



# 4-H MILITARY FAMILY BOOK SHEETS

## Supporting Military Families During Deployment with Books & Activities

### 4-H Military Family Book Sheets

The 4-H Military Family Book Sheets help parents and guardians find books and activities to help their children during various stages of their service members' deployments. Each book sheet contains a summary of the book, author and publication details, and activities that they can use with their children pre-, during or post-deployment to extend the message of the book. To find each book, check with your local library, bookstore or online retailer.

#### BEFORE READING:

- ▶ Show your child the front and back cover of the book. Ask him or her to guess what the book is about.

#### WHILE READING:

- ▶ Stop at any time if something comes up that you or your child would like to talk about.

#### AFTER READING:

- ▶ Spend time talking about the story.

Deployment involves moving an individual or military unit within the country or to another country. A mission or task might include training, supporting communities during times of disaster, helping foreign countries or fighting in a war. The many changes happening with each departure and return create difficulties for both service members and their families.

### Supporting Michigan's Military Families

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension and Michigan 4-H are committed to supporting the more than 20,000 Michigan military children and youth, and their families, through programming and community education.

#### PROGRAMS FOR MILITARY FAMILIES INCLUDE:

- ▶ 4-H clubs on installations and in communities
- ▶ "4-H 101" and "4-H 201" training for military staff
- ▶ Operation: Military Kids (OMK) – supporting children of deployed soldiers
- ▶ Speak Out for Military Kids (SOMK) – preparing teens to speak on military life and deployment
- ▶ Hero Packs – saying thank you to military children and youth
- ▶ Military 4-H Club Grants – supporting 4-H clubs for military youth and integrating them into county 4-H programs
- ▶ Community Awareness Training – educating the public on issues facing military families experiencing a deployment
- ▶ Special recognition events during Month of the Military Child and Month of the Military Family
- ▶ Educational and recreational events and opportunities for military families

### Learn More!

Connect with us on Facebook: Search "Michigan Operation: Military Kids" and "Michigan 4-H."

For more information on supporting military families, visit the following websites:

- ▶ MSU Extension: ([msue.anr.msu.edu](http://msue.anr.msu.edu))
- ▶ Michigan 4-H Youth Development: ([4h.msue.msu.edu](http://4h.msue.msu.edu))
- ▶ 4-H Military Partnerships: ([www.4hmilitarypartnerships.org](http://www.4hmilitarypartnerships.org))
- ▶ Operation: Military Kids: (<http://www.operationmilitarykids.org>)



# 4-H MILITARY FAMILY BOOK SHEET

## A Very Long Time

### SUMMARY

A young child talks about what “a very long time” means during her dad’s deployment.

Title	A Very Long Time
Author	Geri Timperley and Nikki Arro
Illustrator	Marlaina Kopietz
Publisher	Interface Publishing
Date of Publication	2005
Audience Age	4 years and up

### PRE-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Talk about what “a very long time: means. Show how long the service member will be deployed using a calendar. Talk about how many birthdays or holidays will happen during the deployment.
- Make a paper chain with your service member. Use one link for each day they are going to be gone. On each chain link write a special message, memory or picture. Hang the chain in an area that is easily accessible to the family to see.

### DURING-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Each day take a link from the countdown chain you made with your service member. Read what was written on the chain link. Hand the link up in a place where all family members can see and read what was written on the link.
- Put together a care package for your service member. Include their favorite treats or snacks. Ask family members and friends to write a note or draw a picture that you can include in the care package. Send the care package to your service member. For information on mailing care packages visit the United States Postal Service website.

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### Extension

Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.

### POST-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Revisit what “a very long time” means. Think about what happened while the service member was deployed. Share any pictures, drawings and special memories or stories with your service member. Have the service member share their pictures, drawings or special memories or stores of their deployment with the family.
- Plan a special day with your service member. Think about doing things you couldn’t do together during the deployment. It could be watching movies, making ice cream sundaes or playing board games.