

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT



Little Troopers in Healthcare is a dedicated area where healthcare professionals can access useful information to better support military children in your care.

Our charity receives an ever-increasing number of enquiries from NHS professionals looking for advice to help children who have parents serving in the British Armed Forces.

Our charity believes that all healthcare professionals should have a good understanding of the unique challenges that military children sometimes face, such as having a parent away from home on military operations and exercises, and how these challenges can impact on a child's wellbeing. It's also important to recognise how the mobile nature of military life can add practical barriers to accessing healthcare, particularly for children with longer-term needs or for children on a waiting list for treatment or an assessment.

Our charity wants to empower healthcare professionals with the tools to increase your knowledge and understanding of military life, as well as providing practical resources that you can use with children in your care.

All of the tools and resources in this area have been created with the help of educational psychologists, play therapists and other professionals and they are all specific to military life.

The resources can be adapted for a range of healthcare settings, including children's hospitals and wards, paediatric outpatient facilities, children's centres, GP surgeries, social work services and more.

Who classes as a military child?

Military children are any children who have one or both parent(s) serving in the British Armed Forces – the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force – both regular and reserve. There are estimated to be approximately 100,000 military children in the British Armed Forces community.

What are the challenges that military children face?

Military children can experience life differently from their peers.

Families are always coping with unexpected change and uncertainty which can impact on family life:

Having a parent deployed or serving away from home on exercise or course.

- Moving home and school frequently.
- Living unaccompanied.
- Dual Serving parents.
- Military children are not necessarily resilient to these experiences just because they happen all the time.
- Having a parent away on exercise for a few weeks can be just as hard for some children as a longer deployment

HOW CAN LITTLE TROOPERS HELP?

Little Troopers Therapy Programme



The Little Troopers Therapy Programme is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and is a bespoke early intervention programme providing face-to-face therapy for military children to help them navigate some of the more challenging aspects of military life. All the sessions are delivered by qualified clinicians from The Owl Therapy Centre, a CQC approved therapy centre.

Healthcare professionals can refer individual children of school age (reception to Year 13) for six one-hour therapy sessions. This course of therapy is delivered face-to-face either in the child's home, the clinician's office or other agreed space in the community. During the course, each child will explore the topics of emotional regulation, uncertainty and change, relationships, resilience and life-story work, all within the context of growing up in the Armed Forces.

To be eligible to receive support, children need to have a parent who is currently serving in the British Armed Forces or reserves. This is an early intervention programme and is not aimed at children in crisis. Children who are on a Children and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS) waiting list will be prioritised.

At present, the programme is only available in England, although if you are working with a military child in Wales who you think would benefit from the programme, please email info@littletroopers.net as the charity may be able to refer your case on.

The Therapy Programme also includes one-off group face-to-face sessions for military teenagers and an on-demand parent session.

For more information and to refer a child to the programme, please visit www.littletroopers.net/little-troopers-therapy-programme

What other resources are there?

Little Troopers has lots of other resources that you can signpost children, families and schools to for military-specific support. Visit www.littletroopers.net for more details. Here are a few examples linked for direct access:

SQUAD:

A podcast for military teenagers. Across eight episodes, 15 teenagers talk about their own experiences of growing up in the Armed Forces community and some of the challenges they have encountered. Each episode comes with an activity sheet that young people can complete at home or in school.

Mindfulness pack:

A free downloadable pack featuring five mindfulness activities.

X-Ray of Feelings:

A series of illustrations and accompanying worksheets that have been created by an Educational Psychologist to help children unpack their emotions in relation to some of the most challenging aspects of military life: moving home, moving school and having a parent deployed.

Affirmation cards:

35 free printable affirmation cards, including some specific to military life. Families and schools can download and print them off to encourage a positive mindset. The pack comes with an overview featuring ideas on how to use the cards.

Expert View:

A series of bitesize video clips in which an Educational Psychologist delves deeper into some of the topics discussed on the SQUAD podcast and offers advice to parents and professionals working with military children.

All Together Deployment Club:

Little Troopers runs a deployment club for military children of all ages including online sessions for under tens, adventure days for 7-13 year olds and residential weekends for children aged 14+. You can signpost families to the Little Troopers website for the latest information.



Email: info@littletroopers.net

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