



WELCOME HOME! RECONNECTING WITH YOUR CHILD

Presented by Military & Family Life Counselors

OBJECTIVES

What To Expect and Tips That Can Help:

- Infants
- Toddlers/Preschoolers
- School-Age Children
- Teens



INFANTS

What to Expect:

- May react to you as a “stranger” by crying or clinging to the other parent
- May not recognize you



INFANTS

Tips:

- Get involved slowly by helping with daily care such as changing diapers, helping with bath time and bedtime
- Engage child in a playful way such as playing peek-a-boo
- Give lots of affection: loving strokes, kisses and holding



TODDLERS/PRESCHOOLERS

What to Expect:

- May have regressive behaviors
- May not recognize you
- Might cling to the other parent
- Could test limits
- May want all of your attention



TODDLERS/PRESCHOOLERS

Tips:

- Focus on rewarding positive behavior
- Plan special play time with your child
- Have patience with your child
- Maintain established routines



SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

What To Expect:

- May want all of your attention
- Could have mixed feelings about your return
- Might test the limits
- May cling to other parent or relative
- May feel very proud of you



SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

Tips:

- Show your child plenty of love and attention
- Praise your child for all of his or her achievements while you were gone
- Be involved in daily activities such as homework and sports
- Be patient with your child



TEENS

What To Expect:

- May have mixed feelings about your return.
- Could test the boundaries.
- Might feel self conscious about sharing their feelings.
- May withdraw and/or act out



TEENS

Tips:

- Avoid criticizing or teasing your teen
- Share appropriate deployment experiences with your teen
- Find a shared interest or activity that you both enjoy
- Be patient with your teen



OTHER EXPECTATIONS

Many children and teens are:

- Excited to have their parent back in the home
- Happy to have their parent involved in their daily lives again
- Proud of their parent's service
- Excited to share their accomplishments with their parent
- All children and teens can adjust given time, patience and love



CONCLUSION

Be patient and enjoy your child.

Allow time for you and your child to adjust and appreciate these changes.



SUMMARY

When a parent returns home:

- Infants and younger children may not recognize the returning parent and may cling to the other parent
- Older children and teens may test limits, act out or withdraw
- It's important to be patient and allow time for reconnecting
- Seek help from military and community resources when needed





QUESTIONS?



RESOURCES

- Military Community Services
- Chaplain and Local Clergy
- Military OneSource (800) 342-9647
- TRICARE www.Tricare.mil
- Behavioral Health Services





THANK YOU