



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

[www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil](http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil)

## For the parent(s) leaving



# When single parents or both parents are deploying

Deployment is a stressful time for all families, but when single parents or both parents are deployed, there are some extra challenges. Children will feel more uncertainty and so will parents. Here are some ways to help.

### Make a plan.

- You have probably already thought about who will care for your children in your absence. Now is the time to review these plans and see what will work.
- Discuss with the caregiver how to talk to your children about what is happening and how to best make the necessary changes.

### Talk with your children.

- Your children need to be told what is happening. This will give them time to think about the deployment, begin to accept it, and get used to their feelings about the separation to come.
- Be available whenever your children want to talk.
- If possible, let your children know why and when you are leaving, where you are going, and how long you will be gone—as much as you are allowed to tell.

### Keep routines in the new household.

- Talk with the caregiver about routines, rules, interests, comfort items and special activities to help ease the transition.
- Keep family routines as normal as possible until the day you leave (bed-time stories, Saturday movies, evening walks with the dog).
- Talk about and practice new routines that will occur during deployment.
  - Your children may be walking home from school instead of you meeting them each day after school.
  - Your children may be in charge of feeding pets while you are away.

### Stay in touch with the caregiver and your children.

- Make plans for how to communicate with the caregiver and your children while you're away. Include back-up plans in case the first choice is unavailable.
- Give the caregiver suggestions for talking with your children about you, your absence and your return. *Share the fact sheets for homefront parents or caregivers.*