



Awareness to Action

KANSAS



COMMUNITY ACTION

It seems the hardest part about providing support to military families is figuring out what to do. But in reality, military families are very much like other Kansas families. So consider what you might appreciate if a member of your family were deployed. There are dozens of things, both big and small, that you can do to help. Try brainstorming your own options to add to the list.

Community Groups

- Sponsor parades or special events
- Compile and distribute a list of community resources
- Provide Operation: Military Kids (OMK) with materials for Hero Packs (backpacks full of activities and ways to stay connected to deployed parents)
- Sponsor military support networks in businesses and neighborhoods
- Provide the local Army Family Readiness Group with requested items
- Organize an around-the-house help day
- Hold childcare training for military kids
- Provide transportation to practices and appointments
- Create scholarships for youth to join teams and special events
- Invite soldiers and their families to speak at club meetings
- Coordinate a community resource festival for military families
- Connect military families with helpful organizations
- Sponsor a mother's/father's day out

Schools

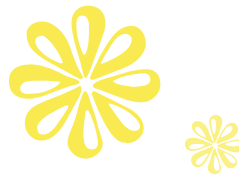
- Educate staff about challenges military kids face
- Allow time for communication with deployed loved ones
- Sponsor military appreciation events at school functions
- Display OMK banners in schools
- Educate staff about post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

City and County Officials

- Recognize the contributions of military families
- Provide waivers or passes for local recreation facilities
- Include military families on committees and boards
- Designate a committee or commissioner as the community's military champion
- Include military family support messages on government websites
- Display OMK banners in government offices
- Distribute OMK seals and stickers as bill inserts
- Adopt a local military branch

Everyone

- Volunteer to babysit
- Offer to help with household chores
- Educate others about how deployment affects families
- Tutor military kids
- Invite military kids to join recreational teams and groups
- Volunteer to do a family's shopping
- Drop off a home-cooked meal



AWARENESS TO ACTION

What You Can Do

Community groups have a lot of power to help local military families. They can provide supplies to local military support groups, or teach other groups around the community about deployment and military culture. They can even put together their own care packages for area families whose loved ones are deployed.

Families and individuals can make a big difference simply by volunteering to watch a military family's kids for an evening, offering to rake their leaves, or setting up a monthly get-together with neighborhood families.

Getting Others Involved

Once you've become active, take it one step further by spreading the word. Inspire teachers, businesspeople and other civic leaders to take action.

Healthcare providers, for instance, can teach others about post-traumatic stress disorder and how it affects returning soldiers. And contractors and other craftspeople can donate time on projects at a military family's home.

Partners

Operation: Military Kids — www.OperationMilitaryKids.org
Army Child & Youth Services — www.ArmyMWR.com
Army Reserve Family Programs — www.ARFP.org
National Guard Child and Youth Program — www.GuardFamily.org/Youth
Military OneSource — www.MilitaryOneSource.com
Military Child Education Coalition — www.MilitaryChild.org
National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies — www.NACCRRRA.org
Zero to Three — www.ZEROTOTHREE.org

Contact

Ann Domsch
Coordinator
Kansas Operation: Military Kids
785.532.2276
adomsch@k-state.edu
www.KansasOMK.org

Elaine Johannes, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist
Kansas Operation: Military Kids
785.532.7720
ejohanne@k-state.edu
www.KansasOMK.org

Operation: Military Kids is a program of the 4-H/Army Youth Development Project, a collaboration of the U.S. Army Child and Youth Services and National 4-H Headquarters, U.S. Department of Agriculture through Kansas State University under special project number 2003-48558-01716.

