

Slide 8: “Commonalities”

- Let’s Get to Know Each Other Better

1. Divide participants into small groups (8per/max)
2. We are going to be playing commonalities
 - a. When I say “GO” your group has 5-7minutes to brainstorm as many things that you all have in common as possible
 - i. Nothing obvious like we all have clothes on, shoes, in W. Leb, NH, at PD for the day, etc.
 - ii. Things like we have all been to Europe, or better yet, we hall been to Frankfurt, Germany
 - iii. Get as detailed as possible
 - iv. Also, identify one characteristic that is unique to you within your group. Be creative! Not, “I am the only male in my group,” but, “I won the state baton twirling championship.”

"Walk This Way"

Have you ever...

Have you ever heard the expression "Walk a while in my shoes"? This will help you understand what military youth have to deal with. INSTRUCTIONS: Find someone who has personally experienced these situations. Have them put their initials in the box that they can relate to. The first person to get a "bingo" gets a prize.

...enjoyed some good times with others who share your experiences?	...had to go stay with other family or friends for a year while both your parents are gone?	...had to take on additional responsibilities as the "man or woman of the house" because your mom or dad is gone?	...experienced anger over having to quit your school sports team, or squad because you had to move to a different school while your parent is away?	...known the sadness of leaving the comfort and stability of your friends to go to a strange new place and have to start the process all over again?
...had to sell your house, pack and move with no one to help your parent but you and maybe brothers/sisters?	...known the joy of doing things on the "spur of the moment" because no one has a schedule to keep?	...had a sibling, or yourself, tested for a serious disease which meant one parent had to handle the burden because the other parent is gone and there's no other family nearby?	...found out that your parent had to sell their business because their tour of duty was extended again?	...found out that your parent had to team up with another family with children because there is not enough money to go around?
...listened to taped bedtime stories from your parent because your parent is away for an unknown amount of time?	...watched your Mom or Dad trying to make ends meet when spouse has part of the money overseas?	FREE SPACE WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF MILITARY CHILDREN	...experienced the anxiety of moving multiple times in as many years and never starting the new school at the beginning of the year.	...felt angry because you wanted to spend time with your parent who is home on "R and R" but knowing your other parent needs time alone with them too after a lengthy separation?
...realized that life at home is morphing into something different and worried about how you and your returning parent will transition back into everyday life with the rest of the family?	...had no communication with your parent for weeks, while knowing that his or her location is very dangerous?	...gotten a letter from your parent/loved one that he/she is in the hospital overseas, but without any details as to why?	...known the loneliness of spending a year or longer celebrating holidays without a parent?	...had to do all the yard work and housework by yourself?
...had to deal with your family having a sudden major reversal of income?	...feared your parent will be a stranger to you because they've missed so many major milestones?	...felt the sense of accomplishment after completing a major task typically done by your parent such as buying groceries or paying bills?	...dreaded the sight of reporters because you "heard it first" on national news, but only got enough details to make you "fear the worst?"	...feared losing the independence you've gained upon your parent's return, after having so much responsibility or spending so much time on your own?

Slide 33: “Walk this Way”

Key Talking Points:

- A. Review “Walk this Way” Activity slide with participants
- B. Provide copies/make reference in training manual to activity handout
- C. Instruction: Find someone in this group who has personally experienced these situations. Have them sign their initials in the box which they are able to relate to. The first person to get a bingo gets a prize
- D. Large Group Discussion Questions:
 - What thoughts and feelings came to mind as you completed this activity?
 - How does it relate to our training topic?
 - Did any of the examples strike you as particularly challenging for youth impacted by the deployment of a parent or loved one?
 - What will you walk away with as a result of participating in this activity?

Slide 60: “A Blanket Community”

Objectives:

- Create awareness.
- Build group rapport.

Activity Instructions:

Supplies:

- Blanket, tarp, or tablecloth
- Several objects to represent various aspects of the community such as balls, empty plastic water bottles, other objects with different shapes and textures.

Procedure:

Place the blanket or tarp on the floor and have all participants align themselves on the edges. Each member picks up an edge of the cloth and holds the blanket tightly. Add objects to the center of the blanket. Each participant holding the blanket will assume a community role: teacher, parent, business owner, law enforcement officer, doctor, county employee, school administrator, elected official or other community member.

Add the objects and tell the group that these are the children in our community and that we have to keep them safe. Have the group make a wave with the blanket but at the same time keeping the children on the blanket. Begin telling the group that the business owner, a member of the National Guard has been deployed. That person drops out, then call more people to be deployed until you are down to two or three people.

Questions to ask:

1. What happened as people started leaving their spots on the blanket?
2. How did you feel in trying to keep all the objects on the blanket?
3. How did your role/responsibility change as others left the blanket?
4. What implications does this activity have for how we respond to the military youth and families in our community?