



Fostering Your Military-Connected Child's Communication Skills to Minimize Conflict

Family Conflict

- Conflict within families is inevitable.
- Military-connected families have added stressors that compound conflict, such as deployments, transitions, absences, and relocation.
- Conflict typically has three dimensions: cognitive, emotional, and behavioral.
- Conflict escalates from slight discomforts to misunderstandings, increased tension, and if not addressed, becomes a crisis situation.
- Conflicts may stem from deeper issues not seen on the surface.
- A person's conflict style can either enhance or hinder a resolution.
- Benefits of teaching children conflict resolution skills include: improvement in higher-level thinking and moral reasoning abilities, greater focus on growth, increase in confidence to handle difficult situations, and increase in empathy toward others.
- Some conflict resolution strategies:
 - ⇒ Remain calm
 - ⇒ Model empathy
 - ⇒ Redirect
 - ⇒ Role play
 - ⇒ Talk about emotions
 - ⇒ Encourage problem-solving strategies
 - ⇒ Reframe the situation
 - ⇒ Use "I" statements
- Building trust and security:
 - ⇒ Respond
 - ⇒ Sympathize
 - ⇒ Support
 - ⇒ Listen
 - ⇒ Acknowledge emotions
 - ⇒ Brainstorm
 - ⇒ Compromise
 - ⇒ Guide without judgment

For more information, check out the Lough Barnes Consulting Groups' Conflict Resolution Resource Guide: <http://www.oacas.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/The-Conflict-Resolution-Resource-Guide.pdf>

Conflict Management Style Assessments

Knowing how you typically respond to conflict can help you acknowledge your strengths and weaknesses when addressing future conflicts. A variety of assessment tools are available to help determine where improvements can be made. Here are a sampling:

Adapted from Dr. Reginald Adkins' Elemental Truths, this assessment also provides descriptions along with pros and cons for each of the five conflict management styles.

http://www.blake-group.com/sites/default/files/assessments/Conflict_Management_Styles_Assessment.pdf

A 30-question online assessment from the United States Institute of Peace provides immediate feedback on which conflict style you lean towards and how to interpret the scores.

<https://www.usip.org/public-education/students/conflict-styles-assessment>

The Lough Barnes Consulting Group created a comprehensive Conflict Resolution Resource Guide to provide a research-based, useful guide for care workers in residential settings.

Although not specifically for parents, much of the resource can be used as a guide to help deal with resolving conflicts within our own homes. A variety of assessments tools are included in this document with the specific "How Do I Act in a Conflict?" assessment, which is based on Johnson and Johnson's five conflict positions (see pages 14—16). Pages 17 and 18 of the document offer an interpretation of these styles.

<http://www.oacas.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/The-Conflict-Resolution-Resource-Guide.pdf>

Books

Oftentimes, difficult concepts can be explained through literature. Following are a sampling of book suggestions that can help with role-playing and begin conversations on how to deal with conflicts.

- ◇ *Enemy Pie* by Derek Munson
- ◇ *Click, Clack, Moo Cows That Type* by Doreen Cronin
- ◇ *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio

For more title suggestions, check out:

<https://bookroo.com/books/topics/resolving-conflict>



For More Information

Teaching Kids How to Deal with Conflict from Child Mind Institute:

<https://childmind.org/article/teaching-kids-how-to-deal-with-conflict/>

Help Young Children with Conflict Resolution from Early Childhood Consultation Partnership:

[http://www.eccpct.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/Tips for Tots 2/2-4 ECCP Tips for Tots Supporting Young Children Conflict Resolution.pdf](http://www.eccpct.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/Tips%20for%20Tots%202-4%20ECCP%20Tips%20for%20Tots%20Supporting%20Young%20Children%20Conflict%20Resolution.pdf)

The Center for Parent & Teen Communication offers advice on strengthening family connections and helping teens thrive: <https://parentandteen.com/>

Building Trust with Your Children from We Have Kids:

<https://wehavekids.com/parenting/BUILDING-A-RELATIONSHIP-OF-TRUST-BETWEEN-YOU-AND-YOUR-CHILDREN>

The Conflict Resolution Network offers a variety of free resources to the community:

<https://www.crnhq.org/>

Collaborative Problem Solving approach with free printables and videos to help work through issues with older children, available through a program with Massachusetts General Hospital Department of Psychiatry and Harvard Medical School:

<https://thinkkids.org/>

Parent-child conflict paper by researchers at the University of California, Davis:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320811906 Parent-child conflict](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320811906_Parent-child_conflict)

Military Kids Connect is an online community for military children (ages 6 to 17) that provides resources in dealing with deployment and other aspects of military life.

<https://militarykidsconnect.health.mil/>

For additional help, reach out to your Military and Family Support Center, a Military and Family Life Counselor, chaplain, or contact Military OneSource at 800-342-9647.

For More Information: Parents@MilitaryChild.org



MCEC Webinars and Additional Information Links

Recording to today's presentation Encouraging Your Middle School Reader:
<http://militarychild.adobeconnect.com/webrec1521/event/registration.html>

If you would like to watch a webinar recording related to today's topic,
the recordings can be found on our website:
<https://www.militarychild.org/webinars>

Videos

"Destination: Good Communication" by Center of Parent and Teens
<https://youtu.be/FGQ4oxLrYE>

"Conflict to Resolution in 4 Steps" by RocketKids
https://youtu.be/arFGdviw_ys

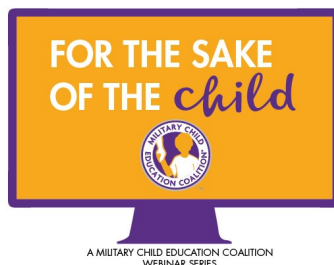
MCEC Parent Programs Resources

Find other MCEC Parent Programs Webinars related to this topic at:
www.militarychild.org/webinars

Contact your local Parent to Parent team for workshops that are offered in your community.

<https://www.militarychild.org/programs/parent-to-parent>

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to:
Parents@MilitaryChild.org



For More Information: Parents@MilitaryChild.org

