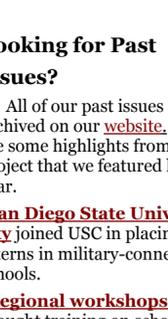


Building Capacity in Military-Connected Schools

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Quick Links...

[Our Website](#)

Looking for Past Issues?

All of our past issues are archived on our [website](#). Here are some highlights from our project that we featured last year.

-San Diego State University joined USC in placing interns in military-connected schools.

-Regional workshops brought training on school safety and threat assessment to both interns and school staff members.

-Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, visited USC to learn more about the *Building Capacity* project.

-The California Healthy Kids Survey was changed to ask all students whether they have a parent or caretaker in the military.

-Interns were provided training in a modified, school-based version of the **FOCUS** program from experts at UCLA.

-The Navy's Family Readiness Express (FRE) visited several schools in the Consortium.

-Undergraduates in UCSD's Partners at Learning (PAL) program provided tutoring to students in military-connected schools.

Upcoming Events:

FOCUS Training:

Sept 21 and 28, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the USC San Diego Academic Center (SDAC), 16870 West Bernardo Drive, Suite 200

Threat Assessment:

Oct. 5-6, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., also at SDAC.

To register for either workshop, send an email to Diana Pineda at dianapin@usc.edu

FRE:

Jefferson Middle School in Oceanside on Oct. 11-12, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Veterans Elementary School in Chula Vista, Oct. 17 and 19, also from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Back-to-School Readiness Resource Fair:

Aug. 17, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot's fieldhouse and lawn. The event is organized by the MRCDC school liaison program, call (619) 524-0916.

Back-2-School Resource and Enrollment Fair 2012:

Aug. 18, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Farb Middle School, 4880 La Cuenta Dr., San Diego, 92124. The annual event is sponsored by the San Diego Unified School District.

Questions, Comments or to Unsubscribe: e-mail us at raastor@usc.edu

Building Capacity in Military Connected Schools

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Building Capacity Project Heads into Exciting Third Year

Resource Guides Set for Fall Release

As the Consortium gears up for the third year of the *Building Capacity* project, several important developments are taking place, including the release of our four resource guides on supporting military children in public schools.

To be published by Teachers College Press at Columbia University in October, the guides are written for teachers, school administrators, pupil personnel, and parents. The books provide an engaging combination of background knowledge on challenges facing military children and practical strategies that can be implemented to make students feel welcome and connected.

The strategies and ideas highlighted were inspired by the eight school districts in our Consortium and the graduate interns from USC and SDSU. Follow this [link](#) to view ordering information for the teacher's guide. Five thousand free guides will be distributed to Consortium administrators, teachers, pupil support professionals and parents. Please contact us if are interested in receiving a copy.

In addition, clicking on [New Titles](#) will display all of the books. All royalties from the guides are donated to military child education causes. We hope that universities will adopt these guides as part of their educator training programs. The Military Child Educational Coalition has endorsed the books and will distribute them nationally. The American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education will also distribute information about the guides to all university schools of education in North America.

Our goal is for these good practices, developed by educators in our consortium, to be shared so that public schools across the nation can create welcoming environments for military families.

Here are some other programs and events to watch for as our project continues to grow.

- After a successful first year working in our Consortium schools, the Partners at Learning (PAL) tutoring program at the University of California San Diego's (UCSD) Department of Education is expected to increase its emphasis on educating undergraduate education students about military-connected children. The number of PAL student tutors in local schools will be expanded to 500 undergraduates this year, amounting to tens of thousands of tutoring and mentoring hours.
- J. Kevin Cameron, an expert on traumatic stress from the Canadian Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response, will return to San Diego in October for a two-day, intensive workshop for both interns and school officials. Cameron's sessions last year received high ratings from the hundreds of graduate students and educators who participated. This year's workshop builds on last year's introductory sessions. (See Upcoming Events for details.)
- In September, USC will host the California Engagement Event--an effort of the Military Child Education Coalition to involve all sectors of society in supporting military children. This statewide engagement will involve influential leaders in developing a plan to support military families and the schools their children attend. (See the story below.)
- The Family Readiness Express returns this fall for visits to more Consortium schools. See [Upcoming Events](#) for dates scheduled so far and our [Special Issue](#) last fall for more information on this unique vehicle.
- We have expanded our internship program with the SDSU social work, counseling and psychology departments to 55 graduate level interns. The interns are expected to provide over 20,000 hours of support services in our schools.

We will continue to highlight these and other events and opportunities in our newsletters throughout the year.

California Public Engagement Coming to USC

One hundred influential policymakers, community leaders and military officials have been invited to the University of Southern California next month to collaborate on ways to support the education of military children across the state.

Scheduled for Sept. 19-20, the California Public Engagement is organized by the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) as part of its efforts to bring together influential leaders and decision makers in each state to identify gaps in services for military children and set an agenda for meeting their needs.

The School of Social Work at USC is helping to sponsor the event at USC. Dr. Ron Astor, who leads the *Building Capacity* project, and Dr. Anthony Hassan, director of the Center for Innovation and Research on Veterans and Military Families, are the state co-chairs and hosts of the event in partnership with MCEC.

"This initiative is simply good community practice," Hassan said. "The engagement is a force multiplier for our USC efforts because it extends a wider community approach that plays to the strengths of the community, including small, scalable clusters of stakeholders who have the resources and relationship in place to work well together to do the greatest good."

Astor added that while there are many pressing issues that the military education community cares about, "no issue is more important than California's full implementation of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. This will ensure that public schools accommodate military students' academic, social and emotional needs as their parents serve our great nation."

The event will bring together representatives from seven sectors: business, community leaders, education, faith-based, health services, service providers, and service clubs and organizations. The participants will hear from experts, identify resources available in the community and work in groups to create action plans.

"In order to do this, we need the cooperation of business, religious leaders, community organizations, the media and health care to look at the needs of the military families from a societal perspective," Astor said. "Many warriors are coming home. We need to be ready to support them and their families."

The engagement process "enhances the capacities of the state, organizations, and/or local communities to support military-connected children and youth," said MCEC President Dr. Mary Keller. "The resulting action plans are focused on sustainable support for the child."

In other states where MCEC public engagement events have been held, outcomes have included the development of "family assistance centers" in remote areas, ongoing statewide steering committees focused on military children, and grants for counselors in schools with high concentrations of military students.

"One of the major goals of our *Building Capacity* consortium was to engage the state," Astor said, adding that the event is in keeping with President Obama's efforts to involve all sectors in supporting military children and families. "We want all military students in California to have positive educational experiences in public school. The educators, military community, and school liaison officers in our consortium have been leaders, and we are now engaging influential civilian policymakers on a statewide level. To get to all our children we need to be working at the policy level."

Coffee Breaks Give Military Parents at Chula Vista School a Chance to Socialize

As the USC MSW student interning at McMillin Elementary School in Chula Vista last year, Lisa Mills knew that there were a lot of military families in the school, but the parents didn't know each other well.

So she decided to organize some events that would bring the families together and introduce them to the variety of resources and services available for military members and their children.

"I was trying to build more relationships through the school," Mills says. "There's a huge military population here but they are kind of invisible to each other."

Mills worked with school liaison officer Chamin Massaglia and Fleet and Family Services to plan a morning coffee--or tea--break just for military parents, and invited other representatives from military family organizations.

The second time, the gathering was open to all parents, but also featured programs designed for military families.

"Maybe someone has an aunt or an uncle in the military," Mills says.

The event is something that can be organized at any school or added on to existing principal "chats" held for parents.



Leilani Ojinaga with son Kavi and Alle Munguie at McMillin's coffee gathering

Spotlight On: Shevette Maultsby

When she wasn't equipping Navy helicopters with the latest weapons, Aviation Warfare Specialist First Class Shevette Maultsby could always be found having lunch at her sons' school, Chula Vista Hills Elementary.

After back-to-back deployments--14 months in Bahrain and 13 months in Beaufort, S.C.--she wanted to spend as much time with her sons, Iziah, 9, and Jaycob, 6, as she could.

"I noticed that I was seeing them on Saturdays and a little bit on Sunday," says Maultsby, who works the night shift. "The only way for me to be involved was to go to the school."

She never expected, however, that spending lunch there would turn into becoming president of the school's PTA.

"Lunch turned into 'I don't want to leave,' and then they started asking me to make copies, and they started giving me more to do," she says.

She even earned the nickname "the cheetah lady," for coordinating the school's running club and stamping the students' cards every time they ran a lap. The school's mascot is the cheetah.

When she saw how passionate other PTA leaders were about serving the school, Maultsby realized she wanted to be involved at the Vista Hills.

While Chula Vista Hills doesn't have a large military family population, the leadership has been increasing the focus on supporting military families.

"She's really on top of things with the military kids," said Chamin Massaglia, a school liaison officer for the Navy. She added that being PTA president this year allows Maultsby to bring more visibility to the needs of military families.

Maultsby wants to work on informing school personnel about the challenges facing military families during deployments, possibly by bringing sailors in to talk with teachers, and to give students more ways to express their feelings when their parents are deployed. She's also interested in applying for grants to help the school.

She compares her new role as PTA president to her experiences in the military.

"In my line of work, my supervisor gives me a mission and I just go do it," she says. "I don't know what is on the other side of that hill, but I just do it."

Featured Resource: Alliance of Military and Veteran Family Behavioral Health Providers

Based at East Carolina University, the [Alliance of Military and Veteran Family Behavioral Health Providers](#) works to support those who are assisting military families and veterans in the areas of resilience, recovery and reintegration.

Members of the Alliance include behavioral health providers, educators and others who are working to advance the mission of the Alliance.

The Alliance offers resource guides, including one on family support, as well as expert speakers, continuing education activities, and a monthly newsletter.

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:

The Military Child Education Coalition has released the findings of its latest [study](#) on the educational experiences of children with parents in the Army. Focusing on transitions, the study includes information on:

- the ways in which federal and state testing requirements affect highly mobile students
- the impact of high-stakes testing as a result of No Child Left Behind (NCLB)
- the impact that frequent parent deployments have on student education technology advances that have changed communication and the transfer of records

[The State](#) in South Carolina featured a program funded by the Department of Defense that brings military children together with their deployed parents through Skype.