

Teen Video – Youth Coping with Military Deployment:
“Promoting Resilience in Your Family”
Narrator Script

The video begins with pictures of deployments, families and active duty troops. Key statements from the interviews are provided by the teens at a rapid pace to introduce the issues up front. “A film for teens, presented by teens who have experienced deployed” splits the comments. Segue to Cameron, a 16 year old teen boy whose father was recently deployed, playing ball with his younger brother (8 yo) and a teen friend (16). Cameron indicates that he’s got to go, motioning to the camera audience, and that they will meet later. Cameron walks to the camera.

Introduction/ Deployment Concerns:

Hello!! My name is Cameron Lucke. If you are watching this video, chances are that someone close to you is going to be or has been deployed as part of their military job. But, don’t worry; you’re not alone, even though it may feel that way sometimes. There are many families in the same situation and everyone handles the experience in different ways. *(Close up)* When your mom or dad first left, you may have felt upset or scared. You may have been mad that your mom would miss your games or school activities or wouldn’t be able to help with your homework. On the other hand, you may have felt proud that they were the ones helping to defend and protect our country. *(Smiles and shrugs)* Some kids don’t feel any differently at all when their parent has to go away. However you feel is OK. We made this video so we could show you how other kids are feeling about somebody in their family being deployed. Maybe some of the things they are doing will work for you too.

Teens discuss how they felt about hearing of the impending deployment and introduce some of the ways they started dealing with it.

Difficulties With Deployment

Cameron is sitting at a picnic table under a tree, looking at a schoolbook.

Having mom or dad gone can be tough. Before your mom leaves, she may be busy getting ready for her military job. This may not leave a lot of time to spend with you. Maybe you are wondering what you are going to do without her and how things will change in the family. You may even be wondering how things are going to be when she comes back. You might be having strange feelings you’ve never had before as you go through this deployment experience. These feelings are really normal... *(he reflects a moment and closes his book)* and they’re not because there’s anything wrong with you. They come from uncertainty about the future and the big changes to your normal routine. This is a lot for us to go through but others have gone through it and have come out ok, as you will see....

Teens discuss how deployment affects their family and their personal routines, disrupted family activities. News of prolonged deployments are discussed. Problems with school and grades are raised.

Worry

Cameron is writing a letter to his father. He puts the notebook aside and discusses worries.

Some of us have been separated from our dads before for military duties, but this time it may seem different because of the potential danger of his job during war time. When you

think of war, you may think of your dad getting hurt or even dying. *(He reflects)* These are the worst things that could happen to your dad while he's away. It's normal to worry about that, but most return home safely. It's important to realize that your dad is a part of the best military in the world and they're surrounded by others who'll be watching their back. Bottom line? It's important to recognize your fear but not to dwell on it. If you have these feelings, talk about how you're feeling with someone in your family or someone you trust. Let's see what other kids are thinking about...

Teen interviews of worries and concerns.

Watching the News (Media)

Cameron is sitting under a tree reading a newspaper. His younger brother sits next to him, oblivious, playing a Gameboy.

Some kids find that watching news coverage of the war can be upsetting. It seems that only the negative parts are shown on the news. You're probably hearing positive stories from your family member that never make it to the news. If you do watch the news or read the paper *(motions to it)*, keep in mind that things are not always bad as they seem. For every negative thing that is shown there are many positive things that are not being shown. I'll bet that your mom or dad is much more likely to be helping out with the positive stuff.

(He goes back to reading the paper.)

Coping

Cameron is playing with a basketball. He stops to discuss coping skills...

Coping is what we do to feel better when we feel bad or don't understand our feelings. There are many different ways to cope. Some make things better but others can even make things worse. It's important to learn healthy ways to cope. It's normal to be angry when your mom first leaves but staying angry doesn't do anyone any good. Most kids find it's helpful to join activities outside the home a great way to relieve stress. Some play sports, others join clubs, and some hang out with friends or take new classes at school. It could also be a great opportunity to spend more time with the rest of your family. Also, consider looking to other people to talk to ...such as other relatives, maybe your friends, maybe even a doctor, your minister, or teachers. You may even know someone else whose family member is deployed and knows exactly what you're going through. Look to these people and develop relationships with them while your family member is away. Believe me; it'll make your family deployment experience a lot easier.

Teens talk of ways they coped (are coping) with the deployment.

Support

Cameron is talks to the audience about the importance of trusting adults in the community.

Remember that we are not alone during this deployment experience. There are many people who are able and willing to help us. It's ok to let a trusted adult know when you're feeling bad. If they can't help you, chances are they can find somebody who can. The military and your community are also very concerned about you while your family member is away. *(Cameron's brother runs up –he puts his arm around him.)* They have many ways to help you get through the deployment experience. *(He walks off with his brother).*

Personal Growth

Cameron is playing catch with his brother and friend. He approaches with glove and ball in hand...

There's no question that things change once your dad leaves, but not all change is bad. Sometimes when we're tested like this, it's surprising how much we can overcome. You'll learn that you can do things on your own that you never thought you could do. Some kids have less supervision with one parent gone. Some like that, while others feel unfairly weighed down by all the extra stuff we have to do. Most families count on us to do more than we did before. Taking on extra responsibility is a big help to our families, and may even lead to more responsibility and independence later on. *(He smiles and nods knowingly, showing the car keys, and runs back to play catch.)*

Interviews of family responsibility and growth...

Conclusion:

Cameron is putting stuff into his backpack, getting ready to go...

So, you saw how other people were dealing with military deployment. I got involved in this project because my father was recently deployed too. My family experienced many of the issues we discussed in this video. We came out OK and I know that you will too.

Remember, everyone handles the deployment experience differently. It's a difficult time for you and your family. Whatever feelings you're having are normal. Sure, there'll be tough times when you feel sad and alone, but there'll also be times of great pride and joy when you realize that your family is doing something great thing for our country. *(He acknowledges his little brother.)* Remember to take time to take care of yourself and your family. Remember to try to find positive stories about the war, and remember to talk to people. If you are having trouble dealing with or understanding your feelings, don't hesitate to talk to a family member, a friend, a trusted adult, or one of the many professionals whose job it is to help you through this challenging time. Oh, and don't forget to check out the other cool resources contained on this video. Thanks for watching and I hope we made things easier for you. See 'ya!

The group walks off... music, credits, "for more information, print out information provided on this dic..."