

Fact Sheet: Resources for Families

The military supports the success of military-connected children, youth and families through a host of programs and services. When required to move, or given a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) order, military families benefit from relocation assistance provided by their service branch. This assistance includes everything from full-scale Family Centers (or Military and Family Support Centers) at each installation to support programs for academic tutoring, partnerships with community resources, afterschool services, supports for children with special needs and psychological health supports. The following is an overview of key resources for families, including links to additional information.

Family Centers

Family Centers provide a variety of services to assist relocating military personnel and their families, including relocation counseling, planning assistance, destination information and seminars on move management and financial preparedness. They also offer professional support services as well as information and referral to community resources.

Guard and Reserve commands have organized family support systems of staff and volunteers that work with unit leaders to strengthen their bonds with families and provide a way for families to share information and support.

Mental Health Supports

The following are resources offered by the military to assist in supporting the emotional well being of military-connected children and families due to the stress of relocation, deployment, or for general support:

- **Military One Source** is an online resource that provides links to every program and resource from the military, including psychological health supports from each service branch. It also offers real-time support through “face-to-face,” telephone, and online access to counselors. This service is available to active duty military, Reserve, and Guard service members and their immediate family.
- **TRICARE Assistance Program (TRIAP)** is short-term, non-medical assistance provided to eligible active duty service men and women and their families. This service augments TRICARE, the military healthcare provider’s many existing counseling assistance benefits for service members and their families by providing the support they need, when it’s needed. Services provided under this program include short-term counseling about family, personal and parenting issues. TRIAP launched a web-based assistance program to provide behavioral and psychological health counseling through private and secure web portals, 24 hours a day and seven days a week.

- **Military Teens on the Move** provides information directly for children and youth. They can find answers to questions, work with online tools and read tips designed to assist them with the emotional and academic changes they face when they move.
- **KidLink Network** provides assistance to parents, social service and court agencies, as well as other referral sources by locating the most clinically appropriate treatment setting for children and adolescents suffering from a variety of psychological health disorders.
- **Military Family Life Consultants (MFLC)** are counselors providing free-of-charge assistance to active-duty, National Guard, and Reserve Component members and their families. MFLCs deploy to active duty installations for up to 90 days and to National Guard and Reserve events to provide on-site support. They assist with a range of non-medical counseling issues in individual, group, and family settings. DoD has extended the program to schools with high enrollments of students from military families that are stationed at installation sites where parents are likely to be deployed.
- **Children and Youth Behavioral Military and Family Life Consultant (CYB-MFLC) Program** supports faculty, staff, parents, children, and youth in a variety of settings, including but not limited to Child and Youth Programs, Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Schools, National Military Family Association “Operation Purple Camps,” Guard and Reserve camps for children, local schools and through the Joint Family Support Assistance Program (JFSAP). **CYB-MFLCs provide confidential, non-medical, short term, solution-focused counseling to Service members, their families, faculty, and staff, to enhance operational and family readiness.**

Services for Children with Special Needs

The military understands that families with children who have a medical, emotional, or physical disability can benefit from extra supports. Some children require in-home medical support, additional academic support, or therapeutic intervention, for example. In other cases, families just need guidance about school policies. The following is a list of key additional supports available to military families and their children, including both military and non-military resources.

- **Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)** applies when an eligible family member residing with a sponsor possesses a physical, intellectual, or emotional handicap that requires special medical or education services. The EFMP ensures that a sponsor will be assigned to a location where appropriate services exist to support the special needs of the family. All of the military branches have an EFMP.

- **Special Needs Parents Handbook** is a comprehensive guide for information and tools that are geared towards helping military families with special-needs children navigate medical and special education services, community support, and benefits and entitlements.
- **Special Needs Organizational Record (SCOR)** is a series of documents and forms designed to assist families of children with special needs to organize and record necessary care information. Use of this tool can assist parents in maintaining consistent and appropriate care for their children.
- **Specialized Training of Military Parents (STOMP)** is a federally funded Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center established to assist military families who have children with special education or health needs. The STOMP Project is staffed by parents of children with disabilities who have experience in raising their children in military communities and traveling with their spouses to different locations.
- **Yellow Pages for Kids with Disabilities** lists education consultants, psychologists, diagnosticians, health care specialists, academic tutors, speech language therapists, advocates, and attorneys in each state, along with government agencies, grassroots organizations, special education schools, and parent support groups.

Afterschool Resources

High quality before- and afterschool programs not only provide safe care while parents are working, but they augment learning that takes place during the school day. For elementary students, this care is critical for providing additional extracurricular activities like sports and arts. In addition to providing interesting activities, these programs offer an excellent way to help a child find new friends and integrate into a new school. For older students, this socialization is especially important. In addition, according to the National Afterschool Alliance, high-quality afterschool programs also reduce engagement in risky behavior like substance use, early sexual exploration, and gang involvement. The military has the largest number of accredited afterschool programs of any other group in the country, and each service branch generally operates accredited centers on their installation sites.

More Information About Resources for Families

For more information about resources for families, visit MilitaryHOMEFRONT, the Department of Defense site for official Military Community & Family Policy (MC&FP) at <http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/>. Or, visit Military OneSource for customized assistance at <http://www.militaryonesource.com/home.aspx?MRole=&Branch=&Component=>.