



IMAGINE STEPPING INTO
YOUR CHILD'S WORLD AND
SEEING THINGS FROM HIS
OR HER POINT OF VIEW.





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Talking about the return of a parent

The reunion of your family can be a building block or a stumbling block. Here are some ideas of things you can do to help you and your children prepare for the return of the deployed parent.




Take time to talk—and listen!

-  Tell your children what is happening. This will give them time to think about the parent's return, begin to accept it, and get used to their feelings about the reunion to come.
-  Be available whenever your children want to talk.
-  Show patience when your children ask the same questions and you repeat the same answers.
-  Treat all of your children's questions with respect and seriousness.



Encourage your children to talk about their feelings.

-  Help your children express their feelings through talk, play, drawings, etc.
-  Be aware of your own emotional reactions around your children and do not rely on them for emotional support.




Remind your children to be patient.

-  Remind your children that everyone has changed somewhat while the parent has been away.
-  Talk about how it may take time for everyone to adjust to being a family again.
-  Assure them that it is okay to be excited about the return of the parent and worried about what it will be like to have the parent home again.

Help your children tell the returning parent about life at home.

-  Ask your children to think about how family life may be different when the parent returns.
-  Ask them to find pictures, books, homework, artwork and other things to show the returning parent.

Prepare children for how things may be different when the parent returns.

-  Talk about what the returning parent likes to do around the house.
-  Think about ways to get the returning parent back into the family routines.
-  Plan some favorite activities that your children and returning parent can do together.