The Military Child Education Coalition

VISION STATEMENT:
To serve as a model of positive leadership and advocacy for ensuring inclusive, quality educational opportunities for all military-connected children.

MISSION STATEMENT:
To ensure inclusive, quality educational opportunities for all military-connected children affected by mobility, family separation, and transition.

GOALS:
1. Provide responsive and relevant support systems, resources, and products.
2. Expand the MCEC outreach through engagement, advocacy, and partnerships.
3. Execute a strategic communications plan.
4. Build a strong, sustainable, and financially sound organization.

Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)
is a GuideStar Gold Participant
www.guidestar.org/profile/74-2889416

The Independent Charities Seal of Excellence is awarded to the members of Independent Charities of America and Local Independent Charities of America that have, upon rigorous independent review, been able to certify, document, and demonstrate on an annual basis that they meet the highest standards of public accountability, program effectiveness, and cost effectiveness. These standards include those required by the U.S. Government for inclusion in the Combined Federal Campaign, probably the most exclusive fund drive in the world. Of the 1,000,000 charities operating in the United States today, it is estimated that fewer than 50,000, or 5 percent, meet or exceed these standards, and, of those, fewer than 2,000 have been awarded this Seal.

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## Features

### Honest, Dedicated, Confident: Eagle Scout

An inside look into what it takes to earn the top ranking in the Boy Scouts of America.

### Special Insert: Deepening Our Understanding about Military-Connected Students: A First Look at One State’s Data

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### Become an On the Move® Author

MCEC publishes articles addressing issues, trends, and policies supporting military and veteran-connected children and youth.

Views expressed do not necessarily agree with positions taken by MCEC. Submit ideas to Newsletter@MilitaryChild.org

### About the Cover:

Sonnett, Grade 11
Salem High School
Virginia Beach, Virginia
US Army

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ON THE move®
April is nationally recognized as the Month of the Military Child. This awareness month was established by former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger to underscore the important role that children play in the Armed Forces community.

We at MCEC are focused daily on making life a little better for our military children and providing them help to face their unique challenges. Here are some statistics that you may not be aware of: there are approximately 1.3 million military children ranging in ages from newborn to 18 years old, 1.3 million of them are school-aged, and military kids on average move 6-9 times in their K-12 education careers. All those school transitions present unique challenges which is why MCEC is focused on continuing to develop programs that support academic achievement to make our kids college and life ready. Statistics also show that military kids are at least twice as likely as their civilian peers to enter military service. They understand and appreciate a life of service to their country.

I hope that you enjoy this edition where we highlight some of our military children and that you will take time during the Month of the Military Child to recognize and appreciate our military children.

Sincerely,

William M Fraser III
General, USAF (Ret)
Chairman, Military Child Education Coalition

Growing a Community of Support

At MCEC, we strive to empower military and veteran-connected children and the community that surrounds them. Please join us as we work to ensure the children of our service men and women have everything they need to reach their full potential.

HOW YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

Your tax-deductible donation to MCEC funds programs for students, parents and professionals, providing vital peer and community support systems. MCEC will be honored to be the recipient of your charitable contribution designated in one of the following areas:

- Student/Youth Initiatives
- Parent Initiatives
- Educator/Professional Initiatives

Together, we will grow a community of support ...for the sake of the child.
Month of the Military Child is a great time to reflect back on the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) mission and why we do the work we do. MCEC focuses on college and career readiness for all military and veteran-connected children, and as we know, transition, mobility, and separation can present challenges for staying on track. We spoke with James, (page 4) a 22-year-old software developer and military child, about how he balanced nine school moves with his STEM career track. James sees the benefits of his mobile lifestyle sharing, “I’ve seen most of this massive country and been exposed to a vast array of cultures, walks of life, types of people, and life situations.” Students like James keep us dedicated to providing resources for our military-connected children.

Our Military Student Transition Consultants (MSTCs) have grown to 21 professional navigators in place at the school level to advocate for our students and their families as they transition in and out of schools. Our MSTCs (page 24) have the opportunity to work with each campus to build support structures that help meet the students’ needs. “The faculty and staff are welcoming and are excited to learn how we can all work together to build a safety net of social-emotional support for our military-connected students and families,” shares Mesha Hayes, our MSTC in Norfolk, Virginia. Thanks to a DoDEA grant, many of our teams now have Project Directors in place to give the students even more attention.

Our partner and friends at the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) are doing fabulous work serving military families and children through their Military and Veteran Families Program (page 22), which serves to create resources and coordinate the NCTSN treatment programs for military children throughout the United States. For the April 2017 Month of the Military Child, the NCTSN is working to raise awareness about ways parents and teachers can bolster support for military children, including their emotional growth and needs.

Let us spend this Month of the Military Child celebrating our students and continuing to find new ways to support the children of those who serve us all.

Sincerely,

Mary M. Keller
President and CEO, Military Child Education Coalition
Military-connected children are inherently resilient, as evidenced by the way they handle the military lifestyle. Growing up as a military child is a unique and challenging experience. “We are social beings; and much of our personality, interests, and psychology is determined by the connections we make with others and the kind of people we foster relationships with,” shared James, a 22-year-old software developer, who grew up in a highly mobile military family.

James moved nine times before graduating from high school and leaving for college, but keeps in touch with very few of the people he met from his many moves across the country. “The military lifestyle throws a wrench in this formative process, as constant relocation often prevents the child from developing deep roots in communities and social groups, from forging the kind of long-lasting connections that most people build their lives upon,” shared James. “But I’ve seen most of this massive country and been exposed to a vast array of cultures, walks of life, types of people, and life situations.”

Growing up, James developed quickly formed friendships; but because of the frequent mobility, he felt they were shallower bonds. It did, however, allow him to, “…develop resilience and independence as a means of survival,” shared James. “It makes for charismatic and well-rounded personalities, well-developed and self-sufficient work ethics, and provides a default conversation starter (although listing all the places you have lived CAN get tiresome).”

From a young age, he trended toward the scientific and engineering mindset, building Legos, reading, and exploring. James immersed himself in books, critical thinking, and experimentation from day one. “To foster engineering thinking (much like any other learning) in kids, starting at the home isn’t just important: it’s essential,” expressed James. In high school, he developed an interest in robotics, specifically robotic prosthetics. “Like many military children, I’d had plenty of up-close and personal experiences with wounded and amputee veterans, and seeing these servicemen come home with prosthetics got me thinking about advancing that technology to make their lives easier.” Once reaching college and beginning computer science education in earnest, his interests changed, but that initial passion never died out.

Resources for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) were endless for James in high school and were paramount in preparing him for college and a career in computer science. Learning can start at as young an age as interest allows. “The efforts to teach kids to code is huge and backed by the likes of Apple, IBM and Google, who all release resources aimed at all ages to get coding as soon as possible,” explained James. “There are countless online resources like khanacademy.org, udemy.com and codeacademy.com that have sprung up in the last few years to become massive collections of awesome video tutorials and courses to teach you how to accomplish anything you could imagine.”

It is easier now than ever before to get started exploring, building, and sharing projects from simple websites and
The Military Child Education Coalition is an approved provider for continuing education units through the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET), National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), and Texas Education Agency (TEA).

The professional development arm of MCEC assists professionals in the fields of education, health care, and childcare, as well as community business leaders, in learning the most current research-informed methods for supporting military-connected children and youth. Through training seminars, highly skilled presenters demonstrate the most effective ways to assist constantly transitioning military-connected children and youth.

MCEC Professional Development Courses Include:

- Supporting Veterans’ Children Through Transitions™
- Helping Military Children Discover Their S.P.A.R.C.: Strength, Potential, Aspirations, Resourcefulness, Confidence™
- The Journey from “Welcome Home” to Now: Reunion, Reconnecting, Routine™
- Supporting Military Children Through School Transitions: Foundations™
- Supporting Military Children Through School Transitions: Social/Emotional™
- Responding to the Military Child with Exceptional Needs™
- Living in the New Normal™
- Student Programs Sponsor Training

Over 2500 professionals were trained by MCEC programs in 2016!

Many of the following courses are eligible to receive Continuing Education credits and/or non-degreed graduate credit. Requirements to receive credit include:

- Maintain 95% attendance
- Engage in class activities and discussions
- Complete end-of-course evaluation
- Complete end-of-course assessment with a minimum score of 80%

Participants can apply for CEUs at MilitaryChild.org and applications are valid for one year after completion of MCEC course.

For more information, contact Amanda Hulsey at Amanda.Hulsey@MilitaryChild.org or visit: www.MilitaryChild.org
Eagle Scout is the highest ranking offered in the Boy Scouts of America with only 4% of Boy Scouts earning it. An Eagle Scout has to complete 21 merit badges covering a wide range of skills and activities with topics including citizenship, hiking, camping, cooking, fitness, first aid and swimming. Matt Glennon, a veteran-connected child and a high school senior is in that top four percent having earned the coveted rank in the fall of 2016. “The idea is to expose boys to a wide range of experiences with the goal of turning out a really well-rounded young man who has confidence in a range of competencies,” shared Matt.

“Plus, an Eagle Scout is a good citizen who willingly and regularly gives his time to help others.”

Being a son of two Veterans, life for Matt has not been much different from other kids in his school. His parents go to work every day and are home every night, which he enjoys. “Both my parents have taught me the importance of service. They don’t spend a lot of time talking about what it was like for them when they were in the military, but my dad has some great stories about things he experienced and my mom was really glad she was able to serve,” shared Matt. His parents believe it is important to serve, and they have fostered many different opportunities for their family to give back to their community.

Matt has been involved in scouting since before he was born. “My dad is also an Eagle Scout; and I think as soon as he found out he was going to have a son, he started planning my scouting career,” joked Matt. He joined the Cub Scouts in first grade and never looked back. Now that he is 18 years old, he is an adult scout volunteer with his troop and gets to mentor younger scouts. “It’s a whole different kind of scouting for me.”

Over his scouting years, Matt has developed skills ranging from basics like knot tying, building a fire,
and identifying edible vs. poisonous plants to practicing emergency preparedness, taking care of the environment, and learning about citizenship and leadership. Matt gained certifications and specialized training in Open Water Scuba Diving, Wilderness First Aid, Lifesaving, and during his sophomore year, the Leave No Trace Training from the Center for Outdoor Ethics. “This course helped me develop skills to teach others how to minimize our impact on the environment, so that when we go camping, we leave the campsites like we find them, so others can enjoy the space for years to come,” shared Matt. When he is not out saving the environment, he enjoys regular activities like water sports, music, and videogames.

While Matt’s parents are retired from the military, the family still lives in a military community. “I think it’s great living in a town where there is always someone new to meet,” expressed Matt. Just this year one of his best friends moved away because her dad is still in the Army. Saying goodbye was hard for Matt but he promises they will keep in touch, “It’s a lot easier to stay connected because of all the technology we have today.” Matt makes friends easily so meeting new kids, learning about what they have done in other places, and where they have lived is interesting to him.

Texas Tech University accepted Matt into their civil engineering program. He is considering the ROTC program and joining the Army after college. He is grateful for all the opportunities the Boy Scouts have provided him. “I think that there will always be opportunity for me to use my leadership skills, whether as a leader of a team or to support whoever is placed in leadership over me,” shared Matt. “When you meet someone who has earned the Eagle Scout Badge, you should have confidence that he is someone who is honest, dedicated and confident in his abilities, someone who can complete the task you give him and someone you can trust to do the right thing, even when no one is looking.”
Dan Warren, PhD, Team Lead for Research and Evaluation, Boy Scouts of America (BSA), was involved in BSA and excelled to the highest rank of Eagle Scout. Achieving the highest rank in Boy Scouts was a changing point in his life. “The two biggest reasons I joined was to develop character and to participate in a values-based organization,” shared Dan.

Post high school graduation, Dan left Scouting in his past and earned his degree in psychology and education. Years later, he met Richard M. Lerner, Ph.D., Bergstrom Chair in Applied Developmental Science and the Director of the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, where Dan was earning his Master’s degree in Child Development. Dan and Rich worked together on a successful 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development. Following the study, Dan taught 5th grade in public education for 9 years. “One day, all those years later, Rich called me and had just received a grant to study scouting and wanted me on it,” shared Dan. “It was a fascinating opportunity to come back and study at a higher level and study scouting.”

The study sought to understand character development in the Cub Scout years. “We collected data over 2.5 years and looked at positive attributions like being helpful, kind, trustworthy, and future mindedness. Attributions that were tied to kids having success over a lifetime,” explained Dan. The purpose of scouting is to develop character, citizenship, fitness, and leadership. The study found that scouts who remained in the program longer had higher levels of trustworthiness, school competence, intentional self-regulation, and hopeful future expectation.

Today, Dan Warren, PhD, is Team Lead for Research & Evaluation for the Boy Scouts of America. Dan believes the standardization of BSA curriculum plays a huge role in easing the transition of mobile populations like military-connected children. “If I walk into a scout meeting in Boise, someone can look at my uniform and know a lot about me already. You know where I have been, what I have done, and that we have similar experiences. We are going to talk about those shared experiences and how they were different in our troops,” shared Dan. “It is really powerful, and that’s the socialization piece, not even the curriculum that the BSA brings.”

“The two biggest reasons I joined was to develop character and to participate in a values-based organization.”

The BSA works to make sure they provide resources to make the whole family feel supported, not just the child. According to Dan, “Boy Scouts is a powerful source for experimentation, education, and building meaningful, tangible skillsets.”

Learn how Girl Scouts of the USA builds girls of courage, confidence, and character in the fall issue of On the Move!
Easing Transitions

As a veteran-connected student, Becca experienced different transition challenges than Active Duty military kids. “My dad retired when I was ten so having him gone all the time to being here was a transition,” shared Becca. After his retirement, her father discovered there were limited opportunities, and the family had to make sacrifices for a short time that they didn’t have to while he was in the military. “I am very proud of him.”

After her father retired, Becca continued to move a lot but it was due to her search for the best academic opportunities rather than because the military had moved them. “I didn’t feel like I was being academically challenged where I could improve so I changed school’s multiple times,” shared Becca. “My third move was to a great little charter school with only 100 students. Two months later we moved to Texas, and I began my fourth high school.”

Becca’s fourth school, Belton High School in Belton, Texas, was the most challenging and biggest school she had attended. It was also where she found the Military Child Education Coalition Student 2 Student (S2S) Program. S2S is a student-led organization that welcomes incoming students to their school and helps departing students prepare for their next school. The program eases transitions and creates a positive environment. “My S2S tour guide is now my best friend,” shared Becca.

Becca attended the S2S Student Summit at the MCEC National Training Seminar last summer. Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, over 60 students attended the Student Summit and worked together to create campus-specific plans to enhance college, career, and life readiness for military-connected and civilian children.

Becca is now the Vice President of her local S2S group and enjoys working with members to make new students feel welcomed. “S2S has helped me be more inviting to people because I have been there with transition. I like seeing our members taking care of new incoming students.”

Becca graduates high school this year, is applying to local Texas universities, and hopes to study Dance Science, a Kinesiology major, which teaches how your own body works. Through all her challenges, Becca has remained positive and eager to challenge herself academically and socially.

Poetry Corner

DEPLOYMENT TO IRAQ

Skyler • Grade 5, EA White Elementary School • Fort Benning, GA • US Army

One of the saddest moments of my life is the day my dad got deployed to Iraq, in 2003. My family was living in Wurzburg, Germany when my dad got the news that he was leaving.

I was sad and depressed when I first got the news. My mom wasn’t that happy because she would have lots of children to take care of by herself when he was gone. There were four children in our family, at that time.

My family dropped my dad off at a big deserted park, where a big army-colored bus was waiting for him. We jumped out of the car and flooded my dad with lots of hugs, kisses, good lucks, and goodbyes. Then in a blink of an eye he was driving away, on his way to Iraq.

After a week or so, my dad started writing us letters and sending us packages. My mom, siblings, and I would send candy to him along with letters of how much we missed him. My dad would give some of the candy to children who did not have enough money to buy their own candy or treats. These things showed that we missed him a lot. We wanted to support my dad and the job he had to do.

One day my family got a big package in the mail. It was filled with a lot of sand and special surprises, like stuffed animals, candy, and pajamas colored like the Iraq Flag. It was so cool. My dad was showing us how much he loved our support and letters. He was thinking of us.

I was overjoyed when my dad came home from Iraq. My dad’s deployment taught me how to be tough when he wasn’t around. My family also learned how we could support each other by caring and supporting him when he was in Iraq.
The Star Spangled Banner is more than our country’s anthem. Although already a moving piece of artistry, it plays an even greater role in my life as a military child. At 5:30 every evening, the hundreds on a military base become one, while standing to respect our great country. The National Anthem is simply a song to many people, but a riveting reminder for military families.

Growing up on a military base provides me the luxury of safety and security. As a result I am able to play outside without a parent tracking my every move. In fact, my parents never need to worry about me, or know exactly where I am. On base, where kids are an ever-present element of the landscape, all my friends are nearby and we can get together easily. Everyone is friendly towards everyone and bullying is unheard of. Frequently, we play for hours without any awareness of time until we hear the first few notes of the National Anthem. Automatically, we stop, stand, and remain in place for a unified show of reverence to all those who serve and have served. At the conclusion, with no need to explain, we all head back to our houses. Back at home our parents take comfort knowing we’ll be through the door soon.

We respect our military members daily by stopping for the Star Spangled Banner. This small gesture shows we honor the brave men and women of the military, our family. When the Anthem plays, we reflect and think about the people sacrificing themselves to protect us. During this two-minute song, people of all ages on our military base stand together, showing that every single one of us is respectful and grateful. This doesn't happen outside the military. No one off base understands the feeling of appreciation that ripples through the military child during the Anthem.

Ultimately, the National Anthem serves as a daily reminder to military children that when our parents work well past dinner, they are in the service of others. They see the bigger picture and work to protect their families, other families, and truly, everyone else in the world. Service Before Self. That is the military way. Most children unrelated to the military don’t and can’t appreciate everything that is done for them. Our parents help us see the world as it is. A military lifestyle gives us a greater understanding and we are made better people for it.

During the Anthem, everybody on base willingly stands, paying their respects to the men and women working to sustain peace in America and worldwide. I live on a military base safe from the dangers of the outside world. My parents needn’t worry about me when I go out to play. Though away from home for hours, after the Anthem plays, we all say, “See you tomorrow.”
Military Child Education Coalition has developed a series of eight interactive lessons designed to support youth serving professionals, parents, and highly mobile military and civilian students to become college and career ready. NEW! Free TedEd Lessons for Parents and Educators!
Military & Veteran Children: a Constellation of Strengths & Challenges

Who can benefit from these lessons?

Educators, service providers, youth-serving professionals, parents and anyone interested in learning more about supporting military students and increasing their opportunities for a successful transition from high school to college and career.

How do I find the lessons?

The eight interactive lessons (described at right) can be found at www.militarychild.org/professional-learning-opportunities. Each one is a separate link to TedEd. Once you arrive at the TedEd site, it is best to register for a username and password, so you can take full advantage of the TedEd enabled lessons.

What will I learn in the lessons?

Each lesson includes a short video. Once you have landed at the lesson, view the video first. Then, you will be given the opportunity to learn more about the topic through thought provoking questions, additional resources and more. You can even check your understanding through a short quiz. There is no limit to the amount of times each video can be watched. Be sure to share with other learners your compelling thoughts and action items.
Objectives for learning:
- Introduce participants to the mobile military and veteran-connected child.
- Share information about strategies for inclusion, transition and motivation of military and veteran-connected children.
- Create an environment where all children graduate from high school successfully ready for college and careers, regardless of their transition status.

What is a Professional Learning Community?
According to ALLTHINGSPLC.info, a Professional Learning Community (PLC) is defined as an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. PLCs operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators.

How can a Professional Learning Community help your campus?
For staff, the following results have been observed:
- Reduction in isolation of teachers.
- Increased commitment to the mission and goals of the school, and increased vigor in working to strengthen the mission.
- Shared responsibility for the total development of students and collective responsibility for students’ success.
- Powerful learning that defines good teaching and classroom practice, and creates new knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learners.
- Increased meaning and understanding of the content teachers teach and the roles they play in helping all students achieve expectations.
- Higher likelihood that teachers will be well informed, professionally renewed, and inspired to enthuse students.
For staff, continued:

- More satisfaction, higher morale, and lower rates of absenteeism.
- Significant advances in adapting teaching to the students, accomplished more quickly than in traditional schools.
- Commitment to making significant and lasting changes, and higher likelihood of undertaking fundamental systemic change.

For students, the results include:

- Decreased dropout rate and fewer classes “skipped.”
- Lower rates of absenteeism.
- Increased learning that is distributed more equitably in the smaller high schools.
- Greater academic gains in math, science, history, and reading than in traditional schools.
- Smaller achievement gaps between students from different backgrounds.

Ways to put the MCEC lessons into practice:

1. Create goals for increasing the campus-wide awareness of military and veteran-connected students.
2. Create an interest inventory for middle and high school students to gauge the interest and help identify mentoring opportunities.
3. Casually talk to one student each week about his/her career aspirations.
4. Identify former students who are military or veteran-connected and ask them to share their career experience with your students.
5. Highlight the college experience of your colleagues through bulletin boards and newsletters.

What are some other ideas that you have?

We would love for you to share your ideas with us through the TedEd platform!

This project made possible through a generous grant by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

REFERENCE


*The MCEC lessons created with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will help members of Professional Learning Communities understand the challenges faced by military-connected children and all children who experience transition. When you use the MCEC lessons as a topic in your PLC, the members will find engaging videos, dynamic conversations and ideas for assisting all students to become college and career ready, while meeting the demands of state, district and local requirements.
**Parent to Parent™ Program News**

Introducing the latest addition to the MCEC Parent to Parent program:

Team Colorado Springs, Colorado led by Louise Webb with Melanie Douglas and Lynne Conde

The MCEC Parent to Parent Program has a long history serving the greater Colorado Springs military community. Originally created through a contract with the Army Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command in July 2006, the team has delivered more than 975 workshops to 12,653 attendees. Parent to Parent Workshops cover a wide-range of education and social/emotional topics such as resiliency and transition, parent-teacher conference success, homework, and math. Military-connected spouses with experience in military transitions and the education fields lead the training team. They provide research-informed resources as well as tips and techniques to help parents in their workshops become their child’s best advocates as they navigate the challenges associated with the military lifestyle. The current team supporting Colorado Springs will focus their workshops on parents with children in elementary schools and early childhood.

As we move into the last half of the spring 2017 semester, many military parents are challenged with preparing for that seemingly inevitable move over the summer. The MCEC Parent to Parent Program offers a variety of workshops for parents to help ease the transition. Building an academic portfolio is a great way to start before the move so that parents have the documents needed to get their child(ren) enrolled smoothly at the next duty station. Additionally, keeping their minds actively engaged in learning over the summer can be a challenge. The “Preventing the Summer Slide” workshop offers ideas for parents to help keep kiddos engaged in active learning without them even knowing they are doing it.

A Parent to Parent Webinar Series you don’t want to miss!

Learn how military-connected parents can serve as their child(ren)’s best advocate on educational and social/emotional issues. Mark your calendars and register for the live webinar that fits your needs! Or watch the recorded presentation for up to two weeks.

**Transitions – What Every Parent Needs to Know**
April 12, 2017 – 12:00 pm EST
April 13, 2017 – 1:00 pm PST

**What to Expect When You’re Accepting**
(OCONUS College Acceptance Process)
April 26, 2017 – 12:00 pm EST and 8:00 pm CST
April 27, 2017 – 1:00 pm PST

**School Transitions with Exceptional Needs**
May 10, 2017 – 12:00 pm EST and 8:00 pm CST
May 11, 2017 – 1:00 pm PST

**Preventing the Summer Slide**
May 24, 2017 – 12:00 pm EST and 8:00 pm CST
May 25, 2017 – 1:00 pm PST

**Helping Young Children Navigate Change**
June 14, 2017 – 12:00 pm EST

**Helping School Aged Children and Teens Navigate Change**
June 28, 2017 – 12:00 pm EST
July 12, 2017 – 12:00 pm EST and 8:00 pm CST
July 13, 2017 – 1:00 pm PST

**Financing Your Military Child’s Education**
August 2, 2017 – 12:00 pm EST and 8:00 pm CST
August 3, 2017 – 1:00 pm PST

**Positive Communication – Parent/Teacher, Parent/Child, Child/Peers**
August 16, 2017 – 12:00 pm EST
August 17, 2017 – 1:00 pm PST

For more information, contact Judy.Glennon@MilitaryChild.org or visit www.MilitaryChild.org/parents-and-students/webinars.

Webinars sponsored by the Navy Child & Youth Program, Child & Youth Education Services.
The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, or NCTSN, is a proud partner with MCEC to support our military families and children. The NCTSN proudly serves military families and children through our Military and Veteran Families Program, which serves to create resources and coordinate the NCTSN treatment programs for military children throughout the United States.

For the April 2017 Month of the Military Child, the NCTSN is working to raise awareness about ways parents and teachers can bolster support for military children, including their emotional growth and needs. April 2017 Month of the Military Child is a perfect time for our community to review our understanding and deepen our commitment to serving the families and children with a parent or parents who serve in the Armed Forces.

Growing up in the military can be a great adventure for many, with an abundance of opportunities to gain both interpersonal skills (social) and the types of skills that lead to new interest areas in academic subjects. For example, some military children will become curious and want to study about new places they live and visit. Other military kids describe how quickly they learn to adapt to new environments after moving to a new community. These kids will describe how they learned positive social skills to making new friends quickly, staying in touch with their old friends and making each move a new chapter in their lives. Other military kids are excited about STEM and computer-coding electives offered at schools and can apply those skills to after school clubs and projects.

Military families face risks that can, at times, challenges and even overwhelm their abilities to stay connected to these educational advantages. These risks seem to emerge around the times of separation from a parent due to deployment or trainings, as well as frequent or sudden moves in location. A recently published report by RAND suggests that military children may experience academic difficulties associated with the length of their parent’s deployment. That is, the longer the deployment, the greater odds that they child may have difficulties at school. The report also suggests that separation from a military parent during a long deployment may also raise the students’ feeling of anxiety or fearfulness. Previous studies have also shown that without the proper support,
multiple transitions and parental deployments can put a military child at increased risk for academic challenges. These academic challenges include difficulties maintaining satisfactory test scores and grades, feeling socially isolated at school, and feeling lost or behind in the class lessons.

Sometimes military children are impacted by even greater stressors, such as when a trauma or loss takes place. According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), a traumatic experience is a difficult life experience that overwhelms the child and their ability to cope. The child’s reactions to the trauma may interrupt their ability to interact with others, and lead to difficulties learning and concentrating on schoolwork. School age children may also experience difficulties sleeping at night, as well as have scary dreams. Sleep problems may also lead to daytime sleepiness, which can impact activity level and participation in extra-curricular activities like sports.

Families have many options to address these challenges through supportive community programs at military bases and through community agencies that offer different types of prevention and intervention for the family and children.

There is lots of good news. Most military children are very resilient and adapt quickly when faced with change. In fact, most military children have learned to adapt to new situations, like making friends at a new school, or helping around the house after a parent leaves for deployment. Family members, teachers, and behavioral health providers are welcome to find resources and materials to support military families and children, including fact sheets, assessment and screening materials, and webinars to assist them to help military children to adapt to change, as well as adversity or challenges associated with military life.
Pride in Service

We’ll be highlighting one of our Military Student Transition Consultants in each issue. Mesha Hayes is serving our students in Norfolk Public Schools, Virginia.

M CEC Military Student Transition Consultants (MSTC) are professional navigators and advocates for military-connected students and their families as they transition in or out of schools. Assigned within school districts, MSTCs cultivate personal relationships and become involved in problem solving at an individual level.

As a proud United States Army Veteran, self-proclaimed Army Brat, and Army parent, Mesha Hayes takes pride in serving military families and providing support strategies that help educators and administrators address challenges military-connected students face. Prior to becoming a MSTC, Mesha was an inclusion teacher with Norfolk Public Schools (NPS), which has the largest concentration of military-connected students in the country. “I have a long history with NPS. I was once a military-connected student in NPS, where I attended seven schools before graduating high school,” shared Mesha. “I take great pride in being a product of the military community.”

In the fall of 2016, Norfolk Public Schools received a DoDEA grant to increase staffing with personnel dedicated to responding to the “unique experiences and challenges of students connected to the military.” A component of the grant and new to Norfolk Public Schools this year are Project Directors.

As a life-long learner and educator, Project Director Angela de Mik, has a deep passion for families and the various challenges they face raising children and seeking the best for them both socially/emotionally and academically. “Living in Hampton Roads for the past 16 years, has given me deep respect and appreciation for the daily sacrifices military families make, especially military-connected students,” shared Angela. Recognizing the resiliency and challenges military families face led Angela to focus her Doctoral Research on military-connected students and programs designed to support military families.

Project Directors and MSTCs work as a team to provide support when military students face challenges associated with mobility, separation, and transition. As a Project Director, Angela supports Mesha as she navigates the

“Providing support for eight schools can be challenging, but Mesha sees it as an opportunity to work with each campus to build support structures to help meet the students’ needs. “The faculty and staff are welcoming and are excited to learn how we can all work together to build a safety net of social-emotional support for our military-connected students and families,” expressed Mesha. She has noticed that military-connected students appreciate the individual attention MSTCs provide and appreciates that MCEC recognizes military children serve, too.

BRITTANY MAHLSTEDT
Communications Specialist, Military Child Education Coalition
school district and various school systems. While Mesha provides direct services to the military students and their families, Angela provides indirect services by working within the school system to arrange trainings and organize data/evaluation tools. “We enjoy connecting to share the exciting ways in which we are building bridges and helping schools. We are positive and meet barriers with problem-solving to find solutions to keep us moving forward,” shared Angela. “My goal is to raise community awareness, parent education opportunities, and future initiatives that will provide local, state, and possibly national collaborations that will continue to benefit military students and Norfolk Public Schools.”

For more information about MSTCs and a list of current MSTCs and locations, visit: www.MilitaryChild.org/MSTC

Military and veteran-connected kids are in every county

Percent of Veteran Households with Children

Source: Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Statistical Analytics Service, USVETS FY2015.

Prepared by the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics
The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) National Training Seminar (NTS) is a globally-recognized, premier professional development event for anyone interested in serving and supporting military and veteran-connected children. NTS provides a unique opportunity to engage with senior military, education, and thought leaders while obtaining in-depth coverage of current issues relevant to military-connected children during a period of significant change and challenge.

This year’s theme, Military and Veteran Children: A Constellation of Strengths and Challenges, will be complemented by four strands that will emphasize moving beyond entry-level awareness and offer innovative ideas, active hands-on learning, and critical information relevant to attendees dedicated to serving the military-connected child.

REGISTER EARLY for an opportunity to receive a free stay at the Renaissance Washington DC Downtown Hotel on July 28th-29th, 2017! It’s a great occasion to spend a couple days exploring our nation’s capital in advance of the NTS. The deadline for Early Bird registration is April 30, 2017.

Themes:

**USING DATA EFFECTIVELY**
Translate Data to Knowledge to Practice (D2K2P) and apply it in professional and personal lives to support military-connected students.

**PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**
Highlight exceptional partnerships and illustrate how to navigate challenges and maximize benefits of initiating partnerships in local military installations or school districts that serve the interests of military and veteran-connected students.

**SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)**
Focus on programs, partnerships and best practices that provide measurable results in helping military families and their children thrive in their environment.

**EDUCATION POLICY**
Discuss policy implementation and forces leading us in the right direction to support military children and learn how education policies can be improved, developed and adapted to better benefit students we serve.

For more information on the 2017 MCEC National Training Seminar, visit: MilitaryChild.org/NTS