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

Supporting Michigan’s Military Families

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

PROGRAMS FOR MILITARY FAMILIES INCLUDE:

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

Learn More!

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

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

- MSU Extension: (msue.anr.msu.edu)
- Michigan 4-H Youth Development: (4h.msue.msu.edu)
- 4-H Military Partnerships: (www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org)
- Operation: Military Kids: (http://www.operationmilitarykids.org)
When I Miss You

**SUMMARY**
A young animal describes how he feels when he misses his family members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>When I Miss You</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Cornelia Maude Spelman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrator</td>
<td>Kathy Parkinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td>Albert Whiteman &amp; Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Publication</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience Age</td>
<td>3-6 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRE-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES**
- Find an item that can help comfort you when your service member deploys. This could be something that belonged to your service member such as a shirt, coat or small item. It could be something that your service member helps pick out such as a blanket, stuffed animal or other small item. Use your item to help comfort you while your service member is gone by holding it, looking at it, or sharing it with others.
- Make a list of things you can do when you are sad or missing your service member. This list might include reading a book, visiting a friend or family member, drawing or coloring and cuddling with your special item. For younger children, draw pictures on the list and hang it where they can see it and be reminded of what to do when they feel sad.

**DURING-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES**
- Using a cell phone, tablet or computer to record short messages and email them to your service member. You could also set up a private video channel on sites such as YouTube or Vimeo and share them with your service member.
- Keep a picture journal of the times when you miss your service member. Draw pictures of how you feel and what you miss. Keeping a journal is a healthy way to express feelings.

**POST-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES**
- Share your picture journal with your service member. Talk about what you did to not miss them so much. Talk about what you missed the most while they were gone.
- Record messages to each other using a cell phone, tablet or computer when you have to be away from each other. Have messages include what you will miss about them and what you would like to do when you are back together. These could be done when the service member leaves for drill or when a child goes to school or stays at a friends house.