Preventing to leave

Communicating with children

Deployment is a stressful time for all family members, especially children. **Communicating with children** during this time of uncertainty can help ease their stress.

*Use the checklist below to guide you as you talk to your children about leaving.*

**As a parent, I:**

___ Am available to my children whenever they need to talk.

___ Allow my children to ask questions.

___ Give open and honest answers using words that they can understand.

___ Encourage my children to share feelings through words, play, drawings, etc.

___ Talk to my children about the changes to come for everyone.

___ Remind my children and myself that separation can be a time for everyone to grow.

___ Assure my children that I will miss them every day and look forward to returning home.

**As a family, we:**

___ Talk about why and when I will be leaving and where I will be going, if possible.

___ Talk about what it means to be on alert, if that is my status.

___ Discuss ways we can communicate while I’m away.

___ Find some time to talk about feelings.

___ Discuss ways to feel connected while I’m away.