

Month of the Military Child
Military Child Packet
Middle and High School





Montana Schools,

April is the Month of the Military Child! It's a time to recognize and show your respect to all Military Youth for the sacrifices they make and celebrate them as the strong and resilient children they are.

Montana has 6,271 military connected youth with hundreds having experienced a parent being deployed to another country, activated in support of COVID-19 or other natural disasters, such as our difficult fire season last year. These past two years have created many unique challenges for our country, but our service members and their families have truly stepped up to serve all.

We have included some ideas of how to celebrate the Month of the Military Child in your school, along with some resources and activities that will help their peers better understand the sacrifices military families make.

We hope these ideas are helpful and fun ways to recognize your Military Kids. Please send us photos of your celebrations! You can also contact the MTNG Child and Youth Program if you have any questions or would like further resources on how to support a military child experiencing deployment.

Warm Regards,

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Ideas to Celebrate

Wear Purple on Purple Up Day:

Tuesday, April 12th, 2022 is Montana's Purple Up Day for Military Kids. Purple represents all branches of service. Please feel free to take photos of your school participants and email them to us to be posted on our Facebook Page, to help Montana Military Kids see celebrations across the whole State. Please do not post any child's name.

Spirit Week or Dress Up Days:

- Red, White & Blue Day
 - Camo Day
 - Super Hero Day
 - Stars & Stripes Day
 - Purple Up Day
- R.E.D- Remember Everyone Deployed Day- Wear Red (Usually on Fridays)

Create a Hero Board:

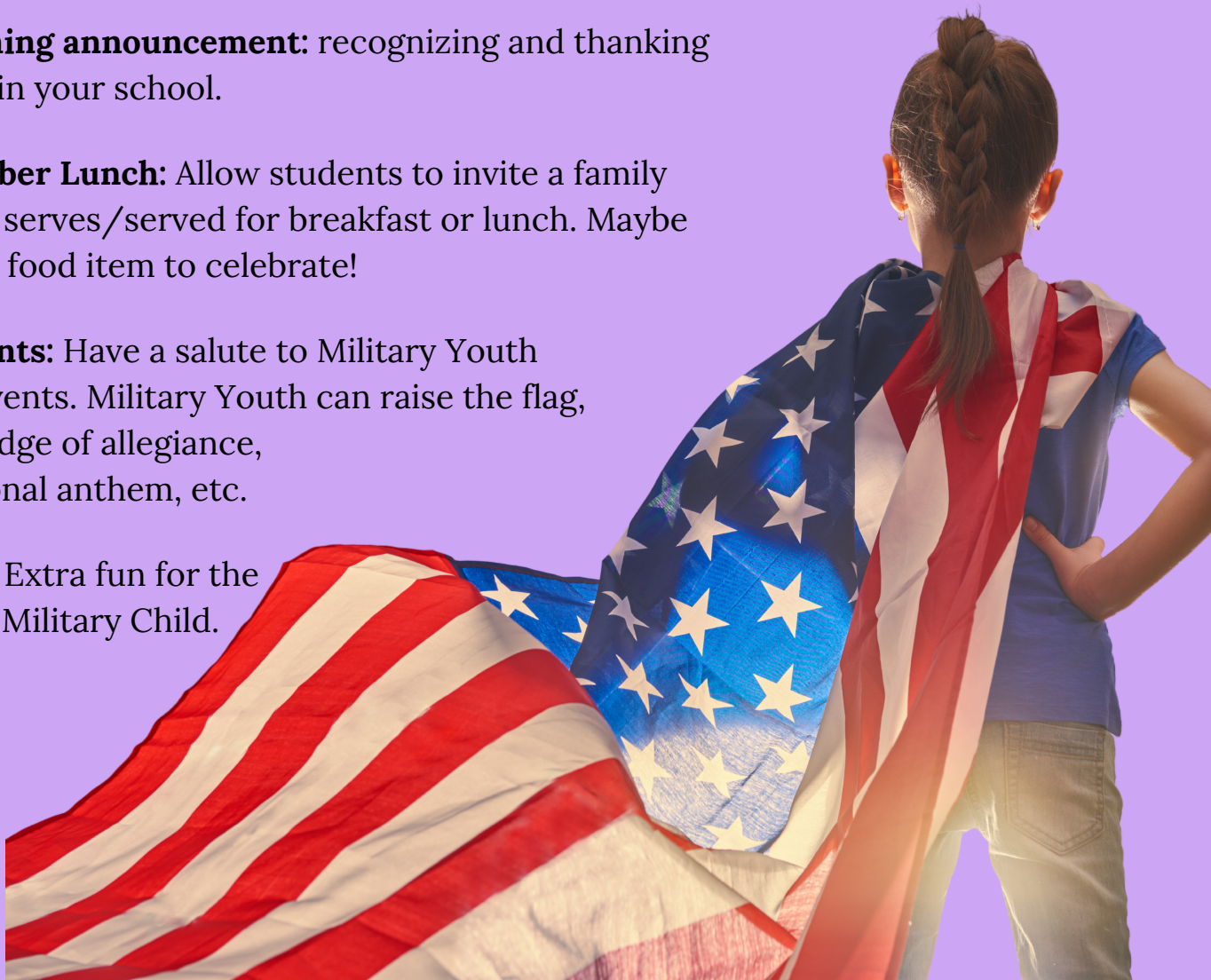
Each home-room can write the names of their family members who serve or have served in the Military on Red, White, and Blue Stars to be displayed on a board in the school. Have them include the service members name and relationship: "My Dad- Eric", "My Uncle-Rob"

Service morning announcement: recognizing and thanking Military Kids in your school.

Service Member Lunch: Allow students to invite a family member who serves/served for breakfast or lunch. Maybe have a purple food item to celebrate!

Sporting Events: Have a salute to Military Youth at sporting events. Military Youth can raise the flag, recite the pledge of allegiance, sing the national anthem, etc.

Photo Booth: Extra fun for the Month of the Military Child.



Military Families and Sacrifices Made

Learn more about the unique challenges Military Kids face

o https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-h_TNcCQq_k

o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDFXxgz0vHc>

o <https://www.cnn.com/2016/11/10/living/iyw-military-families/index.html>

o MT Guard Teens: <https://youtu.be/PQAxJRSNNSQ>

-Please watch these clips before showing to your classroom-

-Important to note that many Military Kids in Montana are National Guard kids. They don't move as much, but don't live on a base, so they don't have as many military peers/same level of support & resources.-

Invite a local Service Member or family member to your classroom to share their perspective on life in the military or their profession.

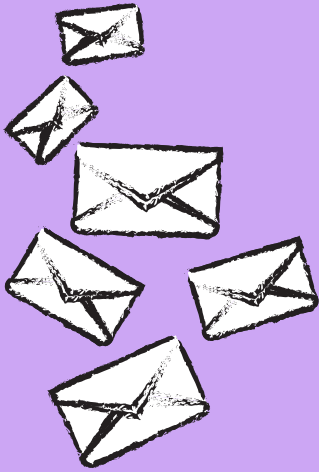
Have Military Kids write an essay or poem about being a Military Kid for extra credit. With permission it could be shared with the school or shared anonymously.

Get Active: Have a mini boot camp challenge with relay races, pushups, running, sit ups, etc.

Read a book about Military Life. We have a list of book options on the next page.



Ideas on how to show support for Service Members and Families



Write thank you letters to Service Members & their families:
We consistently have MT families experiencing deployment and can provide these letters of support to the service members & families.

****Thank You Coloring Card Included****

Tips on writing letters:

<https://www.operationgratitude.com/express-your-thanks/write-letters/>

Mail Class Letters To:

MTNG Child & Youth Program, 1956 Mt. Majo, Fort Harrison, MT 59636

Create care packages for deployed troops from your classroom:

<https://www.herocarepackages.com/homefront/how-to-get-your-school-involved-in-sending-care-packages/>

If a student in your school has a parent being deployed, ask the at-home parent if your classroom can do something special to help the family during deployment: Maybe to rake leaves, bake a treat, shovel the drive way, carpooling for kids events, etc. Let students brainstorm some ideas.



Read a Book about Military Youth and Families!

4th-7th: “Bravo Zulu, Samantha”, by Kathleen Benner Duble

4th-7th: “100 Days and 99 Nights”, by Alan Madison 2008

4th-7th: “Operation Yes”- Sara Lewis Holmes 2009

5th-7th: “Spanky: A Soldier’s Son”, by Sue L. Laneve

7th-12th: “Dear Blue Sky”, by Mary Sullivan 2012

8th-12th: “Beneath Wandering Stars”, by Ashlee Cowles 2016

9th-12th: “My Story: Blogs by Four Military Teens”, by Michelle D Sherman and Deanne M. Sherman



“We Serve, Too” Activity

An interactive game to learn about how a community can respond to deployment.

Supplies: Parachute or Sheet, A variety of different balls, “Role Name Tags”, and participants!

Give every participant a “Role”- Doctor, Teacher, Coach, Student, Kid, Chef, etc. [Provide students with a role title sticker/name tag, so they don't have to try to remember their own role]. There can be 1-3 of each role.

Number off participants 1-4 and have students find a spot around the parachute. They do NOT need to be in a specific order.

On the parachute place multiple balls [or responsibilities]. The group task will be to continue waving the parachute, without letting any of the balls fall to the ground.

When you call a number, those individuals have to instantly let go of the parachute to "help" and "serve", while everyone else continues to keep the balls in the air.

After a couple “fails”, let students know in advance what number you will call out next. Encourage them to communicate and strategize on the best way to keep the balls in the air at all times, without falling on the ground.

After playing the game, it's a great time to review the activity. Our Service Members have a big responsibility that takes them away from their community responsibilities. Even when they are gone helping and serving others, we can all step up to keep things going strong. Military Families have to take on all the responsibilities of their hero, but as a community we can help too. Maybe a family friend can help carpool kids to practice, a teacher could offer extra help on homework; let the kids think about all the different community roles and how we can all help support families during deployment.

