



4-H MILITARY FAMILY BOOK SHEETS

Supporting Military Families During Deployment with Books & Activities

4-H Military Family Book Sheets

The 4-H Military Family Book Sheets help parents and guardians find books and activities to help their children during various stages of their service members' deployments. Each book sheet contains a summary of the book, author and publication details, and activities that they can use with their children pre-, during or post-deployment to extend the message of the book. To find each book, check with your local library, bookstore or online retailer.

BEFORE READING:

- ▶ Show your child the front and back cover of the book. Ask him or her to guess what the book is about.

WHILE READING:

- ▶ Stop at any time if something comes up that you or your child would like to talk about.

AFTER READING:

- ▶ Spend time talking about the story.

Deployment involves moving an individual or military unit within the country or to another country. A mission or task might include training, supporting communities during times of disaster, helping foreign countries or fighting in a war. The many changes happening with each departure and return create difficulties for both service members and their families.

Supporting Michigan's Military Families

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension and Michigan 4-H are committed to supporting the more than 20,000 Michigan military children and youth, and their families, through programming and community education.

PROGRAMS FOR MILITARY FAMILIES INCLUDE:

- ▶ 4-H clubs on installations and in communities
- ▶ "4-H 101" and "4-H 201" training for military staff
- ▶ Operation: Military Kids (OMK) – supporting children of deployed soldiers
- ▶ Speak Out for Military Kids (SOMK) – preparing teens to speak on military life and deployment
- ▶ Hero Packs – saying thank you to military children and youth
- ▶ Military 4-H Club Grants – supporting 4-H clubs for military youth and integrating them into county 4-H programs
- ▶ Community Awareness Training – educating the public on issues facing military families experiencing a deployment
- ▶ Special recognition events during Month of the Military Child and Month of the Military Family
- ▶ Educational and recreational events and opportunities for military families

Learn More!

Connect with us on Facebook: Search "Michigan Operation: Military Kids" and "Michigan 4-H."

For more information on supporting military families, visit the following websites:

- ▶ MSU Extension: (msue.anr.msu.edu)
- ▶ Michigan 4-H Youth Development: (4h.msue.msu.edu)
- ▶ 4-H Military Partnerships: (www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org)
- ▶ Operation: Military Kids: (<http://www.operationmilitarykids.org>)



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Mommy, You're My Hero

SUMMARY

Mommy, You're My Hero targets children of service members about to deploy. The book addresses deployment from a child's perspective and offers small ways to help families communicate during deployment. (The book *Daddy, You're My Hero* is also available.)

Title	Mommy, You're My Hero
Author	Michelle Ferguson-Cohen
Illustrator	Michelle Ferguson-Cohen
Publisher	Little Redhaired Girl Publishing
Place of Publication	Brooklyn, New York
Date of Publication	2002
Audience Age	Infant to 5 years

PRE-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Talk with your child about where your service member will go. Focus on similarities and differences. For example, what will the weather be like where your service member is going? Will it be hot or cold? How is that different from what your child will experience? Display a map showing your home as well as the deployment location by putting thumbtacks or stickers on the map. Emphasize that even though you will be far apart you will always love each other.
- Talk about ways your children can help around the house during your service member's absence. What special chores can they do to allow them to feel helpful? Allow them into the decision-making process to choose chores such as feeding a pet or keeping their rooms clean. Make it clear that even doing required tasks such as homework without complaining is helpful. Let them know that their contributions are important to you and your service member.

DURING-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Use the map you created to show various places that your child and your service member visit. For example, if your service member goes to a different location, put a sticker on that location. If your family goes on vacation or goes to visit friends or relatives in another town, put a sticker on those locations.
- Set aside time each week to draw or write to your service member. Send some of the drawings or letters through the mail, but keep some for when he or she comes home.

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POST-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Share drawings or letters with your service member when he or she returns. Do only a few pages at a time so that your service member doesn't get overwhelmed and you can all focus on each special event as a family.
- Use the map that you created to show your service member all the places you have visited while he or she was gone. Share your favorite memory from each trip and have your service member do the same with the places he or she visited.