

Supporting Youth of Veterans and Military Families

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Indiana Operation: Military Kids

PURDUE
EXTENSION

LOCAL FACES
COUNTLESS CONNECTIONS







I'm
finally
happy.





I'm
finally
happy.

Today

1. Describe the current military youth population in Indiana.
2. Discuss the unique issues facing today's military youth and families.
3. Identify the deployment cycle and skills youth need to successfully navigate each stage.
4. Identify local and statewide support resources for military children and families impacted by the deployment cycle.
5. Discuss how to support Indiana's military youth throughout the deployment cycle.

The Indiana Operation: Military Kids (OMK) partnership is a shared initiative of the US Army Child, Youth & School (CYS) Services and funded by the Army National Guard and Army Reserve in collaboration with Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service.



“Military Kids”

- youth
- school age (K-12)

“Service Member”

- Any branch/component
- Primarily National Guard and Reserve

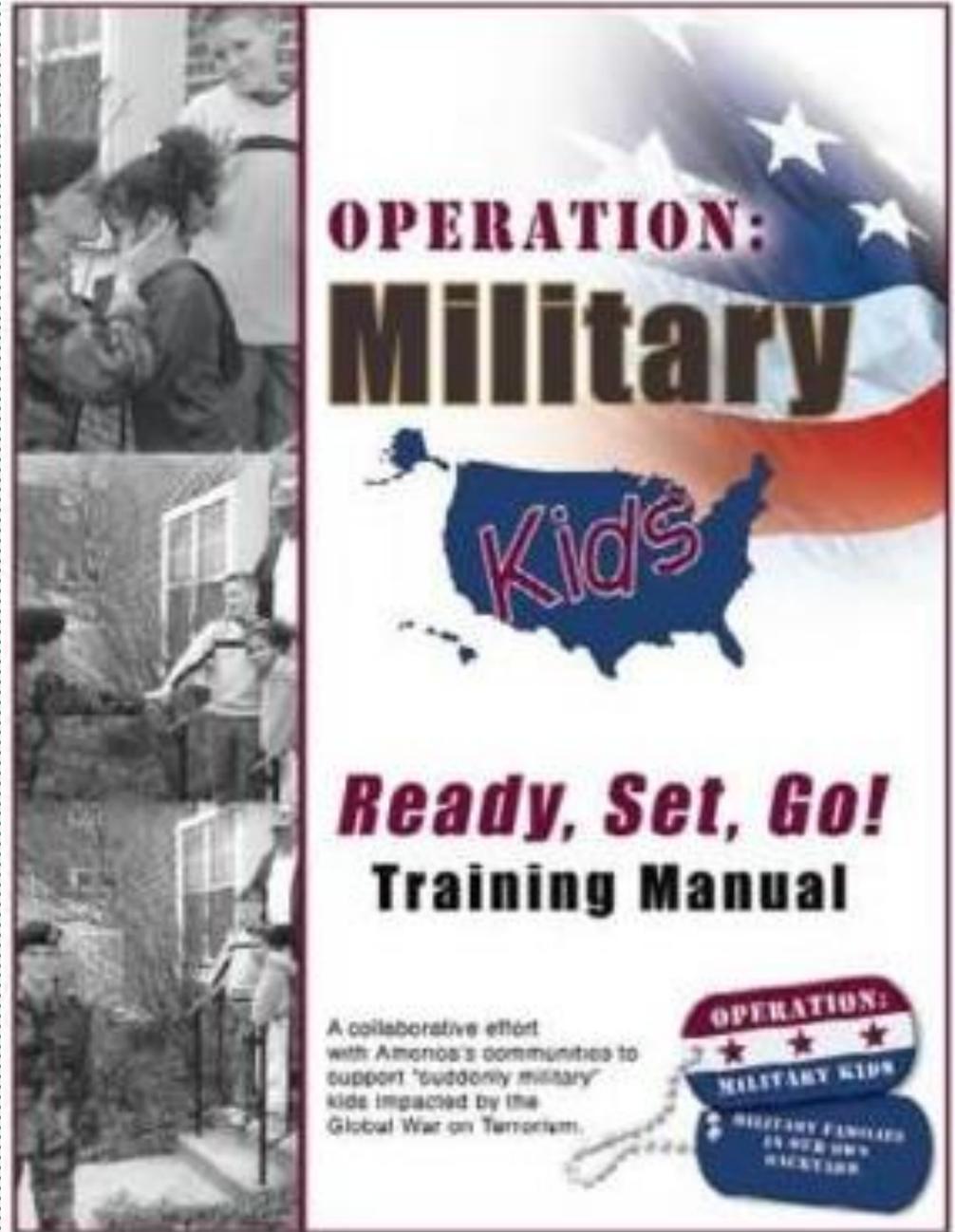
“Loved one”

- Mom, Dad, brother, sister, uncle, aunt...

Positive Youth Development

- Focus on desired positive outcomes

Ready, Set, Go!



What has been your interaction with military youth?

- A. Service member with children
- B. Community volunteer
- C. Organization that supports military youth
- D. Other



Current Demographics

Describe the current military youth population in Indiana.

~20,000 military youth in Indiana.



Direct Dependents

Ages 0-5: 7,565

Ages 6-12: 8,233

Ages 13-18: 5,607



92

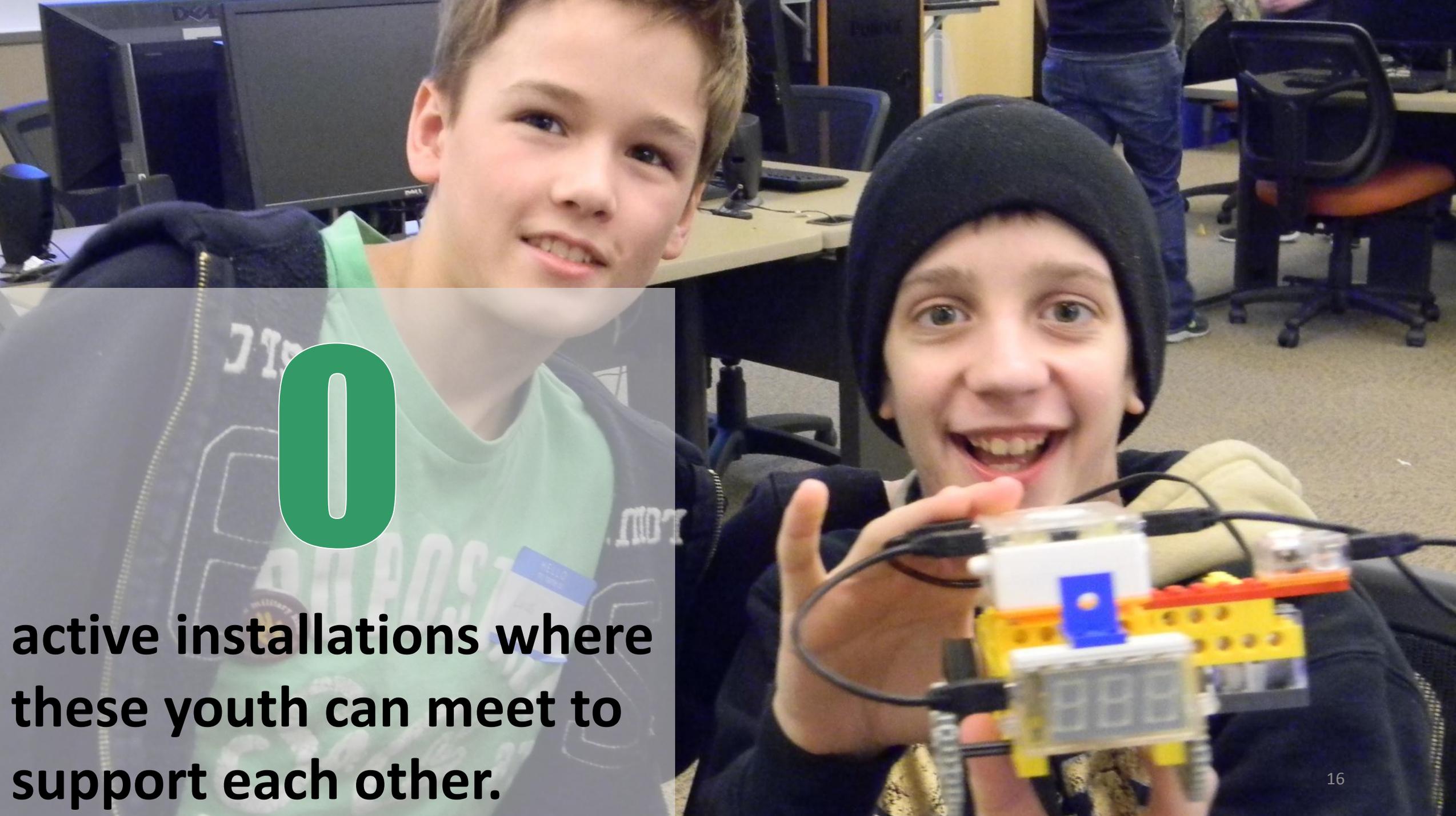
**Indiana counties
where military
youth live.**





5

branches of the military
represented in Indiana.



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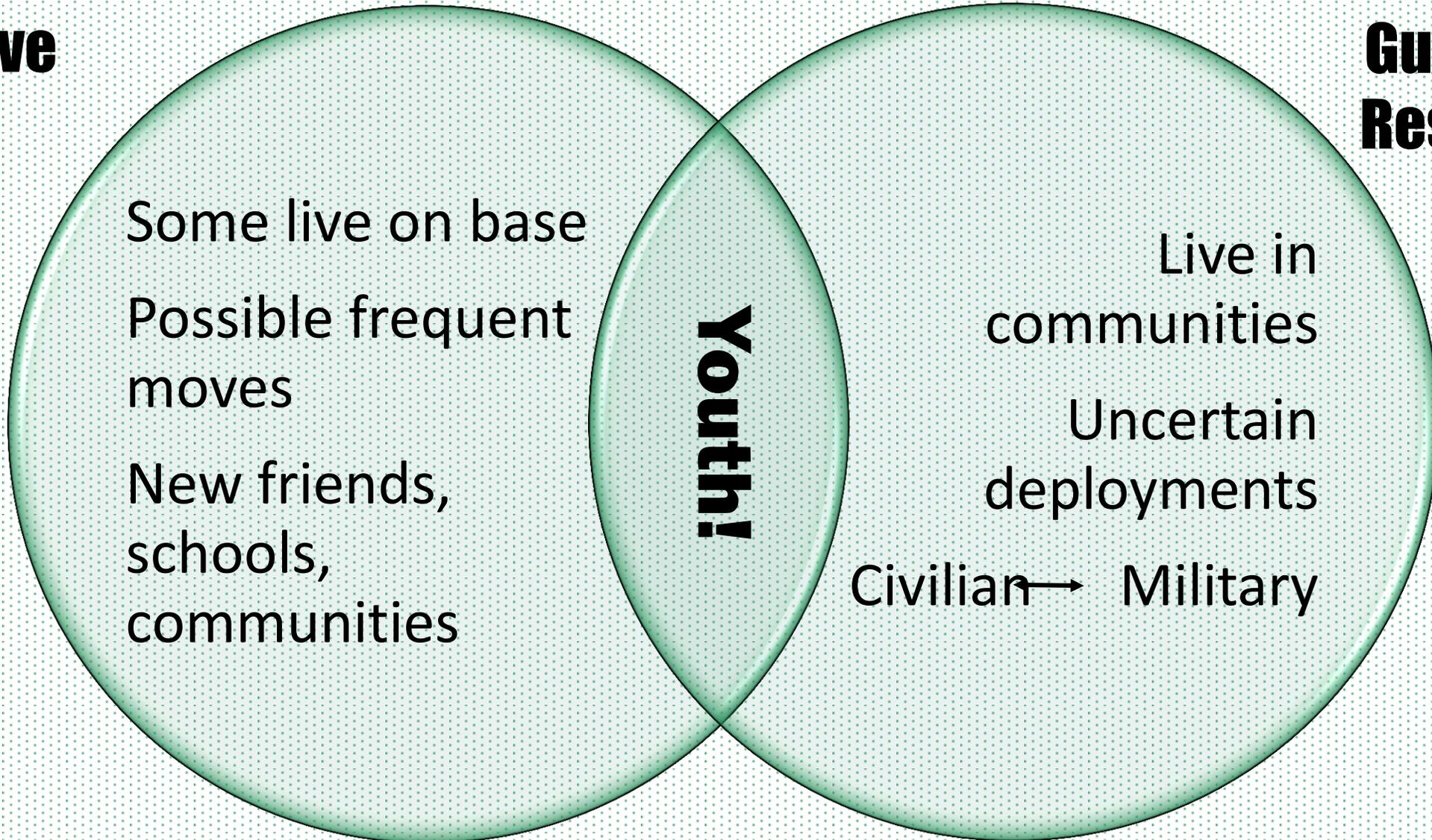
active installations where these youth can meet to support each other.

Unique Issues Facing Military Youth Today

Discuss the unique issues facing today's military youth and families.

Active

Guard & Reserve



Some live on base
Possible frequent moves
New friends, schools, communities

Youth!

Live in communities
Uncertain deployments
Civilian ↔ Military

Community Awareness

You can't support what you can't find!



Educator Preparedness/Transition



Dependent Care



Frequently Unaware of Resources





Understanding and Dealin

Talking to Kids About Violence, Terrorism, and War

Kids ask tough questions particularly when it comes to understanding acts of violence, terrorism, and war. Given this, educators may find themselves in the unique position of engaging with kids about these very important issues.

In their day-to-day interactions, educators have the unique opportunity to help kids understand current world events factually, to facilitate open and healthy discussions about how these events impact kids' lives, and to help kids take action to identify their own emotional and behavioral reactions to these events.

How Educators Can Offer Support

Listen to Kids

- Find out what kids are worried about, what information they have or don't have, and how they are interpreting what is being said.
- Encourage them to take the first step in sharing.
- Offer information, clarification, and reassurance as needed.
- Don't overwhelm kids by explaining what you know.
- Listen, listen and listen some more!

Ask questions

- Ask thoughtful open-ended questions, ones which can't be answered with "yes" or "no," as a good way to get a conversation started, particularly with an older child.
- Specific questions such as, "What are you afraid of?" "What bothers you most about what you are hearing?" and "How does this make you feel?" are appropriate for discussion.
- Ask clarifying questions to find out what kids mean. Remember their ideas of violence and war may be very different from yours.
- And remember to answer kids' question(s) after they have answered yours.

Acknowledge kids' feelings

- Knowing what to say is sometimes difficult. When no words come to mind, saying "This is really hard," will work.
- Try to recognize feelings underlying kids' reactions and help them identify these feelings in healthy ways through play, drawing, or words.
- When kids are upset, don't deny the seriousness of the situation. Saying "Don't cry, everything will be okay," does not reflect how they feel or make them feel any better.
- Be honest with kids. When appropriate, share your fears and concerns while at the same time reassuring them things will be alright/okay.

Help kids to feel physically safe

- Help them differentiate between acts of violence, terrorism, and war and understand that precautions are being taken to keep their environment safe.
- Maintain normal routines and schedules to provide a sense of stability and security.
- Stop kids from stereotyping people from specific backgrounds, cultures, or countries.
- Add tolerance lessons to school curriculum to prevent harassment and improve a sense of safety.
- Let those who are worried about a parent/loved one's deployment talk and share their feelings as needed. (See Tough Topics Issue #1: Supporting Military Kids During Deployment for more information)

Help kids maintain a sense of hope by taking action

- Help kids find their own unique ways to offer support to their schools and communities in response to incidents of violence, terrorism, and war.
- Send letters, cookies, magazines, or care packages to those in the military or local public safety positions/jobs.
- Encourage kids to write or dictate letters to legislators about their concerns and feelings.



Gone for a Soldier
One Battalion's Wrenching Deployment to Afghanistan
By JAMIE BROWN
A YEAR-AND-A-HALF DEPLOYMENT TO AFGHANISTAN
The soldier's family spent the last 12 hours of his deployment...



My dad is
in Iraq. It is hard because
I have more responsibilities
at home because my mom some
times watch my brother and sister and I
would want to go play with my friends.



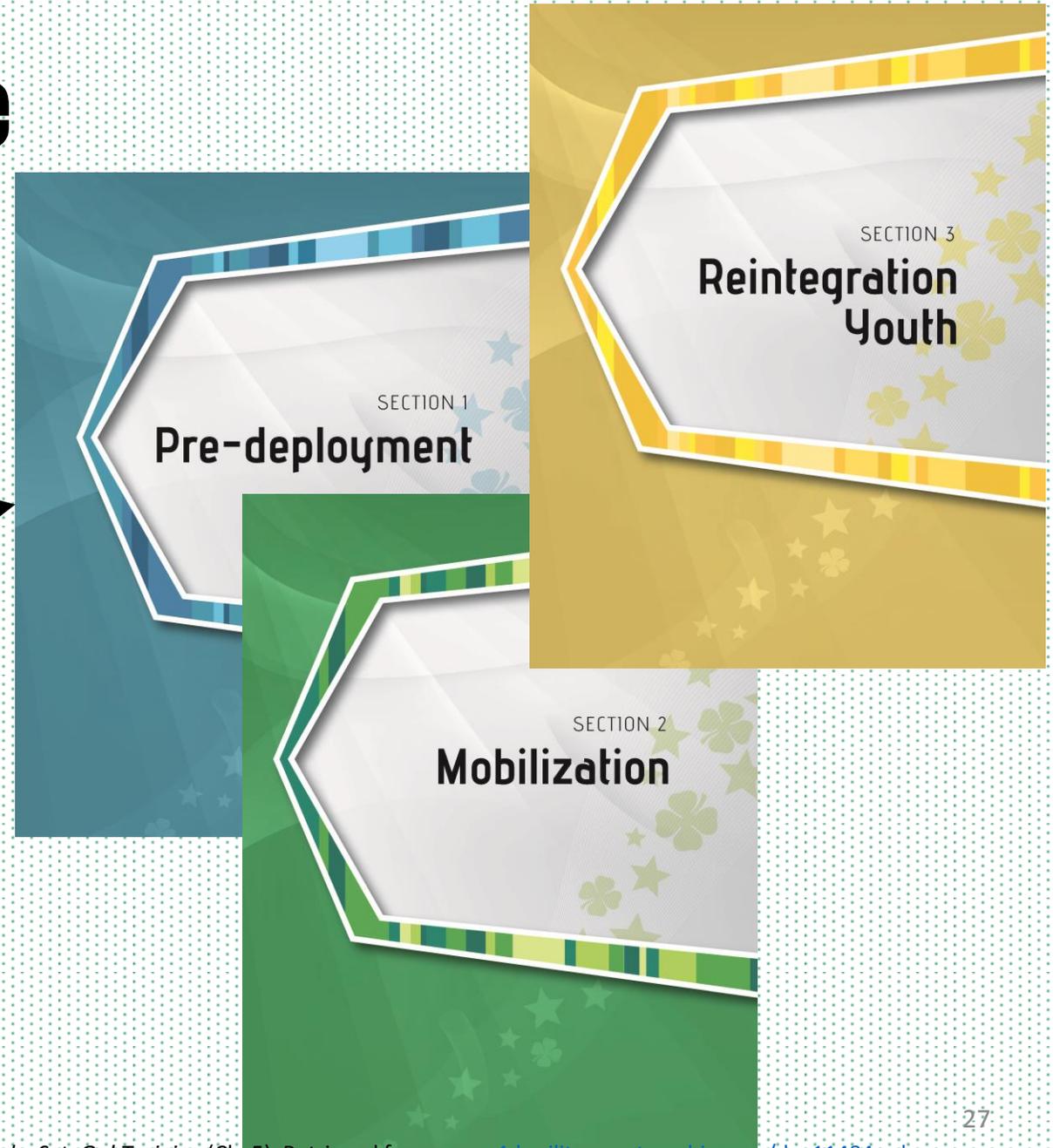


Navigating the Deployment Cycle

Identify the deployment cycle and skills youth need to successfully navigate each stage.

The Deployment Cycle

Pre-deployment
Deployment
Sustainment
Re-deployment
Post-deployment



Pre-deployment

Anticipation of Departure

- Increased **stress** in home
- Denial and anticipation of loss
- More **emotional**
- Completing the checklist

Detachment & Withdrawal

- **Anger**, arguments among members
- Difficulty **communicating**
- Service member distances self

Mobilization

Emotional Disorganization

- Numb and uninterested
- More **irritable**
- Routines have changed
- **Responsibilities** added

Recovery & Stabilization

- Changes settle in
- **Positive coping** happens
- **Negative coping** also happens

In-between

Anticipation of Return

- Family is happy, excited, feeling boost of energy.
- Worry if Service Member will be the same.
- If Service Member came home on leave at some point during deployment, that experience may be what family members expect

Reintegration

Return Adjustment and Renegotiation

- Everyone has changed – pleasant surprises or new conflict.
- Everyone needs space to adjust!
- Negotiate new household – “**new normal**”
- Members feel more secure, relaxed and comfortable.
- Readjustment challenges could resurface, support is important!

Reintegration & Stabilization

- “New normal” established
- **Readjustment** challenges can resurface, ok to ask for help!

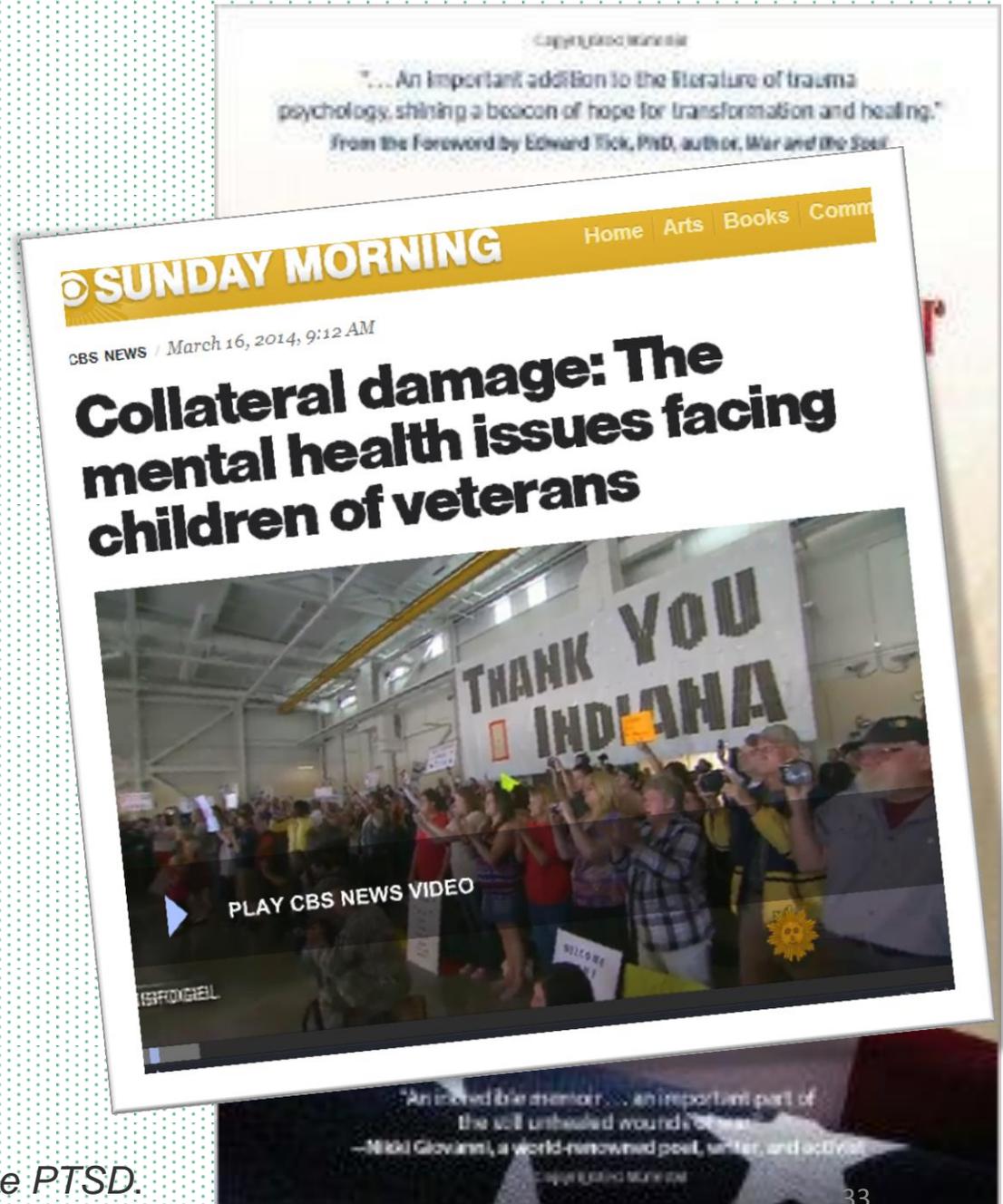
Positive Results of Deployment

What skills do youth acquire as a result of a loved one's deployment?

- Fosters maturity
- Growth inducing
- Encourages independence
- Encourages flexibility, adaptability
- Builds skills for adjusting to separation and losses faced later in life
- Strengthens family bonds
- Civics—relationship with community

Children of Veterans

- Main concerns
 - PTSD in parent
 - Loss of connection to other military youth
- Mental health care *possibly* available for child.



Skills to successfully navigate the deployment cycle.

Identify the skills that youth need to successfully navigate each stage of deployment.

Skills to Successfully Navigate Military Life

Communication

Conflict resolution

Leadership

Self-responsibility

Social skills

Resiliency

Problem solving

Self-discipline

Managing feeling

Coping

Teamwork

Responsible citizenship

Sharing

Cooperation

Caring

Flexibility

Perseverance

Resourcefulness

Goal setting



Belonging

“It is important for me to meet other military kids because **no one else understands.**”

-Indiana military teen

When youth feel like they belong:

Relationships

Social skills

Communication skills

Concern for others

Empathy

Conflict resolution



Independence

“When children realize that **they can control the outcomes of their decisions and actions**, they’re more likely to know that **they have the ability to do what it takes to bounce back.**”

-Dr. Ken Ginsburg

When youth experience independence:

Resilience
Responsibility
Self-sufficient
Problem solving skills
Resourcefulness
Self-discipline



Mastery

“The more youth master life experiences, the more they realize they can **tackle new challenges** and, thereby, **develop genuine confidence** in themselves.”

-Dr. Ken Ginsburg

When youth master something:

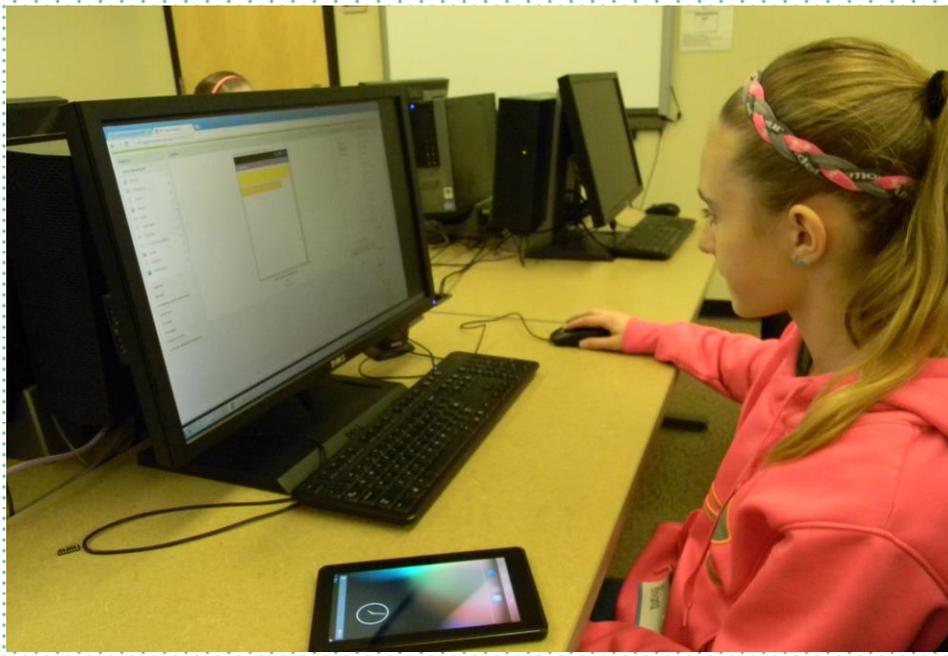
Learning to learn

Self-esteem

Competence

Confidence

Stress management



Generosity

“Youth need to feel their lives have **meaning and purpose.**”

-Essential Elements of 4-H

When youth experience generosity:

Sense of purpose

Sharing

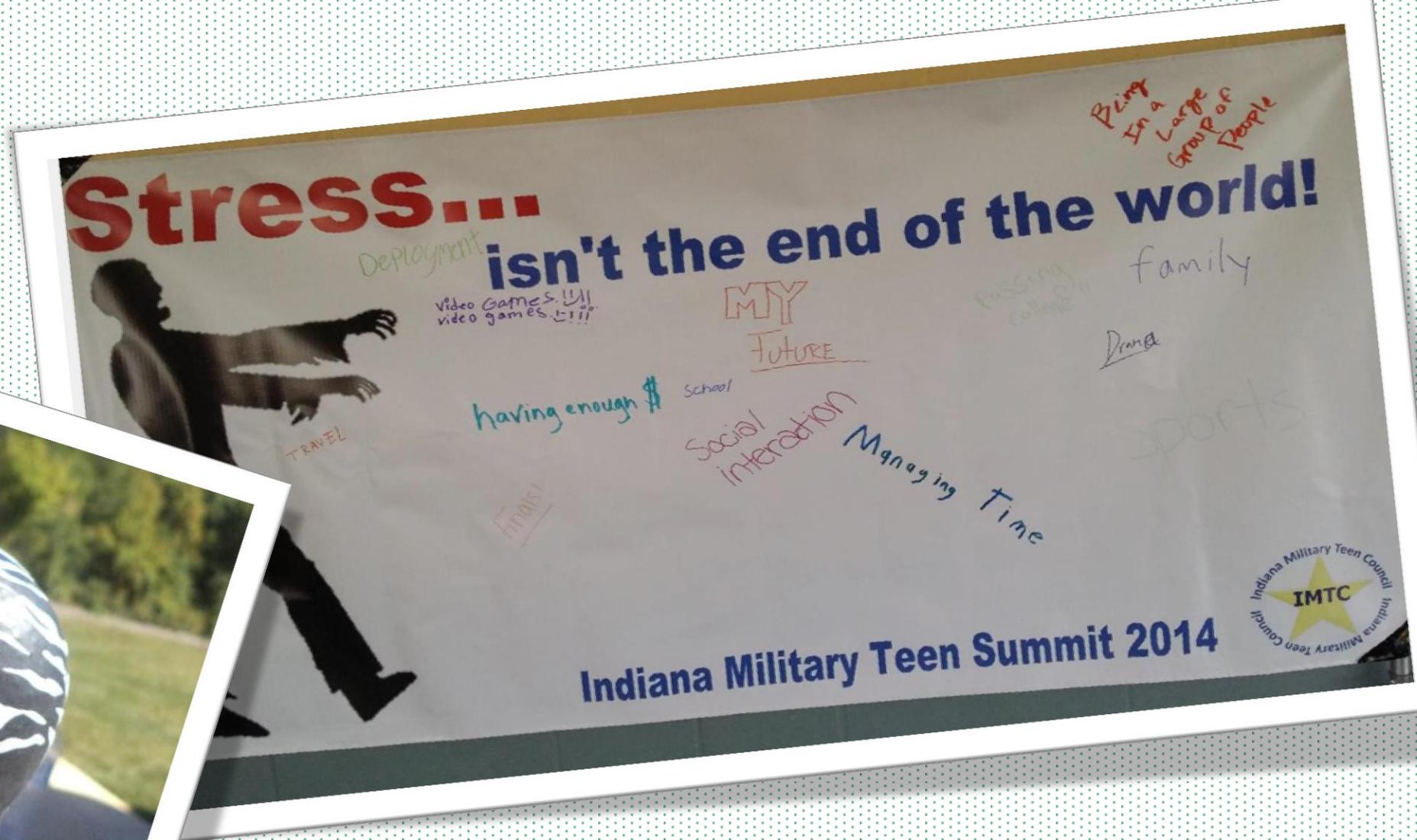
Service learning

Character

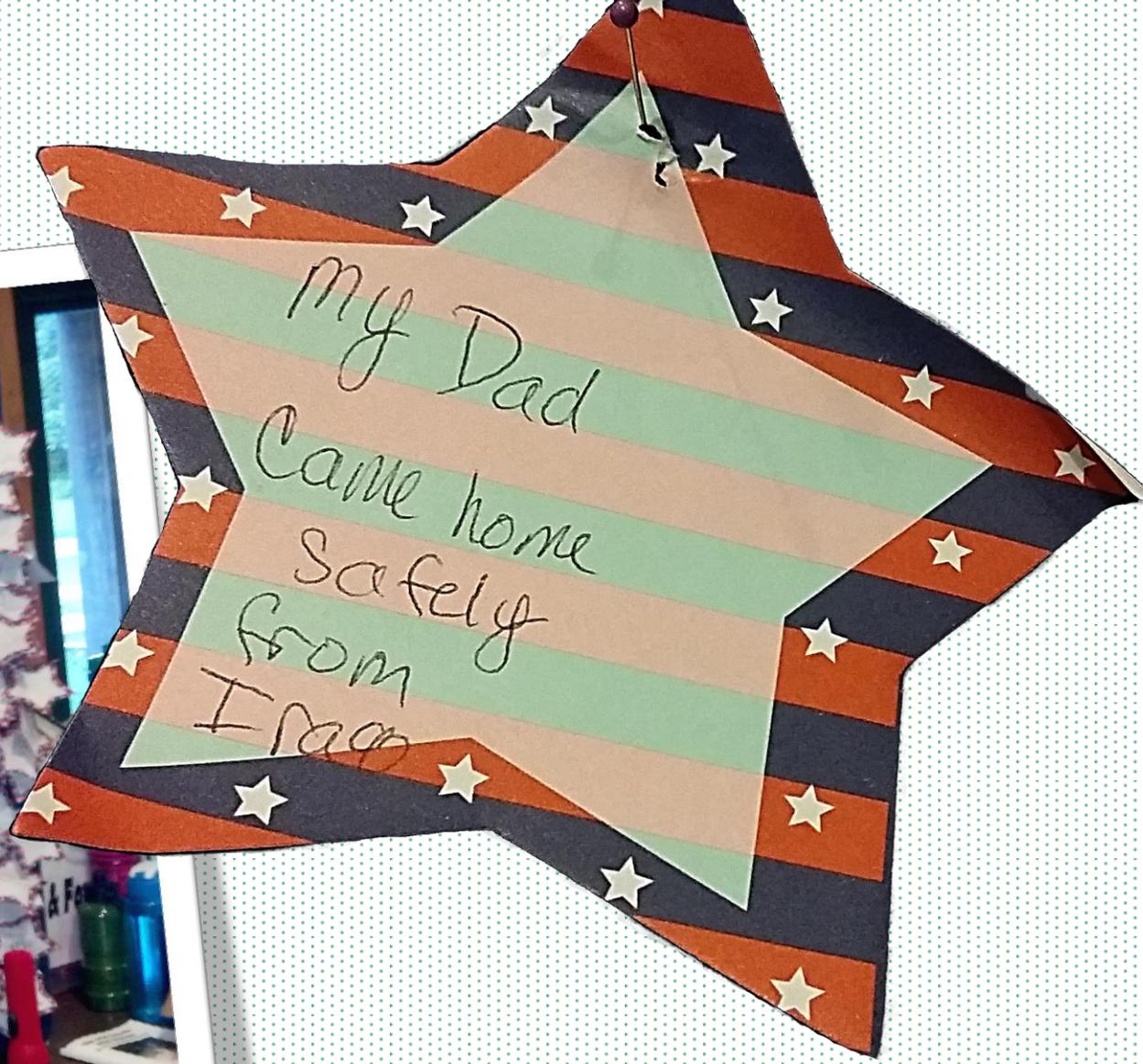
Compassion



Coping



Resilience





**Life Skills,
Citizenship
&
Leadership**



**Sports,
Fitness
&
Health**

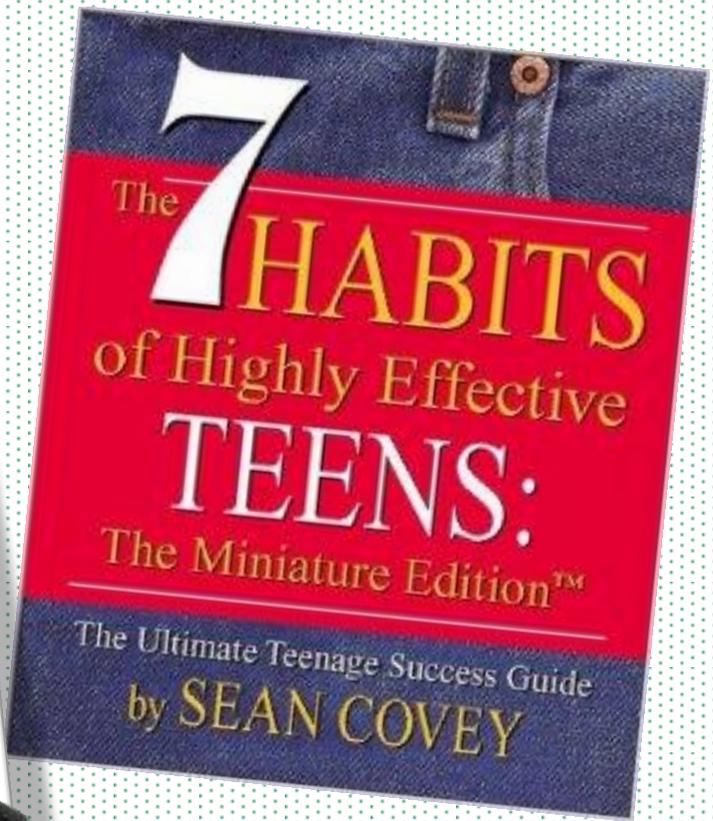
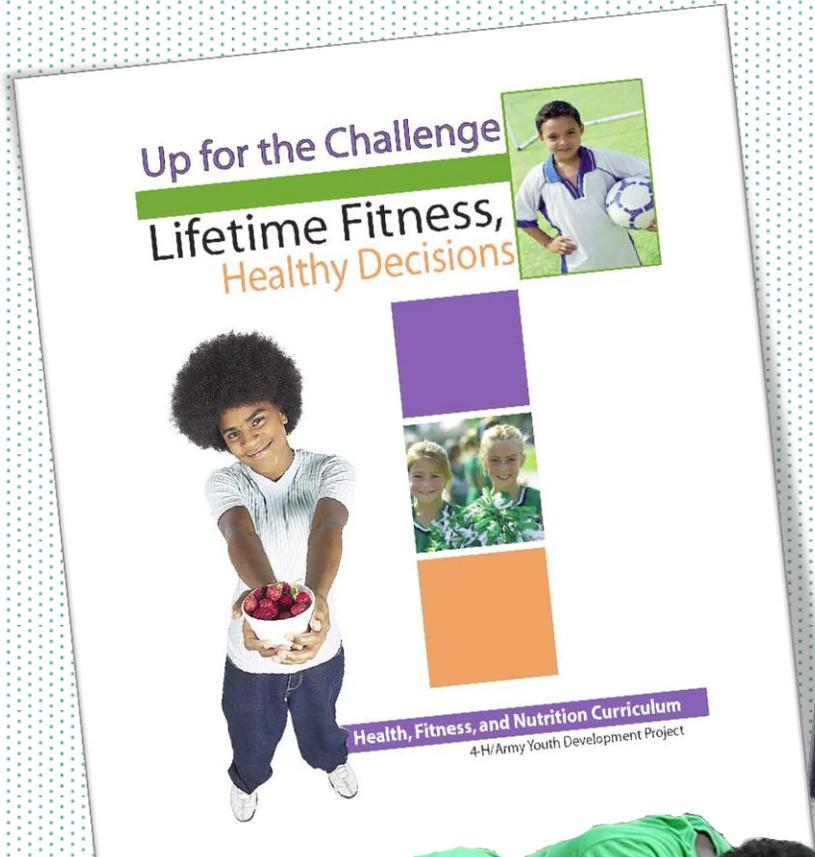


**Arts,
Recreation
&
Leisure**



**Academic
Support,
Mentoring
& STEM**

Healthy Living



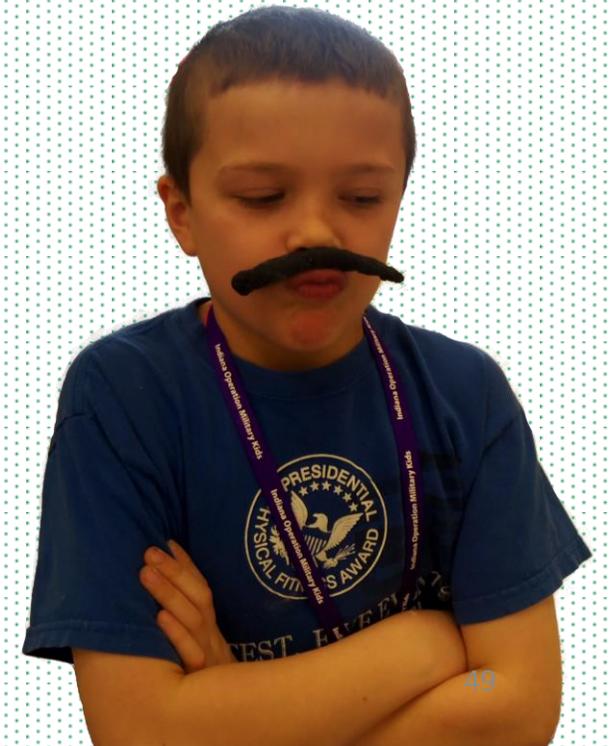
Life Skills, Citizenship & Leadership



Academic Support, Mentoring & Intervention

M.K.I.S.S.

**MILITARY
KIDS
IN
SCHOOL
SUPPORT**



Arts, Recreation, & Leisure Activities



MILITARY KIDS DUNES DISCOVERY CAMP
DUNES LEARNING CENTER | CHESTERTON, IN | JULY 20-25, 2014



PURPLE UP!
for military kids

COMPLICATED

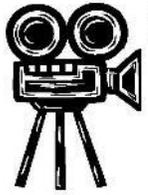
ROLLERCOASTER

I would like school to know that some of us like being Military kids.

Proud

Hard

We don't
Want
Special
treatment



3, 2, 1... Action!

Videography
Workshop
Handbook

aring for Reunion and Reintegration

OPERATION: Military Kids

OPERATION: BOOTS OFF
Guide

experience **OPERATION: MILITARY KIDS**

Activity plans for kids to use before, during and after loved ones are deployed.

OPERATION: Military Kids

Speak Out

SECTION 3
Reintegration Youth

SECTION 1
Pre-deployment

SECTION 2
Mobilization

SECTION 4
Reintegration Youth and Family



OPERATION: Military Kids

OPERATION: BOOTS ON

A Guide for a Mock Deployment

OPERATION: MILITARY KIDS
Deployment Cycle Support
Yellow Ribbon Youth Outreach
Activity Guide

30 Day Reintegration &
60 Day Reintegration

OPERATION: MILITARY KIDS
Deployment Cycle Support
Yellow Ribbon Youth Outreach
Activity Guide

Pre-deployment & Mobilization

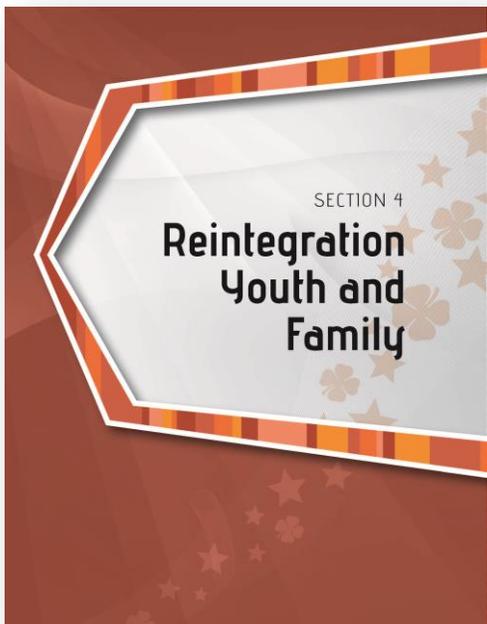
OPERATION: MILITARY KIDS
MILITARY FAMILIES
IN OUR OWN
BACKYARD.

DEPLOYMENT
It's not a game

OPERATION: MILITARY KIDS
Deployment Cycle Support
Yellow Ribbon Youth Outreach
Activity Guide

Volunteer Training Guide

Activity	Deployment Stage	Life Skills	Resilience Skills	4-H SET Abilities	National Education Standards
Re-Engineering Our Family	Reintegration: Youth & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Decision Making • Self-responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social • Family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate, demonstration • Collect data • Collaborate • Organize, order, classify • Use tools • Summarize 	NT.K-12.4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecommunications to collaborate, publish, and interact with peers, experts and other audiences • A variety of media and formats to communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences



Families will re-engineer how they communicate with their Service Member to help ease the transitions around reintegration, by providing the Service Member with thoughtful, specific details about their daily lives.

Resources available to support military youth

Identify local and statewide support networks for military children and families impacted by the deployment cycle.

Branch Specific Youth Support

Indiana National Guard State Youth Coordinators

Ms. Anne Tedore

317-247-3300 x 85441

Ms. Jillian Lain

317-247-3300 x 85481

310th ESC Army Reserve

Ms. Ashley Gregg

School Support Specialist

Mr. Jordan Dinkins

Youth Support Specialist

317-532-4409

4-H + Military = ?



PURDUE
EXTENSION

LOCAL FACES
COUNTLESS CONNECTIONS

American Red Cross

The American Red Cross' unwavering commitment to members of the U.S. military, its veterans and their families continues to grow and develop more than a century after Clara Barton first recruited nurses to support the U.S. Army. Today, the Red Cross is meeting the needs of a changing military and expanding services to veterans. Red Cross support of military members and their families enhances morale and contributes to increased operational capability in several ways.

www.redcross.org/military



**American
Red Cross**

Boys & Girls Clubs of America

The MISSION: Youth Outreach partnership supports military youth, ages 6 to 18, coping with a deployed parent, or parents, by creating a positive, supportive network. Through this partnership, children of National Guard, Reserve and Active Duty families, who do not live near or have access to a military Youth Center, can receive a free membership to their local Boys & Girls Club.

www.bgca.org/military



**BOYS & GIRLS
CLUB**

Military Child Education Coalition

The work of the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) is focused on ensuring quality educational opportunities for all military children affected by mobility, family separation, and transition. A 501(c)(3) non-profit, world-wide organization, the MCEC performs research, develops resources, conducts professional institutes and conferences, and develops and publishes resources for all constituencies.

www.militarychild.org



National Association for Child Care, Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)

“ChildCare Aware of America”

Operation Military Child Care

The Operation Military Child Care program provides fee assistance for families of deployed or mobilized National Guard, Reserve and Active Duty Army soldiers during the duration of the deployment.

Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood (MCCYN)

The Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood program provides fee assistance for families of Active Duty Army Service Members and Army Civilians / Technicians who are unable to access on-post child care.

www.naccrra.org/military-families



YMCA

Provide hands-on, innovative, specialized programs and support services to military service members and their families with a particular focus on junior-enlisted men and women — the individuals on the front lines of defending our nation. Programs are offered at no or low cost and require no dues or membership fees.

www.asymca.org



Many, Many, Many More

- Family Assistance Centers
- Survivor Outreach Services
- Military OneSource
- NMFA Educator's Tool Kit
- Tutor.com/military
- Militarykidsconnect.org
- Ourmilitarykids.org
- eXtension.org Military Families Learning Network
- School Superintendents Assoc.
- School Liaison Officers
- American Legion & Auxiliary
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- ...
- ...

So...

What can you do? (And not do.)

Share ways to support Indiana's military youth throughout the deployment cycle.

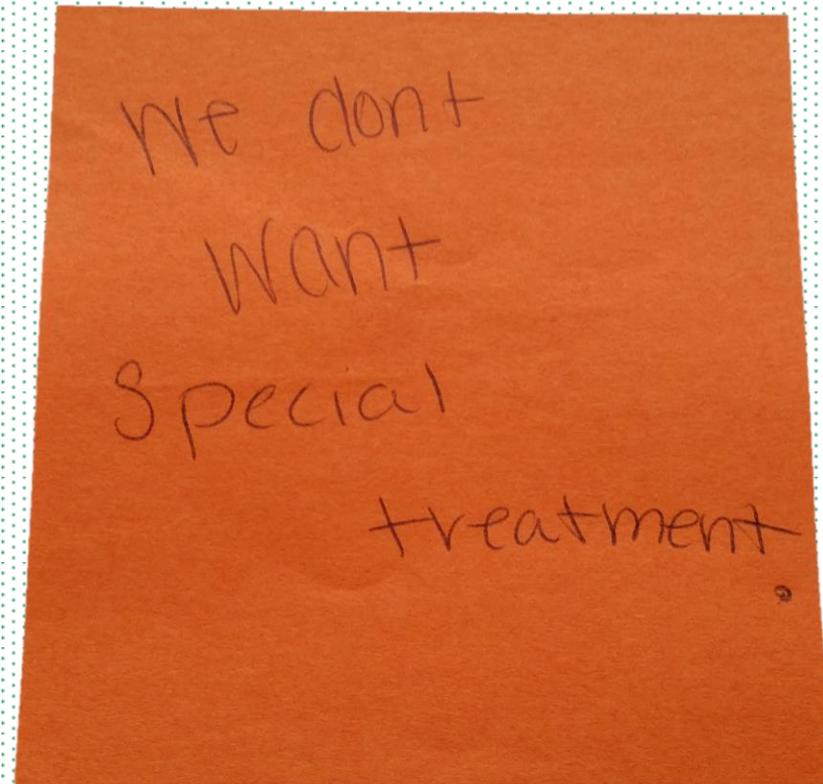
Do...

- Ask about their service member
 - Find out what you can do and **DO IT**
 - Listen to concerns and discuss.
 - Share information and resources.
 - Celebrate the Month of the Military Child
- Acknowledge and validate feelings
 - Continue to help during reintegration
 - Partner with organizations already supporting military youth
 - Just say, “Thank you!”

Don't...

“Don't cozy up to me. That's creepy.”

-Military kid



Don't...FORGET THAT THEY ARE KIDS!

