

Building Capacity in Military-Connected Schools

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Limited Time Offer

For a short time, Teachers College Press is offering free copies of Building Capacity's guidebooks for educators and military parents. Click [here](#) to request a copy. These books are essential resources for those who work with military-connected students.

Building Capacity Joins Efforts to Honor Veterans and Their Families

Members of the *Building Capacity* Consortium participated in a variety of Veterans Day events this month.

Diana Pineda, project manager at the USC San Diego Academic Center, and project assistant Jonathan Alfonso provided information on *Building Capacity* during the annual "Honor Our Veterans Parade," organized by Veterans Elementary School in the Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD).

The parade, which culminated at the school, included a ceremony recognizing veterans and military families. (Alfonso actually grew up in a military family and attended Chula Vista schools.)



Chula Vista Councilwoman Mary Salas and Building Capacity team member Jonathan Alfonso



Veterans Elementary Principal Froylan Villanueva (left) and CVESD Superintendent Francisco Escobedo at the annual Veterans Day parade

Meanwhile in Oceanside, members of the Military

Events and Announcements:

Local Dollar Tree stores are once again participating in Operation Holiday, sponsored by Operation Homefront. This toy drive runs through Dec. 6. Purchase a toy or care item and drop it off in a collection box located in any Dollar Tree store. Items will be distributed to the children of low and mid-grade ranking service members in San Diego and Oceanside. Read more [here](#).



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Alliance Club at El Camino High School, which was organized by USC MSW student Eric Henderson, assisted in preparations for a Veterans Day ceremony in downtown Oceanside.

They also helped to coordinate and serve a special lunch for veterans visiting the school for an assembly on Tuesday, Nov. 12.

This year over 80 MSW interns from USC and San Diego State University helped to coordinate school celebrations for Veterans Day in San Diego, Riverside, Los Angeles and across the nation.



From left, Retired U.S. Navy Korean War veteran Raymond Metcalf, Military Alliance Club member Alyssa Ramirez and USC student Eric Henderson

Building Capacity Annual Reports Released

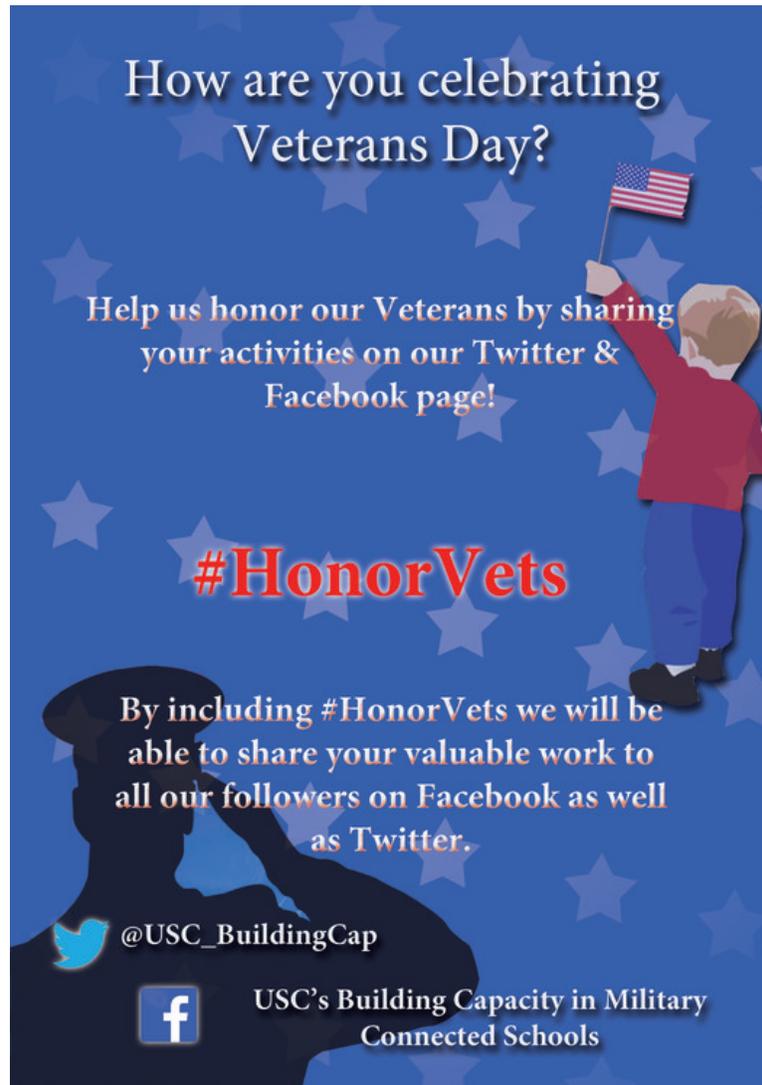
Building Capacity has released two reports describing activities and accomplishments during Year 3 of the grant. The [first report](#) is for the general public and provides summaries of the major events of the year, including release of the California Healthy Kids Survey data, being honored at a San Diego Padres game and progress on state and national policies that would benefit military students.

The second report is the data-centered [technical evaluation](#), which provides a detailed research analysis of the CHKS results and assessments of the many components of the project, including the internships and various programs implemented in the schools to benefit military students.

Connect With Us on Twitter and Facebook

Veterans Day might be over, but National Military Family Appreciation Month runs through the rest of November. We want to continue to hear what you're doing to honor and support military children and

families. This flyer explains how.



Adolescents in Military Families at Higher Risk of Poor Mental Health Outcomes, Compared to Peers

New Study Suggests Need for Early Prevention and Additional Services by Schools, Health Providers

Adolescents with a parent or a sibling that has been deployed are more likely than their nonmilitary peers to feel depressed, contemplate suicide and report poorer overall well being, according to a [new study](#), covered by the *Los Angeles Times*.

Findings from the study of military-connected adolescents, which appears this month in the [Journal of Adolescent Health](#), is based on results of the California Healthy Kids Survey and show evidence that

children and youth from military families who experienced multiple deployments are at a higher risk of feeling sad or hopeless. Read the USC news story [here](#). The full article is also available on our [website](#).

"Given the link between separation and emotional health, it is not surprising that adolescents experiencing deployments were more likely to report feeling sad or hopeless, depressive symptoms, and increased suicide ideation and that more deployments further exacerbated these experiences," said Dr. Julie A. Cederbaum, the lead author of the study and a professor in the USC School of Social Work.

The analysis shows that 33.7 percent of students with a parent in the military and over 35 percent of those with a sibling in the military said they felt sad or hopeless during the past year. Almost 25 percent of 9th and 11th grade students with a military parent and over 26 percent of students with a military sibling thought about ending their lives.

Teen suicide, however, is a national problem, and new resources are available to help families and educators recognize the signs that a young person is thinking about suicide.

- The Suicide Prevention Council (SPC) is a community-wide effort to reduce and eliminate suicides in San Diego County. Its Question, Persuade, Refer training teaches "gatekeepers"--including educators, parents and community members--to recognize a crisis and to identify the warning signs that someone might be thinking about suicide. To find out more about the training, click [here](#).
- The [Signs of Suicide](#) (SOS) prevention program teaches middle and high school students how to identify the symptoms of depression and suicidality in themselves or their friends, and encourages help-seeking.
- [ReliefLink](#) is a new mobile app that links people to helplines, 911 operators and friends and family members who can help in a crisis.
- [LEADS For Youth](#) (Linking Education and Awareness of Depression and Suicide) is a curriculum for high school students in grades 9-12 that is designed to increase knowledge of depression and suicide, modify perceptions of depression and suicide, increase knowledge of suicide prevention resources, and improve intentions to engage in help-seeking behaviors.

A new issue of [Future of Children](#) also highlights the needs of military children, drawing attention to the stress that multiple deployments have placed on children and families.

The results of the new study, the authors say, should be a call to public schools, mental health providers and physicians to systematically screen adolescents for depression and suicide ideation, especially those in military-connected families and those experiencing parental or sibling deployment.

"Increasing capacity of support personnel in medical and school settings," Cederbaum said, "can help identify the mental health risks and needs of adolescents with military-connected parents and siblings."

Spotlight On: Kelly Frisch

This month, the *Building Capacity* team would like to welcome Kelly Frisch, the new regional school liaison officer (SLO) for Command Navy Region Southwest.

A native of Northern California, Kelly earned a bachelor's degree in family and consumer sciences with an emphasis in family studies, and a minor in child development, from California State University, Sacramento. She then completed her certification with the National Council on Family Relations, and became a Certified Family Life Educator in 2007.



Kelly has worked in a variety of military support programs, and served as the Naval Base Coronado SLO since the inception of the program in 2009.

Kelly says she feels rewarded when she can help a military student receive a better education.

"I love what I do," she says. "I am honored to work with such amazing families and assist them in getting the support and resources that they need. It is a very humbling experience."

Headlines and Resources

We regularly feature stories, reports and resources related to military children on our [website](#). Check back often for new additions, such as these:

- Dr. Ron Astor, a professor at USC and the head

of the *Building Capacity* project, was interviewed by [Al Jazeera](#) about a recent shooting at Nevada elementary school.

- Jenny Sokol, a military mom in Orange County wrote this piece for the [Orange County Register](#) on how schools can address the needs of military children.
- Operation Homefront is currently accepting nominations for Military Child of the Year awards, which are presented to outstanding children from each branch who demonstrate resilience, leadership and achievement. Nominations will be received through Dec. 14. The winners will be recognized during an awards ceremony in April in Arlington, Va. Click this [link](#) for more information.

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