

What can Parents and families do when one parent is deployed

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/32406781/ns/health-kids_and_parenting/

What parents can do

The Military Child Education Coalition, a nonprofit advocacy group, says deployment can be a difficult time, for both parents and the families they leave behind. It offers these tips for military families:

- Stay in touch. Ask about homework, tests and school activities. This will help you feel connected to family life.
- Share details about the deployment. Don't think you're doing your children a favor by sparing them the details — they want to know where Mommy or Daddy will be.
- The remaining parent or caregiver must make care to take care of his or her own needs first. Make sure you're connected to other people through groups on base, community groups, church groups or parent groups, so you will have your own support network.
- If it can be determined, find a concrete way to illustrate how long the deployed parent will be away. One way is to create a paper chain, with each day represented by an individual link.
- Leave remembrances. Photos, especially those of the family together, can be very powerful. Record yourself reading favorite bedtime stories or singing favorite songs. These will be treasured resources while you are away.