Military-Connected Families Roundtable

Seeking resources

Difficulty finding providers who meet the needs of the community

Importance of being particular about references for community services; this is especially important because resources are so tight and the need to be good stewards of the government’s money

Ensuring quality treatment, including

- Cultural awareness, avoiding preconceived notions of what military life is like
- Family supports from families (opportunities for connections and developing a consistent social group)
  - Difficult to sustain potentially: isolating housing, not wanting to engage with negative family members in the area
  - Different needs between spouses (one may want to be on base, highly connected, while the other may not)
  - Benefits of being an island
  - Practitioners: learning about service member’s rank, family dynamics, etc.

Addressing the sub-culture of Navy (and other branches); we’re our own community

Consistent school supports, particularly for IEP, special education supports

- Perspective of military children simply being a source of funding/a number rather than a child in MCY identification efforts in schools
- Parents have to be somewhere (near a school or installation) where the information is being shared, not guaranteed
- Receiving information about Interstate Compact and other supports, but face cost-benefit analysis of application (should I advocate/fight for two years to get these things when I’ll move as soon as my child gets them)

Idea: Benefit of continuity, installation-based supports to ensure that parents are aware of resources and how to use them

Geographically separated families, isolation; differences in how and whether families move together across Navy, Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, varying service member positions/ranks, etc.

Families are coping with changes and rarely knowing what is going to happen, constantly having to be on edge and prepared

Consider how each stage of deployment affects the family; changes in family roles, parent doesn’t know what their role is, child is unsure of others’ family roles and their own; changes in parenting

What goes on at home affects the child at school

Idea: It would be helpful for students to have peer support; reaching across district lines

Idea: Need sufficient support to reach across multiple areas (not just one person stretching across four states, Military Family Life Counselors not consistently available near school districts)

Idea: Having DoDEA schools partnering with local district, “adopting” a school on the other side of towns
Children cope differently, make decision differently (e.g. whether or not to connect when they move into a new district)

Idea: Equipping student volunteers (not forcing students into service) with military background to connect with new students (e.g. peer sponsor)

Training Ideas

Free online trainings for basic information about military culture (existing)

Increasing level of awareness

- Considering limitations and differences of children whose parents have chosen active duty
- You don’t encourage someone to do something they won’t be able to do (even if because of parents)

Youth Advocacy Groups, roundtable groups to hear from the children themselves (also an opportunity to connect with other local MCY; existing)