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BUILDING RESILIENCY IN CHILDREN OF MILITARY FAMILIES
A CUMULATING EXPERIENCE

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By

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ABSTRACT

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Often we think of the military men and women who serve this country with great pride and feel appreciation for their bravery. There has been much attention given to the sacrifices and the negative effects that war has on them, but very seldom do we think about their children. With so many of these children living quietly on military bases and some in our public schools, we often forget about the struggles that they face on a daily basis. This population is raised with certain pride and strength that often leads them to mask their emotions to the difficult situations they face on a daily basis. Children of military families struggle with such challenges as relocating, deployment, low achievement, marital distress caused by war, substance abuse, physical and emotional distress, and masking their emotions to demonstrate bravery and strength.

CHAPTER I

I. Introduction

Many studies have been conducted that demonstrate the negative effects that result from the experiences that men and women that serve our country encounter during war. Auchterlonie, Hoge, and Miliken (2007) found that 20.3 percent of active and 42.4 percent of reserve soldiers are requiring mental health treatment. They found that interpersonal conflict increases up to four times for soldiers returning from war and often they face problems with alcohol (Auchterlonie, Hoge, & Miliken, 2007). It is understandable that they would face these and other challenges after experiencing the horrors of war. While we often reflect about the soldiers' well-being, not much is said about how this affects their families, and more specifically their children.

Fung (2011) found that according to the National Military Family Association, "In the 10 years since the two wars began (Iraq and Afghanistan), more than 2 million servicemen and women have served in wartime duties, with more than half of them being deployed more than once" (Fung, 2011). When compared to soldiers from past wars, those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan are more likely to have children, most under 11 years old (Fung, 2011). Military children are an invisible minority in our society, one that needs support and is often overlooked. With such traumatic events that are encountered in the military lifestyle, these children should receive the necessary tools to tackle the emotional and psychological difficulties they will face throughout their childhood and consequently, their adulthood. Given the necessary support, military children can overcome the challenges that are placed before them and their families and

therefore grow to be well adjusted adults.

One study looked at the three most stressful situations for military families, those being relocation, separation, and reunion. The study found that as of 2003, the military includes 1.37 million active duty service members, 1.28 million reservists, and 669,000 civilian employees. The study also found that the majority of troops, about sixty percent have children (Cable, Coleman, & Reinkober, 2003). This provides an understanding of how many individuals and families are impacted by war. It also mentions a truth that is often overlooked, those who have a loved one in the military must be a strong, positive and determined. They are to cope with the stresses that the military lifestyle brings in a quiet and independent manner. As Cable, Coleman and Reinkober (2003) state in their article, the family members of a soldier are expected to behave and follow the same guidelines as the soldier does. The spouse and children hold the same responsibility as the soldier does, they must be as strong as he or she is. It is difficult to understand how anyone could expect this of a family and especially of young children, but it is a way of life for them. The strength that they possess is one that most individuals can never truly comprehend.

II. Statement of Need

Most military families continue with their lives and cope privately with the stressors associated with being part of the military. In past wars, such as the Vietnam War this was not a choice because there were very little available services provided. In more recent years, the military has taken responsibility and emphasized the importance of providing their servicemen and servicewoman with necessary services. The military bases generally have these services such as individual, couple, and family counseling are

available to the families of the military men and women, but those services are very rarely used due to the stigma associated with them. The problem remains, how can these children be helped through the difficulties that war has created?

While the lack of emphasis on the children is one problem, the attitude towards services for the military families also creates a barrier. There is a negative attitude associated with the need for services and this deters many servicemen and servicewoman, as well as their loved ones to pursue the counseling services that they need. The needs of the military family need to be addressed and recognized. In order for that to happen, there is a need for more public awareness of their struggles, research, and the development of programs that fit their needs (Cable et al., 2003). It is agreed that it is vital to have more public awareness with regard to military receiving necessary services, such as counseling. This is significant because while a good amount of these families do live on military bases; the majority of do not and need to be made aware of available services. Most military families live in the civilian world where things are quite different and the services are not readily available to them as they face their everyday lives.

The problem is clear, currently we are faced with the effects of having our brave men and women at war. Too many people the problem is one that does not hit close to home and while they sympathize, they do not truly comprehend the severity associated with the effects of war. There is a need for resources for children of military families to access and be provided with the assistance they need to cope. The stigma of receiving help should be removed so that these children can grow up as emotionally stable individuals who pride themselves in the bravery of their parent(s) and a love for their country.

III. Purpose of Graduate Project

The purpose of this project is to provide a workbook that will assist military children in building the skills necessary to face the challenges associated to the military life. This workbook will focus on building resiliency in children ages 6 to 12. The workbook will be divided into four areas: personal development, emotional development, social development, and academic development in the military environment. What this means is that the project will assist children in building the necessary skills to become emotionally, socially and academically apt to develop resiliency and therefore be able to face the challenges that the military lifestyle entails. In addition, the workbook will involve parents/guardians by providing a letters to summarize key concepts being learned and involve them in the process of building resiliency in their young children.

Resiliency is one of the most important factors of an individual's personality. For this reason, it is the focus of the workbook. It is best described as the ability to face, overcome and even be strengthened by the adversities that life may bring (Wolin & Wolin, 1993). There is no individual in the world that does not face some type of adversity in their lives, but it is the way that these adversities are handled that sets us apart. The International Resilience Project states, 'With resilience, children can triumph over trauma; without it, trauma (adversity) triumphs,' ("Project resilience," 1999). We need to assure that children of military families have the skills necessary to triumph over the traumas that they may face; this is what led to the development of the workbook.

IV. Terminology

In this section, definitions are provided for terms used within the studies conducted for the research and production of the proposed workbook.

Resiliency- Throughout the years, the term ‘resiliency’ has gained various definitions. In general, the term describes an individual who has overcome great challenges. A study conducted on 698 infants in the Hawaiian island of Kauai during 1955, suggested that resilient children had the following characteristics: higher levels of autonomy, independence, empathy, task orientation, and curiosity than their less resilient peers. They had better problem-solving skills and better peer relationships (Werner, 1989; Werner & Smith, 1982). Researchers found that social and family relationships have an enormous impact on a child’s level of resiliency.

Deployment- a military term; defined as any activity that is related to the duties of military personnel. The term deployment involves operation, location, command, or a duty that is distinct from the military member’s current position (Department of Defense Joint Publication, 1994). Currently, the most common deployment that the public is aware of is that of military personnel that are deployed to Afghanistan or Iraq, these deployments are also referred to as tours.

Relocation- this term refers to the changing of assignment that involves a physical move from the current living situation. Depending on each case, the soldier may make the move alone or transfer entire family to new assignment location.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) - defined as a stress disorder that results from experiencing an event that is traumatic in nature. These events can be life-threatening and include combat-related experiences. This experience leads to three types of consequences: involuntary re-experiencing of the trauma, avoidance of reminders and numbing of responsiveness and increased arousal, such as trouble sleeping (Flouri, 2005).

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) – Military.com (2012) defines a TBI as damage to the brain that results from some type of injury. TBI occurs when a sudden trauma or head injury disrupts the function of the brain. This serious condition has been coined as the signature wound of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

There are two types of traumatic brain injuries, mild and severe. The symptoms associated with TBI's range and include: headache, confusion, dizziness, blurred vision, ringing in the ears, bad taste in the mouth, fatigue, a change in sleep patterns, behavioral or mood changes, loss of memory, difficulty concentrating, slurred speech, loss of coordination, and increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation (Military.com, 2010).

V. Organization of Project

The workbook curriculum will focus on these four terms: personal development, emotional development, social development, and academic development. The goal is for the child to develop skills within these four areas in order to have self-esteem, learn to cope, interact socially, and be motivated to do well academically. The child of a military parent experiences traumas that can be extremely detrimental to these areas and therefore would benefit greatly from strengthening the skills necessary to maintain overall well-being. This workbook is designed for all military children ages 6-12, but is intended for those in public schools who do not have services readily available to them. It is designed to follow a four subject schedule but gives the counselor the liberty to choose which lessons they would like to use from each section. While it is intended to be used in the school and professional setting, it may also be used within the home setting.

CHAPTER II

I. Introduction

Children of military families are our nation's invisible minority. With so many of these children living quietly on military bases and some in our public schools, we often forget about the struggles that they face on a daily basis. This population is raised with certain pride and strength that often leads them to mask their emotions to the difficult situations they face on a daily basis.

They are children expected to hold the strength and resiliency of an adult. The situations that they face are difficult for even adults to cope with and yet we expect that they will have the ability to cope. Their family faces such challenges as relocating, deployment, low academic achievement, physical and emotional distress, marital distress caused by war, substance abuse, and the burden of masking their emotions to demonstrate bravery and strength, (Keats, 2010).

There is a great need for resources for children of military families to access and be provided with the assistance they require to cope with the difficulties that they face. There is currently a stigma associated with receiving help within the military community; The stigma must be removed so that these children can grow up as emotionally stable individuals who pride themselves in the bravery of their parent(s) and a love for their country, (Keats, 2010).

II. A Silent Population Impacted By War

There is an immense amount of research on the effects of war on our servicemen and servicewoman, but an area that is often not discussed is how the children of our military are impacted. Only very recently have researchers begun to find an interest in

this topic and acknowledge the negative consequences associated with the military lifestyle. There is an immense population of children whose daily lives are impacted by the war and that are often overlooked because they hide their pain in silence. Only recently have we begun to see the challenges that they face.

Fung (2011) found that according to the National Military Family Association, in the 10 years since the Iraq and Afghanistan wars began, more than 2 million servicemen and women have been deployed to wartime duties. From these more than 2 million servicemen and women, over half of them have been deployed more than one time. When compared to servicemen and servicewomen from past wars, such as Vietnam, those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan are more likely to have children under 11 years old (Fung, 2011). This means that there are a vast number of children in this country that are facing challenges that are associated with the military lifestyle and war. There is little acknowledgement of this population and very little resources that are available.

III. A Nation of Tiny Soldiers

Military children often hold immense responsibilities and are placed on a much higher level of accountability than civilian children. Clifton (2004) found that military children are better behaved than civilian children and it is thought that this is due to the normative constraints of military life. As a dependent of a serviceman or servicewoman, one is expected to act in the same manner as their military parent.

More specifically, Burland and Lundquist (2009) found that members of the military are subject to an additional set of laws known as the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), and by extension their family is often forced to also follow those laws. The UCMJ was passed by Congress in 1950. It is a system that balances the need of the

commander to ensure discipline in the armed forces and American traditions of due process and fairness (Turner, 2000).

“Some of the positive points that might be gained from a military lifestyle include a strong sense of responsibility, social skills, resilience, loyalty, discipline and tolerance. Conversely, military children may become over-responsible, may protect themselves from developing close friendships and may have the tendency to move on rather than work through problems,” (Clifton, 2004, p.459). There are advantages to the military lifestyle and if children are provided with guidance they can fully develop and embrace these advantages, rather than falling victim to the disadvantages of the military lifestyle. In order to prosper in this environment, these children require positive guidance and reinforcement of positive skills.

One vast disadvantage of the military lifestyle is that the serviceman or servicewoman must always be available to do their job. This means that the military is a priority above the good of his or her family. For most, family is always the priority, but for a serviceman or servicewoman, this is often not the case. It is not that they do not feel their family is important, but their job truly guides their lifestyle. This is difficult for a spouse and children because ideally the family always comes first. It is difficult for the spouse and the children to adjust to this mentality. Burland and Lundquist (2009) add:

“The family must adapt to this reality, which often translates into prolonged separations, frequent relocations, disruptions to the career of the spouse not serving in the military, school system irregularity for the children, the risk of death or disability to the main provider of the family, and general uncertainty about the future,” (p.1105).

The military child is expected to face this reality with the same strength and honor as their military parent, but often they lack the experience and the skills to do so. They are far too young to understand and to cope with the situations that they face in their lives.

IV. Deployment and Relocation

At a very young age, children of soldiers are faced with events of intensity that they are not developmentally prepared to tackle. As a child, one spends their carefree days becoming familiar with their surroundings and building strong relationships with the people that they hold close: their family. A child from a military family does not always have that same type of stability in their home. They often find themselves moving place to place, making it very difficult to identify a clear definition of home. Some children are born while their parent is away at war, and others spend months if not years away from their military parent.

A study conducted by Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland found that of the 2.2 million active duty U.S. military members, 44% of them have children. What is more alarming is that of these children, two-thirds are under age 11 (Osterweil, 2011). Our nation has a significant number of children who are being impacted by the war and need support in order to cope with the stressors involved. These children are scattered within bases, private schools, public school and therefore it is sometimes difficult to pinpoint where the need is. Those living outside of the military bases face a much more difficult challenge when it comes to accessing the necessary support. Schools outside of the military bases often do not have staff members that are prepared to handle the unique needs and experiences of military children and their

families.

There are U.S. children that live in bases all over the world and face unique situations that they may not be prepared to face. These children find themselves in different environments, continually being separated then re-united with their loved ones. Their lives become a revolving door; the people they love most come in and out of their young lives. Studies have found that children of deployed parents have higher degrees of emotional difficulties and more problems with school, family, and peers, and parental stress. Often the length of deployment can predict symptoms of depression in children (Osterweil, 2011). Children are meant to live carefree and focus on excelling academically, but it would be almost impossible to do this when they are experiencing emotional difficulties.

There has been research on the effects of deployment that demonstrate the degree of consequences related to parental separation. “Studies have suggested that deployment-related parental separation predicts higher heart rates stress, elevated anxiety levels, and greater rates of co-sleeping with a left-behind parent or sibling,” (Tunac De Pedro, Astor, Benbenishty, Estrada, Dejoie & Esqueda, 2011). It is evident that children are negatively impacted by the separation from the people who are most pivotal in their lives. They experience emotions that they cannot understand or cope with by themselves. They cannot possibly comprehend the extent of the situations that are occurring around them and what they and their loved ones are feeling due to these events.

V. Academic Achievement in Military Children

Research shows that approximately 2 million children have dealt with parental deployment since 2001. Currently, 1.2 million children attending preschool through

grade 12 have a parent that is an active duty military service member, 625,000 children have a parent that is serving in the National Guard, and an additional 705,000 children have parents that are Reserve members (Tunac De Pedro et al., 2011). Research has determined a negative association between parental deployment and academic achievement in children from military families. Studies have found that military students of different age groups have academic functioning and behavioral issues as a result of deployment-related stress and anxiety (Tunac De Pedro et al., 2011). The majority of these children attend schools that are not familiar with the lifestyle of military families and cannot meet the needs of these children. These children should be identified and be provided counseling in the school setting instead of falling through the cracks and becoming low achieving students and behavior problems. School staff has the responsibility to meet the needs of these children and provide support for the difficulties that they face.

Clifton (2004) found a 1999 study by Galton that focused on the effects of mobility in military children. These children experience changes in schools more than any other population. They found that up to two out of every five students fail to make expected progress during the year immediately following the change of school. The study concluded that further research should be conducted in order to more closely determine the causes of this lack of progress. What this research indicates is that these children are susceptible to lower academic achievement and therefore there should be a focus on their achievement. These children should be provided with additional help to ensure that they excel academically despite the frequent changes in school settings.

America has approximately 1.1 million students from military families that can be mistaken for other vulnerable student populations. The deal with high mobility that leads them to struggle academically and the instability in the home leads them to emotional problems (Sparks, 2011). While it is fairly easy to identify groups of children who struggle within a school district, military students' struggles may be harder because schools are not required to report them separately.

There has been an increase in attention on this topic of low achievement in military children and perhaps schools will become accountable for reporting on progress made by this population. It is very difficult for these children to excel academically due to frequent changes in schools. Many times, these children move quite regularly due to their parent's changing assignments. They might move to another state or country, which makes it very difficult for the children to follow the same curriculum.

It is also important to note the differences between a mother being deployed, and a father being deployed. Tunac De Pedro et al. (2011) found that the absence of a mother has a more negative effect on academic achievement than that of a father's absence.

Tunac De Pedro et al. (2011) stated that:

“In a study comparing children with deployed mothers to children with deployed fathers, researchers found some significant psychological differences between the two groups. Children with deployed mothers scored significantly lower in academic achievement measures, while children with deployed fathers scored significantly lower on measures of peer relationships, handling learning demands, emotional expression, and physical health,”(p.568).

Whether it is the mother or the father that is deployed, the absence of a parent is going to be difficult for a child to adjust to. An absent parent means changes in the way that the home is run. The roles will have to change and perhaps the parent that is left behind will have to bear much more responsibility in addition to the emotional stress caused by the separation. Sometimes the children have to increase their responsibilities at home in order to alleviate some of the burden from their parent. Some children are able to adjust to these changes easier than others. While differences were found between mother and father deployment, it is understood that regardless of which parents is deployed, the child suffers from the separation.

VI. Emotional and Physical Distress

The fear of soldiers being killed while deployed is among the highest concerns that the families face while their loved one is away at war. The term fear is defined as “an aversive emotional state experienced in response to any threat to one’s safety, security, or well-being. In general, outcomes associated with fear include physiological arousal, nervous tension, efforts to escape or withdraw, and attempts to gain control” (Adams, Burrell, Castro, & Durans, 2006, p.4). Children are not prepared to cope with immense feelings such as fear and find themselves submerged in emotions that are much more powerful than they have experienced. They may not be able to identify the feelings of fear that they experience and may become angry in response to the feelings, or act out in order to cope with the feelings.

A study conducted by Adams, Burrell, Castro, and Durand (2006), found that the families of soldiers in Desert Storm reported feeling fear for the safety and overall well-being of their loved one. In many cases this fear has led to health issues, a situation that

is often not discussed. The stresses of having a loved one at war is so intense and even more emotionally and physically draining when one has to deal with it alone. It is difficult for a parent to explain to a child why their parent must be away from the home for such a long period time; it is far more difficult to explain to a child why their parent did not return. This is the reality of military families, the constant fear that their life will forever be changed.

Aside from the fear of death while being deployed, another fear held by military families is that their loved one will experience some type of life-changing injury. A child expects that their parent return to them the same exact way that they left, they cannot comprehend the changes that occur when placed in such a violent environment.

According Herzog, Everson and Whitworth (2011), the most common conditions that are associated with war are post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and traumatic brain injury (TBI). A study found that 15% or more of soldiers deployed to Iraq in 2007 had acute stress symptoms, 7% had depressive symptoms, and another 7% experienced anxiety symptoms (Herzog, Everson & Whitworth, 2011). This is a significant amount of soldiers facing emotional distress and attempting to return to civilian life and resume their day to day lives. Their families will never comprehend the extent of their distress, but will ultimately suffer the effects that war has left on their loved ones. As the family is reunited and attempts to regain their previous life, often they become emotionally distressed as they find that their life has been forever changed.

Herzog, Everson and Whitworth (2011) found that soldiers engaged in active combat in Afghanistan and Iraq have experienced Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)'s at a rate up to 30%. Military.com (2012) defines a TBI as damage to the brain that results

from some type of injury. TBI occurs when a sudden trauma or head injury disrupts the function of the brain. This serious condition has been coined as the signature wound of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. There are two types of traumatic brain injuries, mild and severe. The symptoms associated with TBI's range and include: headache, confusion, dizziness, blurred vision, ringing in the ears, bad taste in the mouth, fatigue, a change in sleep patterns, behavioral or mood changes, loss of memory, difficulty concentrating, slurred speech, loss of coordination, and increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation.

For any soldier reintegration into civilian life is difficult, but for those returning with TBI's or emotional distress, the process becomes far more stressful. For some soldiers, the real battle begins when they return and go on fighting to recover their previous life. Their loved ones suffer quietly beside them as they too fight to adapt to the difficulties of reintegration after separation and war.

According to Dr. Stephen J. Cozza, Professor of Psychiatry and Associate Director of the center for the study of traumatic stress at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland, over 95% of military personnel that suffer a severe injury are young males. These are young men that are fathers and lead a very active role in the lives of their children. They are subjected to such injuries that change the way that they can interact with their children. Some of these injuries include the loss of a limb, or a traumatic brain injury, these types of injuries dramatically change the way that the parent is able to relate to their children and interact with them, (Osterweil, 2011).

This is a painful truth that truly illustrates the cost of war on our nation and on the family members of those who so bravely protect the nation. A child may experience that the mother or father whose return they so desperately longed for, never truly returns

to them. This is a difficult truth to face for anyone, especially for a young child. Studies have found that the types of consequences that military personnel that have been deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan face are psychological and cognitive. The exposure to the violence and stress causes a trigger that result in psychological and cognitive consequences (Meredith, Parker, Beckjord, Galliot, Trivedi, & Vaiana, 2008). As they return home, the families of the soldiers soon recognize the impact that the war has had on their loved one. Some soldiers return and can't even remember who their children are, have a completely different personality, are angry and distant, or are physically handicapped (Meredith, et al., 2008).

Recent studies suggest that compared to earlier wars, mental health issues have become more prevalent within wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The children of military children often demonstrate depressive and aggression in response to mental health issues suffered by their parents. (Tunac De Pedro et al., 2011, 566-618). Research conducted during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars demonstrate higher rates of mental health symptoms among the children of military personnel when compared to civilian children (Tunac De Pedro et al., 2011). As the soldier returns, life is immensely different and the family has to be supportive and strong in order to face the challenges ahead. The relationships between child and parent can become strained as well as the relationship between spouses. This can cause more stress to the child because the relationship between parents is extremely influential to a young child.

VII. Marital Distress

The University of Utah funded a study which researched the relationship between soldier who have deployed to war and their spouse. Previous research has already been

done on this topic and has concluded that there is a rapid increase in marital distress after deployment. The results of the study found that, “substantial minorities of the spouses of soldiers recently returned from combat evidenced elevated levels of depressive symptoms (44%) and, as detected in prior elevated levels of PTSD symptoms (10%) as well” (Jones, 2008, p.589).

Marriage can be difficult and with the added stress of deployment, it proves to be challenging to maintain a stable marriage. This is something that one must also be aware of because it is not only the couple that suffers, but their children as well. Some believe that one of the most difficult stressful life situations for a child to cope with is divorce so anything that creates a hardship within a marriage should be addressed. As the soldier return home, there are many emotions and sometimes the parents are so engulfed in their own pain that they forget that the child is experiencing emotional distress as well. Unlike the parent, the child is unprepared to cope with the emotions that they experience. They truly require the support of their loved ones to guide them and make sense of the events and the feelings that they are experiencing.

Cozza et al. (2005) found that during deployment, the parent that stays behind experience stress and anxiety. This stress and anxiety has a negative impact on the military children and often results in psychological and behavioral outcomes in the child. Additionally, they found that the stress of the parent left behind is shifted onto the child because many times the parent shares information with the child that they may not be developmentally prepared to face. The parent may communicate to their child their fears of injury or death, their grief sense, stress, etc. The parent may also turn to their child for support if they feel alone with the pain. They may not realize that they are causing their

child harm by unleashing their emotions on a young child who is developmentally unprepared for such emotional distress. The spouse that is left behind is negatively impacted by deployment and the way that they handle this pain can have a lasting effect on their children.

According to a study conducted by Herzog, Everson and Whitworth (2011), the spouses of military soldiers involved in wars are also at increased risk for secondary trauma stress. The stress that was reported by the participants of this study was similar to those associated with PTSD. The study also found that the children are a vulnerable to secondary trauma. It is understandable for the child to suffer emotional distress when the two people that they look to for guidance are experiencing it themselves. Still more upsetting, in a nationally representative National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study (NVNRS), an estimated one third of male veterans with PTSD engaged in partner violence (Taft, Pless, Stalans, Koenen, & King, 2005). This is a truth that has been examined by several studies in the past years since Vietnam. It has been found that veterans suffering from PTSD exhibit more general marital problems, parental problems, and family adjustment difficulties than non-PTSD veterans (Taft et al., 2005).

VIII. Substance Abuse

An article in the Consumer Health News (2012) published the results of a study conducted on 600 veterans returning from war. The results revealed that the veterans were at increased risk for mental health problems, alcohol and drug abuse. The study indicated that close to 14 percent of the veterans faced a possible post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), 39 percent were found to be at risk for alcohol abuse, and 3 percent for possible drug use ("U.S. soldiers face," 2012). The study provides an understanding of

the life of these soldiers and their families. The results of deployment to war, PTSD and substance abuse proves to be too much to handle and for some, leads to suicide. The Consumer Health News (2012) reported:

“The analysis of data from 2,064,183 active duty personnel in 2005 and 1,981,810 active duty personnel in 2007 also showed that mental health diagnoses, mental health visits, prescriptions for selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) antidepressants and sleep medicines, reduction in rank, enlisted rank and separation or divorce were all associated with suicides,”(p.1).

In many cases, the combination of PTSD and substance abuse leads to domestic violence. Research has demonstrated that spousal abuse is a very significant problem for military families and is too often a predictor of child maltreatment (Tunac De Pedro et al, 2011). It is an aspect of war that is often hidden from the world; the effects of trauma that translates into years of pain for the military family members. Soldiers return home and battle with the trauma in any way that they can, many turning to drugs and alcohol to numb the pain that they feel. The combination of trauma and abuse of substance can lead to domestic violence from individuals who would never have committed these terrible acts. According to Tunac De Pedro et al. (2011), military families who experience domestic violence are twice as likely to experience child maltreatment compared to military families with no domestic abuse.

In military families, physical abuse and neglect are the most common forms of child maltreatment. Sexual abuse and emotional abuse are less common, but do tend to occur in military families that demonstrate child maltreatment (Rentz, Martin, Gibbs, Clinton-Sherrod, Hardison & Marshall, 2006). This is a subject that is not often

discussed within the military community. We are only recently becoming more aware of all of the negative effects related to military life. A study conducted by Rentz et al (2006) found that when compared to civilians, military families experience more cases of Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS). Also, military wives report more cases of physical abuse and alcohol use by their spouse. This is the type of environment that some military children must endure on a daily basis. There is an immense amount of research that demonstrates how devastating alcohol and physical abuse is on the well-being on a child.

IX. The Psychological Barrier

Mental traumas due to experiences of war are a reality to so many military soldiers and the effects are the reality of many children. The mental health of their parents is so influential to a child's life and therefore the effects of war are devastating to a child. This brings light to the importance of support for the soldier, spouse, and children after deployment to war. Throughout the years, services available to soldiers and their family have increased dramatically. While these services are now available, there is a much more challenging problem: attitude toward receiving help.

Keats (2010) found that the military culture builds psychological barriers to sources of help. While the services are available, the soldier may not feel that they need it despite their level of distress. The military culture does not encourages self-analysis and expression of emotional states. Instead, they value conforming to the very strict behavior that is emphasized by their military duties (Keats, 2010). During the training process, the soldiers are taught to keep their emotions internalized and their ability to do this is translated into their level of masculinity. Keats (2010) explains it best by stating:

“Ideas about how the ‘masculine male’ should manage stressful combat experiences have been present in the military and civilian culture for thousands of years.

Formerly, combat stress was associated with hysteria, weakness, and vulnerability, which were contrasted with the idea qualities of heroin, strength, and endurance,” (p.290).

There is a very apparent stigma associated with psychological stress in the military culture. This invisible barrier is keeping so many soldiers and families from receiving necessary help. As mentioned, the families of the military are often expected to hold the same ideals as their soldier; therefore they too must refrain from seeking help. Hall (2008) explains that aside from feelings of weakness associated with counseling, some believe that receiving services can negatively impact their career. When a family member pursues any of the services available to them, they worry about the ramifications that could arise from acknowledging their distress and its impact on any possible career advancement for the soldier (Hall, 2008).

This will lead many soldiers and their families to resist receiving help. The soldier must show his or her strength and their families must do the same. There is a stigma that deters many from the free services available to them and hopefully with time will diminish. It is difficult for many to understand the logic behind this stigma, but for those within the military culture it is a way of life. They demonstrate strength and cannot bear to acknowledge the pain and weakness that they may be experiencing.

A study conducted by Kerpelman, McFadyen, and Pittman (2004) studied 1,064 Army families reunited after deployment for Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. The study found that when the families took advantage of the services that

were provided to them, they were more able to cope with the pressures and stress related to having their loved one overseas at war. This highlights the importance of changing the view that some military families seem to hold about the use of such services.

The question is how this stigma could be weakened in order for the families and more specifically, the children to receive the support they need. This support would assist them in getting through a challenging time and not allow for the negative effects to be carried throughout their lives. It is difficult because to break this stigma, there would have to be a change in military culture and that appears almost impossible. The very basis of their existence would be challenged with the acceptance of feeling overwhelmed and requiring support. Military families are accustomed to addressing any situations within the compounds of their personal homes and not demonstrate these difficulties to anyone around them. It is a mentality that has been engraved in their very being and would be incredibly difficult to change.

The children of military soldiers experience and witness distress in ways that most of us cannot even imagine. Their family faces these adversities as well as the burden of masking their emotions to demonstrate bravery and strength. Children are expected to hold the strength and resiliency of an adult. Research shows that soldiers returning from deployment face many challenges that ultimately rest on the shoulders of their children as well. The lifestyle of the military family is unpredictable and unstable and can be very difficult for a child to adapt to. The well-being of these children is at stake and while it is being more recognized, there is still much more that can be done.

X. The Power of Resiliency

Resiliency is one of the most important factors that contribute to the well-being of an individual. It is best described as the ability to face, overcome and even be strengthened by the adversities that life may bring (Wolin & Wolin, 1993). There is no individual in the world that does not face some type of adversity in their lives, but it is the way that these adversities are handled that sets us apart. The International Resilience Project states that when children have resiliency, they can triumph over any type of trauma, instead of having the trauma triumph over them, ("Project resilience," 1999). We need to assure that the children of military families have the skills necessary to triumph over the traumas that they may encounter in their young lives.

There has been an increase of research on resilient children in the last decades. The interest of this subject began to rise after studies of children of schizophrenic mothers emerged. The data demonstrated that the children of schizophrenic mothers thrived despite the high-risk status of their lives and this led researchers to want to examine the individual differences in response to adversities (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000). Some of the early work demonstrated that high self-esteem and autonomy were the key personality traits that resulted in resiliency (Masten & Garmezy, 1985). Since then, researchers have provided us with an excess of information on characteristics associated with the process of building resiliency.

A study conducted on 698 infants in the Hawaiian island of Kauai during 1955, suggested that resilient children had the following characteristics: higher levels of autonomy, independence, empathy, task orientation, and curiosity than their less resilient peers. They had better problem-solving skills and better peer relationships (Werner,

1989; Werner & Smith, 1982). Researchers found that social and family relationships have an enormous impact on a child's level of resiliency. Masten, Garmezy, & Best (1990) found that children who have hardships recover better when, "they have a positive relationship with a competent adult, they are good learners and problem-solvers, they are engaging to other people, and they have areas of competence and perceived efficacy valued by self or society."

MacDermid, Samper, Schwarz, Nishida, and Nyaronga (2008) found that positive and nurturing relationships with parents and other adults, cognitive skills, the ability to regulate emotions, and self-esteem are factors that promote resilience in military children. If children of military families are provided with this, then they will ultimately become more resilient and be able to face the challenges of a military lifestyle. The relationships that these children build within their communities and their schools can make an immense difference on how they handle the stressors in their lives. Military children should be engulfed in positive interactions and receive counseling services that will provide aid to them and their families.

XI. Lack of Services For Children Outside of Military Base

Military bases provide support that is readily available, but it is more difficult for those children who are not living on the base. There is often an assumption that military families always live on bases, but this is often untrue. There are an estimated 1.2 million school-aged children of military service members. Of those children, only 86,000 attend schools that are administered by the Department of Defense on military bases throughout the world. The remaining military children attend schools administered by civilian schools such as public schools, private schools, and other non-military related

educational agencies (Tunac De Pedro et al., 2011). Attending schools outside of the military base has its advantages because it provides the children with a sense of what life is outside the base, but due it also has its disadvantages. Those who are on base are surrounded by other individuals who are facing the same challenges and that possess the same set of values that they do. The bases have a sense of community that is difficult to find in the civilian community.

Those who do not live on military bases and are surrounded by individuals that do not understand their way of life have a much more difficult time. Staff members at most civilian schools are not trained to handle the unique situations associated with the military family lifestyles. The schools do not offer school-based counseling that is tailored to the needs of military children. Tunac De Pedro et al. (2011) found that military adolescents have had significantly more mental and behavioral health visits, behavioral and stress disorders, and mental health diagnoses during the current wars than younger military children. For this reason, it is imperative that children receive services in order to strengthen the skills necessary to maintain overall well-being and that these services be provided at a young age. These military families give their commitment to the well-being of this country and therefore, they should be cared for whether they are on base or in the civilian community.

Chandra, Martin, Hawkins, and Richardson (2010) found that civilian public schools are struggling to be supportive of military children and responsive to their needs during deployment. The staff members are aware that many of the military children are experiencing anxiety that it related to deployment of their parent, but the study found that schools feel overwhelmed by the needs of the military children. A child's school should

be a place where they feel safe and supported, but it would be difficult for staff to meet the very unique needs of the military children without the proper training. Schools should have counseling available to meet the needs of these children and therefore ensure that they feel nurtured and safe when at school. For a child, school should be their first priority and place that makes them feel happy and successful. Given accessing the appropriate supports, military children can flourish whether they attend a school on the military base or a civilian school.

The research is clear, counseling services can truly make a pivotal difference in the life of a military child. Military children can be provided with a sense of normality despite the challenges and stressors that their lifestyle encompasses. It can be achieved with the correct interventions, which include counseling sessions that focus on the development and encouragement of resiliency. Unfortunately, many cannot receive these services because they live off base and attend schools that are not prepared to handle their unique needs. Due to the stigma associated with counseling, many soldiers and their families who do live on the bases tend to stay away from counseling. Some feel that counseling demonstrates weakness and others are simply scared that it may affect advancement in their military career. The lack of available services outside of the military bases and stigma associated with receiving services on base have led to emotional distress that could have been avoided with the appropriate resources.

XII. Summary

When taking into account all the previous research stated, the main idea is that numerous studies have demonstrated the negative effects that result from war. An alarming number of servicemen and servicewomen have required mental health services

following assignments during wartime. The numbers of interpersonal conflicts increases up to four times for soldiers returning from war and often face problems with alcohol (Auchterlonie, Hoge, & Miliken, 2007). These findings are alarming. It is understandable that soldiers would face these and other challenges after experiencing war. The focus should now be how these and other related problems impact their young children?

In the ten years since the Iraq and Afghanistan wars began, more than 2 million servicemen and women have served in wartime duties. From these 2 million soldiers, more than half of them being deployed more than once (Fung, 2011). Most have children that are very young and we need to focus on how the changes are effected them and what can be done to help them.

The development of a counseling book for military children stems from the need that these children demonstrate. As previously stated, Tunac De Pedro et al. (2011) found that military adolescents have had significantly more mental and behavioral health visits, behavioral and stress disorders, and mental health diagnoses during the current wars than younger military children. For this reason, it is imperative that children receive services in order to strengthen the skills necessary to maintain overall well-being and that these services be provided at a young age.

Military children experience change in schools more than any other population. They found that up to two out of every five students fail to make expected progress during the year immediately following the change of school, (Clifton, 2004). What this research indicates is that these children are susceptible to lower academic achievement and therefore there should be a focus on their achievement. These children should be

provided with additional help to ensure that they excel academically despite the frequent changes in school settings.

The proposed workbook would meet the needs that have been addressed in the research. It is vital that the workbook should be structured in a manner that is relevant to a military child's lifestyle and is tailored for young ages. It should teach coping strategies, build confidence, and emphasize the importance of academic success. More importantly, the counseling sessions that would accompany the workbook should be done in a group setting in order to alleviate feelings of alienation and also to promote a sense of community between the children. It is important that these students connect with others who face similar hardships and would benefit from positive interactions.

The parents of these children risk their lives for the safety of our nation and this bravery is respected and valued by us all. The families of these brave soldiers adapt to a different lifestyle than most will ever know and they do so because they believe in what their loved one fights for. It is therefore the responsibility of our communities to demonstrate appreciation for all of the sacrifices made by military families and especially by the young children. The proposed workbook would provide support for a population of children that desperately require guidance and reassurance. Their parent risks their life for the safety of our nation and of us all and therefore it is pivotal that the community look after the well-being of their children.

CHAPTER III

I. Introduction

Research has shown the negative impact of war on the lives of the soldiers and their families. There are an overwhelming number of children who have a loved one who has experienced war. The number of families impacted by the war is overwhelming and the services are not always available due to lack of coverage of family treatment, concerns about confidentiality, lack of professionals trained to work with military families and distance from the military base (Paris, DeVoe, Ross, & Acker, 2010). There is a great need for services to these children who are expected to show bravery but lack the skills necessary to cope effectively with the distress that they may experience and witness in their young lives. In this section, the following will be discussed, the development of the counseling workbook, the intended audience, qualifications of those using the workbook, the space needed, and an outline of the workbook.

II. Development of Project

This project is directed towards children who cannot receive counseling due to stigma or inconvenience of travel to the military base. The workbook aims to provide military children with guidance that will help them build resiliency. There is no individual in the world that does not face some type of adversity in their lives, but it is the way that these adversities are handled that sets us apart. The International Resilience Project states, "With resilience, children can triumph over trauma; without it, trauma (adversity) triumphs," ("Project resilience," 1999). We need to assure that children of military families have the skills necessary to triumph over the traumas that they may face, and that is the purpose of the workbook.

In order to create this workbook, research was conducted on military families,

counseling children and personality traits that lead to a resilient individual. The workbook will be divided into four areas: personal development, emotional development, social development, and academic development in the military environment. These subjects were selected by examining what important areas lead to overall well-being of a child and future success. MacDermid, Samper, Schwarz, Nishida, and Nyaronga (2008) found that positive and nurturing relationships with parents and other adults, cognitive skills, the ability to regulate emotions, and self-esteem are factors that promote resilience in military children. The workbook focuses on providing children with such support and skills in order for them to become more resilient and be able to face the challenges of a military lifestyle.

The workbook is designed to be used in conjunction with counseling sessions in the school environment. Teachers and staff would recommend these counseling services when they see a military child struggling in the school setting. The availability of counseling and the cooperation of teachers would create another level of support for these children when their parents are emotionally distressed, and have difficulty identifying and attending to the emotional needs of their children.

While there are counseling services available for children in most schools, there may not be sessions that are directed towards the specific population of military children. Individual counseling can be very stressful for a child and therefore these sessions would be more of a group activity setting. The sessions would be designed in a way that would create less structure than a regular counseling session. The children would learn how to work on improving themselves and become stronger individuals in order to cope with the difficulties in their home life.

While the workbook is based on military life, it does not include specific scenarios of deployment or emotional distress. Rather, the intention is to teach children the skills that will help them to address these situations. The reason that specific scenarios are not covered is because the counseling sessions are done in a group setting and therefore each child has a different current situation and it would be inappropriate to discuss situations that may not be relevant to every child. Also, the discussion of specific scenarios may create anxiety in the children. Therefore, the workbook encompasses a positive tone that helps develop skills of resiliency.

III. Intended Audience

The target of the counseling workbook is for any child who has family member in the military and is negatively impacted by the effects of the war. Children from military families often face hardships that most will never experience. They are children expected to hold the strength and resiliency of an adult. Their family faces such challenges as relocating, deployment, low academic achievement physical and emotional distress, marital distress caused by war, substance abuse, and the burden of masking their emotions to demonstrate bravery and strength.

This workbook will focus on building resiliency in military children ages 6 to 12. The ages were selected due to the type of activities in the workbook, most appropriate for that age range. The workbook is intended for military children who attend public school and therefore may not have access to counseling.

IV. Personal Qualification & Environment and Equipment

The workbook is intended to be used as a form of counseling conducted by a licensed psychologist, therapist, or a counselor. However, it may be adapted for personal use; in other words, it may be used in the home setting by parents. If used in the school

of professional setting, the counseling sessions should take place in a private office, in order to protect client confidentiality. The necessary worksheets are included as part of the workbook, but crayons, scissors, and glue may be necessary for a variety of the activities. Community involvement is also recommended, but is not a requirement of the workbook program.

The workbook will be outlined in a manner that allows for the child to develop personally, emotionally, socially, and academically. Each section will include a parent/guardian letter to explain what the child will be doing in the session and also recommend some at home activities to complete with their child.

The first section that the workbook will cover Personal Development, this term is intended to describe the understanding of self. During this section, the student shares about themselves and begins to become more aware of their individuality and their worth. Some of the lessons in this section include: family trees, interests, family lifestyle, wants and future dreams.

The second section will focus on the emotional development of the child. Emotional Development refers to the development of skills that are necessary to identify, comprehend, and cope with their emotions. Some of the skills taught in this section include: self-esteem, awareness of emotions, and coping strategies. .

The third section is social development and refers to the development of skills that allows for positive social interactions with others individuals, or groups. Some of the skills in this section include: building empathy, friendships, problem solving, communication, and social responsibility.

The fourth and final section of the workbook is academic development and refers to the development of skills that are pivotal for academic success. Some of the skills in this section include: motivation, listening skills, study habits, and following directions.

The workbook is designed in a manner that allows for the counselor or psychologist to choose activities that they feel would benefit the child, it is not necessary to complete every activity in each section. In general, the workbook aims at developing skills in a child that will help shape them into self-confident, caring and motivated individuals.

V. Project Outline

I. Introduction

II. A letter to Parents

III. Section 1: Personal Development

1. Activity 1.0 Letter to Parents
2. Activity 1.1 All About Me
3. Activity 1.2 My Family Portrait
4. Activity 1.3 My Family Tree
 - a. Activity 1.3 Family Tree Cut-Outs
 - b. Activity 1.3 Family Tree Cut-Outs
5. Activity 1.4 My Life Collage
6. Activity 1.5 My Military Hero
7. Activity 1.6 My Future

IV. Section 2: Emotional Development

1. Activity 2.0 Letter to Parents

2. Activity 2.1 Boost Yourself Up!
3. Activity 2.2 I Feel So
4. Activity 2.3 My Life is Amazing
5. Activity 2.4 A Story About Jenny
 - a) Activity 2.4 A Story About Jenny Handout
6. Activity 2.5 The Change Game
7. Activity 2.6 What Can I Do
8. Activity 2.7 Trash It!!!
9. Activity 2.8 The Positive Hat
 - a) Activity 2.8 The Positive Hat Handout
10. Activity 2.9 My Box of Sunshine

V. Section 3: Social Development

1. Activity 3.0 Letter to Parents
2. Activity 3.1 In The Spotlight
3. Activity 3.2 Surround Yourself With Good
4. Activity 3.3 Taking Turns
5. Activity 3.4 Match It!
 - a) Activity 3.4 Match it! Handout
6. Activity 3.5 What Should You Do
7. Activity 3.6 A Helping Hand

VI. Section 4: Academic Development

1. Activity 4.0 Letter to Parents
2. Activity 4.1 The Best I Can Be

3. Activity 4.2 My Motivation
4. Activity 4.3 Following Directions
 - a) Activity 4.3 Following Directions Handout
5. Activity 4.4 Listen Carefully
 - a) Activity 4.4 Listen Carefully Handout
6. Activity 4.5 How Can I Remember It?
7. Activity 4.6 Tick Tock
 - a) Activity 4.6 Tick Tock Handout

VII. Conclusion

1. Letter to Parents

CHAPTER 4

I. Evaluation

The workbook was evaluated by a panel of school staff members that have experience counseling children of different ages with various difficulties. This panel included two School Psychologists (Evaluators 1 and 2), one of which has experienced several cases associated with military children. These two professionals were chosen to evaluate the workbook because not only do they understand the psychological distress that may arise from a military life, but they also have a clear understanding of what is and is not effective when counseling children.

The panel also included a military parent (Evaluator 3) who is a mother of three daughters. Her husband has been deployed for years at a time and her family has lived in various countries throughout the years. They have relocated to bases in Spain, Japan, Russia, Germany, and San Diego. While her husband was in South Korea for two years, she and her daughters moved to South Carolina in order to be around family. Having her review the workbook would be beneficial because the ages of her daughters fall within 6-12, which is the target population of the workbook.

The evaluation questions and answered provided are summarized below:

1. Is the purpose of the workbook explained appropriately?

Evaluator1: "Please elaborate on the explanation as to why the specific scenarios of deployment were not addressed directly."

Evaluator 2: "Yes, explained very well."

Evaluator 3: "Yes! This has been a long time coming! Finally! Our children need this type of workbook."

2. Is the workbook organized in a manner that is easy to follow?

Evaluator1: "Please add a divider page for each section."

Evaluator 2: "Yes, organized well and visually appealing."

Evaluator 3: "Very easy to follow."

3. Do you feel that they are appropriate for ages 6-12 and are they useful?

Evaluator1: "Wonderful, I used some ideas already- is that ok?"

Evaluator 2: "Yes."

Evaluator 3: "My girls are all within those ages and I can see them enjoy all of these activities. They are educational but fun too!"

4. Do you have any recommendations on how this workbook could be improved?

Evaluator1: "See number 1, that's all. Excellent workbook!"

Evaluator 2: "None"

Evaluator 3: "No, it's great."

5. How do you feel about the letters provided to parent? Should they be included?

Evaluator1: "Absolutely."

Evaluator 2: "Yes, they should be."

Evaluator 3: "I think that every parent has the right to be involved in the counseling sessions of their child, I really like the letters to parents. Also, the recommendations given to parents are wonderful."

6. What do you find most useful about the counseling workbook?

Evaluator1: "The fact that it was broken by subjects. Easy to access what the counselor will need or want to use."

Evaluator 2: "The activities are fun for the children."

Evaluator 3: “Academic sections because for the kids it gives strategies to help them with school.”

7. What do you find least useful about the counseling workbook?

Evaluator1: “I think it depends on the preferences of the individual counselor.

Excellent workbook!”

Evaluator 2: “Great workbook.”

Evaluator 3: “Nothing, I love it!”

The results of the panel evaluation indicated that the evaluators reported that workbook does fill a need in our schools and community. The evaluators found the workbook to be well organized and the activities to be appropriate for the designated age group. One evaluator stated, “This has been a long time coming! Finally!! Our children need this type of workbook.” The panel felt that the letters to the child’s parent are used within the workbook were a great addition and stressed the importance of parent involvement. The parent evaluator stated, “I think that every parent has the right to be involved in the counseling sessions of their child, I really like the letters to parents. Also, the recommendations given to parents are wonderful.”

One of the evaluators felt that the workbook should be organized differently. She stated, “Please add a divider page for each section.” She felt that by adding a divider page it would be much easier to navigate through the workbook, demonstrating where one section ends and the next begins. This was a great suggestion and was something that was not thought of when producing the workbook because the table of contents was believed to be sufficient. The addition of the dividers would make the workbook much easier to navigate.

One of the evaluators said that what they found most useful about the book was, “The fact that it was broken by subjects. Easy to access what the counselor will need or want to use.” This was something that was very important because the workbook was created with this in mind. The workbook is organized so that the counselor can skim through the sections pertaining to a certain skill area and determine which activity would best fit the students her or she is working with. In this manner, the counseling sessions can be tailored to the needs and interests of the individual students.

She also felt that the workbook should address the reason why specific scenarios such as deployment are not addressed directly. She stated, “Please elaborate on the explanation as to why the specific scenarios of deployment were not addressed directly.” This was a topic that was a struggle during the planning of the workbook. It would be difficult and inappropriate to address these situations in a group setting because every child has a different experience. Some have not had a parent be deployed and could be negatively impacted by discussion of such an event. While the topics are embedded within the activities, they are not directly addressed. The workbook is meant to be used in a group setting and therefore it is most appropriate to teach skills of resiliency instead of focusing on individual situations that can cause distress in the children. This would be better addressed during individual counseling.

The workbook was also designed with the military mentality in mind. In other words, instead of focusing on the individual’s emotions and personal situations directly, it is done in a less intrusive manner. The military culture teaches to be strong, unshakeable and to not demonstrate weakness. Due to this, the workbook provides a less stressful and uncomfortable process of counseling. It is the intention of the workbook to teach the

students skills instead of focusing on their most personal feelings. Due to the nature of the workbook, the counselor is at liberty to adjust the counseling sessions as they see fit to meet the needs of the students. If the students feel at ease and want to share more personal feelings, then the counselor can adjust the lessons to do so if they feel that it would be appropriate.

Overall, the school staff members were so pleased with the workbook that they have asked to use it at their sites to provide great counseling to military children that they have identified as benefiting from such services. One of the evaluators has already used several of the activities for her counseling sessions and has found them to be very successful. At one of the school sites, the workbook has been used to work with a student who has been displaying behavior difficulties since his Father was deployed to Afghanistan. It was wonderful that the workbook can aid in working with this child others who are facing similar situations.

CHAPTER 5

I. Summary

The purpose of this project is to focus on a population of children who are growing up during the war against terrorism. With so many of these children living quietly on military bases and some in our public schools, we often forget about the struggles that they face on a daily basis. This population is raised with certain pride and strength that often leads them to mask their emotions to the difficult situations they face on a daily basis. Children of military families face such challenges as relocating, deployment, marital distress caused by war, substance abuse, physical and emotional distress, and masking their emotions to demonstrate bravery and strength.

Research has shown the negative impact of war on the lives of the soldiers and their families. There are an overwhelming number of children who have a loved one who has experienced war. The number of families impacted by the war is overwhelming and the services are not always available due to lack of coverage of family treatment, concerns about confidentiality, lack of professionals trained to work with military families and distance from the military base (Paris, DeVoe, Ross, & Acker, 2010). There is a great need for services to these children who are expected to show bravery but lack the skills necessary to cope effectively with the distress that they may experience and witness in their young lives.

The proposed workbook aims to provide military children with guidance that will help them build resiliency. The workbook will be divided into four areas: personal development, emotional development, social development, and academic development in the military environment. These subjects were selected by examining what important areas lead to overall well-being of a child and future success. In order to create this

workbook, research was conducted on military families, counseling children and personality traits that lead to a resilient individual.

The workbook is designed to be used in conjunction with counseling sessions in the school environment. Teachers and staff would recommend these counseling services when they see a military child struggling in the school setting. The availability of counseling and the cooperation of teachers would create another level of support for these children when their parents are emotionally distressed and have difficulty attending to the emotional needs of their children.

II. Discussion

This project was intended to bring light to a population of children that is often forgotten. Research was conducted in order to determine the effects of war and the importance of building resiliency in children who face challenges that most will never truly grasp.

The parents of these children risk their lives for the safety of our nation and this bravery is respected and valued by us all. The families of these brave soldiers adapt to a different lifestyle than most will ever know and they do so because they believe in what their loved one fights for. It is therefore the responsibility of our communities to demonstrate appreciation for all of the sacrifices made by military families and especially by the young children. The proposed workbook would provide support for a population of children that desperately require guidance and reassurance. Their parent risks their life for the safety of our nation and of us all, and therefore it is pivotal that the community look after the well-being of their children.

The workbook is wonderful and its production has filled a void, it would provide a great service to military children who face challenges in silence. There were no major changes made to the workbook based on the evaluation from the panel of experts. However, there were minor changes in wording and also worked on creating a more visually appealing cover based on the feedback from the panel. The experts felt that the workbook was designed well and the activities provided are appropriate.

III. Future Work/Research

Due to the high level of interest that the workbook has gained, there is an interest in working on creating a more in depth workbook. This would be done by adding more activities to each section so that there are more activities to choose from. There would also be more of an emphasis on academics since the counseling is school-based. There would also be an addition of a section at the end of the workbook that can be used for more individualized situations. For example, if there is a child whose parent is about to deploy or perhaps return, there would be a worksheet on that topic and would be done during individual counseling. There would also be material for students who loss a parent during war. These were not added previously because it was felt that the workbook should focus on gaining resiliency and that by teaching these skills, the child would be able to better cope with any situation that may arise. The addition of the additional chapter would be a great way to incorporate the feedback received from the panel. The suggestions made by the panel were extremely beneficial to the production of the workbook.

The panel also expressed an interest in modifying the workbook in order to use with children who are not from military families. Currently, there is much work being

done on creating a second book that can be used with children from any background. There are minor changes that need to be done to the current workbook in order for it to be used by children of different populations. Once created, the School Psychologists would like to use it at their school sites. It is believed that children would benefit greatly from the activities in the workbook that teach resiliency. Children have become less resilient in a time when resiliency is necessary. There are so many families that are facing hardships such as economic difficulties, divorces, loss of jobs, etc. Parents are facing many stressful situations and that stress is felt by their children. It would be wonderful to be able to provide resiliency building counseling sessions to children in public school settings that face difficulties and could benefit from the activities in the workbook.

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APPENDIX A

Building Resiliency in Military Children Counseling Workbook

KARINA PARTIDA

BUILDING RESILIENCY IN MILITARY CHILDREN

A Workbook based on Military Life.

Activities to help children build self confidence, problem solving skills, responsibility, empathy, friendships, motivation and awareness of the community.

INTRODUCTION

There is some attention given to the men and women that serve our country and the emotional and physical effects that war has on them. Many studies have been conducted that demonstrate the negative effects that result from the experiences that they encounter during war. It is understandable that they would face these and other challenges after experiencing war. While we often reflect about the soldiers' well-being, not much is said about how this affects their children.

In recent years, we have started to see the results of war on the children of our soldiers. Military children are an invisible minority in our society, one that needs support and is often overlooked. With such traumatic events that are encountered in the military lifestyle, these children should receive the necessary tools to tackle the emotional and psychological difficulties they will face throughout their childhood and consequently, their adulthood.

The purpose of this workbook is to provide military children the opportunity to build the skills necessary to face the challenges of growing up in the military life. The workbook focuses on building resiliency in children ages 6 to 12. It is divided into four areas: personal development, emotional development, social development, and academic development in the military environment. What this means is that it will assist a child in building the necessary skills to become emotionally, socially and academically apt to develop resiliency and therefore be able to face the challenges that the military lifestyle entails. The workbook also involves parents/guardians by providing a letter to summarize key concepts being learned and involve them in the process of building resiliency in their young children. Parents/guardians will receive a total of six letters throughout the counseling sessions.

Our military protects all of us from harm and we as a community should do what we can to protect their loved ones. This workbook aims to teach skills that will help these children of military families face the challenges and excel in life.

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SECTION ONE
PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT



A Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

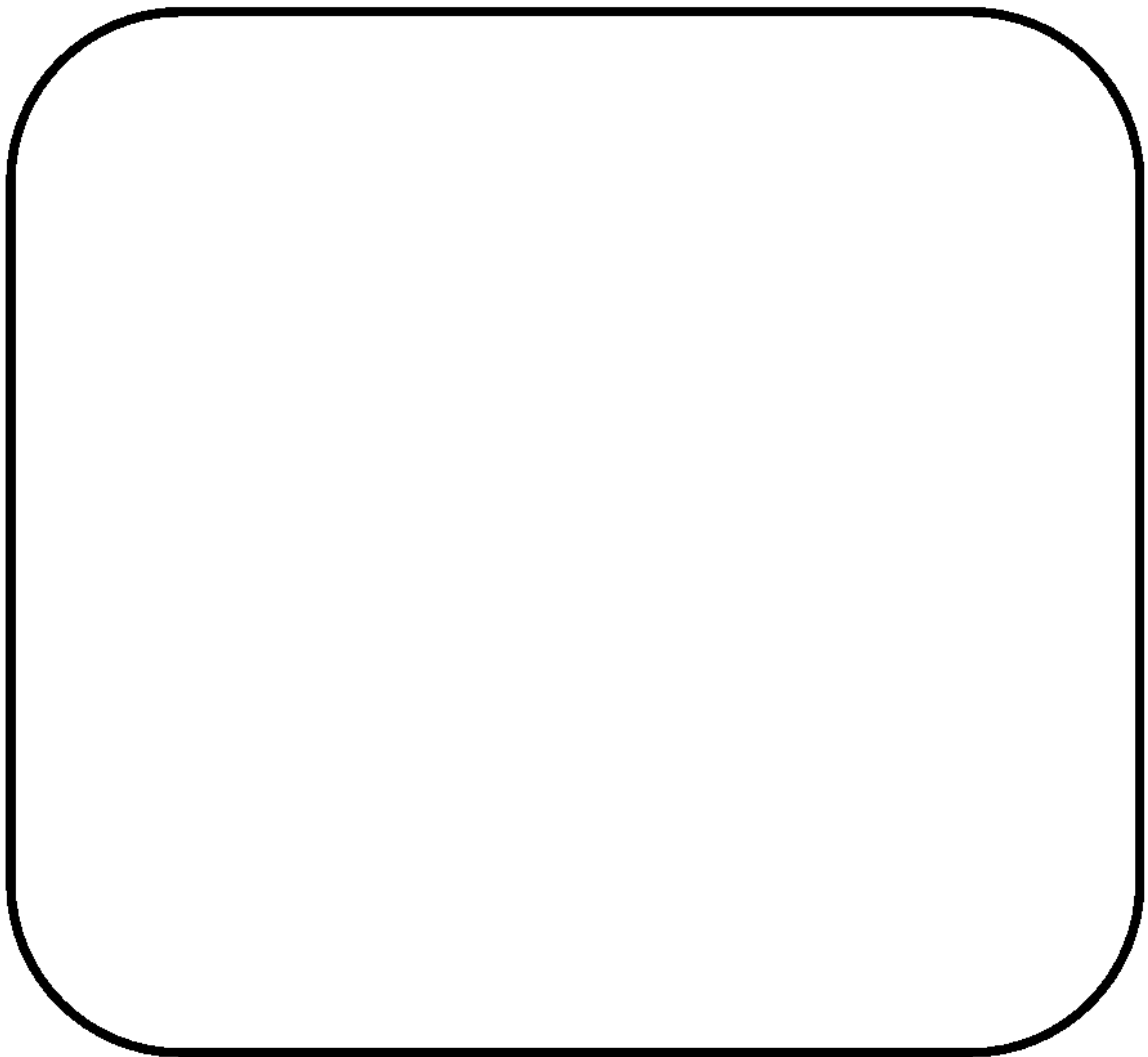
The first area we will cover during counseling is Personal Development. In this section, your child will share things about themselves and become more aware of their individuality and their worth. Some of the lessons in this section include: family portraits, family trees, interests, wants and future dreams. During the next sessions please make sure to talk to your child about what makes them unique and on the good qualities that they possess.

A family tree activity will be sent home for the child to complete with the assistance of their parent/guardian. The intention of this activity is for the child to recognize the number of people that they have in their lives and that they can turn to for support and guidance. A child that feels emotionally supported will worry less and live a happier life. As you construct the family tree discuss the importance of family with your child as well as the value of having a system of support. This activity is about understanding ones roots, self, and identifying systems of support.

Thank you,

All About Me

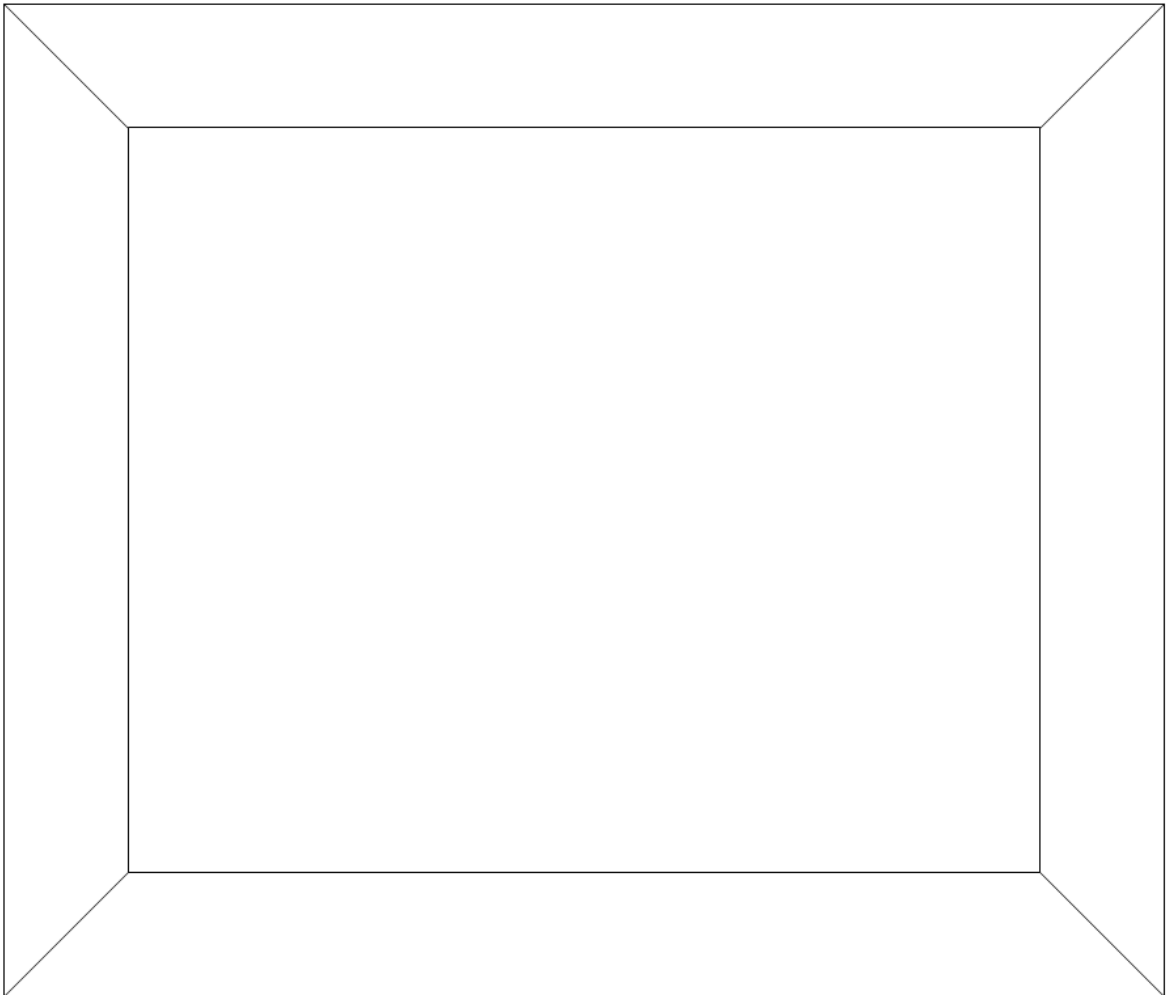
Lets learn about each other! Draw a picture of yourself doing something that you really enjoy. It could be a picture of you playing a favorite sport or game, with your favorite people, or maybe at your favorite place. Be ready to introduce yourself to the group and share your masterpiece.



My Family Portrait

Family provides us with love and support. They are the people that are closest to us and that we can rely on. What does family mean to you? How many people do you have in your family?

Draw a picture of your family inside of the picture frame provided below. Also make sure to decorate the frame to show off your creativity! Be ready to discuss with the group why family is so important to you.



My Family Tree

Family is one of the greatest gifts that we are given in our lives. When we think of family, most of think about sisters, brothers and our parents, but our families are much larger. Do you have any cousins that you are close to? A favorite aunt or uncle? Do you have any Grandparents? What about family pets? During this activity you will create a tree that displays all of the family members that are most important to you.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is for the child to understand their roots, self, and identify support systems that they have at their reach. The family tree will serve the purpose of demonstrating to the child how many people they have in their lives to provide them with love and support. As you construct the family tree, discuss the importance of family.

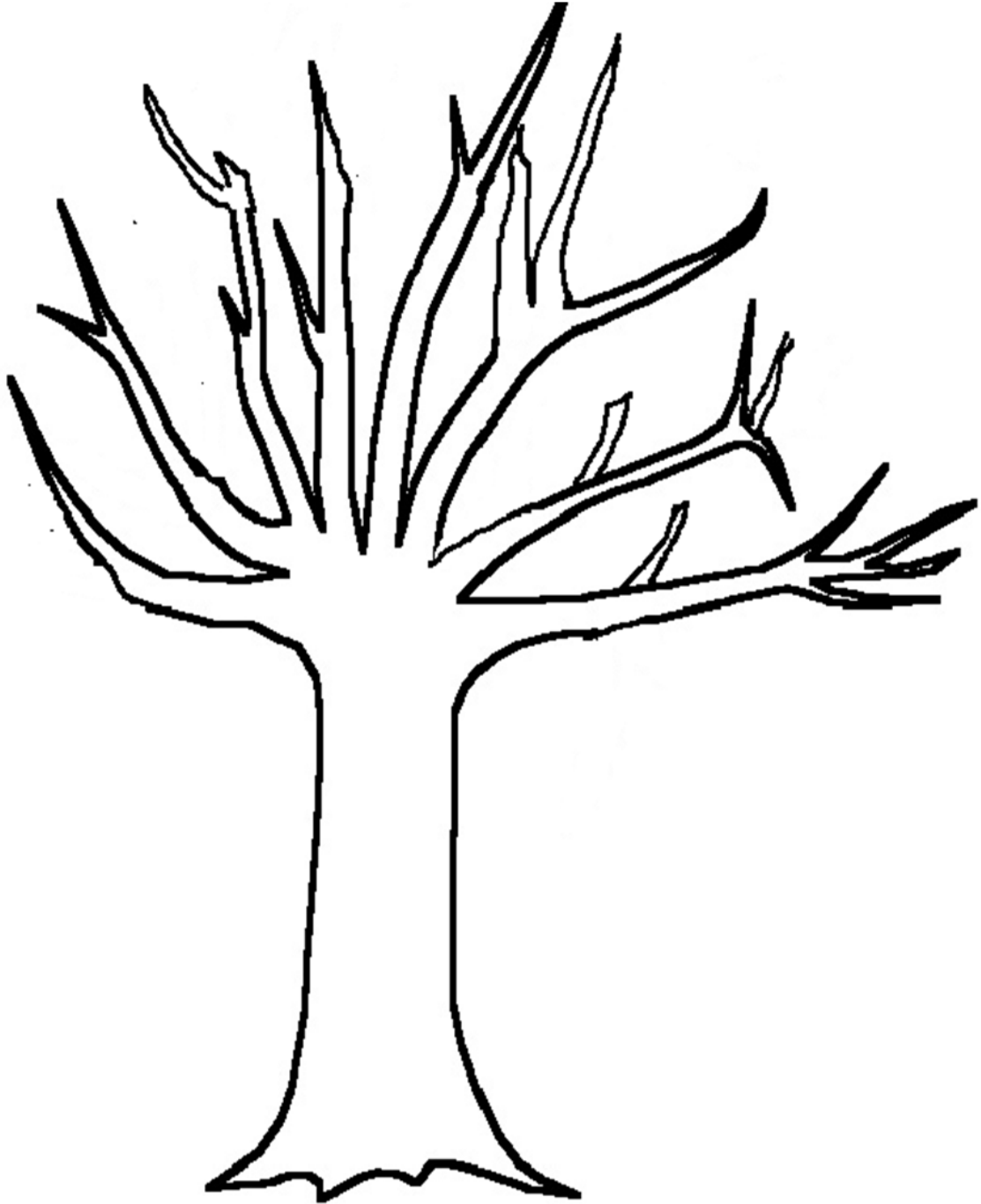
Materials Needed:

- ◆ Legal size white paper
- ◆ Construction paper (brown, yellow, orange, red)
- ◆ Handout for tree and leaves cut out
- ◆ Scissors
- ◆ Glue
- ◆ Pictures of family members
- ◆ Crayons, markers, pencil

Directions:

1. Hand each student a blank piece of legal size paper.
2. Cut out trunk and leaves and trace onto construction paper.
3. Cut out trunk and place onto your paper.
4. Trace leaves onto different colored construction paper and cut out.
5. Each leaf will represent a family member, draw a picture or place a photo of family member inside of the leaf.
6. Begin to glue the leaves onto your tree to represent your family.

Family Tree Cut-Outs



Family Tree Cut-Outs



My LIFE Collage

There are no two people that are exactly alike in this world. We all come from different places, like different food, listen to different music and have different traditions. During this session you will be creating a collage to show how unique you are. Your collage can be as creative or simple as you would like. You can include words that describe you, pictures of your favorite foods, places, games, your family members, pets, anything that demonstrates who YOU are! Have fun!!!

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is for the child to express themselves by creating artwork that represents who they are. This activity allows an opportunity for children to express themselves and reflect on the things that are important to them.

Materials Needed:

- ♦ Sheet of construction paper
- ♦ Photographs from home
- ♦ Old magazines
- ♦ Scissors
- ♦ Glue
- ♦ Markers
- ♦ Stickers

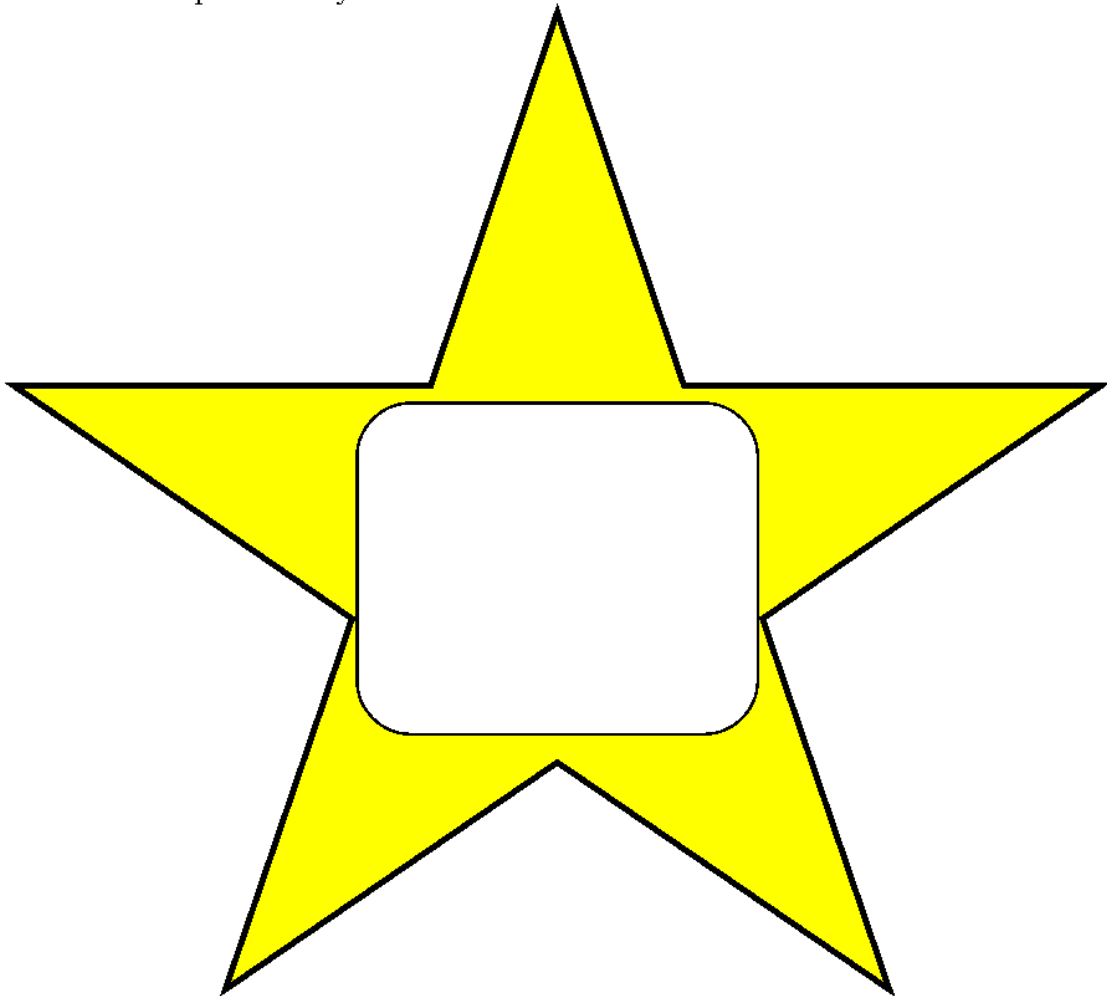
Directions:

1. Hand each student a blank piece of construction paper.
2. Distribute old magazines, stickers, markers, scissors and glue to students.
3. Have students create a collage about their life using magazine clippings and photos brought from home.
4. Once completed, have the students walk around the room and look at the fabulous collages created.
5. Have the student take the collage home to share and display.

My Military HERO

One thing that every child in the group has in common is having a parent in the military. That makes you special because you live a life that is different from many other kids. Some military kids get to live all over the world and learn about other cultures that are very different from their own.

Inside of the star below draw a picture of your Military Hero and around draw a picture or write all the places that you have lived.



My Future



Look what we found!!! These aren't just regular glasses, they are **MAGICAL** glasses that let you see the **FUTURE!!** When you put them on what do you see? What will you be like in **5 years, 20 years**, what about **40 years???** Put them on and see what your future will be like. What will you be doing? Where will you live?

Purpose:

This activity is intended to teach students to think ahead and plan for their tomorrow. It is very important to have goals and to live your life in a way that promotes those goals.

Materials Needed:

- ♦ A pair of goofy glasses for each student
- ♦ Blank piece of paper
- ♦ Crayons, markers, pencils

Directions:

1. Hand each student a pair of goofy glasses and have them try them. Once the student has their glasses on ask them to share what they see by drawing it on the paper. Students can wear the glasses as they complete the activity.
2. Students share their future with the group.
3. Discuss with students the importance of having goals for their future and how to attain their goals.
4. Have each student name two things that they are currently doing to work toward one of their goals.



SECTION TWO
EMOTIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



A Letter to Parents



Dear Parents,

The second category that we will discuss in our sessions is called Emotional Development. The purpose of this section is to help the student learn to identify, comprehend, and cope with their emotions. Some of the skills taught in this section include: awareness of emotions, self-esteem, and coping with our emotions.

During the next couple of weeks, try to incorporate the awareness of emotions into your daily lives. For example, you can say to your child, "You look very happy, did something really good happen at school today?" Use feeling words as often as possible so that the child learns how to use them in order to express themselves.

Thank you,

Boost Yourself Up

It is important that we recognize our personal strengths and the positive things about themselves. During this activity, each child will fill out the worksheet below and talk about all the positive traits that they possess and the good things in their lives.

Self-esteem is very important for anyone, especially children. This activity will help the child pinpoint the good things in their life and create a boost in self-esteem. Answer the following questions:

- I am really good at _____
- The best thing about me is _____
- I am special because _____
- My parents show that they love me by _____
- I am proud of myself because _____
- I care about _____
- I love my _____
- At school, I am good at _____
- My friends love think I am nice because _____
- The best thing about my life is _____

What do you think you deserve an award for? The Sister, Best Singer, Great Student, Most Helpful, Most Liked??? Draw a picture of your trophy below and explain why you deserve it.

I Feel So...

Sometimes its hard to understand what we are feeling and even harder to let others know how you feel. Have you ever had a friend ask you, “what’s wrong?” Was it hard for you to answer the question? You can answer that questions by saying, “I feel _____ because ____.” What is the word for what you’re feeling? Find the feeling words inside the word search below and talk walk with your group about what the word means. Try to use it in a sentence, “I feel _____ because_____.”

B K E I Q V Y N A N X I O U S
 L T D E T N I O P P A S I D D
 V X I V P C T N E D I F N O C
 G V K C X X D E R A C S D N C
 Y I X L L W E N H I V Y A D U
 L P P N R E L A X E D P M K L
 X G P A A M W O R R I E D V L
 P S I A C V Q A H C X L P E T
 L C W S H F M O L T D W E B C
 E G B A P N Z L M E S V D H O
 M N H F V O U E A G E G J A Z
 P O M E W V A I O C E E L S S
 F R H X C O N T E N T H W A X
 U T A Q P I E C Q Z R U G V D
 D S G L A F R A I D Q C G Q K

UNHAPPY	DISAPPOINTED	STRONG	CONFIDENT
SCARED	AFRAID	CONTENT	RELAXED
WORRIED	EMBARRASSED	GLAD	WORRIED
MAD	SAD	CALM	SAFE

My Life is Amazing

It is important that we recognize our strengths and the positive things about our lives. If a child focuses on all of the positive aspects of their life then they are more likely to feel happy and excel in life. During this activity, each child will fill out the worksheet below and talk about why their “Life is Amazing.”

Focusing on all of the positive things in our lives helps us to face any difficult times.

I family is great because _____
My life is _____
I am special because _____
I am very lucky because _____
I am grateful for _____
I love _____
I care about _____
I love my _____
I have _____
My friends think I am nice because _____
The best thing about my life is _____
I feel happy that _____
The coolest thing that I own is _____
My favorite memory is _____

Some things that make me smile are _____

I am nice,
I am smart,
I am lucky,
And I have a big heart!
I can do anything that I set my mind to,
I can, I can, just watch what I can do!!

A Story About Jenny

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is for children to hear a story that they may be able to relate to and learn from. The story focuses on how to appropriately deal with anger and the importance of perspective.

Materials Needed:

- ♦ “A Story About Jenny” (on next page)
- ♦ Discussion Questions (provided below)
- ♦ Markers, crayons
- ♦ Pencil
- ♦ 8 1/2 x 10 piece of white paper

Directions:

1. Read the story to the children.
2. Answer the question at the bottom of the page as a group.
3. Have students draw a picture showing a time when they were very angry and share how they calmed themselves down.

Discussion Questions:

- ♦ What do you think about how Jenny dealt with her father’s “exciting news?”
- ♦ How do you think her Dad felt when Jenny became angry about the news?
- ♦ Was it okay for Jenny to yell at other people just because she was mad?
- ♦ How do you deal with change? Do you try to focus on the good, or the bad?
- ♦ Have you ever had to move? What was it like?

A Story About Jenny

Jenny, a 10 year old 4th grader lived in a military base in San Diego with her family. Her Father was a Corporal for the Marines and her Mother a stay at home Mom. Jenny loved her life, she had so many friends on base and loved the living near the beach. Everything in her life was going great until one day it all changed.

It was nice spring day when Jenny's life suddenly changed. She went to school like every single day, walked home with her friends, and worked on her homework as soon as she got home. That afternoon during dinner, her father reported that he had exciting news to share with his family. Jenny and her younger sister, Katie, were so excited to hear the news and immediately gave their full attention.

Jenny looked at her father as he spoke the words that would make her feel that her whole world was crashing down. It was almost in slow motion that she heard her father say, "We are moving to Japan!" Jenny's mouth dropped and she felt her face get hot and her nose flare up. Her little sister cheered as she heard the news and her Mom smiled in approval. How were they happy? Jenny did not understand, she had so many questions, why? Why was her father doing this to her? She yelled, "I don't want to go to Japan!!! I'm not going, you can leave but I'm staying here!!!!!"

She rushed to her room and slammed the door. She felt angry and it was hard for her to breathe. Her parents allowed her some time to cool down before approaching her. When they knocked on her door she yelled, "Leave me alone!!!" Jenny stayed in her room and began to write in her journal about all the anger that she was feeling. She felt a little of the anger leaving her, she could breathe now.

The next day at school, she didn't want to talk to anyone. She yelled at a student who accidently bumped into her, she ignored a friend that waved to her and looked so mad that no one wanted to sit next to her at lunch. One of her friends, Nancy, came up to her and said, "What's wrong Jenny, everyone is staying away from you because they are scared you're going to yell at them." Jenny looked around and realized that people were scared of her. She said, "Nancy I'm so mad!!! I have to move to Japan because my Dad is trying to ruin my life!"

Nancy smiled and said, "Jenny that's not true. Your Dad loves you but he has to do his job. I've lived all over the world because of my Dad's job and now I have great friends like you everywhere." Jenny looked at her and felt a little bit of relief. Jenny said, "I don't want to lose my friends, I love living here." Nancy said that she didn't lose her friends and gets letters from all the places that she used to live. She said, "My Mom says we are lucky kids because we get to see different places and learn about different cultures. You know, there are people that wish that they could go live in a different country but they can't and we can." Jenny thought for a moment and said, "I guess you're right Nancy."

That afternoon her Dad came home and walked right over to Jenny and gave her a hug. He sat with her and said, "I know you're upset sweetheart, but sometimes things happen that we can't control. I have a responsibility to my job and I have to go where they need me. It doesn't help me to get upset, nor does it help you. The best way to deal with change is to find the good in it. Japan is a different culture; you will get to see new things, experience new traditions and people. We will be living on a base so you will be surrounded by kids just like you and make great friends like you have here. We will only be there a few years and then we may come back here or to another state or country."

Jenny smiled at him as he comforted her and she realized that things were going to be okay. She felt bad for being so negative and making her father feel bad for just doing his job. Jenny decided that next time she felt angry; she wasn't going to take it out on the people around her. Instead, she would try to find the good in the situation or talk to a friend to help her feel better.

Her family moved to Japan a month later and it was just how her father had described it. Every day was something new and exciting! She made so many friends on the base and weekends were filled with family adventures exploring the country. She was very happy living in Japan but was open to the idea of moving to a new place because she realized that there is always good to be found in any change.

The Change Game

Is there anything that you wish you could change? Maybe you wish you were a better soccer player, or had a better voice. Maybe you wish you could live outside of the base, or move to a foreign country. Everyone has thoughts of how their lives could be different. There are things that we can change but others that we have no control over and have to learn to find the good in. Fill in each box with something you would want to change about your life. Next to the arrow write how you can change it, or if you cannot change it, list something positive about it.

The form consists of three large rectangular boxes arranged in a triangular pattern. Each box is connected to a set of five horizontal lines by a large, hollow arrow. The top-left box has an arrow pointing right to lines on the right. The middle-right box has an arrow pointing left to lines on the left. The bottom-left box has an arrow pointing right to lines on the right.

What Can I Do?

It is important to be able to identify the emotions that we feel and describe it to others. Once you know what you are feeling the question is, “What can I do? How can I change how I am feeling?” If you are angry at a friend, what steps can you take in order to get rid of that anger? Negative feelings bring us down so we have to find ways to rid ourselves of those feelings so that we can be the best that we can be.

As a group, finish the sentences below to describe what each of the people can do to help improve their situation.

1. Stephanie was mad at her sister and shouted, “I hate you! I wish you were not my sister.” She didn’t mean it but the words just came out. Her sister began to cry and Stephanie all of a sudden felt terrible for hurting her feelings.
Stephanie should... _____

2. Kyle lost his baseball game this morning and feels very sad.
He can... _____

3. Mikey feels really anxious about a science test that he has to take on Friday. When he thinks about the test, he feels like he can’t breathe.
Mikey should... _____

4. Melissa feels that she can’t do math so she avoids any math work at school. She is failing in school and her parents are disappointed. She feels bad about it but math is very hard and she thinks she will never understand it.
Melissa should... _____

5. What do you do when you feel sad? What kind of things make you feel better??
I feel better _____

Trash it!!!

Sometimes we are the hardest on ourselves. We feed ourselves with negative thoughts that slowly pick at our self-esteem. The strongest comments are the ones that we live with everyday. For this reason, we have to learn to TRASH the thoughts that bring us down and only keep thoughts that help us excel and be the best person we can be. This activity is about learning to distinguish between positive and negative thoughts.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is for the child to identify negative thoughts and comments and learn to disregard them. They will learn the importance of positive thoughts and their influence on their self-esteem and well-being.

Materials Needed:

- ♦ Paper to write statement, thoughts (good and bad)
- ♦ Scissors
- ♦ Trash Bin (small)
- ♦ Pencil

Directions:

1. Hand each child a blank piece of paper. Students then write statement. They can write down one of their own thoughts, or maybe something that someone has said to them.
2. Child cuts out strips of statements.
3. As a group each student takes a turn reading a statement and choosing to keep it or “Trash it!”
4. Group takes turn until all statements have been either kept or trashed.
6. Group concludes activity by talking about some people can be hurtful and say things they don’t mean. Instead of getting angry, you can just “Trash” that thought and not let it bring you down.

Positive Crown

Life is hard and we have to use every tool that we have in order to face the challenges ahead. One of the most powerful tools that we have is a positive attitude. We can get through anything that life brings to us if we learn to have a positive attitude.

In this activity, students will create their very own Positive Crown that they can wear to remind them to look at the positive in every situation. Remember, that sometimes what we all we need is a change in perception to get through our day. Focus on the positive because they far outweigh the negative.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is for children to create a physical representation (Crown) of a Positive attitude. They will learn that being positive is the best tool in life and will help them succeed in all that they do.

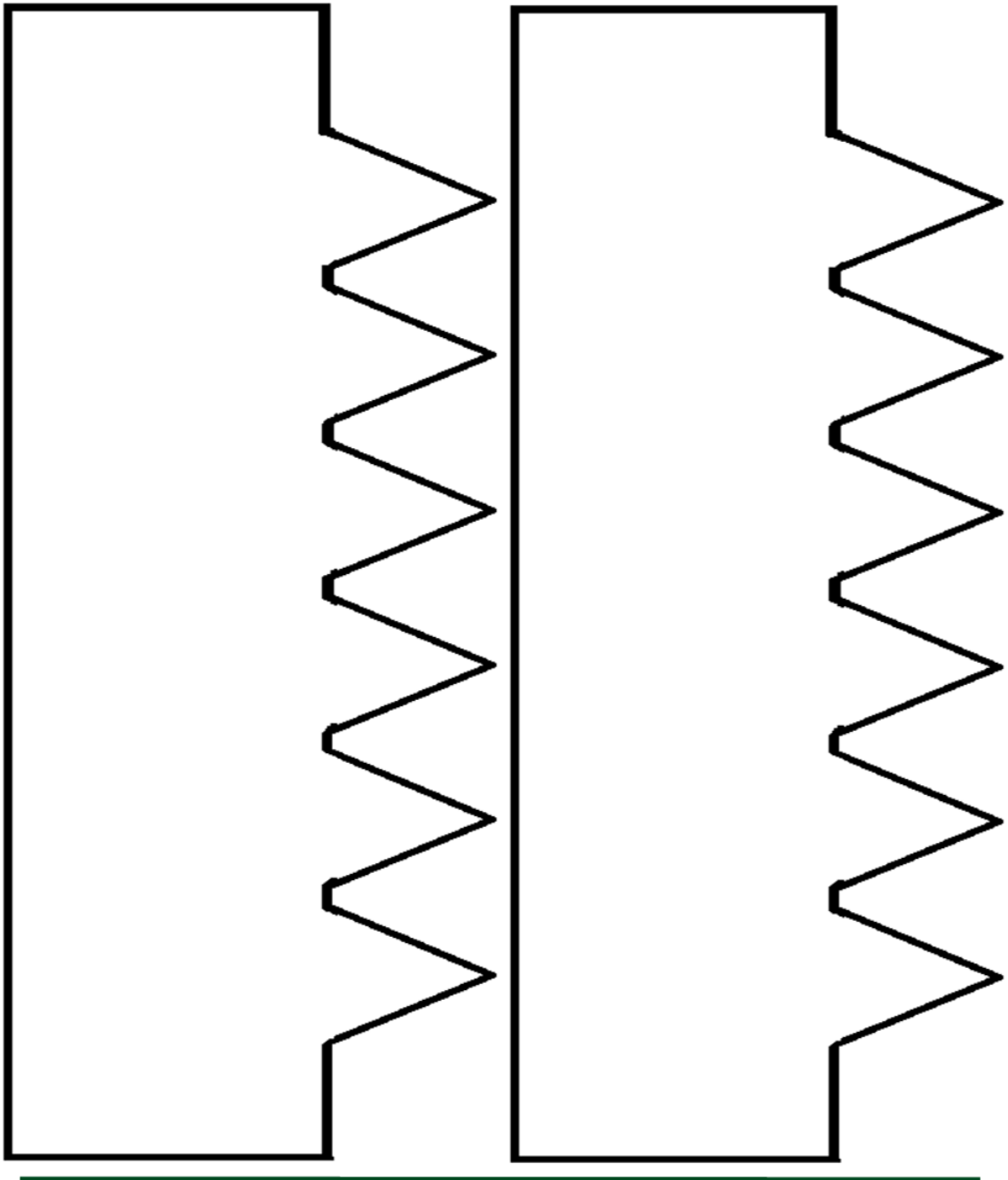
Materials Needed:

- ♦ “Positive Crown” Handout
- ♦ Scissors
- ♦ Glue
- ♦ Markers, colored pencils, crayons
- ♦ Any materials to help decorate crown (stickers, glitter, plastic jewels, string, lace)

Directions:

1. Talk to students about the power of having a positive attitude
2. Discuss that there is always something to be happy about and that helps us keep a positive attitude.
3. Give each student a “Positive Crown” handout
4. Have students cut out and decorate their hat.
5. Give examples of how students can use their “Positive Crown”/Positive Attitude.
6. Have students role play with a partner.

Positive Crown Handout



My Box of Sunshine

Sometimes we can let our emotions get the best of us. When you don't feel happy it is almost as if all the sunshine has left and you are left walking through a gloomy, rainy day. Life is not always wonderful and that is why we have to learn to carry our sunshine so that on days when bad things happen, we have a little sunshine of our own. During this activity, we will be creating our box of sunshine that we can look through when things get hard and we feel sad or angry.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is for the child to think about all the things that make them feel happy and learn to use those ideas as a coping method when they are feeling bad. The box can be filled with pictures of people that they love, positive quotes, song lyrics, picture of favorite places, letters from friends and family, or anything else that would cause them to smile. This is meant to be an exercise for student to develop coping strategies and also use their creativity.

Materials Needed:

- ♦ Small box
- ♦ Scissors
- ♦ Personal items
- ♦ Stickers
- ♦ Construction paper
- ♦ Marker, colored pencils, crayons

Directions:

1. Hand each child a plain white box.
2. Have kids create or bring in items for their box that make them feel happy.
3. Have students decorate their box and fill with personal items.
4. Explain to the child the idea behind Sunshine in a Box.
5. If students want to share their box, allow them to share with the group.



SECTION THREE
SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT



A Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

The third section that we will cover during counseling is Social Development and refers to the development of skills that allows for positive social interactions with others individuals, or groups. Some of the skills in this section include: building empathy, friendships, problem solving, communication, and social responsibility.

One of the most important terms covered in this section is social responsibility. Military families understand this term better than anyone else, it refers to what an individual does for the good of their society. Community service is an excellent way to demonstrate to a child the importance of kindness. Try to involve your child in a military sponsored community service, perhaps preparing care packages for the military.

In The Spotlight



When we meet new people we want to learn more about them. Find a partner and interview each other using the questions below. What things do you have in common? What do you find interesting about your new friend?

What is your name? _____

How old are you? _____

Where were you born? _____

Have you ever lived in another country? _____

Do you have any brothers or sisters? _____

What is your favorite game? _____

What is your favorite animal? _____

What is your favorite color? _____

What makes you smile? _____

Do you have any pets? _____

Do you have any special talents? _____

What is your favorite food? _____

Where is your favorite place to go? _____

What do you want to be when you grow up? _____

If you were given 3 wishes, what would you wish for?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Surround Yourself With Good

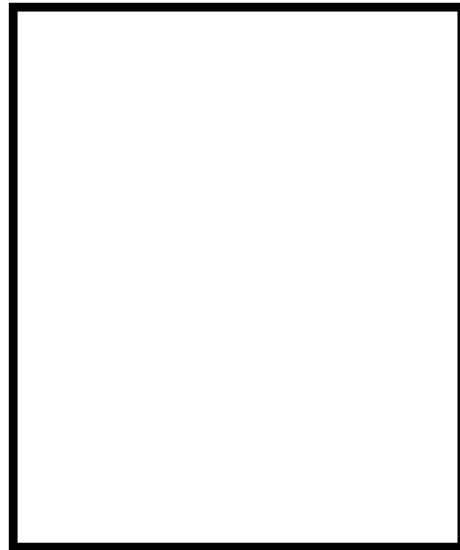
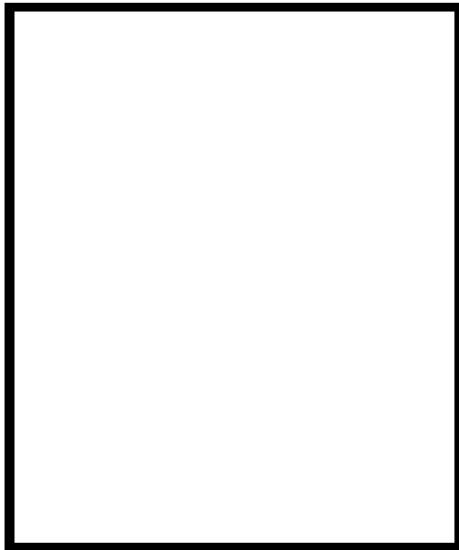
Friends are very important to an individual's life and also influential. Children spend a lot of time around their friends and therefore it is very important for children to choose friends wisely. During this activity, children will discuss the positive traits that they look for in a friend. They will learn what traits make a good friend and then they will determine which traits they possess that makes them a good friend.

Characteristics of Friends:

Happy	Empathetic	Loyal
Nice	Honest	Funny
Helpful	Calm	Respectful
Positive	Caring	Generous
Kind	Smart	Reliable

Draw Yourself & Friend:

In the space provided below, draw a picture of a friend and list 5 of the traits from above that you look for in your friends. Then draw a picture of yourself and choose 5 traits that you have from the list above.



Taking Turns

Taking turns when having a conversation is hard for everyone, but it can be especially difficult for kids. It is so important that we teach children to be respectful to others when they talk and not interrupt. During this activity, you will begin a conversation with the group on a topic that would be of great interest to everyone. If you create excitement in the conversation, it will raise the opportunity to teach the lesson of patience and respect. Explain to the children that we all have to wait our turn to speak.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is for the child to understand that they should wait their turn to speak in a conversation. When you interrupt someone, you can make them feel that what they are saying is of no importance to you.

Materials Needed:

- ♦ No materials, only a subject of interest (plans for summer, pets, funniest moment in their lives, favorite games, etc)

Directions:

1. Ask the group a questions such as, “what is the funniest thing that every happened to you?”
2. Remind children to give their full attention to the person sharing and wait their turn before beginning to share their story.
3. To children who often interrupt, begin to interrupt them as they share their story. The idea is to demonstrate to them how they make others feel when they interrupt.
4. After the group shares, ask them how it felt when/if they were interrupted. Talk to the students about the importance of waiting their turn even though they may be excited to share.

Match It!!!

Can you tell when a friend is sad without them saying a word to you? If you can that means that you can read their facial expressions. We make facial expressions all day long, without even realizing it. If we are angry, confused, surprised, tired, happy, or even annoyed. There is a facial expression for almost every feeling. Lets see how well you can read facial expressions. Play the Match It game and see if you can match the correct emotion to the picture.

Find a partner to play the game with... good luck!!!

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is for the child to practice identifying emotions. They will draw emotions on faces and then match with the feeling that it represents.






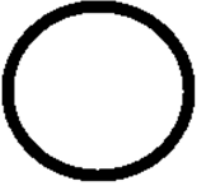




Materials Needed:

- ♦ Matching cards hand-out
- ♦ Scissors
- ♦ pencil

Directions:

1. Hand each child matching cards handout and have them draw in emotions.
2. Have child cut the cards out.
3. Find a partner to play the game with, or choose to play alone.
4. Lay each card face down.
5. Turn over two cards and see if the two cards go together.
6. Play until you run out of card, the player with the most amount of matching pairs wins!

Match It!!!

SCARED		DISAPPOINTED	
CONFUSED		SAD	
EMBARASSED		HAPPY	
NERVOUS		ANGRY	
EXCITED		ANNOYED	

What Should You Do?

In life you will face so many situations and some you will know exactly what to do and others will take some work to figure out. No one knows how to react to things, but we all do the best that we can. We learn from the challenges that we face and keep moving forward.

Lets see if you can help the people in the next couple of examples deal with their current situation. If you need help, quietly work with a partner.

SITUATION 1: Jimmy receives an F on his spelling test, he takes one look at the big F written on that test and begins to feel his heart race, what should Jimmy do???

SITUATION 2: Janet sees her best friend Susy crying behind the tree at lunch. What should she do?

SITUATION 3: Cindy is really sad because her Dad is away and couldn't be here to see her win the Student of the Month award. Her friend Lily sees her, what should she do?

SITUATION 4: Frank see kids playing tag and wants to join them, what should he do?

SITUATION 5: Heather's Dad tells her that he has to leave for a few months for work. He



SECTION FOUR
ACADEMIC
DEVELOPMENT



A Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

The fourth and final section of the workbook is Academic Development and refers to the development of skills that are pivotal for academic success. Some of the skills in this section include: motivation, time management, listening skills, study habits, and following directions.

We must remind children that their main responsibility is to attend and excel in school. Given the correct tools, children can excel in school with very little effort. Students will learn that everyone has strengths and weakness and we should always be working towards improving ourselves.

Setting goals is vital for academic success and is something that needs to be applied to their daily life. As you see your child making changes to improve themselves, praise them and help them to meet their goals. If they want to try to turn in more of their homework assignment, you can help them set a schedule to finish homework right after school.

While school is a child's main responsibility, it is the parents responsibility to help the child succeed. Make sure to emphasize the value of education and praise your child for any academic achievement.

Thank you,

The Best Me I Can Be

Read the sentences below and choose whether the statement is “True, A Little True, or False.” Be honest, remember that no one is perfect and we can all use some improvement.

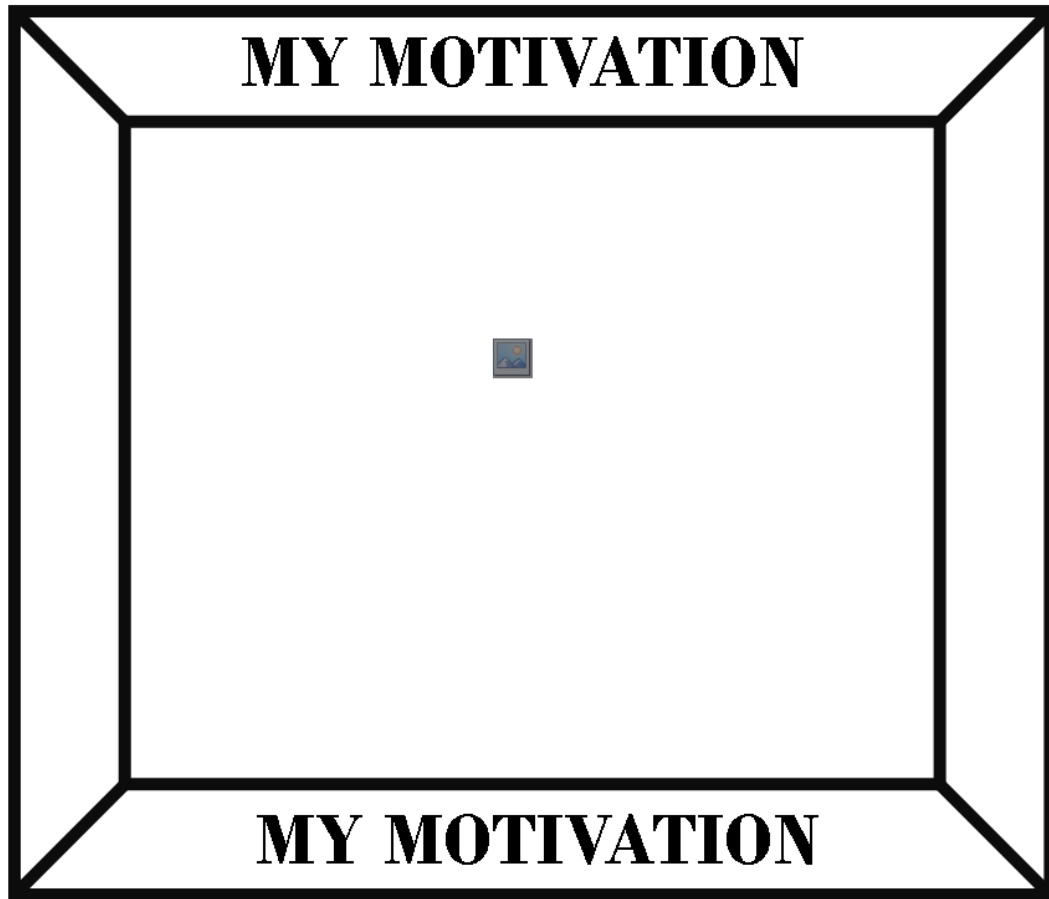
STATEMENT	TRUE	A LITTLE TRUE	FALSE
I always turn in my homework.			
It is easy for me to pay attention in class.			
I never get in trouble.			
I am friendly.			
It is easy for me to make friends.			
I like school.			
I am good at spelling.			
My backpack is organized			
I never forget what people tell me.			
I always finish my classwork.			
I study for tests.			
It is easy for me to talk to new people.			
My desk at school is organized.			
I get up for school on time.			
I have a positive attitude.			
I am good at sports.			
I am smart.			
I am a good person.			
I treat others with respects			
I don't interrupt others when they are talking.			
I have good table manners.			
I follow the rules at school.			
I am good at math.			

Choose 3 of the false statements from above and explain what you can do to improve in this area. For example, you could use flashcards to study your math skills.

My Motivation

What is your motivation to do well in school and to be a good person? Are you motivated by the goals that you have? For example, do you work hard because you want to be a Doctor when you grow up? Are you motivated by your parents? Trying our very best and working hard are not always easy, but if we find something that keeps us going then we have a much better chance of reaching all of our goals.

As a group, talk about what motivation is and talk about what motivates each of you. In the space below, draw a picture of your motivation.



Following Directions

Being able to follow directions is the key to school success. It is so important to follow directions in order to ensure that you are doing what is expected of you. The following exercise is intended to demonstrate how following directions can help a student succeed in the classroom.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to show children the importance of following directions that are given to them in order to assure they do things correctly.

Materials Needed:

- ◆ Following directions hand-out (next page)
- ◆ Pencil

Directions:

1. Announce to group that they will be taking a short quiz.
2. Hand each of the students a quiz, place face down on their desk.
3. Once every student has their quiz, give directions.
4. Say, "You will be taking a short quiz and have five minutes to complete it. Make sure that you read the directions above before beginning your quiz. Begin."
5. After group finishes the quiz, choose one student to read the directions aloud.
6. Discuss how failing to read the directions caused much more work and led them to complete the assignment incorrectly.



Following Directions

This quiz is timed. You will be allowed five minutes to complete the quiz. Please make sure that you have a pencil and erase any mistakes that you make. Please make sure that you put your name at the top right of this quiz and also write the date. This quiz is to be completed beginning with the last question.

When you finish, please place your paper face down on your desk.

1. What is $25+10$? _____
2. How many sides does a triangle have? _____
3. Name 5 colors. _____
4. What is your favorite book? _____
5. Name two different shapes. _____
6. What is $5-1+19-0-3-7+2$? _____
7. What is $78-34$? _____
8. What is the opposite of cold? _____
9. Mom is to daughter as Dad is to _____? _____
10. Name one planet other than Earth. _____
11. Name 6 states in The United States _____
12. Name 3 animals that have feathers _____
13. What is $7-0$? _____
14. Name 10 animals? _____
15. What is $6-6+25+16-10+4-12+1$? _____
16. If you have \$20 and buy a book for \$12.34, how much is your change? _____
17. Draw a circle, triangle and octagon on the back of this quiz. _____
18. You are done with this quiz, turn paper over and remain seated.
19. Write the alphabet: _____
20. Write number 1-15: _____
21. Write your name in the space provided: _____

Listen Carefully

Listening is essential to success both socially and academically. Listening to others makes them feel that you care about what they are saying. Keeping eye contact with the person shows them that they have your full attention and also helps you to better understand what they are saying. Visual cues like facial expressions, hand gestures and visual examples help us better understand what is being explained. Sometimes it can be hard to keep eye contact because we are distracted by the things around us. This is a skill that we have to constantly work on. When you look at the person who is talking to you, then you are more likely to listen to what they are saying. This is why teacher's always say, "Eyes up here please." They simply want to make sure that they have your full attention.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to show children the importance of listening and also demonstrate the difficulty of following directions when you cannot see the person that is talking to you.

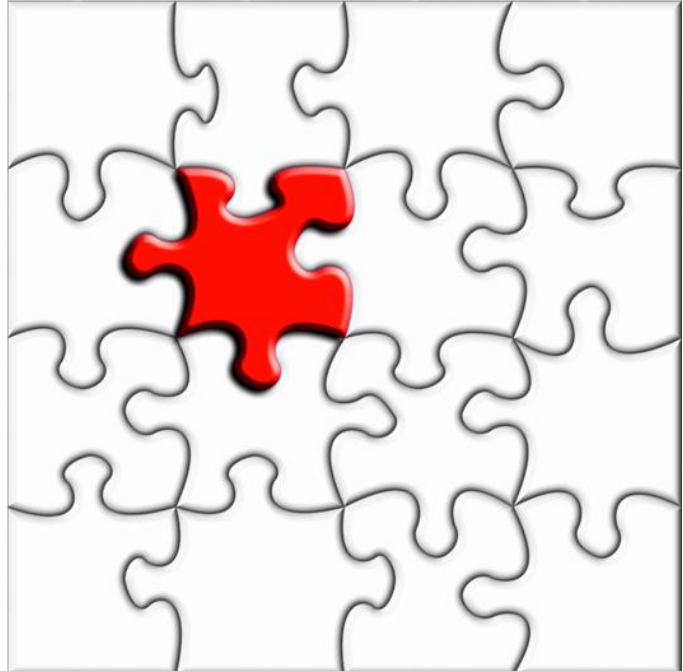
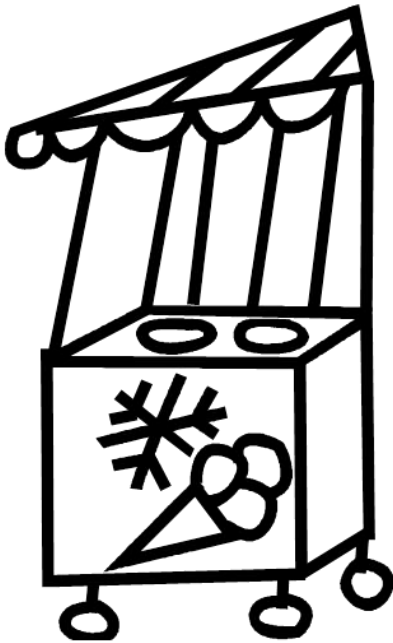
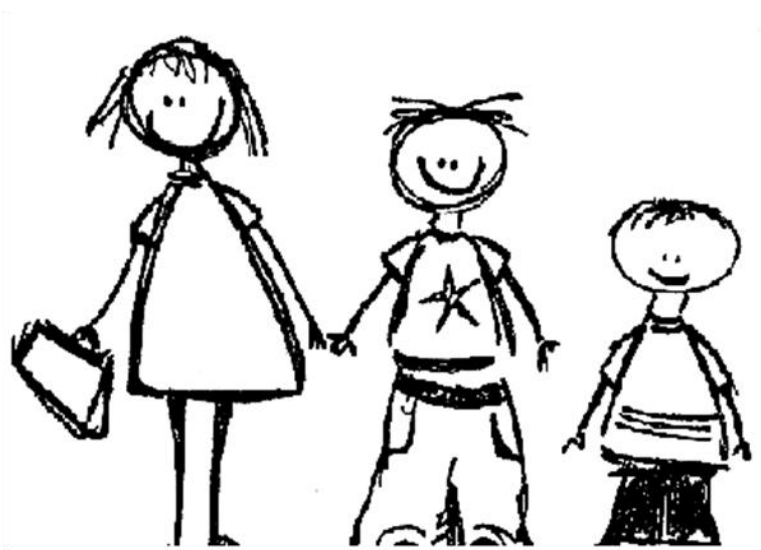
Materials Needed:

- ♦ "Listen Carefully" hand-out (next page)
- ♦ Pencil
- ♦ Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- ♦ Desk dividers (example: opened folder to block children from seeing each other)

Directions:

1. Discuss with group the importance of listening and eye contact.
2. Have each student find a partner for this activity.
2. Partners should sit across from each other.
3. Set up desk divider (open up folders to block students from seeing each other).
4. Hand each student handout and coloring materials.
5. Give students the following directions, "You are going to work with your partner to color this handout. You will take turns giving each other directions. For Example, 'color the square green.' Then both of you will color it green. Then the next person will give directions and both will follow it. Keep going until you have colored in the entire handout, or run out of time. It is very important that you **DO NOT REPEAT** your directions."
6. Have each set of partners show picture to group and see if they match. If they do not, then they did not listen carefully to each other. Also note the difficulty when you don't have eye contact with that person.

Listen Carefully Handout



How Can I Remember It?

There are so many things that you have to remember for math, science, history, etc. It can be hard to remember all the information that you learn in the classroom. That is why there are lots of strategies you can use to help yourself remember things. Learning can be easy if you take the time to study the material that you learn.

Below are some examples of things you can do to help you remember what you learn. After you read the examples, share one thing that you currently do to study.

FLASHCARDS:

These are great for memorizing ANY subject. You can use it for your math facts, science tests, or even history.

WRITING IT DOWN AGAIN AND AGAIN:

Repetition will help you remember the information. You can also write in different colored markers to make it more fun. This is a GREAT way to work on those spelling words!

ACRONYMS:

This can be very helpful for any subject. A very popular acronym is PEMDAS (Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally) it helps students remember the order of operation in mathematics. Parenthesis, Exponents, Multiplication and Division, and Addition and Subtraction. You can make up your very own acronyms to help you remember information that you may need for a test.

READING IT ALOUD:

Some people find it very helpful to simply keep reviewing and reading the information they need to remember aloud. You can also read it to a friend and then have them read it back to you.

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU DO TO STUDY?

Tick Tock...

Time... something that we all wish we had more of. Our days are filled with things to do and sometimes we just can't do everything that we want in one day. This is why we have to learn to organize our time. If we can't do everything on our to do list, then maybe we should only do what is most important first.

During this activity, students will learn the importance of organizing their time and that it is necessary to prioritize the things that they need to accomplish within their day.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate to students the value in organizing their time. They will learn to focus on the most important tasks first and that it is okay if we can't fit everything into one day as long as the most important things are completed.

Materials Needed:

- ♦ "Tick Tock..." handout (next page)
- ♦ Pencil

Directions:

1. Discuss time management with students and what a priority is.
2. Give each student a "Tick Tock..." handout and have them fill out the to-do list using the examples provided at the bottom of the handout.
3. Review answers to make sure that group understands what should be completed first.
4. Have students share some of the things that they have on their to do lists daily. Do they have basketball practice? Homework? Chores? Favorite TV show to watch? Naps?

Tick Tock...

Below are a list of things that Meg **WANTS** and **NEEDS** to do today. Can you help Meg put these on her to do list in order of **IMPORTANT?** She has a lot and may not be able to get through everything today, so what do you think should be the first thing on her list? What about the least important?

Fill in the to-do list with the help of a partner. Then complete your own to do list.

<u>MEG'S TO DO LIST</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

<u>YOUR TO DO LIST</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

- ◆ Spelling Practice Test
- ◆ Play tag with neighbors
- ◆ Clean room
- ◆ Watch cartoons
- ◆ Math homework
- ◆ Take a 20 minute nap
- ◆ Walk the dog
- ◆ Work on project due next week

- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____

A Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

This will be our very last counseling session. We hope that the session have benefited your child, as well as yourself. As a parent, you want your child to be fully prepared for all of the challenges of life but it is sometimes difficult to understand how to prepare them. We hope that the skills that we have provided your child with will lead them to be a much more well rounded individual with resiliency to face the world.

Please remember that resiliency is a process and the skills that we have covered in our sessions should be practiced in the child's everyday life. Instill in your child the values of family and community, self-esteem, empathy, motivation, friendships, respect, and problem-solving.

Life is a journey and with the right skills and the support of our loved ones, it is a journey that we can all succeed in!

Thank you,

Evaluation of Resiliency Workbook for Military Children

Evaluator:

1. Is the purpose of the workbook explained appropriately?

2. Is the workbook organized in a manner that is easy to follow?

3. Do you feel that they are appropriate for ages 6-12 and are they useful?

4. Do you have any recommendations on how this workbook could be improved?

5. How do you feel about the letters provided to parent? Should they be included?

6. What do you find most useful about the counseling workbook?

7. What do you find least useful about the counseling workbook?

Thank you for your time