

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **MILITARY CHILD EDUCATION COALITION SALUTES THE WORK OF *TALK, LISTEN, CONNECT: HELPING FAMILIES DURING MILITARY DEPLOYMENT***

**Program has distributed more than 400,000 free educational videos for military families**

**WASHINGTON, D.C., April 3, 2007** – The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)<sup>™</sup> today hailed the expansion of the *Talk, Listen, Connect* program, and acknowledged the thousands of lives it has touched across the country. *Talk, Listen, Connect* is the result of a strong partnership between MCEC<sup>™</sup>, Sesame Workshop, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., and the New York State Office of Mental Health (NYSOMH).

“We at MCEC<sup>™</sup> are deeply appreciative of the work and generosity of Sesame Workshop and Wal-Mart Stores Inc., in nurturing this project from idea to fruition,” said Dr. Mary Keller, Executive Director of MCEC<sup>™</sup>. “In this, the ‘Month of the Military Child,’ we remember especially the importance of what MCEC<sup>™</sup> strives to do every day in meeting the unique and urgent needs of military-connected children.”

MCEC<sup>™</sup> was particularly honored to join Sesame Workshop, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., and NYSOMH as a partner in guiding the development of age-appropriate content for the program. Dr. Mary Keller, along with MCEC<sup>™</sup> Board Member Patty Shinseki, proudly served on the Advisory Board of leading experts who informed Sesame Workshop on the project.

Since August 2006, more than 400,000 *Talk, Listen, Connect* kits have been distributed as a resource for military-connected children, parents and caregivers coping with the process of deployment. MCEC<sup>™</sup> appreciates Sesame Workshop’s development and review process and applauds Wal-Mart’s renewed efforts to make the kits even more widely available.

“The Military Child Education Coalition’s sole purpose is to provide a comprehensive support network to all military-connected families and *Talk, Listen, Connect* is a much needed tool; we are honored to have such dedicated partners in this effort,” said Retired General Tom Schwartz, Chairman of the Board for MCEC<sup>™</sup>. “The commitment of the brave men and women serving our country must be matched with a commitment to their families and the unique and significant challenges they face.”

### **About MCEC**

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC<sup>™</sup>) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that promotes partnerships and provides for networking of military installations and their supporting school districts. Their focus is to address transition and other educational issues related to the military-connected child, including active duty, National Guard, and Reserves. MCEC<sup>™</sup> seeks to include all military installations, their supporting schools, concerned organizations, and caring individuals. For more information, please visit [www.militarychild.org](http://www.militarychild.org).

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