# November, 2009

# THE KID ZONE

**My friend's Mom is being deployed next month. How can I be supportive? She's really sad. ~ My friend is excited that his Dad is coming home but he's also nervous. He hasn't seen his dad in 7 months. ~ I have a friend that is really upset. Her Mom has come home from Iraq but her leg has been broken. She may have to have surgery.**

Some of you know someone who has a parent who serves in the military. Some of these parents may be *deployed* in the next few months or they may have been *deployed* months ago. A person who serves in the military is trained by taking special classes. When they are *deployed*, these individuals meet other trained people and they work together to get a job done.

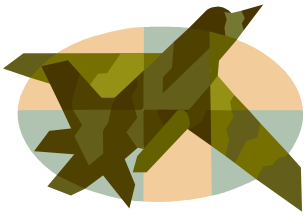
*Deployment* can last months and even years. When a parent is *deployed*, they are working for the United States government. They have an important job that takes place in another country, another place. Parents who are *deployed* may be across the world but they can often call at least once a week. Parents can write letters to home and receive mail as well. Did you know that you can send a special package to someone who is *deployed*? It takes a bit longer for mail to travel far away but mail can reach parents who are *deployed*.

Parents who are *deployed* miss their families just as much as their families miss them but they have a job to do and this job is unlike other jobs where you come home every night to be with your family.

What can you do? Turn this page over and let's start brainstorming

Deploy [de-ploy] - bring troops or forces together for a job.

# Make a Plan - Take Charge!



## That special something...

In the military, everyone wears “dog tags” around their neck. When we wear a piece of jewelry, it can often help us feel closer to someone else. If you don’t like jewelry, you might carry a special coin or symbol in your pocket. Help your friend think of something that makes him feel closer to his parent - something that can be taken with him wherever he goes.

## What’s the plan?

One of the hardest parts of having a parent deployed is having them stay so far away. You can’t grab the phone and call when you want to.  Help your friend create a plan - a phone schedule or how many letters to write a week. Photos are also a great way to remember the ones we love and miss. Create a scrapbook, an album or place a picture in your locker.

## Make a list!

Have you ever felt like you were alone? Sometimes when someone is gone or if we know someone special to us is leaving, we feel a sense of loss. We feel sad and lonely. Help your friend create a list of everyone she can count on - friends (like you!), neighbors, brothers, sisters and relatives.

## It’s okay...

Sometimes your friend may be really upset or sad because they are  missing their parent more than usual. It’s okay for your friend to cry or to even be angry that the parent is gone. When a parent is deployed, it’s hard on the entire family. Your friend will feel all kinds of things from fear to hope.