

ASK THE QUESTION

HAVE YOU EVER SERVED IN THE MILITARY?

One question can make a big difference.

Children's Services & School Systems

SUPPORT MILITARY FAMILIES BY:

*Helping a student thrive when a parent is deployed.
Supporting families facing deployment and reintegration.
Improving peer sensitivity to military children.*

WHY ASK THE QUESTION?

In NH, where many of our military serve in the National Guard or Reserves, we do not always know who in our community is serving. Guardsmen and Reservists often work civilian jobs, so even their neighbors might not know they serve. When a child has a parent or other family member serving in the military, he or she may experience a loved one's absence for long periods of time – sometimes to a war-zone where he/she may be in harm's way and out of touch. *The best way to identify and support a military child and family is to ASK!*

**At the point of school/program enrollment ,
ASK THE QUESTION of the parent:
"Have you or a family member ever served in the military?"**

WHEN THE ANSWER IS "YES," you may consider thanking them for their service. You may also then be able to find out more from the parents about the family's military experience that will help you to provide the best possible services and referrals. Asking further questions will also help you to:

- Build rapport with the parent and child and demonstrate interest and cultural competency
- Identify any deployment-related stressors on the child and family as well as any related behavioral, emotional, social, and academic implications for the child
- Explore deployment and reintegration challenges
- Link to any needed military and veteran resources and benefits, including VA and non-VA programs
- Identify family supports and resources as well as needs for support not yet met
- Address perceived barriers to the child or parent(s) in seeking support

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An Initiative of the NH Department of Military Affairs & Veterans Services



Following are some questions that could be asked in the context of gathering information for more effective referrals and services. Pay attention to non-verbal cues, and show respect, curiosity, and empathy. Also be aware that responsiveness and effective follow-up are critical to building trust and rapport.

- When did you/your family member serve? What service era? Which Branch?
- In what ways may your need for services here be connected to your/your family member's military service?
- Is your child facing or has recently faced a family member's deployment or military duty away from home? If yes, when?
- Are you/your family member enrolled/connected to the VA or other veteran resource or organizations for support or services?
- What types of support are needed but not yet met?
- What reservations did you/your child have about coming in to seek support and assistance? Is there anything that might be a barrier to further seeking assistance?

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