



DEPLOYMENT DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR THE DEPLOYED MEMBER AND THEIR CHILD(REN)

ELEMENTARY (6-11 YRS OLD)

Feelings:

Encourage your child to talk about feelings and concerns about the deployment. Is s/he happy, sad or frightened? Share your feelings and concerns. When feelings are voiced by your son/daughter, listen to him/her and reassure him/her.

Military life:

Share with your children information regarding the deployment. Explain your role and day to day life. A tour of your workplace can help children better understand what it is that you do. Acquaint them with military terms and jargon.

Communication:

Share ways that the family can communicate during the deployment. Some suggestions include letters, emails, tapes, drawings, postcards, schoolwork, and newspaper articles. Talk about how communication during deployment is different than writing to a friend in a different town or province, how it takes more time. Discuss possible plans for before, during and after deployment.

SECONDARY (9-12 YRS OLD)

Feelings:

This age can talk about most of their feelings and might express very strong concerns about the deploying parent and the upcoming separation. Encourage them to share feelings (happy or sad). They also worry about your safety in terms of other people harming the command. Explain the command's defences if this issue arises. Talk about responsibilities of family and individuals.

Military life:

Talk with your child(ren) and find out what they know about your job and the military. This age group usually knows a great deal.

Communication:

Explain to your child(ren) that sending and receiving mail overseas takes time, it is not instantaneous like email. This age can write letters, emails, be in charge of sending newspaper clippings, or keeping a family journal. Spend some time brainstorming creative ways to communicate.