



# Awareness to Action

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# KANSAS



## FAMILY RESILIENCE

**Kansas families are nothing if not resilient. This is especially true of Kansas military families. On top of typical, everyday demands, military families must endure the added burden of deployments, frequent moves, and knowing their loved ones might be in harm's way.**

**In spite of all these obstacles, research shows that most military families demonstrate resilience when facing these issues. Still, there is a lot we can do as friends and neighbors to integrate military families into the community and provide another layer of support. Read on for ways to bolster resilience among military family members.**

**Children** handle family stress better when they can understand and react to what is happening. They also draw strength from positive, nurturing relationships with parents and other adults.

- Offer high-quality child care
- Support parents
- Establish school programs that foster teacher-child relationships
- Remind children they are part of a safe, welcoming community

**Teens** often seek comfort beyond the family — in friends, activities, school and jobs. They find resilience through self-reflection; approaching situations from multiple perspectives; and making conscious, positive choices.

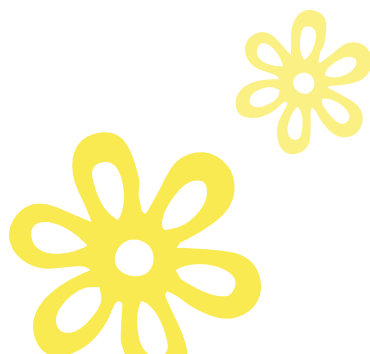
- Provide opportunities for involvement (e.g., service learning)
- Invite them to join social networks (e.g., clubs, organizations, teams)
- Educate adults who work with youth about military life and deployment

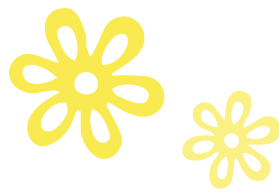
**Adults** set the tone for how the rest of the family acts and reacts. Resilient families rely on routines that promote togetherness, especially during difficult times. Parents are more likely to participate in activities that focus on the children or the whole family.

- Invite them to activities that involve the entire family
- Inform them about available community supports
- Include them in events that link them to the community
- Involve them in activities you organize at a variety of settings and times

**Everyone** faces adversity at some point. The best thing you can do for a military family is to offer continuous friendship and consideration. Belonging to a supportive, interconnected community can make all the difference when facing adversity.

*Adapted from "Understanding and Promoting Resilience in Military Families," by MacDermid, Samper, Schwarz, Nishida and Nyaronga. Military Family Research Institute, Purdue University, 2008. [www.mfri.purdue.edu/content/reports/Understanding and Promoting Resilience.pdf](http://www.mfri.purdue.edu/content/reports/Understanding%20and%20Promoting%20Resilience.pdf)*





## AWARENESS TO ACTION

### What You Can Do

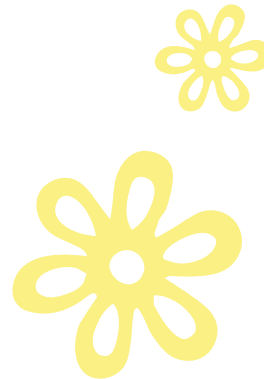
Community groups can hold childcare training for military kids, or coordinate a community resource festival for military families. They can even invite soldiers and their families to speak at club meetings.

Families and individuals can encourage military kids to join in social events and activities. They can drop off a meal that a military family can enjoy together — or invite a family over for a shared dinner.

### 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.

For instance, employers can consider hiring returning veterans and military spouses. Teachers, on the other hand, can encourage the entire class to send letters of support to a military kid's deployed parent.



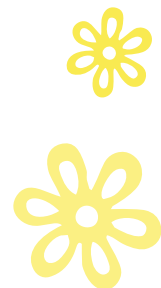
### Partners

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

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*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.*

