



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>)



4-H MILITARY FAMILY BOOK SHEET

The Kissing Hand

Title: The Kissing Hand
Author: Audrey Penn
Illustrator: Ruth E. Harper and Nancy M. Leak
Publisher: Tanglewood Press
Place of Publication: Terre Haute, Indiana
Date of Publication: 1993
Audience Age: 4 years and up

SUMMARY

Chester Raccoon feels anxious about starting school. His mother tells him a family secret called the Kissing Hand to reassure him of her love when he faces scary situations.

PRE-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Record your service member reading *The Kissing Hand*. Then have your service member make kissing hands out of paper for your family members. He or she should trace his or her hands on pieces of construction paper, and draw a heart in the middle of each hand.
- Make a kissing hand puzzle for family members and for your service member. Purchase a blank puzzle piece template at a craft store or online, and put the puzzle together. Then using washable paint, dip one hand in the paint and press it in the middle of the puzzle. Then, once the handprint dries, place a heart sticker in the middle of the hand. Have family members make puzzles using both the service member's handprint and family members' handprints. Have family members exchange puzzles.

DURING-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Have your children listen to *The Kissing Hand*, pre-recorded by the service member. Give them the kissing hand that your service member made. Once you finish reading the book, have your family members make kissing hands and send them to their service member.
- Make raccoon puppets out of paper lunch bags. Have family members decorate all the puppets. Use the puppets to read *The Kissing Hand* and act it out with the puppets. Record the family reading the story and send it to your service member.

POST-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Together, use the puzzles you made under the pre-deployment activity as time to reconnect once your service member has returned. Talk together about how knowing that each person had a kissing hand helped during the times the service member was gone.
- Learn about raccoons together. Look up information on the Internet or in books. Investigate what raccoons eat and where they live. Put together your own storybook about raccoons using printed or drawn pictures. Read your story together as a family.

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