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FREE

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Read more military children stories inside!

Stepping out of my comfort zone

Being a military kid was never something I had expected. At 12 my parents told me that they were thinking about enlisting in the Air Force. At that moment the news had no impact on me, I hadn't put into thought how much that would change my life.

By the time I was 13, when things started getting more intense, my step dad left for boot camp and we got our orders saying we'd be moving across the world to Japan.

Leaving my family, friends was never something I expected from my life. I thought I would never move from Puerto Rico. I had the rest of my life planned, and now my life was about to completely change.

I moved on the 28th of December and arrived in Okinawa on the 31st. I started school shortly after and I felt so out of place, people here were different from my normal, the place, the cultures so different yet similar to my own.

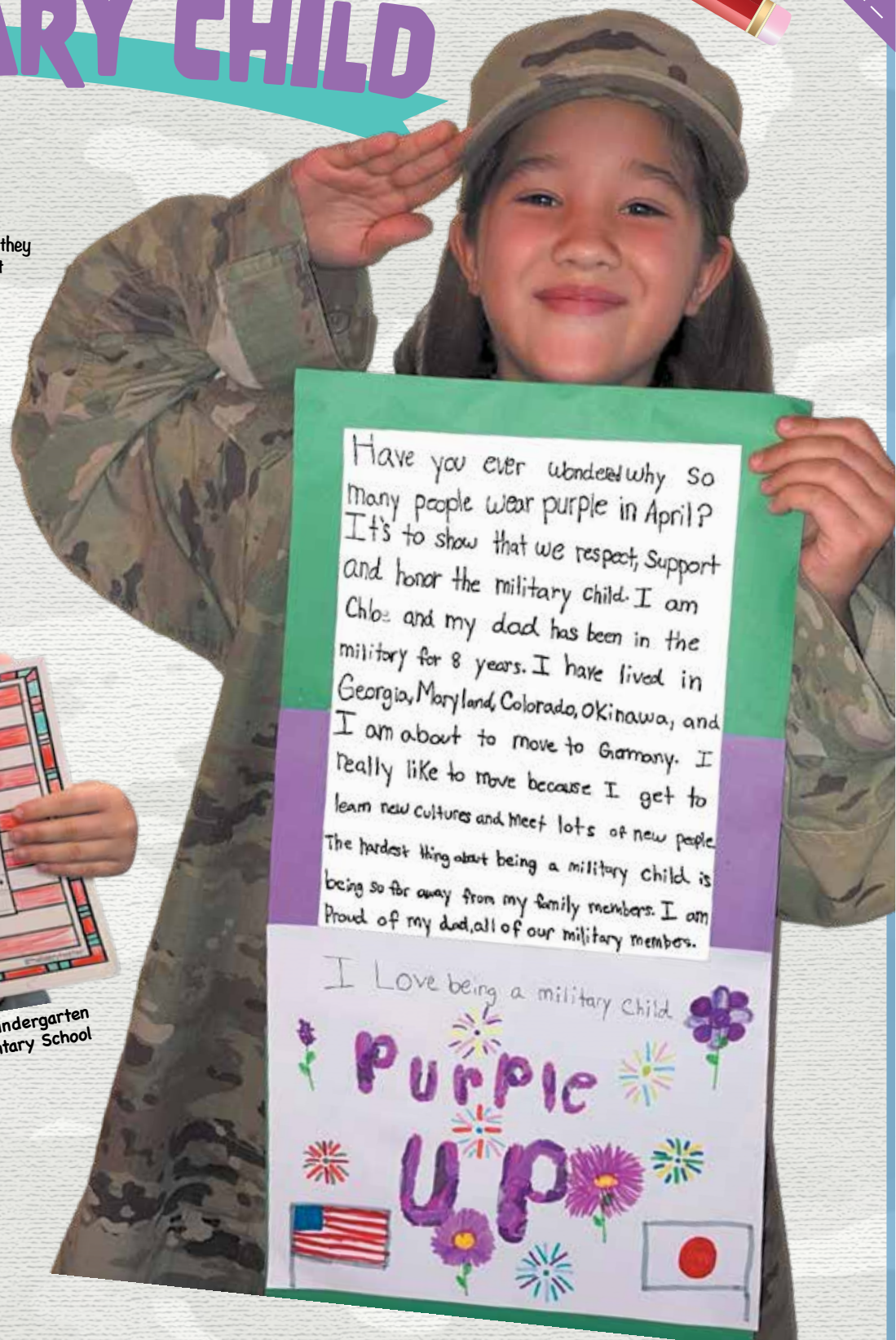
It took a while, but I found my place and my people and started realizing that maybe moving was a good thing in my life. I had never liked stepping out of my comfort zone and trying new things. I'm a creature of habit and often forget to try new things, and moving here pushed me to do it. It pushed me to make new friends, to try new foods, to be a better version of me.

It made me create a new family out of people I'd met, yet cherish every moment I had with my real family. Being a military kid isn't always good. It's hard and it can be really lonely at times, but it also teaches you things about yourself and life that you can only learn from experience.

- Alondra S. Vargas-Mejias, 12 Grade Kadena High School



Elijah, Kindergarten Bob Hope Elementary School



Have you ever wondered why so many people wear purple in April? It's to show that we respect, support and honor the military child. I am Chloe and my dad has been in the military for 8 years. I have lived in Georgia, Maryland, Colorado, Okinawa, and I am about to move to Germany. I really like to move because I get to learn new cultures and meet lots of new people. The hardest thing about being a military child is being so far away from my family members. I am proud of my dad, all of our military members.

I Love being a military child

Purple UP

Chloe M., 4th Grade Homeschool

Carried by the wind

A dandelion blows in the wind
 Spreading from across the seas and through the mist
 To more lands we could ever list
 By now, most of us get the gist.

We show our pride, and you'll watch us succeed
 We work really hard, and we cannot concede. The next generation will soon see
 The impact that we truly leave.

- Caleb Barawid, 11th Grade Kadena High School

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Celebrating
Month of the
Military Child

Ryukyu Middle School



I know we all have our challenges of moving to a new place especially leaving our family, friends, and school behind. I've had my experiences as a military child which has been pretty nice but sometimes hard. It's nice because we get to travel to new places and meet new people, but it's hard because we leave and have to start new, just when we start to get used to everything.

I was born in 2013 at Nason Hospital, Roaring Springs, Pennsylvania although I am from Bellwood, PA. A few years later, my Dad joined the Air Force which meant that we had to move. We then made our way to Georgia where he was stationed at Moody AFB for six years, I really enjoyed it! My dad then got his next orders to Kadena, AFB Okinawa, JP, which is where we have been for the past 4 years. I enjoy visiting the beaches, eating at Yakiniku, and the people here are so nice. This was an experience that I will never forget!

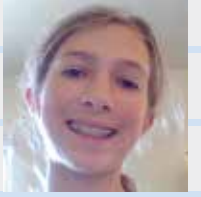
In the next six months we will be packing up all our belongings and moving back to the States.

It's bittersweet leaving but I'm happy that I will be closer to my family. Even though I'll miss Okinawa once I move, I'm also kinda excited and kinda nervous to see some new people at the new school in the states.

- Ayabella Orsborne, 6th Grade

My Life as a Military 'Brat'

When I was younger, I didn't like being a military "brat." My dad would leave for long periods of time, and I would miss him. I also didn't like moving all of the time. It felt to me that as soon as we got somewhere, we would pick up our stuff and go somewhere else, leaving all of my friends behind.



As I grew older, I began to realize that when my dad would leave, he was going to support my country, and when we had to move, it was because my dad had to help in other places.

Now I realize that what we are doing is cool, and that I get to experience amazing things and meet new people. Overall, now I like being a military "brat."

- Piper Cook, 6th Grade

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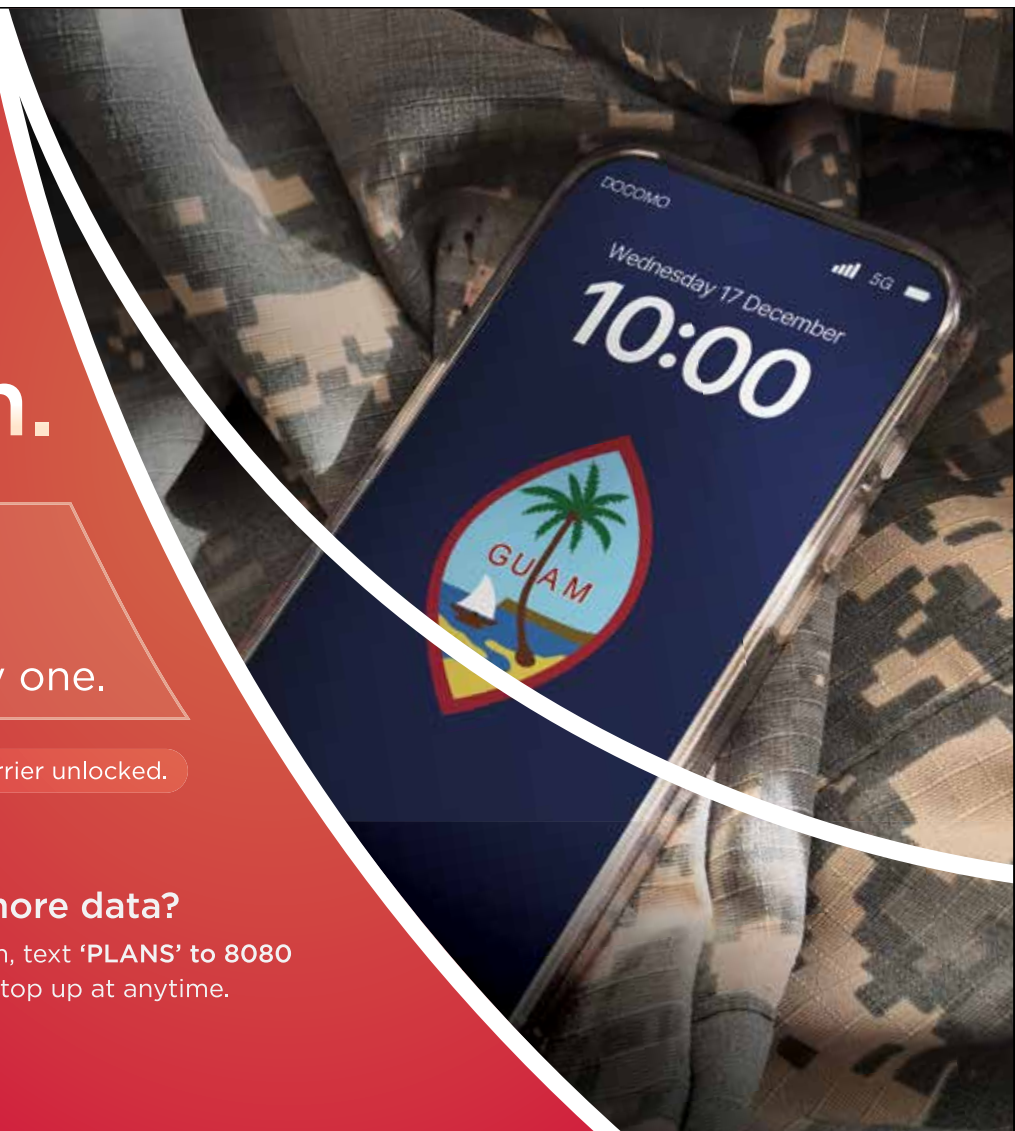


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Celebrating
Month of the
Military Child

Ryukyu Middle School

6th Grade / Ms. Snowden

When I was younger, I didn't really understand much. I thought it was hard and unfair how we had to move all the time and barely see my dad. It is sad. Very sad. About all the things we all go through. Especially my dad. I wish I could see him more often. Now that I'm in Middle School, I got used to moving and meeting new people. It can be hard, but you will eventually get used to it.

I try to think on the positive side when I move. Starting fresh, making new friends, and exploring new places. You finally settle into your new home. Then it's when it starts to go downhill. Your dad starts leaving more often. My mom took care of me and my younger brother the most. And when I leave again after 3 years, I have to say goodbye to my friends and start a new life in a new place. I love Okinawa, but now that I'm thinking about moving again, I'm sad. I built so many strong relationships with my friends, but again, this is the life of a Military Child. I can always stay in touch with my friends. I still stay in touch with my childhood best friend even though we live far apart now. Even though it can be tough sometimes, I am so grateful for my parents and for the life we have.

– Lia Anderson

Sometimes being a military child is not fun. Like when you need to move away from friends and start life at a new school. You have to say goodbye to people and places with a lot of ties and memories. Whenever my family and I went on an adventure and something went wrong someone would say, "Adventure Adversity!" So now it's practically my family's motto. My Dad is a Chaplin for the Navy. The Navy chaplains can also work for Marines so my family has many options to move to. Even though the hardest part of being a Military kid is moving, it's also the most exciting.

When I found out that my Dad was going into the Navy, I was so excited. Little did I realize at the time I would have to leave my best friends. All I was thinking was that I could live in Japan (which was a dream of mine). When we got our first orders, I was disappointed because instead of living in Japan we were moving to Norfolk, Virginia. In the two years I lived there, I met wonderful friends and discovered a love for history and the Revolutionary War.

Our next orders were to Okinawa Japan! This is where we live now. Before we could move, my Dad had to go on deployment. It was really hard, but I was lucky enough that I was able to call him about every day. The move was worth it though because now I can go to cool places and learn about new cultures. "Adventure Adversity!" There are many ups and downs to being a military BRAT, but if you push through the hard parts life normally comes out okay.

– Cordelia Dougharty

When I was younger, I didn't like being a military "brat." My dad would leave for long periods of time, and I would miss him. I also didn't like moving all of the time. It felt to me that as soon as we got somewhere, we would pick up our stuff and go somewhere else, leaving all of my friends behind.

As I grew older, I began to realize that when my dad would leave, he was going to support my country, and when we had to move, it was because my dad had to help in other places.

Now I realize that what we are doing is cool, and that I get to experience amazing things and meet new people. Overall, now I like being a military "brat."

– Piper Cook

Moving as a military child could be tough in ways that go past just packing boxes, changing schools, and making new friends. A ton of challenges come from moving.

One of the big challenges as a Military child is moving schools. Just when you get close with someone you consider your best friend you'd have to move. Eventually it becomes a cycle, it becomes harder to make friends because you know you'll leave them eventually, and some kids might stop trying to get close to other kids.

Another challenge is having to adjust to different environments. For example, if you move to different states or countries, it could mean learning new gestures or new languages. All of this takes time and practice to remember so all of this could be a bit overwhelming for some people.

So in the end, moving as a military child can be challenging, from moving schools, leaving friends and family, and adjusting to different environments, but these challenges can shape adaptability, and strength.

– Kian Duenas

Most military children travel a lot, but I've only moved twice. Even so, it was really hard. My first move was overseas, which was incredibly overwhelming. I moved from Washington State to Okinawa, Japan—going from snow and thunderstorms to constant heatwaves and humidity. Since I had lived in Washington for ten years, it took a long time to adjust to such a big change.

Another interesting aspect of being a military child is that my dad goes on deployments often. I worry whenever he goes on rescue missions to help people. Because of his job, he sometimes misses my birthday and other holidays. It is hard not having him there for special moments. However, I am still very proud of his service.

Lastly, being a military child has required me to develop the skill of fitting in quickly. Moving around the world meant constantly adapting to new environments and social circles. Because of this, I learned to fit in seamlessly into many different groups. I soon realized that making friends depends on being approachable and flexible. As a result, I now view fitting in as a natural and effortless process.

– Cora Dudley

Being a military kid means living in an ever-changing world. You never stay in one place for too long before you have to move again. While most people grow up in one house or town, my life is completely different. Moving around so much can be hard because I have to say goodbye to lots of friends and family but, it also has made me very adaptable. Lots of military kids including me can walk into a room full of strangers and find a way to fit in, a skill I would have never learned if I wasn't a military kid.

However, being a military kid can be hard too. When my dad goes away for a bit it can be hard on the whole family. Sometimes your parents aren't there for birthdays, holidays, or special occasions because they have something more important to do and you just have to accept that. However, it does make kids like me more independent and responsible because we have to help around the house when they are gone.

Finally, even though being a military kid can be hard, it is awesome to make so many friends and to move all around the world. It is a unique experience that not everybody has and it has taught me lessons about life and people that I will carry with me forever.

– Felicity Dashiell

Being a military child means moving a lot. I think it was cool because I got to see many places. The places I have lived so far are England, California, and Okinawa. Being a military kid is great. You can go to many places such as the USA and overseas. Sometimes my dad leaves for a long time. One time, he left for two months for training. This is a sacrifice. If I was not a military kid, we would not have lived in all these cool places.

– Rakk Biechler

My dad joined the military way before I was born. The first place we moved to was North Carolina. North Carolina was the place I was born. We lived there until I was two. Then, we moved to California. I was young, but these places all brought me joy in their very own type way. Finally, we found out we were going to move to Okinawa Japan!

Okinawa has been my favorite place so far because I have had so many given opportunities here and really cool experiences too. I've gotten to go to Tokyo, Thailand, and South Korea, all because my dad's job took us to Okinawa. Once in Thailand, I even had the cool experience to look at elephants up close without a fence.

Though of course. I have faced challenges too. Like I lost contact with a few friends in America. Also, I had to say goodbye to one of my dogs. At the end of the day, I love it here in Okinawa! All in all, being a military child is one of the coolest things ever! You get to see the world and explore the beauties the world holds because of your loved one's career.

– Victoria Perez

Moving around every three years is like living your life in chapters. Most kids I know have lived in the same house since they were babies, but for a military child like me, "home" is a place that changes almost as often as I change my shoes. It's a cycle of packing boxes, saying goodbye, and being the "new kid" all over again.

The first year in a new place is the hardest. You have to learn a whole new school and find a seat in the cafeteria where you won't feel lonely and figure out which teachers are the nice ones. Everything feels weird at first like wearing a sweater that's a little too scratchy, but by the second year things start to get better. You finally have a best friend to text and you know the shortcut to the park and your bedroom finally feels like your own.

Just when you start to feel like you really belong to the third year hits. That's when the "orders" come. You see the big moving truck pull up in the driveway and you have to start deciding which toys to keep and which ones to donate. Saying goodbye to your best friend is the absolute worst part. We promise to play Roblox together or FaceTime but you know it won't be the same as hanging out in person at the park.

Even though moving every three years is sad sometimes it also makes you really brave. I've lived in different states like Maryland and Oklahoma and I've seen things my friends at school have only seen in books. I'm also good at making friends fast because I've had to do it so many times.

In the end, being a military kid means my life is like a giant collection of adventures. I don't have one backyard I grew up in but I have memories from all over the map. I've learned that home isn't just a building—it's my family and we can take that with us wherever the military sends us next.

– Lillian Erquitt



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military children stories at
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Growing up as a military kid usually means you're the one moving, but for me, it's been the opposite. My parents keep extending their time at this base, so while everyone else packs up and leaves, I stay behind. It's kind of lonely to be the one standing on the sidewalk waving goodbye as all of my best friends leave. Hopefully, they will not forget about me.

The hardest part is summer when the neighborhood and school suddenly feel empty. Every year, I have to say goodbye to my friends and watch their houses go up for sale. It feels like the world is a movie that keeps playing for everyone else while I'm stuck on the same frame. Walking into the cafeteria and seeing new faces at our old table is a constant reminder that even though I haven't moved, my whole world has changed.

However, being here the longest, taught me a different kind of resilience. I look at the positive side. Because I know this base better than anyone, I've become one of the people who helps the new kids when they arrive looking lost and nervous. Even though it hurts to lose my old friends, I've learned how to be the anchor for the next family that moves in. I might be staying in one place for a while, but I'm still growing up and learning that home is about the strength you keep inside when everything else around you shifts.

- Elizabeth Kentish

As I went into middle school, I started to understand what being a military child is. When I was little, I didn't understand why my dad kept going somewhere every week. Every time my dad left, I would always be sad and miss him. I also didn't understand why I kept leaving my best friends behind when we moved. My mom was very helpful as she supported me when I was upset and missed my dad. She always treated all of my siblings with love and support when dad was away.

Now that I have grown older, I understand that my dad has a job that is a part of the military. My parents have always done their best to raise us in places that we would enjoy and could excel both mentally and socially. My dad is doing his best to serve his country and his best to provide for our family.

I am fortunate as a military child because I get to go to many places and meet new people. I was even able to visit and spend time with my family in the Philippines because we lived close by in Okinawa Japan. I have now come to realize the importance of my dad's job in the military. Every deployment is important. As a child of a military parent, I am very lucky to be able to experience a lot of different places. I will always be proud of my dad and happy to be a military child. When I grow up, I too want to follow in my father's footsteps and become a Marine.

- Jacob Hoffman

Being a military child can be both exciting and challenging. One of the biggest advantages is getting to experience new places and cultures. Military families often move to different states or even different countries, which gives kids the chance to see the world in ways many others don't. They can meet new people, try new foods, and learn about different traditions. These experiences can help military children become more open-minded, adaptable, and independent.

However, being a military child also comes with difficulties. Moving often means leaving behind friends, schools, and familiar places. It can be hard to constantly start over and build new relationships. In addition, military parents may be deployed for long periods of time, which can make children feel lonely or worried. This can be especially tough during important moments like holidays, birthdays or school events.

Overall, being a military child teaches important life skills like resilience and flexibility, but it also requires emotional strength. While there are many exciting opportunities, there are also real challenges that come with constant change. Military children learn to balance the positive and negative aspects of their unique lifestyle.

- Thalia Hernandez

I love being a military child because it turns the world into my classroom. While many people only read about different cultures in books, I have been lucky enough to experience them firsthand. Moving to new duty stations has allowed me to walk through historic cities, see famous landmarks, and live in places I never imagined I'd visit. Each move is like starting a new chapter in a giant adventure book.

One of my favorite parts of this lifestyle is the food. Everywhere we go, there is a new delicious local dish to try, from spicy street food in a bustling market to traditional family recipes in a quiet neighborhood. My palate has grown so much because I'm always open to trying something different. These flavors always remind me of places we've lived and the memories we made while sharing a meal as a family.

Finally, being a military child has taught me how to make friends quickly and keep an open heart. Even though saying goodbye is hard, I've learned that a new school means dozens of new people to meet. I have friends from all over the country, and even some in different parts of the world. This life has made me adaptable and outgoing, and I wouldn't trade the friendships I've made for anything.

- Marceline Green

Do you want to have to constantly move around every three years? Well then being a military kid is the thing for you. As a military kid, you get to travel a lot and experience new things.

The first good thing about being a military kid is getting to travel around a lot. This allows you to experience a lot more of the world. For example, instead of living in Florida, you could live in Italy! Some other places I've traveled to around the world because I am a military kid are, Indonesia, Taiwan, Vietnam, Misawa Japan, and Okinawa Japan.

Another good thing about being a military child is that you get to experience a lot of new things, like new friends, new schools, or even new foods and restaurants. One of my favorite new things that I've experienced in Okinawa, Japan is eating at a Japanese restaurant called Coco's curry. The food is delicious!

Every good thing always comes with a twist. I like being a military child, but something about it is hard, saying goodbye to old friends and family. It makes me pretty sad whenever I have to move. Whenever you move, you have to say goodbye to everyone you know. You may or may not see them again, so that's why it is especially hard.

A military child's life can be good and hard at the same time. Travelling is good, experiencing new things is good, but saying goodbye is always hard. In the end, if it came down to living in one spot for a long time, or moving around as a military child, I would pick being a military child!

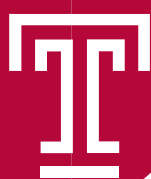
- Mission Coleman

Being a military child means growing up in a world of constant motion, where the only thing that stays the same is that everything changes. From a young age, you become an expert at packing boxes and saying "see you later" instead of "goodbye." Each new duty station brings a different school, a fresh set of faces, and the challenge of proving yourself all over again. While this can be exhausting, it also builds an incredible sense of resilience and adaptability that stays with you for life.

There is also a unique weight that comes with having a parent in uniform. You learn to read the news differently, watching for mentions of specific regions with a mix of pride and worry. Life is often measured in deployment cycles—marked by the long months of missed birthdays and holidays, followed by the overwhelming joy of a homecoming. This lifestyle fosters a deep sense of patriotism and an early understanding of sacrifice, as you share your parent with the rest of the country.

Ultimately, being a "military brat" means belonging to a global community that understands your story without you having to say a word. You might not have a traditional "hometown," but you have a map of the world filled with memories and friendships that span continents. You emerge from this upbringing with a broad perspective and a quiet strength, knowing that home isn't a specific building or a city, but the people who stand by you through every move and mission.

- Scarlett Quinn



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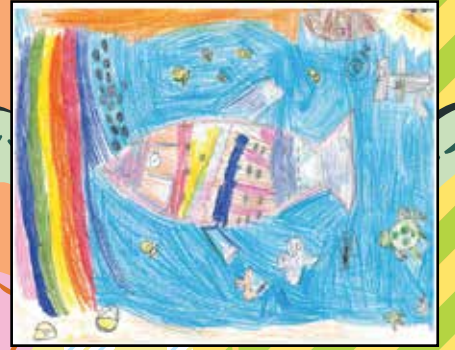
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Celebrating Month of the Military Child

E.C. Killin Elementary School

2nd Grade / Ms. Pagan



"My Life as a Military Child"
by Caroline Anne

I am a Military Child. My family is currently in Okinawa Japan. My Dad is a Marine in the 1st Marine Airborne Task Force. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Taha Carl

Being a Military kid is awesome because my Dad works for me and others. My Dad is serving our country as a Marine. I sometimes have to be a Military kid because I miss my Dad. However, having my Dad in the Marine Corps is awesome because I am proud of my Dad because I love him!

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Elizabeth

Being a military kid is awesome because you get to see your Dad when he comes home. My Dad is a Marine and he is very cool. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Edward R. M.

Being a Military Kid is really because we can travel. My Dad is serving our country at a base in Okinawa. I am very proud of my Dad. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Faith Aggie

My family is currently living in Okinawa Japan. My Dad is a Marine in the US Marine Corps. I am a Military kid and it is hard to be a Military kid. You have to have your things but you can't have them. It is hard to be a Military kid.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Victoria

I am a military child. My family is currently living in Okinawa Japan. My Dad is a Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Cameron

My Dad is a Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Troy

Being a Military Kid is great because you get a lot of support. My Mom and Dad are serving our country as a Marine. My Mom is a Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Cameron

Being a Military Kid is great because you get a lot of support. My Mom and Dad are serving our country as a Marine. My Mom is a Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Tron

Being a military kid is fun because my Mom is a Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Cameron

Being a military kid is great because you get a lot of support. My Mom and Dad are serving our country as a Marine. My Mom is a Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine.

Monsters

Monsters Monsters
We have to flee
Oh no wait for me!
What is that in the trees?
Maybe there could angry bees!
So, we ran with all our might
Super spooky
What a fright!
Then, we saw a big fat stone
So, we made a big fat throne
The Monsters were on our heels
So we ran faster than a face book reel!
Then, we saw a chunky castle with a monkey
Who was a big hassle!
Just then we saw a rocket
So, we took to the stars
And broke its power socket!
Then, we almost turned to ash
And fell in lots of trash!
The Monsters were close to us
So we tried to catch a bus
Just then...
RAA!!!!
They ate us.
The End.

- by Xander Campbell

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Caroline

Being a Military Kid is awesome because you get to see your Dad when he comes home. My Dad is a Marine and he is very cool. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Noah

I am a Military Child. My family is currently living in Okinawa Japan. My Dad is a Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Cameron

Being a Military Kid is great because you get a lot of support. My Mom and Dad are serving our country as a Marine. My Mom is a Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Xander Campbell

Being a Military Kid is awesome because you can move to so many countries. My Dad is a Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Gabriel

Being a military kid is awesome because we get to move every few years, but it's not moving every year. My Dad is currently serving our country as a Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Aggie

My Life as a Military Child is great because you get to see your Dad when he comes home. My Dad is a Marine and he is very cool. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Cameron

Being a Military Kid is great because you get a lot of support. My Mom and Dad are serving our country as a Marine. My Mom is a Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine. She is a very cool person and she makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Aggie

Being a military child is awesome because we get to move every few years, but it's not moving every year. My Dad is currently serving our country as a Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.

"My Life as a Military Child"
by Lauren

I am a Military Child. My family is currently living in Okinawa Japan. My Dad is a Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine. He is a very cool person and he makes me feel like a real Marine.



Celebrating Month of the Military Child

E.C. Killin Elementary School

2nd Grade / Mrs. Bill


Month of the Military Child
By: Liam A.

Military kids are like dandelions. If I could choose my next station it would be Japan because it has a beautiful view and it has a good climate.



Month of the Military Child
By: Kaiona B.

Military kids are like dandelions. If I could choose my next station it will be HAWAII. It is tropical and fits my style. That is why I want to live in HAWAII.



Month of the Military Child
By: Everleigh C.

Military kids are like dandelions. If I could choose my next station would be HAWAII. I want to go to HAWAII because it seems like a beautiful place. I have never been there. My dad has and he told me all about it. It is a great place and besides it has Target and Walmart.



Month of the Military Child
By: Paisley

Military kids are like dandelions. If I could choose my next station it would be back to Texas. I would go to Texas because we would get to see my dogs and everyone would speak the same language as us so I could understand them. I think living there would be fun.




Month of the Military Child
By: Emma J.

Military kids are like dandelions. If I could choose my next home would be New York because it snows so much. And I like the snow. And it has a good view. It would be good to live in New York.



Month of the Military Child
By: Bennett

Military kids are like dandelions. If I could choose my next station it would be in Hawaii. Because you can see the most beautiful view of the ocean and the mountains.



Month of the Military Child
By: Emily L.

I want to go back to Hawaii. First I love swimming with sea turtles. Also I love going to the beaches. I see swim to go to the swimming in my boat and one going to get Hawaii. Hawaii I love going to the beach.



Month of the Military Child
By: Kaden

in the usa

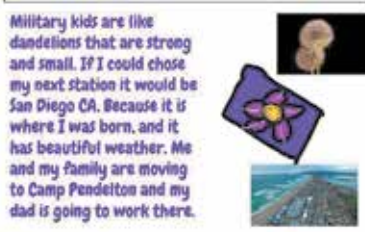
Month of the Military Child
By: Ignacia

Military kids are like dandelions if I could choose my next station it would be with Ernesto and Geoffrey because they are my friends and the place that want to be with them is California we are going there after we go to America hopefully.



Month of the Military Child
By: Geoffrey

Military kids are like dandelions that are strong and small. If I could choose my next station it would be San Diego CA. Because it is where I was born, and it has beautiful weather. Me and my family are moving to Camp Pendleton and my dad is going to work there.



Month of the Military Child
By: Ella

Military kids are like dandelions. If I could choose my next station it would be Tokyo again because we can eat sushi and we can go to malls and see the fireworks.




Month of the Military Child
By: Janssen Booth

I'm like a dandelion. If I could choose my next home it would be Germany because it's language is easy. Also it a lot of my favorite food. Last it is very awesome.



Month of the Military Child
By: Ernesto

Military kids are like dandelions if I could choose my next station it would be Germany because it has lots of stuff to do in Germany and it would be a new place to.



Month of the Military Child
By: Emilia S.

Military kids are like dandelion. If I could choose my next station it will be eyepack. It would be at California. My house is medium. I would go there to help people and make money for my family.



Month of the Military Child
By: Faith T.

I want to move to Maryland because that's where I was born. My dad says that it's quiet there. And I can visit family and friends. My dad rented a house there it's so peaceful.



Month of the Military Child
By: Layla B.

Military children are like dandelions. If I could choose my next station it would be, Germany. when I am in Germany. My dad will still be in the military. First, I can see my family. My mom's family lives in Germany. I also want to try new food. I will also, see different this to see and do. My mom will be so happy to go to Germany.



Month of the Military Child
By: Connor

Military children are like dandelions. I like being a military child because I can go anywhere I want to go. I can choose where I can move next. I want to move to Hawaii.



Month of the Military Child
By: Chase V.

Military kids are like dandelions. If I could choose my next station it would be California. San Diego. I was born in San Diego and I would love to go back. I love San Diego because it has great weather. There are fun parks to play and my family also lives in San Diego.

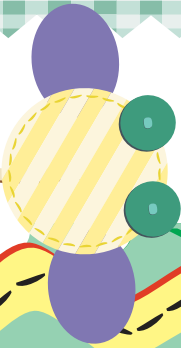


Month of the Military Child
By: Julian

IF I COULD LIVE ANYWHERE I WOULD LIVE IN THE U.S.A. BECAUSE IT IS CLOSE TO MY FAMILY. IT IS ASOW FUN BECAUSE I WHOD HAVE A BAK YARD. THAT IS WHY I WANT TO LIVE IN THE U.S.A.



Check out more military children stories at okinawa.stripes.com





celebrating Month of the Military Child

Kadena Elementary School

5th Grade
Ms. Bauman

Being a military child is hard at first. You have to move, but that is fun. I think making new friends is hard. You miss your old friends, but you still have to go through it. I've been a military kid for 11 years. I've been to England, North Carolina, and Japan. It's really not that bad being a military kid. You go to different places and meet new friends, and my favorite place is England. Then I moved in the middle of third grade then we moved to North Carolina. I like it there. Everyone loves to do TikTok dances. It was funny but I loved it. Then I moved at the end of fourth grade. We moved to Japan where I am now. I like it here and I was born here. I used to go to this school in PreK so I know a little bit about it but Japan is really fun the food here is good like really good. That's how it feels to be a military kid you move a lot of times and make new friends.

By Azariah Caines

Life as a military child is normal to me. I've been a military child ever since I was born. I've lived in Virginia, California, Alaska, South Carolina, and Okinawa, Japan. It's hard to leave friends behind because you know you most likely will not see them again. It's also hard when your dad (because that's my parent in the military) goes on deployment. I didn't see my dad (in person) for 6 months! He was even gone on Christmas. It was the worst / best Christmas ever. It was the best because we (my sister and I) got the most presents we ever got. I think it was about 30 or more presents.

I think that if I weren't a military child I would be bored every day, in the same house every day. With the same school every day. With the same people every day. I think that would be really boring. Anyway, when you hate somewhere and you want to move, well you will in 3 years. Love somewhere and don't want to move, well too bad! The military has its ups and downs but I still don't mind being a military child. I think it's ok.

And now a short poem
Roses are red, violets are blue.
I think being a military child is fun.
Do you?

By Sybil Cisneros

Dear other military child,

Being a military child is hard. Almost all of it is bad. But there is some hope. I know moving is hard. I myself have moved many places. Left many friends behind. But there is a light in the darkness that took me some time to find. Being a military child is hard. I get it and I think all military children know that too. A couple of years ago I left a good friend to move to Tokyo. I left good friends in Tokyo to come here. We will go through hardships, and you have to be brave enough to go through those hardships. For instance, my dad is deployed as you read this and even when he is here, he leaves for work at 4:00Am and comes home around 10:00/11:00Pm, but I use every moment we have to use it to its best use. And when he's gone, I have my family such as my brothers and my mom. Another perk is that you move all around the world. I have lived in many, many, many places. In all, being a military child is sometimes hard. But when you have all of your friends and family, it can make the experience the best just to have fun with family and friends!

By Hunter Clark

When I was born my dad was already in the military, I was born in Texas and spent most of my life there. We transferred from Texas to Maryland. At first, we lived in an apartment then we moved into a bigger house that had a porch that my sister and I liked to go under sometimes.

I moved from Maryland to Okinawa. I transferred over to Japanese school, there were two English speaking kids in my class who would translate for me. After a few years in Okinawa, I moved to Sicily and transferred back to homeschooling again. Then, I went to Sigonella Elementary.

I moved back to Okinawa and now I go to Kadena Elementary school.

One thing I like about Okinawa is the food. I also like how nice the people are here. I also like hanging out with my friends. One last thing I like is living on base. I like it because I'm close to my friends and I can walk to Family Mart from there. That is why I love being a military child.

By Milana Cuadra

My life as a military child was sad and exciting. I mean I love being a military child but, it's not the best. There are a couple things I like about it. One of the things I like about it is that me and my family get the opportunity to move from one place to another. Also, when we move there are always new places to go and new stuff to try. I also like being a military child because there are schools and within those schools I make new friends.

My life as a military child also has disadvantages. One of the disadvantages is moving. I hate moving. Two, I'm LEAVING friends I've known for a very long time. Three, I lived in Florida with my uncle, aunties, and cousins. And when I live with family and be a military child at the same time there's only one result that happens. One, my parents tell me we're moving and that we have to pack up our stuff. Two, we have to say "goodbye" which makes me really sad. And three, when we get to the airport and leave, I feel really depressed.

These are the reasons why I try to live my best life when I live somewhere. This is also why I try to make friends everywhere I go. As a military child I know I won't live somewhere forever, so I try to do the best I can anywhere.

By Jaxson Fa'atua

Dear Reader,

I am writing to you about being a Military child. A Military child is a child who has parents/a parent working in the military. Pretty simple, am I right? There is a lot more to it than you think, so why don't I tell you about some of it.

My name is Carmen, writing to you as a military child. Being a Military child means you have to take big steps in your life. For example, I used to live in Florida, it was the best with all of my great friends. Until the day my parents told us we were moving. I was young at the time so I didn't understand until it actually happened, you know? Another example is having your mom/dad go on many trips, like one summer, my dad left for the whole May. It was very sad, and my mom cried a lot without him. So did I, though. But the bright side is that we can go on fun, fun trips! For example, we get to visit cousins, grandparents, and even places like Australia, Hawaii, Disney, Universal, and other places around the globe, too! We can also live on base with cool places like the BX (Base Exchange). All of this happens because my dad is in the military, isn't that cool? I hope you find my letter helpful for the future somehow.

Your military child friend,
By Carmen Felice



friends that were hard to make, and when you're a military child that just keeps happening all so quick. I like being a military child because if I had not moved here, I would never have met all my friends and be on the baseball team that I'm on. That is special to me and a once in a lifetime opportunity for me to excel in baseball and be able to have a longer career playing baseball. I have also liked being a military child because recently I have learned that from being a military child that I must make it worth it at every single moment today.

By Jacob Fink

I move every 3 years, unless they ask us if we want to stay longer. I love moving sometimes. The reason why I like moving is because I love seeing all new places. It is so cool. The other reason why I like moving is because I make new friends along the way. I have lots of friends, but I have to move so I have their phone number, so I don't forget them. I love moving with my family. Sometimes the babies cry on the plane. It is not fun having them cry.

I don't like planes, so I try to get some sleep on the plane. Sometimes I do not like moving. I do not like moving because I have to say bye to all of my best friends and just my friends. It is not that fun to say bye to my best friends. When I move it is fun and not fun. When I move, I get to make new friends and more friends. My family lives where I used to live. It was very hard to say goodbye. Two of my aunts came to take me to my plane and that was my last time seeing them until they visit me or I visit them or I move to them. I have a lot of new friends now.

By Kynslee Fithian

You meet lots of people in your life, friends and family but later you have to go somewhere new because your parents are going to be stationed there. I am in Okinawa right now. But when you do get to the station and you don't want to go, no worries because you will meet more friends and family and learn a new language. And your parents might get moved for a while if you stay with your mom or dad. Then the other parent will come back later. For me to take things off my mind I like to do these things. I like to play basketball or video games like Fortnite or 2k26. And once you get used to being stationed it will be easier to go to the place you are in then you will feel normal and you will be used to things around you and if your friends come to you then you can show them around. I am always traveling the world and have met all kinds of people. People say being a Military child is hard, but it is not because you have people that love and take care of you so never forget you are you and be amazing and make tons of friends right where you are right now.

By Leonardo Gordon

My life as a military child is kind of hard. I say that because I have to move every 3-4 years. It's hard to hang on to friends because I move constantly. Even though I have amazing friends now I fear it won't last for long. I want to have a life somewhere I can live forever instead of moving. I also want to be able to have friends to hang on to for long instead of having to make new friends everywhere I move. I mean yeah, it does seem nice to make new friends and move to different places but I don't want to move constantly.

I'm afraid I won't be able to have a real culture because I move so often. I mean I'm kind of glad we moved because I wouldn't have met my friends now. But I want a real culture. I don't want to be nothing. I don't want to be a military child because there is nothing to do and I never got to grow up anywhere or stay somewhere for at least 3 years. Sure, I have a cool ethnicity and good life as a military child but I want something more.

By Marina Harris





I couldn't compare an American childhood to mine. I have lived in Okinawa since I was a baby. I went to this school 1st through 5th grade. If you didn't know that is something special in my eyes, especially only one other person in this grade has done that. Moving back, I went to kindergarten until I was 7. There I met a best FRIEND!!! After second grade I lost my besto friend to PCS'ing. Anyway I went into the summer and made a Best FRIEND! We went into third grade, and this was a big jump for me. I went upstairs! Hear me out, my school has 2 floors, the first one has the lower grade classes. Second floor has upper grade classes. I was there twice a week, so being up there was awesome. Moving on to fourth grade me and my best friend added two people to the friend group! We had a lot of fun until fifth grade. Fifth grade is very awesome, but it is not the problem. Usually when I go to the next grade in elementary only around 3-5 people leave. Now people will not only PCS, but also go to different schools. Two friends are PCSing. Other friends are going to different schools. Leaving me with one. I still do think I will have a fun time at middle school!

By Morgan Henderson

My life as a military child is well, complicated and that is how it will stay until my dad retires from the Air Force. When I was a few years old my Dad joined the Air Force. When I was old enough my dad told me that my Grandpa was a tank driver in his younger years. When I heard that I was thinking this was going to be fun. Then after a long time in Texas, we moved, it was shocking. I wanted to stay in Texas for a lot of reasons. The first is that we had a house all to ourselves and it was the nicest house ever. The second reason is that in Texas we had this fun water park called Sea World. The next reason is that there was a Walmart, the best super store there ever was. It was packed with everything you could need from toys to every Halloween costume you could ever wish for. Then after about 1,000,000,000,000 plane trips we landed in Okinawa in the time that in Texas it would have been bedtime but instead it was broad daylight. I have had lots of sad and happy memories in Okinawa but the happy outnumber the sad ones by 1,000,000,000,000. That is why my life as a military child is complicated.

By Noah Kelly

I remember when I was laying on my bed, saying good night to my dad in Spain, deployed, when I was little. Sometimes my mom would call him when my dad wasn't busy. When he got back, he was in a big box wrapped up. When me and my siblings walked towards the box my dad popped out of it. Later when I was living in Washington, we moved back to North Carolina. There, in North Carolina, we had family, friends, and a pet. A few months after our dog passed away, we had to leave our families and friends to move to Okinawa, Japan. I was very sad. I remember making a time capsule with my cousins before we left. When we arrived at Okinawa I was scared. But I had cousins that live here too. When school started, I went to the same school with one of my cousins. I had to start a new life with new friends, new school, and cousins I didn't remember. I slowly made my way of getting used to Okinawa. I have sleepovers with my cousins that I am now really close to now. But she will have to leave soon. As a military child I know that life is kinda like building blocks. You build up a new life at a new place all for it just to fall down again and start building again and again.

By Karalynn Lor

I have been a Military child since I was born. The reason why I'm a Military child is because my dad is in the Air Force. He has been in the Air Force for 13 years. When I was about 3 years old my dad went on a trip to work there from October - March. And it was a lot of work for my dad.

When I was growing up, I realized that being a military child was hard. It is because you have to move a lot and make new friends and leave your old friends that helped you during your hard life and hard times. It's hard to leave your friends and start a new life. And one more thing try to make new memories and forget the hurtful memories and start a new life.

By Jackson Morelan



My life being a military child is good because in Okinawa I get to try lots of things like food, go to the beach play with my friends, hang out. I get to do lots of things. Me and my family have fun together too. We get ramen, we get sushi, we even go to the beach together, and I saw a sea snake. Why I like being a military child is because I can travel. I moved here from Nevada and it was a desert there it was not that green like here in Okinawa. When I got here it was scary but then I faced my fears. I like being a military child because I get to make new friends, meet new people and have fun. My family has been here for three months and it is already getting exciting. I love this place already.

By Arieanna Patricelli

Every time when I move on to new unit it feels like I keep going on as a military child and it's hard to go on but I have to learn and learn. Every time I move out of the country, I feel sad because I lost my friends so I have to get new friends, but that's hard for me so when I go to a new school try to get new friends but the important thing is school.

By Matthew Payne

Life as a military child has many challenges. One is that sometimes friends move away. Another is moving away from friends. But there are also benefits. Like moving to cool new places. Also sometimes meeting old friends or learning different languages.

I have many reasons why I like being a military child and not being a military child. Like how I hate moving away from friends and friends moving away. But I like traveling to places to meet new people, new cultures, and new places. Another thing that I hate about being a military child are the flights. One reason is that you have to wait for a long time most of the time and two usually the leg room is small. A third reason is that when you go higher in the air your ears start to hurt and usually you will only be able to pop one of your ears. But the pain is always worth it.

There are also many better things in Okinawa like having a convenience store almost everywhere you look besides on military bases. Another thing is that there are many nice resorts, restaurants, and beaches. A third reason is that stuff is cheaper than in America like most food, snacks, and toys. This is what life is like as a military child in Okinawa.

By Isaiah Rabine

Being a military child is not that different from a normal child. You do normal stuff and so on. But one thing about being a military child is moving. I absolutely hate moving and I'll tell you that I have lived in a lot of different places. I left too many friends and it's getting old. Like I make friends I live there for a couple of years happily and all of a sudden, you get news that you're moving and you're completely shocked! I was so sad I had to tell all my friends this! So that's one negative about being a military child. But let's talk positively. So, one good thing about being a military child is that you get to go on base, see military stuff and yeah. Also, you can tell your friends "Oh my dad is in the military isn't that so cool." But I don't like to brag. Also being a military child is super fun. When I go into my dad's office (at home) you can just watch him do everything. If your moms in the military, that's cool too. But I'm not complaining that I'm a military child. I'm actually very grateful, and you should be too.

By Lilly Ro



My life as a military child is great and awesome. Even though it's great I still miss my family back home. For example, I used to live in Orlando, Florida. There I have my nana and papa. Also in the states, I have my aunt. Also, I have friends that live in the states.

The good thing about living here is that Okinawa is warm and they have fun activities to do! The bad thing about living in Okinawa is that it gets really hot during the summer. In Orlando it gets really hot but a lot of kids there sell lemonade outside so when I'm thirsty, I can grab some coins and get some lemonade from outside.

Being a military child is awesome because I get to see my dad every day and ask him what important things he did today. Even though being a military child is awesome, I still miss everything that I have back in the states. The most favorite place I miss there is trampoline parks and arcades.

By Josiah Sanon

Being a military child hard, well sure, yes. But there are good things about it too. People say being a military child is bad because you leave your home and friends, or close family members. But if you just think about the bad stuff, you can't enjoy the fun part about being a military child. Sure, it's pretty bad to lose your home and friends, or close family members. But just think how many states, cities, or countries you went to. It's not that hard for me. Because if I think about my friends and family members, I will not enjoy the fun part. I don't care about that because I love traveling. I love being a military child because I get to travel and explore different countries. I love everything about it. I like to stay a military kid and not stay in the same place forever. My dad is in the Marines and I love how every 3 to 4 years I move. Soon my dad will retire and I will miss the fun parts of being a military kid. But I will always have fun memories of the nice places in the world.

By Clayton Slivinski

My life as a military child has been hard, but going to new places for me is exciting. I also get to meet new friends and learn new cultures. Also, I get to try new foods to see if I like it. I get to learn new languages, and most people in Japan speak English, but sometimes they don't, so that's why it's always nice knowing the basics of Japanese. Also, it's hard to leave behind my friends and family where I came from, but I will see them again. Japan has so many shrines and they're so pretty! They also have fun events and things for kids to do. It's really fun in Japan

but I miss my best friend and my other family members. Our school Kadena Elementary school is where I went after I left one of the countries in the world, and it's for other military kids just like me. Japan is very clean and sanitized. People in Japan are very kind and people at Kadena Elementary School are kind, and I met a lot of new friends. I'm leaving again in a couple months. I think it's weird going to a new school but nice, because you get a fresh start, but nobody knows you well until you meet them. So that's my life as a military child.

By Adelyn Smith



Dear Reader,

I am a military child and there are perks and down sides. One of the perks is that I get to visit a lot of different places. There is one problem with that though. I make friends and I really like those friends. When I move around to different places, I leave my friends behind. I want to stay with them because they make me happy.

I also travel a lot. I visit many places and they are very cool. I learn different things. I learn new cultures, foods, and meet new people. I can also learn new languages. I can go to hot places or cold places and even places that snow. Even though I leave friends I make new ones. I don't have to leave my friends forever. I can text and call them.

If you have a phone or other electronic device then you know you can contact people far away. For example, if the person you want to contact has a phone number or an email you can text them. I do that with a lot of my friends so I don't completely leave them. You can stay in touch with the people you're friends with. That is what I like about moving away. You can still have friends that live in different places. I love being a military child.

Sincerely,

By Emmalyn Welborne



CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD



Bob Hope Elementary School

Pre-K

Ms. Ayres
and Ms. Smith



- Alistair Larsen



- Autumn Bradley



- Margaux Green



- Jade Benavente



- Iliana Saltares



- Nora Freeman



- Madeline Sprague



- Delilah Jones



- Ketsael Orellano-Flores



- Phoenix Mitchell



- Rocco Bitanga



- Seou Lee



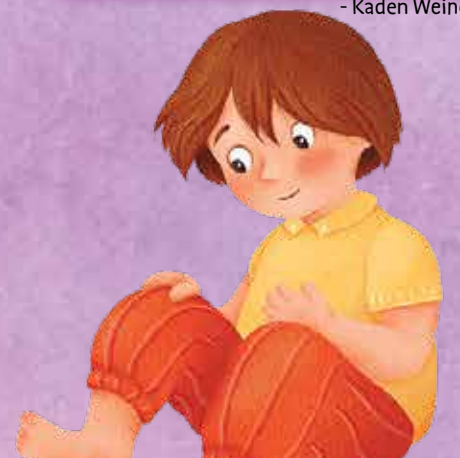
- Elias Overson



- Aniyah Tini



- Kaden Weinert




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CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD



Bob Hope Elementary School

Pre-K / Ms. Beltran & Ms. Kenderdine



Alyssa Forney



June Musgrave



Jaxon Zhang



Evan Whorton



Daisy Dudley



Daisy Dudley



Maddison Acosta



Archie Toms



Lillian Trebing



Kai Reyes



Wyatt McConnell



Mia Victoria Tejano



Malia Neri



Koa Reid



Patrick Dashiell



Cruz Soldano

Check out more military children stories at okinawa.stripes.com

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Bob Hope Elementary School

Pre-K

Mrs. Lacuata and Mrs. Swift

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I workout with mom and weight.

I am brave when I:
try to walk in the dark.

Zander

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I can lift heavy things.

I am brave when I:
go to the bathroom by myself.

Fiola

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I eat a lot of food.

I am brave when I:
walk in the dark.

owen

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
mom and dad.

I am brave when I:
when I take a breath.

braylen

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I play every day.

I am brave when I:
set a shot.

Haley

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I drink Aquarius.

I am brave when I:
see spiders.

THEODORE

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I eat fruits and vegetables.

I am brave when I:
turn on my room light.

Notholie

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I eat vegetables and fruit.

I am brave when I:
had to plug in my night light.

Ezra

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I workout and walk with dad.

I am brave when I:
walk into a forest.

Spencer

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I exercise.

I am brave when I:
dad is around.

Theodore

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I eat vegetables.

I am brave when I:
go to school.

Agib

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I go to my grandma.

I am brave when I:
go to the door.

LOREN

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I walk with mommy.

I am brave when I:
walk in the dark.

queisa

I am a Military Child

I am strong because:
I workout with mom and dad.

I am brave when I:
sleep in my room.

Ava



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Gain amazing skills

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CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Bob Hope Elementary School

4th Grade

Mrs. Kekiwi



Handwritten student story about being a military child, mentioning moving and school.

Handwritten student story titled 'Ireland' about learning to be a village child.

Handwritten student story about being a military child and how it has made them more resilient.

Handwritten student story titled 'Dear Mom' about being a military child.

Handwritten student story about being a military child and how it has made them more resilient.

Handwritten student story titled 'Being a Military Child has made me more resilient in many ways'.

Handwritten student story about being a military child and how it has made them more resilient.

Handwritten student story dated 3/20/26 about being a military child.

Handwritten student story titled 'What is the hardest about being the new kid at a school and how did you handle it?'.

Handwritten student story titled 'It is hard being a military child because of...'.

Handwritten student story about being a military child and how it has made them more resilient.

Handwritten student story titled 'Why?' about being a military child.

Handwritten student story titled 'LOLA F BOB HOPE Elementary School'.

Handwritten student story dated March 20 about being a military child.

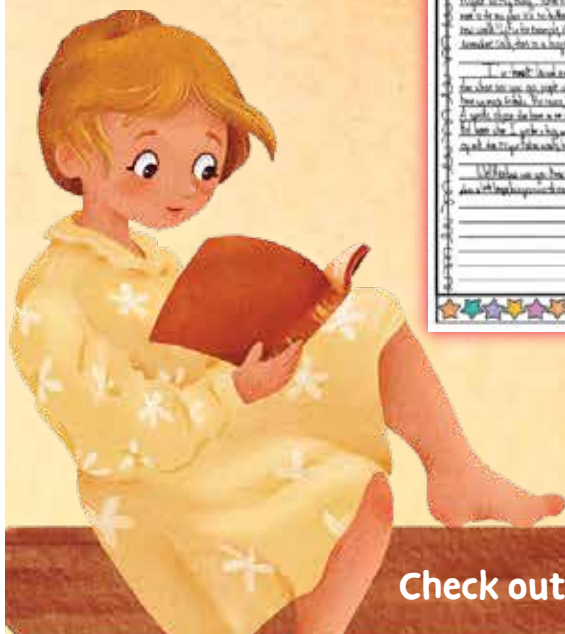
Handwritten student story dated April 20, 2026 about being a military child.

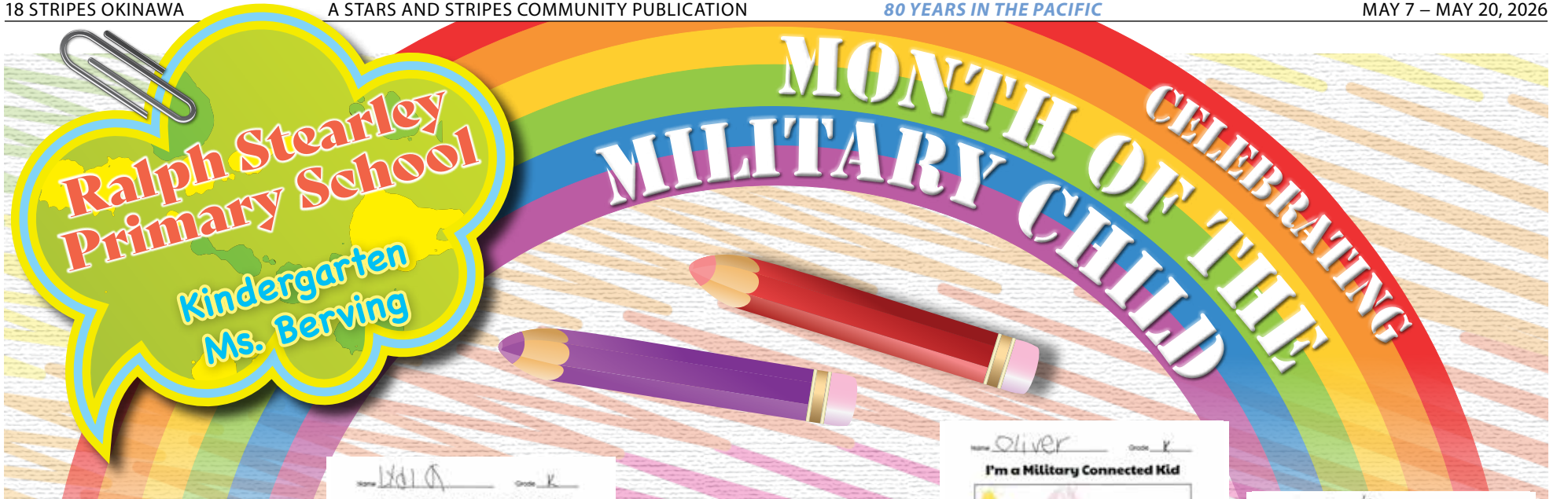
Handwritten student story titled 'Being a military child'.

Handwritten student story titled 'Being a Military Child...'.

Handwritten student story titled 'Dear Dad' about being a military child.

Handwritten student story titled 'How has being a military child made you a stronger or more resilient person?'.





Name: Athena Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I like to be with my dad at his work.

Name: Yoda Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can help my dog at work.

Name: Alvin Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I love to go fishing.

Name: Oliver Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can go to the car lot.

Name: Myrind Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can see jobs in Okinawa.

Name: Javier Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can go to the Okinawa Japan.

Name: CADten Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can learn to be a soldier.

Name: Andrew Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can strong because I exercise.

Name: Emerly Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can play at the Okinawa with my family.

Name: Adellin Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can play at Round One.

Name: Stella W. Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can make good choices at school.

Name: Azaria Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can pick up my grandmas and gramma.

Name: Fiaha Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can go see jobs with my family.

Name: Carlo H Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I go paddle boarding with my dad.

Name: Leo Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can go fishing with my whole family.

Name: Joe Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can see jobs at the store.

Name: Ashy Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can see a job at the store.

Name: Taylor Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid

 I can see a job at the store.

Name: Dejla Grade: K
I'm a Military Connected Kid


 I can see a job at the store.

Check out more military children stories at
okinawa.stripes.com

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD
Zukeran Elementary School Kindergarten
 Ms. Simpson

MOMC Name: Briden

IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am me.

MOMC Name: C. A. TO


IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am a good reader.

MOMC Name: Evallyn

IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am responsible.

MOMC Name: Ezra


IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am grateful!

MOMC Name: Jasmine


IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am brave.

MOMC Name: Edxon


IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am nice.

MOMC Name: Jayleeh


IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am strong.

MOMC Name: Jermarron


IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am great!

MOMC Name: Joseph


IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am smart.

MOMC Name: Leo


IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am responsible.

MOMC Name: Leoh

IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am me.

MOMC Name: Lucas


IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am happy.

MOMC Name: Mckenzie

IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am loved!

MOMC Name: Peavill


IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am brave.

MOMC Name: Sophia


IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I am nice.

MOMC Name: Winter

IBLOOM...



I can bloom
anywhere because
I stand up for
myself!

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD
Zukeran Elementary School Kindergarten
Mrs. Meehan & Mrs. Morgan



COOL
 nice
 happy
 Sweet
 Silly

Axel



Pretty
 nice
 best
 smart
 unique

Iris

STRONG
 CUTE
 NAVY KID
 Pretty
 funny
 unique

Declan Dai-Viet



smart
 intelligent
 kind
 brave
 funny
 unique
 cute

Evelyn



STRONG
 brave
 smart
 military
 happy
 unique
 kid

Jacob



nice
 cool
 smart
 fantastic
 unique

Caden

unique
 smart
 kind
 brave
 intelligent

Evan



NAVY KID
 FUNNY
 HAPPY
 smart
 nice
 brave

Lucas

I am



nice
 cool
 smart
 pretty
 brave
 strong

Rosalie



smart
 funny
 kind
 different
 brave

Ezra



military
 rich
 strong
 learner
 calm
 reader
 loving
 kid

Emmett



cute
 smart
 brave
 pretty
 funny
 kind

Kanasa



military kid
 strong
 amazing
 cool
 happy
 brave
 kind

Kaius



smart
 funny
 kind
 different
 brave

Sophia



silly
 military kid
 beautiful
 outgoing
 smart

Sawyer Rae



happy
 beautiful
 military
 child
 brave
 loving
 kind
 strong

Mia

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD Zukeran Elementary School

1st Grade
Ms. Miles

Name: Alya Grade: 1

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.




I am special because I am a military child. I am special because I am kind to people.

Name: Luis Grade: 1

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.




Military kids are special because they take care of their families.

Name: Miriam Grade: 1st grade

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



Military kids are special because they are bold, brave, and kind.

Name: Allie Solomon Grade: 1st Grade

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.




I am special because I am brave, kind, and safe. I am happy because I am a military child.

Name: Ava Grade: 1st

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



I am special because I am responsible and brave.

Name: Elias Grade: 1

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.




I am special because I am brave.

Name: David Grade: 1

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.




I am special because I am kind.

Name: Ryona Grade: 1

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.




I am special because my Dad says I'm a hero.

Name: Cooper Grade: 1

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



I am special because I am kind to my dog.

Name: Liam Grade: 1

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



I am special because I am kind to my dog.

Name: Maria Grade: 1

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



I am special because I am kind to my new neighbors.

Name: Er Grade: 1st

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



I am special because my mom is in the Navy. She is strong and responsible.

Name: Danika Grade: 1

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



I am happy that I have friends that live in the military.

Name: Kat Grade: 1st

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



I am special because my father is a hero.

Name: Sam Grade: 1st

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



I am special because I am a military child. I am kind, respectful, and special.

Check out more military children stories at okinawa.stripes.com



Name: Reya Grade: 1-2020

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.




I am special because I am strong and brave.

Name: Wyn Grade: 1

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



I am special because I have a good brother.

Name: Hazi Janscar Grade: 1st

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



I'm special because I am bold and brave.

Name: Mikie Grade: 1st

**STRENGTH AND COURAGE OFF THE GRID!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM? I'M A MILITARY KID!**

Write about what makes being a military kid so special. Be sure to include strong describing words and watch your conventions.



I am a military child because I serve my country.

celebrating Month of the Military Child

9th - 12th
Grade
Ms. Mendoza

Kadena High School



– Kayla Gilmore

I was born into a world of motion — fast, unpredictable, and intimidating — but I still grew wings and learned to soar.

As a military kid, I've moved more times than I can count, trained to pack my life into duffel bags, cardboard boxes, and the trunk of a rental car. Each move held a familiar rhythm: folding clothes that still carried the scent of someplace else, pressing tape down over boxes that didn't feel full enough, standing in doorways longer than I needed to — as if pausing could make leaving easier. It never did. And with every move came a new challenge — saying goodbye to friends I'd just begun to know, walking into unfamiliar classrooms under interrogating fluorescent lights, and learning the language of new towns. It often felt like I was stuck in a cycle of arriving just in time to leave again.

But over time, I began to understand that this life in motion wasn't just about endings — it held countless beginnings too. With every relocation, I adapted faster. I learned how to smile even when my stomach twisted, how to find pieces of home in places where everything felt foreign — like the warm smell of pancakes in a new kitchen or the soft comfort of an old hoodie that had traveled with me through states and seasons. I got good at reading rooms, at blending in without fading out. I became flexible, resilient, open — carrying those qualities like essentials in my mental go-bag.

But adapting wasn't just about surviving change. It was also about finding anchors. For me, that anchor was always the field. No matter where I moved, sports gave me something solid to hold onto — a team, a rhythm, a shared language. The sharp scent of fresh-cut grass, the smack of a lacrosse ball against my stick, the sting of sweat in my eyes — those familiar details grounded me. Even when I didn't know anyone's name, I could still run drills. Still find my spot in the huddle.

In high school, I expanded my role. I became the manager for the boys' basketball team — filling ice baths, keeping stats, organizing gear, shouting encouragement until my voice gave out. The squeak of sneakers on hardwood, the snap of towels, the adrenaline of a tight game — all of it made me feel steady and connected. I wasn't on the court, but I was still part of the team. And I learned that leadership isn't always loud. Sometimes, it's showing up early, knowing what people need before they ask, being reliable when everything else is shifting.

These experiences didn't just help me adjust — they shaped me. Constant change taught me how to stay grounded in chaos. Sports taught me how to belong — how to walk into a room full of strangers and feel sure I had something to offer. I've learned to find home in small things: a shared laugh during warm-ups, a familiar pregame playlist, the hum of fluorescent lights in a gym that smells like rubber and effort.

Now, as I prepare for my next move — this time toward college — I know I'm not just packing up again. I'm carrying everything I've built: the resilience earned through years of goodbyes, the confidence I found on fields and sidelines, and the quiet strength of someone who knows how to start over and still stay whole.

This time, I'm not just moving forward. I'm soaring.

– Aubrey Willis

I've been lingering and living in Japan for 13-14 years. Before I was here my dad was stationed around Baltimore in which was where my family resided. It was fun, people spoke my language, we'd always play soccer or American football with my neighbors and go firefly seeing every time we got the chance. The sparks of the fireflies felt like I was looking at stars close up. Life was great. Best of all I spent time with my great grandma before she passed away. Sadly, I knew time was cutting close. Eventually, I finally moved from Baltimore.

Now we're in Okinawa, Japan. I didn't know if there were going to be people that speak English like myself but luckily there were bases I was unaware of. Foster was my first area I've lived in. My elementary school education was taught in Zukeran (the one before the new Zukeran). I remember that I was a toucan and the motto was "I can, You can, We all can for Toucan!" or something along those lines. The vibrant walls with decorated halls and ice cream occasionally on Fridays. I thought life wouldn't be so bad. I made new friends, everything was great.

Sadly, we changed schools yet again. My dad was still stationed here but my mom wanted us to go to a Japanese school so we can tap in on our Japanese side too. All of my friends didn't have social media back then so that was a sad farewell but all of those experiences made me think "All good things must come to an end." All of my friends from elementary school to my Japanese school were great to me and I'm sad that we don't keep in touch but I have to suck it up and keep on moving. Now, in Kadena High School. I realized that all good things come to an end if you choose to. Some of my friends left because of PCS but I realized that I can stay connected with them by using social media and such. Now, I keep in touch with, cherish and enjoy every friend I have. And my choice is to keep all good things from ending.

– Nasir Ryu Ruff

Being a military child comes with highs and lows. You get to experience things that many other people wish they had the chance to experience, but it also holds you back from a whole outside world.

As a military child you are held to a high standard being in a world full of rules and regulations that you must follow. I have been a military child my whole life and never had a glimpse of the outside. Being a military child has given me the privilege of living in Japan for 8 years and it is amazing. Being a military child also comes with consequences such as moving, deployments, and many sacrifices.

If being a military child has taught me anything it is that you must have love and determination for your family. My dad has been serving in the military for almost 30 years and I am proud of him everyday for doing what he loves and protecting his country. While being a military child I have made friends all over the world and many precious memories with my family that I will never forget. I am beyond grateful and blessed to have the opportunity of being a military child.

– Jayla Shipp

Being in the military community, there are many things you would expect: constant moving, new friends, new places, and big life changes at every corner. But what about the population of children left behind? DoDEA children are often the individuals who have to watch countless friends leave and move on to new experiences and places. Although we have the opportunity to move around, our parents' jobs usually require a prolonged time at their location,

causing us to often be overlooked in the Month of the Military Child conversation. Even though we are still children of the military community, we experience things very differently, still just as challenging and exhilarating as the rest. It sometimes feels like a one-size-fits-all perspective is thrown over the topic. However, there are countless experiences and situations that civilian children go through in the military community.

Every time one of my friends leaves, I feel deeply for them, knowing that they have to pick everything up and leave, but I cannot mask the feeling of being left behind. It's truly a different kind of struggle to go through. Sometimes it feels as though you're stuck dormant while your closest friends move on to new, exciting adventures. It's not easy to vocalize feelings such as these, knowing that children of military service members endure so many unique struggles you could never understand, but it's also extremely important to shed light on the mutual struggles of DOD civilian children. I say this to admit, despite being a DoDEA kid, growing up in the military community has taught me countless lessons about resilience, connection, adaptability, and most of all to live every day to the fullest because time with your friends is precious. From a young age, I figured out that living in a military community is unlike the traditional American lifestyle; learning that nothing is permanent and to be flexible at all times. I learned to deeply appreciate my lifestyle and unconventional perspective. Realizing that living in Japan was a true blessing and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. That, through the struggles you may face, focusing on what matters most should always be the top priority. You learn that struggles are merely temporary aches that are always followed by an abundance of blessings.

– Sarah Beth Walker

Have you ever had trouble explaining where you're from?
For me; hearing "where are you from" never sounded fun
Moving from place to place; I didn't know truly where I called home
From being born in the tropical Okinawa
Living in the home of the B2 Bomber Whiteman Air Force Base
To a small town in Mississippi
To the streets of Osan, South Korea
Then a new school experience to the Philippines
Then finally back in Okinawa
All these places and still don't know what to choose
For others even more places they've moved
How can you know where you are from?
The place you were born?
Where have you lived the longest?
Where your family is from?
Or where you liked it the most?
Every place has been an experience
Even though moving, I showed resistance
Even now knowing where I'm from I may not know
But as time will go it will show
Some people may not understand the pressure of this question
But for me it takes me back down the road of my military life
Every place has just been a vibe
I think living in Okinawa for 10 years makes me from here
But I still think about my life in the Philippines over there
This question still gives me fear
But what can I say
I love it over here!

– Jazlene Chaya Vergara

Scattered globally
But connected everywhere
This is you and me
– Ethan Romney

From different time zones
To new faces and places
Not good or bad. Different
– Mary Hardy

My sister and I always knew my dad was part of the military our whole life. And we knew my mom joined at some point, joining my dad, and that's how my family came to be. We had plushes and teddy bears slapped with my dad's face on them. I remember the time when I was three, he had to be stationed here in Okinawa for three years in Kinser, and I didn't really understand why. I knew it was for military reasons, but what does a three-year-old know? But little did I know that would basically foreshadow the future as I grow.

Throughout most of my life, I lived like a regular American citizen in San Diego. We never lived in a military base; there were no guards to check ID's when we left to go somewhere, no fighter jets were flying over our house, and no naval piers. All of that was basically 20 or 30 minutes away.

My first time being stationed overseas was in Rota, Spain. It felt like a completely different vibe upon arrival. It felt like I was in a completely different world. Only days before, I said goodbye to lifelong friends whom I had known since Kindergarten, and now I'm in some ghost town. It was a rough start for me, new school, new people, new language, and a new environment in general. But at least they had a Navy Exchange and commissary, although very downgraded. But when bad things happen, well, for me at the time, many good things happened.

Never in my life would I have thought that we would be living in Europe. My whole life, we never traveled overseas, so I saw places I never thought I would ever see. And I met new friends, who I cherished very much; I would consider them family. Now, we're doing the same routine here in Okinawa. I have realized that living as a military child, you will experience something unique. It gives you opportunities to experience something that other people don't get to experience. You get to see the world, learn, and experience the culture. You will see places you never thought you would go. You get to live the lifestyle that you're not used to. And the best part is, you get to experience it with your family, and it's all outside your door.

– Peter Lim

Growing up in small towns across the midwest, I was always asked questions like "Oh, when'd you get here?," "Where are you from?," and "You're leaving already? I wish you could stay." Yeah, me too. I love getting to experience new places and meet new people, don't get me wrong. As a military brat, I've gained a heightened sense of anticipatory nostalgia. Essentially it's the feeling of noticing you'll miss a specific moment or time in your life before it's even over. Until living here in Okinawa, I had never spent one full segment of education at the same school. Now my high school experience will be a, relatively, normal one. (Obviously despite the fact that I attend a DODEA school on an international air force base on a small island in Japan). I like being a military child because I have expanded my views of the world and come to understand and respect various new cultures. I have friends from all over the world because of my ability to network and make acquaintances in a short amount of time. There are so many pros and cons that come with being in the military, but you can make the best of the experience by looking on the bright side.

– Elisa Morgan

See more from Ms. Mendoza's class on Page 24

Stripes Sports Trivia

Which franchise drafted, and then traded, Kawhi Leonard to the San Antonio Spurs during the 2011 NBA Draft?

Answer

Indiana Pacers

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Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 "Excuse me..."
- 5 And others, for short
- 9 Title of courtesy
- 14 Roberts of romance
- 15 Road
- 16 Disney's first Latina princess
- 17 Billy's barnyard mate
- 19 Fielders' needs
- 20 Stadium
- 21 Anger
- 23 Sad comment
- 25 Track divisions
- 26 Hoover, informally
- 29 Call from a coach
- 31 Water source
- 34 Line on a weather map
- 36 Add comments to
- 38 Peppy
- 39 Really, really want
- 41 Irving Bacheller novel, "_____ Holden"
- 42 Awfully dull
- 44 Typeface type
- 46 Hotshot pilot
- 47 Hare _____ (religious sect)
- 49 U-turn from WSW
- 50 Arthur Murray moves
- 52 Malaria symptom
- 54 Authoritarian leader
- 57 They may have twists
- 61 Be a bad winner
- 62 Member of a Biblical people
- 64 Jousting weapon
- 65 Lena of "Nine Perfect Strangers"

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15				16				
17			18					19				
20				21			22					
		23		24		25						
26	27	28		29		30			31	32	33	
34		35			36				37			
38				39	40				41			
42				43			44	45				
46			47			48			49			
		50	51			52			53			
54	55					56		57	58	59	60	
61						62		63				
64						65			66			
67						68			69			

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- 66 Tesla CEO Musk
- 67 Rear-____: collision
- 68 Like a snoop
- 69 Big Apple force
- 70 Scenic outlook
- 71 Jellied garnish
- 72 Exchange letters
- 73 Windchime spot, often
- 74 Dined at home
- 75 British coins
- 76 "Gotta run!"
- 77 Sri Lanka export
- 78 Something left out
- 79 Bitty biter, slangily
- 80 Brownish-gray
- 81 Trump's 2024 opponent
- 82 Small amount
- 83 Burstyn or Barkin
- 84 Give the eye
- 85 Scaled diagram
- 86 Norse capital
- 87 Way too suave
- 88 Sporty car roof
- 89 Outlook
- 90 "____ takers?"

DOWN

- 1 Faris or Kendrick
- 2 Icy coating
- 3 Sea eagle
- 4 Food from the sky
- 5 Energy unit
- 6 Chinese philosophy
- 7 Biology lab supply
- 8 Not to mention
- 9 Keepsake
- 10 Like some skirts
- 11 Loathsome
- 12 Tiny colonists
- 13 Catholic service
- 14 WWII conference site
- 15 Insulting
- 16 Army branch, once

Answers to Previous Crossword:

K	N	O	B	M	O	B	S	A	S	T	E	P
I	O	W	A	S	P	E	C	S	A	U	D	I
L	A	N	C	A	S	T	E	R	P	U	R	G
T	A	S	K	S	E	P	I	C	E	N	T	E
		S	H	A	D	V	O	C	A	L		
A	M	U	L	E	T	B	E	N	T	E	U	R
P	U	N	I	S	H	M	E	N	T	A	N	N
P	L	E	D	E	A	T	E	R	M	E	T	E
L	A	V	E	N	I	T	R	I	C	A	C	I
E	N	E	S	I	N	E	T	U	R	K	E	Y
	N	A	T	A	L	R	E	L	Y			
P	A	T	R	O	N	A	G	E	P	L	O	W
O	F	F	E	R	N	O	S	T	A	L	G	I
S	T	U	N	K	D	R	I	P	I	R	M	A
H	A	L	T	S	S	E	N	D	S	E	P	T

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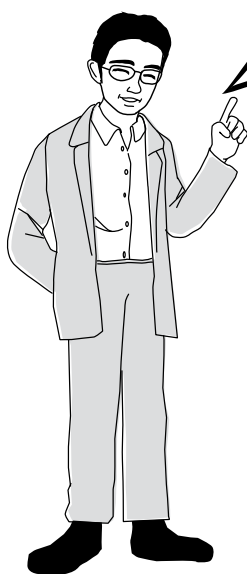
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DID YOU KNOW?

Back in the old days, Okinawans commonly called westerners "Uranda." "Uranda" is the Okinawan way of pronouncing "Oranda," which means "Holland" in Japanese. Uranda means "Dutch." This follows a rule of Okinawan dialect that a word can be converted into the subject of an action by prolonging the last vowel of the word, much just like English converts some verbs into nouns by adding "er" at the end.

Kanji of the week

海

Umi/kai [sea]

Language Lesson

I'm tired.

Tsukare mashita.

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

Edited by Margie E. Burke

HOW TO SOLVE:

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

2	9	3	7	6	8	5	1	4
7	6	1	4	2	5	8	9	3
8	5	4	9	1	3	2	7	6
1	7	2	8	4	6	9	3	5
4	8	9	3	5	7	1	6	2
5	3	6	1	9	2	4	8	7
6	1	5	2	3	9	7	4	8
9	2	7	6	8	4	3	5	1
3	4	8	5	7	1	6	2	9

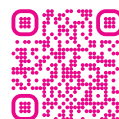
	2							4
3								2
		7	1					
9			7					8
5		1						3
8			2	5				
				4	1			5
7	3				8	6		
	5	4						

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celebrating Month of the Military Child

Kadena High School

Continued from Page 22



Military kid
Traveled all over the world
But Japan is home
- Joseph Parsons

My name is Sophia Fineman. I am a senior at Kadena High School. My whole life, I have lived in Okinawa, Japan. Both of my parents are doctors of education, educating military children. My father is a combat veteran who served in Afghanistan. For eighteen years I have watched my friends move and parents come and go because of moves associated with their military service. Watching the resilience of these families and the resilience my family has, I am proud to be a military child and I am proud to be strong, resilient, and brave. Never to show fear. My family has a history of military service both on my father and mother's side. The story of resiliency which I like to think about in my own family is my great-great uncle David Fineman, a soldier who left just like my father and my Uncle A did for war to serve in Afghanistan. Uncle Dave served in World War II.

As a Jew during World War II, Uncle Dave felt a deep obligation to serve his country and his people. My uncle was a right waist gunner for the B-24 Bomber crew, "Dinah Might". Amazingly, all of the soldiers in his crew were Jewish. In Hebrew the word Dinah means "God will judge."

On February 10, 1944, Uncle Dave was sent on a last-minute mission. Shot down, my uncle Dave was taken as a prisoner of war in Germany. He was taken to a prison camp in Stalag Luft Germany number IV. He was a POW for one and a half years, enduring the wrath of the German army, already extremely hostile to even just Americans, let alone American Jews. After this experience, Uncle Dave would never be the same again. He fought for his country and ended up as a Jewish Prisoner in a German prison. Affected by the horrors of this experience, he suffered severe PTSD. My Uncle Dave would be known for driving to his rural home in Chester, West Virginia all the way from Melbourne, Florida just to see if everyone was okay, stay for half an hour, and then drive all the way back. Much of this was always unexplained, but Uncle Dave's sacrifice for his country showed his commitment to keeping his country and his people free. I am a military child with generations of my family serving in the military. I want to be just as brave as my family members. I'm moving to California next year and I know the importance of going somewhere new to make a difference and not have any fear, just like my family did.

Veterans not only are the heroes of our country, but my own personal heroes. All of these veterans in my life have served something greater than themselves by going into the United States military. Just like my Uncle Dave, who served in war, they were willing to give everything, even their lives to keep our country free. Even like my father and my Uncle A who left for Afghanistan with young, goofy looks on their faces never knowing if they would return home in one piece or if at all.

This bond is something I see from all veterans. Some of my greatest teachers in school are veterans. The veterans in my family who have shown me the value of service, commitment, integrity, selflessness, putting an entire country before themselves, and doing the right thing even when they knew they would never be the same. They signed on the dotted line and honored that commitment. As a military child, I see these heroes daily. I see the sacrifices made and I see families reunited. I am proud to be a part of a family who served. Learning the stories of my grandfather, my great uncle, and especially my father, I take their heroism, braveness, and constant courageousness and apply this to my whole life. To be a military child means to adapt, to not be afraid, and to not show fear just like the service men I am surrounded by every day. I am eternally grateful.

- Sophia Fineman

Being a military child has some cool parts. I've gotten to live in different places and experience things most people don't. Moving around means I've met a lot of different people, and it's helped me become more open and adaptable. I've learned how to make friends quickly and handle change better than most. It also makes me feel proud knowing that my parent is doing something important, and it gives me a strong sense of respect and responsibility. But it's not always easy. Moving so often can be really hard, especially when I have to leave behind close friends just when we're getting really comfortable. It can feel lonely starting over again and again, and sometimes it can feel like you don't belong anywhere.

Friendships are probably the hardest parts. I've met some really great people, but saying goodbye never gets easier. Sometimes it feels like I'm always starting over while everyone else gets to stay in one place and grow up together. I try to stay in touch, but it's not the same as seeing someone every day. At the same time, it's taught me to value the time I do have with people and not take it for granted.

Even with the challenges, there are parts of life that I wouldn't trade. I've seen places and experienced things that a lot of people never will. I've learned how to handle change, how to connect with people quickly, and how to stay strong when things feel uncertain. Being a military child isn't easy, but it's made me who I am, and in a lot of ways, it's made me stronger.

- Azia Jackson

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