

Building Capacity and Welcoming Practices In Military-Connected Schools

April

2014

**This Month the Building Capacity/Welcoming Practices Team
Joins You in Celebrating the Month of the Military Child**



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Celebrating Month of the Military Child

In recognition of the Month of the Military Child this April, we want to share with you this special video on what it means to be a military child.

In their own words, students in Kristine Cephus' 1st grade class at Vogelweb Elementary School in Kaiserslautern, Germany explain their thoughts on growing up in a military family. **Click on this photo to see the video.**



Our second annual **Month of the Military Child** social media campaign is currently taking place on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages. We are sharing information on military children and encourage you to let us know what your school or organization is doing to make military children and families feel welcome and appreciated.

Resource Guide Corner

If you are interested in receiving a free copy of one of our military resource guides for educators and parents, please click [here](#) to request a copy.

If you have already provided us feedback on the books, thank you. If you haven't we still want to hear from you. Click this [link](#) to answer a few questions, and use a computer or a laptop instead of a smart phone.

Quick Links...

[Our Website](#)



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Borrowing an idea from the Cooperative Extension, which has an annual "Purple Up! for Military Kids" celebration, the Building Capacity/Welcoming Practices team gathered for a "Purple Up" photo.

Middle School Students Ready to Create Welcoming Schools as Part Of New Junior Student 2 Student Effort

Creating warm and inviting welcome centers, making presentations to parent organizations and setting up new-student procedures for school offices are a few of the activities that will be taking place this fall when middle school students in the Oceanside Unified School District (OUSD) implement the Junior Student 2 Student (JS2S) program.

In fact, some of the students that participated in the February training provided by the [Military Child Education Coalition](#) (MCEC), as part of the Welcoming Practices Consortium, are already starting to phase in their plans even before the end of this school year.

"Our kids are pumped. They are really excited," says Rebecca Vogel, a school-based resource teacher at Stuart Mesa Elementary, which will be a K-8 school next year. A former military child, Vogel can personally relate to the need for this program. "I know how much difference this can make for a kid."



Students from Santa Margarita present their plans to create a welcoming school.

JS2S is the middle school version of the S2S program for high school students, which trains both civilian and military students to develop and maintain programs to support students when they are transitioning between schools. Students from North Terrace and Santa Margarita schools in OUSD are also participating in JS2S and are each developing plans to help support transitioning students.

The Stuart Mesa students, for example, want to add an anti-bullying component to their efforts and create a welcome video for the school's website, Vogel said. They've also talked about asking local merchants to donate supplies for creating backpacks for new students. She added that finding space for a welcome center will be challenging as the school moves from a K-7 to a K-8, but she said she knows the students "will make it work."

Teachers and other staff members from the Consortium districts that attended the training commented on how the trainers kept the students engaged over the two-day period.

"I believe [JS2S] is going to completely shift the culture and the community for these base schools," says Margaret Malek, the K-12 program specialist for the Kids First Initiative in OUSD. She added that a program like JS2S empowers students to make those changes in their schools.

"It's so easy for us to want to take control," she says. "But it's so important for us to stand back and let them own it."

California Social Welfare Archives Highlights Building Capacity Consortium

The *Building Capacity* Consortium was recognized

this month at the annual award ceremony of the California Social Welfare Archives.

Dr. Ron Astor highlighted the lessons learned as part of a lecture at the April 2 event, where he also received the



George D. Nickel Award for Outstanding Professional Services by a Social Worker.

His talk, "Military-Connected School Children: Challenges and Solutions," focused on how multiple school transitions, deployment and war-related experiences can affect students as well as how schools can use a combination of evidence-based and "home-grown" practices to support students and honor military members and veterans.

Building Capacity Team Presents at AERA

A primary goal of *Building Capacity* is to improve practices in public schools and to influence policymakers to consider the academic and social-emotional needs of military children.

With that goal in mind, the research team presented again this year at the annual conference of the American Educational Research Association, sharing evidence and lessons learned from the many facets of *Building Capacity* project.

The symposium, chaired by Dr. Ron Astor, was entitled "Transforming School and Campus Climate for Military-Connected Students and Veterans: Research and Practice From the Field" and featured a diverse [collection of presentations](#) on many of interventions implemented in the Building Capacity schools, including:

- Learning Together, a peer-tutoring program in the Fallbrook Union School District, presented by Dr. Astor and Dr. Hazel Atuel of USC. The other authors on the paper are Dr. Ruth Berkowitz and Chantra Nhien of USC and Dr. Rami Benbenishty of Bar Ilan University in Israel.
- Because Nice Matters, an anti-bullying initiative in the Temecula Valley Unified School District, presented by Atuel. Benbenishty and Nhien are co-authors.
- FOCUS, a school-based resiliency training program developed at UCLA, presented by Dr.

Kris De Pedro of Chapman University. The other authors are Dr. Ediza Garcia and Dr. Patricia Lester of UCLA, Benbenishty and Diana Pineda of USC.

- Partners at Learning, a tutoring program involving undergraduate students at University of California San Diego (UCSD), presented by Monica Esqueda of USC. Additional authors are Nhien, Benbenishty and Dr. Amanda Datnow, Caren Holtzman and Luz M. Chung of UCSD.

A fifth presentation, led by Esqueda, focused on the roles and responsibilities of postsecondary institutions after a decade of war. De Pedro and Atuel were co-authors on this paper.

Featured Resource: Jacobs Camp

The Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) is offering an innovative Camper Incentive Program for Jewish Military Families on active duty.



The program will be offered at the URJ Henry S.

Jacobs Camp in Utica, Miss., which has served more than 10,000 Jewish children since 1970. Incentives vary in amount from \$250 to \$3,000 per child, based on the military rank of the parent(s)

and the child's age. An individual incentive is available for each child enrolled for camp from participating families. For information on registration, click [here](#).

Jacobs Camp offers a unique environment that will resonate strongly with military families. Jacobs Camp is an oasis of Jewish life in the South that helps build Jewish identity and confidence for kids from diverse geographic and socio-economic backgrounds, who all come together to form a close-knit Jewish community at camp.

Star Behavioral Health Providers Offering Training Throughout California

The Star Behavioral Health Providers (SBHP) initiative will be offering training sessions for service providers throughout California in the coming months.

SBHP is a three-tiered training program, with each training tier building upon knowledge from the previous tier.

The initiative works with course content created by the Center for Deployment Psychology (CDP). Tier One will be taught by SBHP partners in California. Tier Two and Tier Three will be taught by special teams from CDP. Click on this [link](#) for information on how to register.



- Tier One provides awareness about topics specific to the military and an introduction to military culture and information about deployments.
- Tier Two provides education about challenges and difficulties that may present and are often associated with the military.
- Tier Three offers clinical skills that focus on specific evidence based treatments to address some of the behavioral health issues facing service members, such as PTSD.

Tier One training: June 10. Military Intelligence Battalion, 100 Armory Drive, San Francisco, CA 94132

Tier Two training:

- April 24-25. Okinawa Armory, 8400 Okinawa Street, Sacramento, CA 95828
- April 28-29, Joint Forces Training Base 11200 Lexington Drive, Los Alamitos, CA 90720
- July 14-15, Military Intelligence Battalion, 100 Armory Drive, San Francisco, CA 94132

Tier Three training:

- May 21-22. Okinawa Armory, 8400 Okinawa Street, Sacramento, CA 95828
- May 28-29. Joint Forces Training Base 11200 Lexington Drive, Los Alamitos, CA 90720
- Aug. 4-5. Military Intelligence Battalion, 100 Armory Drive, San Francisco, CA 94132

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:

- Work by the *Building Capacity* research team on military-connected children was recently featured in this [article](#) from Take Part.
- Click [here](#) for articles on supporting military-connected children in a special issue of the journal *Children & Schools*, published by the National Association of Social Workers and Oxford University Press.

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