support their young children throughout these challenging events.

Moving to a New Location.
http://www.nichcy.org/families-community/moving/
From NICHCY itself, offering lots of practical suggestions for planning that move.

A book you and your child create together. When mom or dad are deployed, children worry. ZERO TO THREE developed these two books to help parents find the words to reassure their child that mommy or daddy is out there, thinking about and loving him or her from far away. Download the book that fits your circumstance:

When it’s Dad that’s deployed and “out there.”

When it’s Mom.

Helping children handle deployments.
http://www.survivingdeployment.com/helpchildrenhandle.html
Your child’s moodiness and behavior during the deployment may be a sign of stress or anxiety. Here’s what you can do to help your children handle deployment.

More on helping children with deployment: 12 tips for parents and families.
From the American Psychiatric Association.
http://www.healthyminds.org/more-info-For/Military/Helping-Kids-Cope-with-Deployment_1.aspx

The “So Far” Guide.
This 17-page guide focuses on helping children and youth cope with the deployment of a parent in the military reserves.

ARTICLE SOURCE: http://nichcy.org/families-community/military
April is the time to Celebrate Military Children!

Recognize and Celebrate Military Children

April is the “Month of the Military Child.” School divisions are encouraged to take time to recognize the nation’s military servicemen and servicewomen, their families and their children.

Across the nation, Tuesday, April 15, 2014, will be the day to “Purple Up! For Military Kids.” People are being encouraged to wear purple on that day to show support for our military kids and to thank them for their strength and sacrifices.

Military studentsApril was designated as “The Month of the Military Child” by former Secretary of Defense, Caspar W. Weinberger in 1986 to recognize the contributions of children whose parents serve in the military and celebrate their spirit.

Often military children are looked up to for their resilience and ability to deal with life-changing events, but frequent moves, family separations through deployments and reintegrations following deployments make life especially challenging for many military children.

School divisions are encouraged to take time in April, and throughout the year, to recognize the service of military servicemen and servicewomen, their families and their children. See this letter from the Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission (MIC3) for more information about the “Month of the Military Child” (http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/resource.pdf).

Here are some possible “Month of the Military Child” activities:

- Create a “Wall of Honor” which features photos and short stories about service members connected to the school.

- Invite a veterans group to demonstrate flag etiquette and flag folding.

- Establish a Patriotic Day and encourage educators and students to wear patriotic colors.

- Invite service members to speak with classes about what it’s like to be in the military.

On April 15 participate in Purple Up! by wearing purple in recognition of military kids, families and friends. For more information, see the Virginia 4-H Military Club flier about the month of the military child (http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/resource_flier.pdf).


LATINO CORNER

Familias Militares

Lo que está pasando
En casi todas las comunidades viven familias militares. Algunos padres en las fuerzas militares pueden encontrarse en servicio activo y vestir su uniforme todos los días. Otros padres pueden pertenecer a la Guardia Nacional o a las Reservas del Ejército y usar un uniforme solamente cuando son llamados al servicio activo. […]

Lo que usted puede hacer
- Exprése agradecimiento por el servicio que la familia brinda a nuestro país. Invite a los padres y a los hijos a compartir sus experiencias positivas de la vida militar.
- Acérquese y conozca a sus vecinos militares, en particular si sirven en la Guardia Nacional o las reservas. Inclúyales en actividades comunitarias y del vecindario. No espere a que su vecino le pida ayuda: ofrezca a cortar el césped, compartir una comida, ayudar en pequeñas reparaciones del hogar o a cuidar a los niños por algunas horas.
- Comparta información sobre los recursos comunitarios que ofrecen apoyo en momentos de necesidad. Pregunte a los padres militares qué apoyos pueden ayudarles más cuando enfrentan una separación relacionada con las actividades militares y úselos a ponerse en contacto con estos apoyos de manera temprana.


Military Families

What’s Happening
Military families live in almost every community. Some parents in the military are on active duty and wear a uniform every day. Others may be in the National Guard or Reserves and only wear a uniform when they are called to active duty. […]

What You Can Do
- Express appreciation for the family’s service to our country. Invite parents and children to share their positive experiences of military life.
- Get to know your military neighbors, particularly if they serve in the National Guard or Reserves. Include them in neighborhood and community activities. Don’t wait for your neighbor to ask for help—offer to mow the grass, share a meal, help with small household repairs, or care for the children for a few hours.
- Share information about community resources that provide support in times of need. Ask military parents what would help them most when they are facing a military-related separation, and help them to connect with these supports early.