

Operation: Military Kids

Supporting Military Families in Minnesota

Learning Circle Lesson - Leader's Guide



Compiled by:

Sara Croymans & Rose Allen, Regional Extension Educators

Reviewed by: Minnesota Operation Military Kids Team
2006



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Intended Audience: Learning Circle groups or other groups with an interest in the topic
Approximate lesson time: 30-40 minutes

Lesson Materials

- Leader's Guide
- Participant Handouts
 - Operation Military Kids
 - Evaluation
- DVD or VHS with the following clips:
 - "Speak Out for Military Kids" narrated Power Point presentation by Kristen Croymans (8 minutes)
 - "Operation Military Kids: Supporting Military Families in Minnesota" narrated Power Point presentation
 - "Let Them Be Little" Power Point photo/music presentation (3 minutes)

Learner Outcomes

Upon completion of this lesson a participant will:

- Learn about the "suddenly military" in Minnesota
- Understand the cycle of deployment the impact on children and families
- Learn about the "Operation Military Kids" program
- Discuss ways you and your community can support military children & families

Preparing to Lead the Lesson

As a discussion leader your job is to present discussion questions and activities suggested in the lesson materials. You are not expected to be the "expert," but are responsible for leading and encouraging the discussion of the group. Prior to the lesson:

- Review the lesson materials
- Secure a TV and video or DVD player
- Preview the video/DVD

Lesson Outline

1. Welcome & Introductions

- a. Ask participants to introduce themselves and share:
 - i. how they have personally been impacted by the current (or a past) war, and,
 - ii. how they think families and children of United States soldiers might be impacted

2. Review the Objectives

- a. Review the lesson objectives (listed above) with participants

3. “Speak Out for Military Kids” narrated Power Point presentation

- a. View the “Speak Out for Military Kids” segment on the DVD/VHS
- b. Following the presentation, ask the following questions of participants:
 - i. How was Kristen & her family impacted by her father’s deployment?
 - ii. Who provided assistance and support? How?

4. “Operation Military Kids: Supporting Military Families in Minnesota” narrated Power Point presentation

- a. View the “Operation Military Kids: Supporting Military Families in Minnesota” narrated Power Point presentation
- b. Following the presentation ask the following question of participants:
 - i. During times of peace who does the National Guard report to? The Army Reserve?
 - ii. What are some of the issues facing “suddenly military” youth & families?
 - iii. What are the five stages of deployment?
 - iv. How can we, (individually or as a group) support or provide assistance to ‘suddenly military’ youth and families?
 1. Consider connecting with an Operation: Military Kids Regional Team near you to become involved or to identify local needs.
 2. Consider using the ideas generated as a community service project for your group.
 3. Review the list of resources on the participant handout for more information

5. View “Let Them Be Little” (3 minutes)

- a. View the “Let Them Be Little” photo/music Power Point

6. Evaluation

- a. Ask each participant to complete a written evaluation. Return completed evaluations to the address printed on the evaluation.

References/Sources of Additional Information:

- **Operation Military Kids** –www.operationmilitarykids.org
- **Jim Deidrick, State 4-H Military Liaison**, Center for 4-H Youth Development; 612-624-7171 or deidr001@umn.edu
- **Children, Youth, and Families Education and Research Network** – Provides resources for parents, teachers, and family support professionals in times of war. <http://www.cyfernet.org/hottopic/warres.html>
- **Family Policy Council** – “Welcome Home! How to Make a Difference in the Lives of Returning War Zone Veterans.” <http://www.fpc.wa.gov/FPCVet%20Return.html>

- **Military Home Front** –the official Department of Defense web site for reliable Quality of Life information designed to help troops and their families, leaders and service providers. <http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil>
- **Military One Source** –provides information and resources that can help improve many areas of your life, from personal to professional. www.militaryonesource.com
- **National Council on Family Relations** – “Building Strong Communities for Military Families.” http://www.ncfr.org/pdf/NCFR_New_PMS2.pdf
- **National Guard Bureau Family Program Online Community** - find contacts, programs and benefits. Get tips, tools, and training on family issues. <http://www.guardfamily.org>
- **National Military Family Association** - educates military families concerning their rights, benefits and services available to them and to inform them regarding the issues that affect their lives <http://www.nmfa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=homepage>

Operation: Military Kids is a national partnership of Army Child & Youth Services and the USDA National 4-H Headquarters, University of Minnesota Extension Service 4-H Youth Development.