

My Advice About Deployments

Deployments are hard. But you're not alone. I'm a military kid, too, and I've been through eight of them. It's tough being away from your parent for such a long time. Sometimes we worry about if they will be safe. Sometimes we are just sad. It's ok to be sad; it's natural. We just don't want to focus on the sad stuff for too long.

There are lots of things that we, as military children, will get that others won't ever experience. I have gotten to see air shows, tour Navy ships, and even ride in the cockpit of an airplane while it was landing. You may get to travel the world. I've been to Portland, Maine, Los Angeles, California, and Hawaii and most of the states between them --and I'm only twelve! This summer I am moving overseas to Guam. This wouldn't be possible if it wasn't for the military. At all of those locations, I have made good friends. Sometimes the bases even host special parties for deployed families. One time I threw out the first pitch at a minor league baseball game, all because my dad was deployed. There are so many opportunities that a normal kid will never get to experience. When you are having a hard time, remember the good things, the memories you have.

As soon as you learn of the deployment, you begin to get a little sad. Saying bye is always the worst. After a couple of weeks, it tends to get better. Once you get into a new routine, it's easier to think less about how you miss them and more about how great it is when you get to see them again. Phone calls and Facetime are great. My mom always helped me try to remember the interesting parts of my day so that I would have something to tell my dad about when we talked on the phone. Sometimes we all got really sad and grouchy; when this happened we would go to state parks to walk around. Getting out in nature helped us to be able to relax. Just remember that it will be over soon.

When you get to the end of the deployment there is not much greater than being reunited with your parent. Your mom or dad will be so proud of you. You will be proud of yourself, too. You will get to show your parent all the stuff you've accomplished while they were gone. Maybe you've gotten a lot better at a certain sport or instrument or maybe created some cool art. Or maybe you grew two inches!