

# Tween & Teen Deployment Support Program



## Facilitators Guide

[WWW.WhileYouWereAway.Org](http://WWW.WhileYouWereAway.Org)

© Megan Egerton 2010

All rights reserved. No part of this program may be reproduced or distributed in any form without  
annually, written permission from the author.

[WWW.WhileYouWereAway.Org](http://WWW.WhileYouWereAway.Org)

## **Materials Needed:**

**“While You Were Away” journal, pencil crayons, pencils, pillowcases, fabric markers, world map, pins, cardstock, markers, paint, butcher roll paper, Jenga, calendar, transfers, chart paper, duct tape, colour printer, envelopes, blank paper, disposable or digital camera, photocopied agenda sheets, felt, glitter glue, glue gun, glue, and “Coping and/or Stress Bingo”**

## **Program Suggestions:**

- \* Each week two students, who participated well in their groups, are chosen to co-facilitate a younger group and use what they have learnt to support and mentor younger students using the While You Were Away – Deployment Journal for Kids.**
- \* Programs, ideally, would be run in their own room so that resources and materials would be readily accessible.**
- \* Contact large companies that may be able to provide financial support and/or donations (Ex: Target, Walmart, etc. – sheets, Crayola – markers and other craft supplies, etc.)**
- \* Programs should run across a 3 – 6 month period (weekly or bi-weekly) depending on personnel available**
- \* Students that are experiencing significant difficulty should be referred for specialized or further counselling whilst also participating in the groups**
- \* At the end of the session – parents, teachers and support staff should be invited to participate in a presentation of certificates – this presentation, ideally, would occur after the member’s return (much like there is a medal parade for the military member).**
- \* Programs should last a minimum of 60mins and no longer than 75mins due to attention span of students and layout of the program**
- \* Materials and resources should be prepared in advance of each session**
- \* Appendix items can be reproduced if copyright has been awarded**

## **Week 1 – Introductions and Comfort Activities:**

- a) Introduction –
  - 1) Introduction of deployment groups, the role of the group facilitator, etc. <5mins>
  - 2) Students create their own name tag (to be used each week) – Can be put on cardstock and laminated with safety pin for attaching each week <5 mins>
  
- b) Game – Students are broken into groups of two, sit back to back, A tells B as many things about themselves as they can in 30 sec. Then B has to recount to the other person all the things they heard and see how many they remembered. Then they switch. Shuffle groups of two so they are back to back with new people and now you have to tell as many things about your family as you can in 30sec. This can continue until students have had several different pairings. <15 mins>
  
- c) Hand out journals & pillowcases – Explain the significance of writing in the journals. Why it would be useful to write in them, what they can accomplish by writing in them, who would be reading them, the expectations of privacy, etc. Answer questions. <15min>
  
- d) Pillowcases – this week students will write their names on the pillowcases (ex. Megan's). They can make their name as fancy as they wish. <5-10mins>
  
- e) Homework – Fill out the “All About Me” pages. Inform students that they will be playing a game with some of the information they provide although anything they would not want shared with everyone on those pages they can mark with a star beside it. <Rest of the time remaining>

## Week 2 – Discovering Strengths, Weaknesses, Likes, Dislikes & Where To Turn:

- a) Follow-up - Ask students to make a pile of their journals flipped open to the first all about me page.
- b) Game – have facilitator read clues in one all about me page and see if students can guess who the person is. The person has to identify themselves if someone guesses it is them. Go through each person. If students have not completed the pages have them try hard to complete it while the game is going on or leave them for next week. <20mins>
- c) Digital Photos – Explain that there will be opportunities for them to take home a digital camera or disposable camera and get some pictures of their families. These pictures will be used both in their journals (show pages) and can be sent to their parent or loved one who is away later on. On chart paper brainstorm some the things that they will want to take pictures of. Have sign up sheet for camera and give to first student to take home. <5-10mins>
- d) Journal – Students fill out “Help” page. Before filling it out; using chart paper make a list of support systems students use. This would be a good time to talk about the difference between acquaintances and genuine friendships, family and people that are like family, etc. Hand out Mission Information Line magnets and for homework they will take the journals home to complete the page < 10-15mins>
- e) Pillowcases – Write the name or draw a picture of a person who supports you.
- e) Homework – “Questions to Ask Before They Leave” page can be filled out. Regardless of where the deployment is at when the program starts, they should be putting what they think the answers to the questions are or what they know them to be on the “My Thoughts” page and then adding any questions they may have for next week or for their parents <Rest of time remaining>

### **Week 3 – Where Are They?!**

- a) Follow-up – Go over what was assigned for homework and respond to any questions, thoughts or feelings that may have come up when doing the sheets. <10 – 15mins max.>
  
- b) Whole Group Activity - Pull out world map or reference world map on wall and have pins (each pin would have their name and deployed/absent member's name tagged on it). Students will locate country they are in and where the absent or deployed member is, connecting the two pins with thread. <10mins>
  
- c) Journal – Use “The Lowdown on Where They Are” page. Using chart paper, go through the page and have them fill it out. Their homework this week would be to research any of the questions that they are not immediately able to find using atlases or other resources in the classroom. <15-20mins>
  
- d) Pillowcases – Draw or write the name of the place where person is deployed to and something else that would represent that place (ex. Desert, food, different coins, language spoken, etc.) <Time remaining>

## Week Four – Creating Time Lines/Observing Changes:

- a) Follow-up – review the previous week and answer any questions <5mins>
- b) Game: Deployment Jenga – Put students into groups of 4-5. Using Jenga blocks with questions written on the side (see Appendix) students play together. <15 – 20mins>
- c) Whole Group Activity - Roll out long strip of butcher paper, get out student agenda's and calendars, metre stick and markers. Students are going to create a timeline of the entire deployment. They will write the first day of deployment until the last possible date of return (to be on the safe side put an extra 2-4 weeks at the end of the timeline). This week students can add what has already taken place, events they are looking forward to, etc. The timeline can then be displayed in a high traffic area where students can have the opportunity to add to it. If the group is large you may need to create several small timelines and transfer it onto a larger one (see appendix for timeline student worksheet) <15 – 20mins>
- d) Homework – Time Moves On page – go over things that have happened before, and during the deployment, way they have changed, accomplishments, etc. Use chart to brainstorm things or feelings that have changed. Complete part of the page before next week. They could use the back page to talk about various emotions, feelings, etc. they experience over the course of the week. Relate it back to questions asked during Jenga. <5-10mins>
- e) Pillowcase – Write or draw different emotions or feelings they have experienced so far. <time remaining>

## **Week 5 – Adjusting & Things On Your Mind:**

- a) Follow-up - Ask students to share some of the things they wrote on the “Time Moves On” page, move discussion to different things they are doing to cope with ever changing feelings. Using chart paper, students can break into groups of 3-5. Groups can each have a different topic to brainstorm about. One group can talk about the questions they still have. Other groups can have topics such as; what positive and constructive strategies can be used to cope with deployment, the ranges of emotions, the top 10 hardest things, etc. Groups then come together and share their brainstorming. <15-20mins>
- b) Journal – Students can use brainstorming charts to work on their own journals (“Things On Your Mind” and “Top 10 Things I Can Do”). <10mins>
- c) Pillowcases – This week put on the pillowcases great things they have accomplished, good things about themselves, goals they have using words, symbols or pictures. <5mins>
- d) Homework – Complete “10 Things I Can Do” page
- e) Game - Deployment Jenga - <time remaining>

## **Week 6 – The Good and The Bad:**

- a) Follow up – Any students that want to share their “10 Things I Can Do” lists should be invited to do so. Answer any questions. <5 - 10mins>
- b) Game: Crossing the Line - Facilitator will have duct taped line on floor of room and the words “Pro” and “Con” taped out on the floor. Students will stand on the centre line. Facilitator will ask a question (see Appendix) and depending on whether or not students think it is a “Pro” or a “Con” they will step onto the corresponding side of the tape. <20mins>
- c) Journal – “The Pros and The Cons” page. Using the game examples and their own they can complete the page. Some key points should be placed on chart paper for students experiencing any difficulties with language. <10mins>
- d) Pillowcases – Students can use transfers or markers to write, draw or iron on some of the things that they miss the most. <15mins>
- e) Homework – Students can take a sheet home to fill out to send to deployed member along with digital pictures (facilitator needs to make sure the pictures are available for next session & see Appendix for sheet).



## **Week 7 – Recording Moments In Time:**

- a) Follow-up – Anyone who wants to share their finished “Pros and Cons” page, questions, etc. <5-10mins>
  
- b) Photos – Go over who has used the digital camera. Students should begin to place photos in their journals and choose some to send.
  
- c) Whole Class Activity – Students complete the sheets to send, prepare or print photos, decorate and address envelope so that by the end of the session envelopes are ready to mail. <20mins>
  
- d) Whole Class Activity – Students that complete the above can then move on to update the timeline(s) <10mins>
- e) Game: Deployment Bingo – Using blank bingo sheets students fill in their squares using set options (see Appendix). <15-20mins>
  
- f) Pillowcase – Create a family emblem that represents your family (initials, symbols, animal, etc.). Students can use wool or thread and stitch it in or puff paint to give texture to the pillowcase. <10-15mins>
  
- f) Homework – Complete journal pictures

## **Week 8 – Frustration, Indifference, Anger, Happiness, Laughter - Ever Changing Moods:**

- a) Follow-up – Look at the timeline to see what has happened to students to date, what they are looking forward to, etc. Students can comment or ask questions. <5-10mins>
- b) Game: 4 Square – Using an outdoor (weather permitting) or indoor tapped version 4 square students will play a deployment version. Each square will represent an emotion: happy, angry, sad, indifference. Students will start by randomly picking a square. The facilitator will ask a series of questions related to deployment (can use questions from Jenga or Deployment Journal) and students will have to choose a square. Only 4 students can fit in a square in the first round, in the second round it goes down to 3 per square, etc. The ones that are “out” sit out until there are only 4 people left. Once there are 4 left there is one final round and they have to explain why they would feel the square they chose. The best reasoning wins. <20mins>
- c) Pillowcase – Students choose paint colour and dip hands in. They can then ‘hug’ the pillowcase; wrapping their hands around it and making prints. Students can do their own or get a friend to do theirs. <10-20mins>
- d) Homework – Work on one of the pages: “I’m so excited”, “I’m so frustrated”, “The other day I laughed and laughed...”, “It is so annoying when...”, etc.

## **Week 9 – Goal Setting, Dream Creation:**

- a) Follow-up – Students can share something that they wrote (completely voluntary). Facilitator may want to start with a personal example to set the tone. <10mins>
  
- b) Whole Class Activity – Using chart paper, students break into four small groups. On their chairs there would be a piece of paper with either the words; dreams, goals, ambitions, people. They group according to the words. Each group defines their word or people that represent each and come up with 10 examples. Facilitator would circulate to ensure groups are on the right track and provide prompting. Students would then present their work. <20mins>
  
- c) Journal – “My latest dreams, goals and ambitions are...” page using the student generated example they can complete the page. <10mins>
  
- d) Pillowcase – Things that you dream about, things that make you feel safe, loved, happy, etc.
  
- e) Homework – Set a goal and, using one of the “free” pages in the journal, write about it and what happened. The goal should be realistic and attainable within a week (ex. jog everyday, smile at a parent at least once a day, eat one meal a day at home).

## Week 10 – They’re Coming Back & Awards

a) Follow-up – Discuss goals students set and ask them to share their experiences. Guide discussions around how to successfully set goals and around what strategies help support goal attainment. <5-10mins>

b) Journal – Use “They’re Coming Back” page to guide discussion. Students will then make a list on the back page of “They’re Coming Back” that they have for their parents. Each student will be given a strip of paper to anonymously write down a concern they have. Questions will be drawn and students and facilitator will answer them. <20mins>

c) Pillowcase – Brainstorm different awards that students of deployed parents deserve to receive then each student will be given a felt medal (to reduce time, the felt shapes could be prepared in advance of session – perhaps with parent or community volunteers). They will draw a name randomly from a person in the group. They will then (using fabric markers) design a medal to give to that person (using puff paint, glitter glue, fabric markers). It should be clear as to why the person is receiving the medal (ex: Bravery, Courage, Strength, Tenacity, Endurance, Kindness, Patience, etc.). Students will hot glue the medal to their pillow case. <15-20mins>

d) Game: Coping Bingo – Game available through catalogue or mental health agencies. <time remaining>

## Week 11 – Coping With Change

- a) Follow-up – Discuss what awards people received, why they were given and then steer discussion into who else in their world deserves an award or recognition and why. <10mins>
  
- b) Whole Group Activity – Brainstorm as whole group what changes may happen when they come home, strategies to cope with changes, the advantages and disadvantages of change, what changes have already happened, etc. Make connections with Coping Bingo game played last session. <10-15mins>
  
- c) Game - Students will make a “Deployment” game based on a popular game such as Monopoly, Pictionary, Trivial Pursuit, Candy Land, etc. Working in groups of 4-6 they will create a board game that younger deployment groups will be able to use (see appendix). Their last deployment group will involve joining with a younger group and introducing their game and playing it with them. <40mins or until end of group>
  
- d) Pillowcase – Write their biggest worry on square of material fold over and glue or sew on.
  
- e) Homework – Continue to develop board game so that it is ready to use next session.

## **Week 12 – We’ve Made It!**

- a) Wrap up – Review the program and have students provide feedback about what they found helpful, where they are at now and where they were when they started. Fill out evaluation form. <10-20mins>
- b) Game – Provide students with final opportunity to complete board game and add finishing touches. Set time for game to be played with another deployment group. <20-30mins>
- c) Whole Class Activity – Complete timeline. Each student takes a highlighter and has to highlight what was their best experience throughout the deployment. <5-15mins>
- d) Pillowcases and Journals – Assure each student has both

# **Appendix**

## **“While You Were Away”**

### **Deployment Support Program**

© Megan Egerton 2010

All rights reserved. No part of this program may be reproduced or distributed in any form without  
annually, written permission from the author.

[WWW.WhileYouWereAway.Org](http://WWW.WhileYouWereAway.Org)

# Deployment Bingo

B	I	N	G	O
		FREE Space		

© Megan Egerton 2010

All rights reserved. No part of this program may be reproduced or distributed in any form without annually, written permission from the author.

[WWW.WhileYouWereAway.Org](http://WWW.WhileYouWereAway.Org)



# Deployment Bingo

B	I	N	G	O
(B = Best things)	(I = Irritations & Annoyances)	(N = Negatives)	(G= Getting support)	(O =on-going questions)
Independence	Siblings	Lonely	Family	How much longer?
Time alone	Parents	Worried	Friends	When do you come home?
Mail	Extra Chores	Scared	Counsellors	Do you miss me?
More Money	Loss of Privileges	Stressful	Teachers	When will you call again?
Special Treatment	Friends/ Classmates	Anxious	Neighbours	What are we going to do for the break?
Gifts	Teachers	Sad	Classmates	Can you send some mail/email?

\* Samples of cards to cut out and glue onto blank bingo card. Students choose which ones to use. Winner must provide examples of each square they are claiming in their bingo.

© Megan Egerton 2010

All rights reserved. No part of this program may be reproduced or distributed in any form without annually, written permission from the author.

[WWW.WhileYouWereAway.Org](http://WWW.WhileYouWereAway.Org)

# **Jenga Questions**

Something you have learnt about yourself

Thing you miss the most

Hardest part of having a parent away

Worst thing about deployments

Best thing about deployments

How long are they away?

Who gives you the best advice?

Who makes you happy?

What makes you sad?

What can you do that you couldn't before?

What bugs you the most?

When I miss my \_\_\_\_\_ I...

I worry most about...

I get anxious when...

The hardest part is accepting that...

When I need to talk to someone, I talk to...

In an emergency I would call...

When I get stressed I...

When I am upset I...

I think that they miss \_\_\_\_\_ about me the most.

I get scared when I hear...

When I watch the news I...

I now have to...

I often wonder...

One thing that has changed about me the most so far...

The person in my family that annoys me the most is...

I am excited about...

I make myself happy when I...

I keep in touch by...

The hardest thing about \_\_\_\_\_ not being here is...

Name something you have accomplished while \_\_\_\_\_ has been away

What are you most proud of during this deployment

A goal I have is to \_\_\_\_\_ before they get home

The most frustrating thing about the deployment is...

If I had to give one piece of advice about deployments it would be...

FREE TILE (x 9)

MISS YOUR NEXT TURN

PERSON NEXT TO PLAY MISSES THEIR TURN

GET ANOTHER TILE AND PUT THIS ONE ANYWHERE YOU CAN

The best thing about this week is...

The worst thing that happened this week is...

***\* The questions above can all be written on the side of the tiles or you can have students come up with their own questions to put on the tiles.***

# **PROS AND CONS GAME**

<b><u>A Pro or A Con?</u></b>
<i>More money</i>
<i>Gifts</i>
<i>Mail</i>
<i>Independence</i>
<i>Freedom</i>
<i>Alone time</i>
<i>More time with other family</i>
<i>Reliance on friends</i>
<i>More attention/sympathy from others</i>
<i>Responsibility</i>
<i>Person away a lot</i>
<i>Free things</i>
<i>The news</i>
<i>Friends</i>
<i>Neighbours</i>
<i>The internet/email</i>
<i>Less people to nag</i>
<i>Having brothers or sisters</i>
<i>(Add your own questions or those generated by students)</i>

