



IMAGINE STEPPING INTO
YOUR CHILD'S WORLD AND
SEEING THINGS FROM HIS
OR HER POINT OF VIEW.

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Talking about dangerous work

The dangerous work of military moms and dads can be frightening to their children. Children depend on adults for their protection and safety. They may feel helpless when they believe a parent is in danger. Here are some ideas to help you and your children deal with dangerous work issues.

Talk with your children about danger.

- The best way to deal with your children's fears is to talk about them openly and honestly in words they can understand.
- Talking with your children can ease their fears, no matter how scary the situation, and it lets them know they are not facing these fears alone.
- Comfort your children about your dangerous work by sharing that you are trained to be careful and will do everything you can to stay safe. Avoid making promises (*I'll be home safely by your birthday*) you may not be able to keep.
- Encourage your children to express their feelings about dangerous work through talk, play, drawings, etc. Help them make "bravery medals" as a reward for facing their fears.
- Let your children know they can share whatever feelings they have about a parent's dangerous work, then listen sensitively, showing them you are ready to hear all they have to say.
- Let them know that other children share similar feelings about their parents' dangerous work.

Help your children feel safe.

- During stressful times, keep your children as close as possible to a parent or caregiver to help them feel safe.
- Realize that young children have different ideas about dangerous work. Find out what your children know and talk to them about their feelings.
- Answer their questions honestly, using words they can understand.
- Don't try to give your children *all* the information.
- Follow your child's lead: answer questions as they are asked and watch how your child responds before deciding what to say next.