

Communication PRinciples for Principals

APRIL 2011

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD



IDEA

We celebrate the Month of the Military Child to stress the importance of providing children with quality services and support to help them succeed in a global environment. Military children assume many special responsibilities that deserve our understanding and recognition.

The Month of the Military Child.

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) joins the Department of Defense and military communities around the world in honoring military children during April – The Month of the Military Child.

For nearly a quarter of a century, DoD has been designating April as the month to recognize the special qualities of our military children. The sacrifices they make to help keep our nation's defenses strong are sometimes overlooked or underestimated. But the parents of these children recognize the strength and courage their children display as they support their families.

DoDEA children make many sacrifices growing up in a military family. From frequent moves to knowing their parent is serving in a dangerous place, military children must develop resiliency at a young age. This strength is something they carry with them throughout life.

Throughout the month, DoDEA encourage schools to plan special events to honor military children and have administrators and principals incorporate the themes of this month into their every day duties and responsibilities. These efforts and special events will stress the importance of providing children with quality services and support to help them succeed in the mobile military lifestyle.

DoDEA educators know that there are many additional challenges for our children. But there are also many opportunities. DoDEA educators constantly strive to ensure highest student achievement for all of our students. Our schools welcome students, teach them and work hard to prepare them for the future. The children of our service members have much to contribute to their schools, their communities and the nation.

This celebration provides a great opportunity for our school leaders and teachers to underscore the importance of our mission and the commitment we have to military families. This tip sheet will provide some talking points for leaders and teachers to use in that regard.



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<http://www.dodea.edu>

Promoting Awareness of the Month of the Military Child

You can promote awareness of this special observance in many ways. One way is to identify employees who have great speaking and presentation skills who can speak about the daily contributions that our schools make -- folks who have a good understanding of the challenges that military children face when they have a parent who serves, particularly in times of deployment.

These same people can be potential interviewees who can be ready to talk to the news media, including installation publications and broadcast outlets. Have them focus on talking about schools and students and how our teachers and schools can make a difference to families.

Consider the following in choosing someone.

- Someone who is comfortable with public speaking and is absolutely dedicated to military kids.
- Someone who understands deployments and the special challenges they present to military kids
- Someone who deals directly with students every day such as classroom teachers, counselors, and school psychologists. A principal would be great as well.

Should the Area or DoDEA Communications Office need a candidate, please work with your area Public Affairs Officer to provide a list of potential spokespeople.

Make a Public Statement About Month of the Military Child

“Our children make many sacrifices growing up in a military family. From frequent moves to knowing their parent is serving in a dangerous place, military children must develop resiliency at a young age. This strength is something they carry with them throughout life and I believe it is a testament to the strength and resolve of our nation’s military members who serve as role models every day for their children.

As educators, we know that there are many additional challenges for our children. But there are also many opportunities. As DoDEA educators, we constantly strive to ensure highest student achievement for all of our students. Our schools welcome students, teach them and work hard to prepare them for the future. The children of our service members have much to contribute to their schools, their communities and the nation.

Join me in celebrating these youngest members of our military family as we celebrate the Month of the Military Child.”

The Department of Defense has long understood the value of caring for and celebrating children of service members. April is designated as the Month of the Military Child, underscoring the important role military children play in the Armed Forces Community. The Month of the Military Child is a time to applaud military families and their children for the daily sacrifices they make and challenges they overcome.

TIPS



Use the following talking points when you get the opportunity to speak about the Month of the Military Child:

- The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) joins the Department of Defense and the military community in celebrating April as Month of the Military Child.
- Military children endure hardships and assume some special responsibilities that deserve our understanding and recognition.
- The Department of Defense has long understood the value of caring for and celebrating children of service members. April is designated as the Month of the Military Child, underscoring the important role military children play in the Armed Forces Community. The Month of the Military Child is a time to applaud military families and their children for the daily sacrifices they make and challenges they overcome.
- As military families transfer and endure deployments and separations, DoDEA plays a special role in the lives of the children. In a time when many things may be different, schools often remain an important constant for our students.
- Military children bravely manage the challenges of the military lifestyle. They may move many times, often across the nation and around the world, bear the burden of having a loved one serving in harm's way and may not see their loved ones for months on end.
- Children of members of the Armed Forces display strength and courage, often helping their home front parent or caregiver by taking on additional responsibilities during deployments and other separations from their Service member parent(s).
- DoDEA teachers and staff are uniquely positioned to appreciate and support the military child since the majority of DoDEA students have a parent serving in our Armed Forces. Our mission is to provide exemplary educational programs in military communities worldwide that inspire and prepare all students for success in the global environment.
- Military children are prepared for continuous learning and productive citizenship in a global environment. They see the world from a much larger vantage point and have an appreciation for the richness and diversity of cultures around the world. Many live in European, Asian, and North American cities, villages and towns. They eat local foods, shop in local stores, and interact with families of their host nation in ways that make us all very proud. Empowered by our school host nation program and foreign language instruction, school-age children often become the real adventurers in the family, leading their moms and dads to local museums, tourist sites, shops and eateries. They become the family linguists overseas. They build bridges between cultures with simple smiles and make lasting connections that are often more difficult for adults to develop.

- Military children fulfill a special diplomatic role while stationed overseas. The lasting friendships and relationships that are forged by students make a significant contribution to the bonds that keep our nation and the world at peace.
- American military children are among our nation's most mobile populations. They often move every three years from one school district to the next. Transition issues are important considerations for military families.
- At DoDEA, we know that military children face many obstacles unique to their situation, such as having a parent deployed for extended periods of time and moving frequently. Deployments and family separations can be stressful times for children. DoDEA schools are part of the wide community support network available to families. Schools link deployed parents and students by email and other technologies. Our most important contribution is to remain focused on the educational mission and provide a stable environment for the children in our schools especially during these times of stress.
- Throughout the month, DoDEA schools will plan special events to honor military children. These events will highlight the importance of providing children with quality services and support to help them succeed in the mobile military lifestyle.

For more information, visit our DoDEA celebrates website at http://www.dodea.edu/dodeaCelebrates/2011_militaryChild/index.cfm