

## Supporting Children of Deployed Families

Read the following scenarios. Describe what you would say and do to support the children and families.

1. Cassie is a 4-year-old child in your preschool class. Her mother, Cleo, is preparing for a mission to Afghanistan. Due to the nature of Cleo's work, it is unknown when exactly she will leave for the mission, when she will return, and where she will be located throughout the tour of duty. It is unlikely that she will be able to communicate with her family while she is on duty: no news will be good news. During Cleo's last deployment, Cassie had a difficult time. She regressed in her toilet training, and she cried every time her grandmother dropped her off at the child development center. She was clingy and fearful throughout the deployment. How can you help Cassie, Cleo, and their family prepare for this deployment?

2. Your supervisor calls you at home to let you know she just heard some terrible news: 5-year-old DaVonte's mother was killed in a car accident while coming home from work. DaVonte's father, who has been deployed for the past two months, has been informed and is returning home as quickly as possible. How can you help support this family through this difficult time? What do you think DaVonte will need when he returns to school? What words will you use to talk about the accident and his mother? What supports will DaVonte's father need as he reintegrates into home and work? What military or community resources do you think DaVonte and his father will need?

- Lilly has a 3-year-old daughter, Sam, and a 4-month-old son, Toby, in your program. Lilly is going on a one-week TDY to San Antonio. She has never left her children before and is very nervous about the trip. Lilly admits she is concerned about being able to continue to breastfeed Toby, help prepare Sam for the trip, and leave her husband home alone with two young children for a week. Every morning Sam wakes up and asks if mommy is leaving today. When Lilly began packing her suitcase, Sam pulled out items as quickly as Lilly could put them in. Lilly tells you that she and her husband have been fighting quite a bit since she learned about the trip. Her husband thinks she's making too big of a deal out of the trip, and Sam is feeding off of Lilly's anxiety. Lilly thinks she needs to prepare her daughter for the trip. What could you do to help this family?