Using Color, Comics, and Creativity to Cultivate Comfort for Military-Connected Kids

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Using Color, Comics, and Creativity

To Cultivate Comfort for Military-Connected Kids

Kasey Bozeman & Sophia Rodriguez
Kasey Bozeman

- Military Programming at Summer Camp
- Intern at Air Force Reserve Command Headquarters
- County Extension Agent (Ft. Stewart)
Sophia Rodriguez

- Student at Bradwell Institute
- State 4-H Vice President
- Artist
- Father served in Army (suffers from PTSD)
Military-Connected Youth
“Military families are a diverse population whose needs vary over time and across demographic groups. No single story can encapsulate who military families are or what they need to flourish in military and civilian communities.”

- Clever & Segal
Fact or Fiction

A student whose parent deploys as a member of the National Guard is often the only child in class whose parent is in the Armed Services. His or her isolation, and that of the family, adds significantly to the stress of the parent’s absence and worries about his or her safety and the stress of the family’s lengthy re-integration.
Fact or Fiction

As the total number of months of deployments increases, the child and family level functioning declines, with adolescent boys (ages 11-13) experiencing more stress than children of any other age.
Fact or Fiction

Length of deployment and time between deployments ("dwell time") affect family functioning. Longer deployments and shorter dwell times are associated with less effective parenting, less effective child coping, and greater family instability.
Fact or Fiction

Children of veterans with PTSD are at higher risk for depression and anxiety than children of non-combat veterans; they may also develop PTSD symptoms of their own in response to the parent’s PTSD-related behaviors.
Arts-Based Education
“The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution and that questions can have more than one answer.”

- Elliot W. Eisner
“When using an arts-based inquiry approach, there is often a tendency to try to do too much or to become lost in the process.”

- Savin-Baden & Major
Make a Mess and Get Creative
Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning

- Reach students not normally reached
- Learning environment of discovery
- Greater student connection
- Challenge - regardless of level/ability
- Sustained, self-directed learners
Our Project: Tie Dye for Troops
4-H Leadership in Action

• Allows 4-H youth to be a leader in their communities
• Our project uses color, creativity, and comics to relate to military children.
• The goal of our project is to create a safe space for the children to share their feelings.
Tie Dye for Troops
Using Color, Creativity, and Comics to Cultivate Comfort
for Military-Connected Kids

Fill the circle with pictures, words, or symbols that express how each color makes you feel.

Red
Orange
Yellow
Green
Blue
Purple

Color in your Super Pillow comics!
SUPER PILLOW IS ALWAYS THERE FOR GREAT FRIENDS!! WHETHER YOU NEED A SECRET KEEPER, A SCREAMS AND TEARS ABSORBER, OR JUST A GOOD HUG, SUPER PILLOW IS ALWAYS THERE FOR YOU!

Need a HUG?
THE ADVENTURES OF

SUPER PILLOW

AND

YOUR NAME
Super Pillow is always there for great friends!

When you're excited...

...or just mad

Whether you're happy...

...or feeling sad

Super Pillow supports you no matter what!

Draw Yourself in the Blank Boxes Showing Those Emotions!
The Idea of Resiliency

Building Resilience in Children and Teens: Giving Kids Roots and Wings
Kenneth Ginsberg & Martha Jablow
Resilience
the capacity to rise above difficult circumstances
Resilience

the trait that allows us to exist in this less-than-perfect world while moving forward with optimism and confidence even in the midst of adversity
Resilience

- Mindset
- Challenges as Opportunities
- Strength from Problems
- Uneven
The Seven C’s of Resilience

- Competence
- Confidence
- Connection
- Character
- Contribution
- Coping
- Control
Competence

the ability to handle situations effectively

• acquired through actual experience
• develop skills to effectively manage challenges and trust personal decisions
• adults guide youth instead of “fixing” problem/situation
Confidence

the solid belief in one’s own abilities

- rooted in competence
- safe, inclusive environment
- face and cope with challenges
- try new ventures & trust their abilities
Connection

the positive relationships with people & surroundings

• family, friends, school, community
• sense of security = strong values
• belonging to a wider world & being safe within it
Character

the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual

- fundamental sense of right and wrong
- strong sense of self-worth = more comfortable making decisions & demonstrating caring attitude
Contribution

the doing something cooperative or altruistic to benefit others

• sense of purpose = motivation
• take actions that improve the world
• making a difference or impact
Coping

the dealing effectively with something difficult or challenging

• variety of adaptive coping strategies
• effectively manage with stress
• helpful to have adults model coping strategies
Control

the believing in one’s ability to make sound choices & avoid risky behavior

• realize they can control the outcomes of their decisions and actions = more likely to know that they have the ability to do what it takes to bounce back

• adults allow youth to make decisions
What can you do?
Thank You!

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