



Military-connected families are a highly mobile population that experiences unpredictability and frequent changes. Effective coping strategies can assist our children in navigating those challenges and acquiring critical life skills.

One of the most valuable tools is to communicate regularly with your children. Allow your child to express their feelings and help them work through emotions. Welcome what you hear and ask for more details. Some good opportunities to engage your child in conversation could be at bedtime, dinnertime, or even while you are driving in the car.



Being able to express emotions and feelings can contribute greatly to our own mental wellbeing. MCEC has developed a comprehensive Well-Being Toolkit that goes more in depth on the components of emotional intelligence. It also gives specific strategies and resources to use with children and youth.

Little ones often do not have the vocabulary yet to express themselves and the scope of their feelings in nonphysical ways. Help your child by teaching them to give feelings names, and then provide plenty of opportunities to identify feelings and respond to different situations positively. For school-age children and adolescents, one strategy to use is encouraging children to express their feelings by using crafts, art, music, or journal writing (including digital venues).

Help your child identify a “web of support”- a list of caring people who are trustworthy, safe, and whom children and teens are comfortable confiding in. Introduce the concept to children that it is healthy to communicate your feelings to this circle of trusted adults.

Keep routines even during times of unpredictability. Routines can help military-connected children cope because they provide some sense of stability. Additionally, spend quality time with each of your children to help children feel supported and loved in challenging times.

VIDEOS

- **Managing Big Emotions**
<https://youtu.be/9rvUjnhcpYs>
- **Stress and Anxiety in Adolescents**
<https://youtu.be/wr4N-SdekqY>
- **Importance of Family Routine**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jLU59JWAYk>

RECOMMENDED WEBINARS

- **Magic of the Family Meal**
<https://youtu.be/FutfOwc2478?si=BDjSpyF8qmDA7uwP>
- **Tips and Strategies for Interacting with Military-Connected Teens**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tOBuGkPOCE>
- **Effective Listening**
https://youtu.be/dal9JP4kvsW?si=Jyl1fG6N3TY_jGr_

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HELPFUL LINKS

- Military Family Life Counselors (MFLC) offer free, confidential counseling.
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/benefits/military-family-life-counseling-program/>
- Military OneSource has a variety of resources for transitioning families including a Plan My Move guide and confidential counseling. Call 800-342-9647 to speak with a consultant 24/7.
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/>
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network, Checklist:
https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/understanding_child_trauma_and_resilience_for_military_parents_and_caregivers.pdf

<p>MCEC Resources</p> 	<p>MCEC Website</p> 	<p>MCEC Military Student Consultant – personalized support for military families</p> 
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References available upon request.

Current as of January 2025.