

Checklist

DEPLOYMENT | PARENTING DURING SEPARATION

For the parent who is leaving



Preparing to leave

Reassuring children

Deployment is a stressful time for all family members, especially children.

Reassuring children in many ways can help ease their stress.

Use the checklist below as a guide for helping your children share their feelings about deployment.

AS A PARENT, I:

- Remind my preschool children that they are not the reason I have to leave and that deployment is part of my job.
- Reassure my children that they will be safe and cared for while I am away.
- Tell my children I will do everything I can to return safely.
- Show confidence in my children's ability to manage while I am gone.
- Give each child a "comfort item" to hold on to while I am away.
- Give a picture of myself to each child for him or her to keep.
- Reassure my children that I will stay in touch as much as possible.
- Tell my children I will think of them at a special time each day.
- Give each child lots of reassuring hugs.
- Watch for signs of stress in my children (nightmares; excessive worry; anxiety about being away from home; anxiety about going to school or other activities; stomach aches, headaches; withdrawal; lack of interest; acting out; and sudden changes in eating or sleeping habits).
- Seek professional help, if needed.

AS A FAMILY, WE:

- Make childcare plans to reassure children that they will be safe and cared for while I am away.
- Read books together about goodbyes.
- Reassure one another that our family can cope with whatever changes we will face.



IMAGINE STEPPING INTO
YOUR CHILD'S WORLD
AND SEEING THINGS
FROM HIS OR HER POINT
OF VIEW.

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