

I am a Military B.R.A.T.

Brave. Resilient. Adaptable. Tolerant.

Hello, I am a military child; one or both of my parents are in the armed forces. Below are few things about me and the stressors my education will face:

- ▶ I just moved into your school district. Ask me how many schools I have attended.

FACT: Military children generally move six to nine times during their K-12 years. Many make multiple moves during high school alone – some even during their senior year.

- ▶ I am nervous because I don't know anyone at this school yet. I'm also sad because I miss my great group of friends at my last school. Everything feels strange here. School is supposed to be safe but I feel scared.

FACT: In addition to giving up friends and routines, students must deal with other frustrations as they move across state lines or even from school to school. Some of these challenges include different (or unknown) academic standards and courses, different promotion and graduation requirements, different programs for children with special needs, and different requirements for transfer and acceptance of records.

- ▶ I would like to get to know other children; perhaps you can connect me with other military children or leaders in the class. The worst feeling for me is sitting alone at lunch.

FACT: Military-connected students often struggle to develop and maintain friendships. I will learn better if you can connect with me and help me connect with others.

- ▶ Feelings sometimes get in the way of my attention and learning. Stressors include worries about making friends, pleasing new teachers, fitting in and knowing what to do in a new place.

FACT: Transitions can cause gaps in learning and impact motivation and persistence when tackling academic tasks. Emotional wellbeing directly impacts academic engagement.

- ▶ My grades might slip, or my behavior might become problematic, when my parent deploys. These changes may be due to the stress and anxiety caused by my parent's absence. It would be helpful if you:
 - Ask my parents if there are deployments in our future. Sometimes they don't tell me everything. My behavior might change – I may become sad or angry, for example – once I know my parent is deploying.
 - Connect with me and check in once in a while to see how my family is doing and if we get to talk to my deployed parent. I would enjoy sharing something about my deployed parent with my classmates.
 - Please connect with my parent at home. Find out if more can be done from school to help with life at home.

FACT: Common symptoms of children with deployed parents include clinginess, choosing to socialize with adults rather than peers, anger (especially directed against the deployed parent), agitation, difficulty sleeping, decreased school performance, low self esteem and fear of new people or activities.



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