



# 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.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org](http://www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org))
- ▶ Operation: Military Kids: (<http://www.operationmilitarykids.org>)



# 4-H MILITARY FAMILY BOOK SHEET

## The Wishing Tree

### SUMMARY

Amanda is sad that her dad is being deployed. To help with her sadness, she decides to create a wishing tree. The book tells how to create a wishing tree and talks about the wishes that Amanda had for her dad while he was deployed.

|                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Title               | The Wishing Tree     |
| Author              | Mary Redman          |
| Illustrator         | Christina Rodriguez  |
| Publisher           | Elva Resa Publishing |
| Date of Publication | 2008                 |
| Audience Age        | 4 and up             |

### PRE-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Make your own wishing tree. You can use a tree branch from outside, a small artificial tree or an indoor plant. If you don't have room for an actual tree, consider drawing a tree on a piece of paper and hanging it on a wall. Cut out strips of paper in a favorite color so you can easily write down wishes and attach them to the tree.
- Talk about what to expect at the deployment ceremony. Let your child know what will happen and how they are expected to behave. Talk with your child about the upcoming deployment and what they might expect while their service member is gone.

### DURING-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Each day, write down a wish for your service member and place it on your wishing tree. Remember what Amanda wished for her dad to use as ideas for your wishes to get you started.
- Write letters and send pictures to your service member while they are gone. Talk about what you are doing and all the things that are happening at home.

### POST-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

- Take a picture of the family with the wishing tree. Read through the wishing tree wishes together as a family. Talk about why you made some of the wishes.
- Spend time together as a family. Go for a walk, play outside, eat a special treat together. Take time to talk about all the little things that happen during the day as a family.

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