



Before deployment Major changes worry children. Knowing that a parent will be leaving for a long period of time can be quite stressful. Step into Your Child's World with these ways to help your children before deployment.

**Reassure your children**

- Let them know they can talk about how they feel about the deployment. Share your feelings with them, too.
- Inform them of where the deployment is, what the assignment is, and when the family will be reunited, if possible.
- Assure your children that they are not the reason Mom or Dad is leaving.
- Keep family routines as normal as possible.

**Keep lines of communication open**

- Be available whenever and wherever your children want to talk.
- When children ask questions, be truthful. Keep answers simple and use words children will understand.
- Let your children know how their routine will change.
- Talk with the child's teachers about the deployment.
- Inform the caregiver of your family's rules and routines.

**Involve your children**

- Detail how your children can help at home.
- Remind the children that the same household rules will apply.
- Let children know whom they can turn to when they need support.
- Include children in family goodbyes.

# Pre-Deployment Calendar

Write the name of the month here

Write the dates in these boxes

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			Record stories on audio tape for your children to listen to while you are away.			Make a list of people who can help during your absence. Include their phone numbers.
Assure your children that you are leaving because you are doing a special job for your country.						
	Write brief notes to your children. Have someone else slip the notes into their backpacks.				Have a family game night. It will give your children a chance to talk about how they are feeling.	
			Help your child make a memory box, full of items that remind your child of you.			
				Say goodbye to your family, especially your children.		