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Child Counseling Helps Kids Develop Healthy Habits

As a parent of a military youth, you can help your children learn how to develop healthy ways to deal with stress and life's curveballs. Sometimes the stresses kids face may require professional help. This could include a parent deploying, a family move or the pressures of teen life. The [Military and Family Life Counseling Program](#) can help with its children's mental health services.

Keeping your kids mentally fit with children's mental health services

Parents want their children to be healthy. True health also extends to youth mental health. If you see changes in your child's behavior or your family is facing a transition, you may want to contact the program. Your children may benefit in several ways by seeing a child and youth behavioral military and family life counselor.

As a result, you may see improved behavior, school performance or relationships with family members and others. It's always better to get ahead of potential or brewing problems. A move or parental deployment naturally can stress children or teens. Other reasons may not be so obvious. Some warning signs to look out for:

- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Headaches, backaches, stomachaches and muscle tension
- Not eating or overeating
- Irritability, anxiety, frequent crying
- Withdrawing from friends or family
- Smoking, drinking alcohol or using drugs
- Falling grades in school

How the Military and Family Life Counseling Program can help

Program counselors are licensed with a master's degree or higher. All counselors have passed criminal background checks. Licensed counselors can help with:

- Changes at home, such as deployment, reunion, divorce and grief
- Self-esteem issues
- Communication and relationships at home and school

- Life skills, such as problem solving and adjustment
- Behavioral issues, including bullying and anger management

Your child is eligible to see one of the program's licensed counselors as long as you, or your spouse, are an active-duty, National Guard or reserve service member or a designated Department of Defense expeditionary civilian. Surviving children also are eligible.

Call Military OneSource at 800-342-9647 to understand your confidential help options and to connect with a licensed counselor. You can also contact your installation military and family support center through **MilitaryINSTALLATIONS**. Ask if there are child and youth behavioral counselors at the following locations near you:

- Child development centers
- Installation-based schools, youth or teen centers
- Off-installation schools
- Military youth summer camp
- **Department of Defense Education Activity schools**
- **Operation Purple camps**

Your commander or unit training point of contact also can provide you with more information about Military and Family Life Counseling Program and the services they provide.