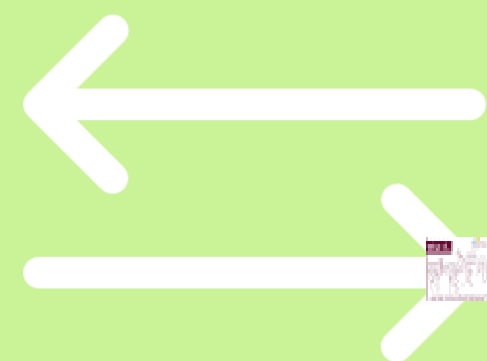


# CHANGE



Be kind to yourself one week after.  
Keep lines of communication open.  
Reach out and ask for help.

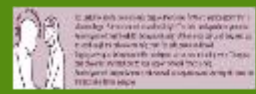


## MANAGING CHANGE

Change can be good or bad. It depends on the person and the situation.

Good or bad change requires an adjustment of some kind; this takes energy. If the demands are too great, it can drain you and create stress. Unmanaged stress can cause physical and emotional problems.

You may not be able to control the change itself. So, the key to coping with change is to gain control of your response to it as much as possible. That's when adjusting your attitude toward change can help.



## TRANSITION

Transition is the time between the old and the new. It is a time of change, of letting go of the old and embracing the new. It is a time of growth, of learning, and of discovery. It is a time of challenge, of opportunity, and of hope.

Children may be feeling frightened by the end and the start of the school year. The change of routines and the inevitable loss and separation or moving feelings of abandonment and threat.

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## MILITARY FAMILIES

Between 7-18 months, children develop the ability to distinguish between familiar and less familiar faces and a special relationship between the infant and his primary caregiver forms.

Military children have been found to show attachment needing behaviours when a parent/caregiver is deployed. Optimising support services to help develop positive behaviours/attachment strategies will ensure families can provide secure caregiving attachments before, during and after deployments.



# MANAGING CHANGE

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Be kind to yourselves and  
each other

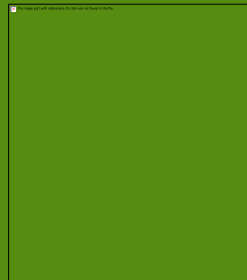
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## How to Deal With Unexpected Change

Acknowledge that change is the new normal

Explore your feelings about the change

Prepare for it

Rely on your support system or create one

Give yourself grace as you move forward



# How to Cope when Things Feel Out of Your Control

Imagine what a role model or admired friend would do in the same situation.

Write down your thoughts. Stress can make us think negative thoughts about ourselves.

Talk to others about how you're feeling.



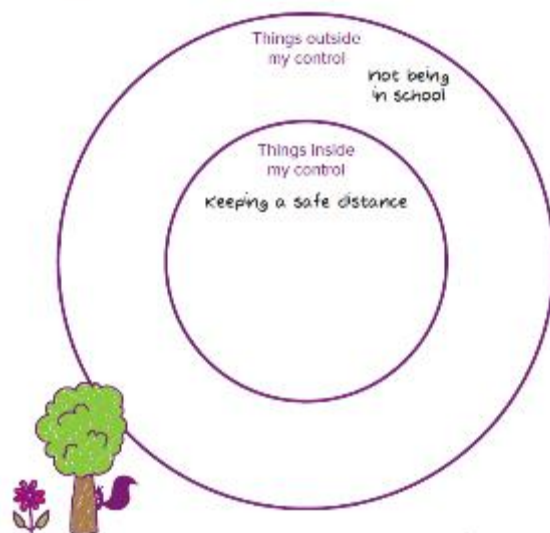
Some of the things that have changed are:



## Inside/Outside of Your Control

Think about the examples we've given you. Some of them you can do something about (they are in your control) and others you can't (they are outside of your control).

Add them to the circles below and think of some of your own ideas too. We've put in a few examples to help you.



## Thinking about Change

When changes happen, sometimes we can do things to help us feel more positive. Think of something that has changed for you recently. What was it? How do you feel about it? What could you do to feel better about it?



What changed?

How do I feel?

What can I do?

# Helping your child to manage change through COVID-19

# TRANSITION



- It's useful for adults to emotionally prepare themselves for the 'transition storm' that is about to begin. Put your seatbelt on and hold tight! The child needs you to be grounded.
- Remind yourself that the child's behaviour is a sign of their inside pain, and they need you to see through the behaviour to help them feel safe, secure and loved.
- Digging down past behaviours to the inside pain, can be hard and tiring work. Take good care of yourself and reach out to your support network for extra help.
- Remind yourself that punishments, withdrawal, consequences and shaming will make the transition harder for everyone.

- Help the child to see the storm coming too. Say "the end of the school year can be a tricky, I'm here to help you through it"
- Help the child name the feelings that they have no words for. Try "I wonder if your 'moving up day' feels pretty scary right now?" or "When things are different like this, I wonder if it makes you worry about being left behind?"
- Help make connections between their behaviour and their feelings, try "When you run away like that it makes me wonder if you don't know where to be to feel safe? You are safe right here".



Children feel fear in their body. Help the child's body to calm by:

- Doing short bursts of physical activity (star jumps, wall push ups, walking, running) frequently
- Playfully ask them to breathe deeply in the mornings and evenings – e.g. blow bubbles, blow away the feelings
- Do body calming activities with them
- Use sensitive touch to let them know you are there. Touch can be a great calmer.



Tell the child the things they need to hear, don't wait for them to ask you because they don't know what they need! **Tell them:**

- How much you care
- That you are not going anywhere
- That they are in your mind even when not in your class/not at home
- That they are safe and protected
- That they will not be taken away
- Tell them what is going to happen that day if the routine is different - use pictures and 'steps' to prepare them.
- Remind them throughout the day what is going to happen and when
- Keep to as much of the usual routine as you can

Use 'transitional objects' to let them know that you are connected, even when apart. How about:

- As a parent, draw a little heart on your hand and the same heart on your child's hand as they go off to school.
- Give your child a special stone, or photo to hold on to at school that reminds them of you
- Teachers – give the child a 'transition card' – a piece of paper with a special message that they look after until you see them again.
- Let the child use their special teddies whenever they need to



# Strategies for Home

- Promoting the importance of education is key
- Ensure that school and key staff are aware when you are deployed
- Ensure children are prepared for when you are away from home for extended periods
- Attune, attend, and satisfy basic needs
- Provide a calm box – this could include bubbles, tearing paper or popping bubble wrap
- Assist with regulation – name the behaviour, match the behaviour, provide soothing or assist children in self-regulating
- Complete an activity together, bake, read, watch a video
- Model positive behaviours, for example sharing
- Teach children to play games, increasing social skills
- Give the opportunity for your child to practice independence
- Ensure children have time to talk
- Ensure consistent routines and boundaries
- If required, seek help if you are not coping



# Strategies for School

It may be worth checking with school to see if they can carry out some of the following strategies:

- Dedicating a key adult to support discussions via groups or independent sessions
- ELSA support sessions
- Actively support practicing relative dependency for the child
- Give responsibility to the child, for example a special job they can be involved in
- Create a safe space/secure base a child can go if they feel overwhelmed
- Give children the opportunity to build relationships
- Transition to new schools – enable peer to peer friendships
- Assess curricular gaps when they move schools
- Encourage wellbeing support when a parent is deployed
- Offer spaces to connect with other children from military families and support workers
- Help to keep in touch with a deployed parent via mail or Ebluey
- Support parents before/during and after deployment



# Key Contacts

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/the-childrens-education-advisory-service-ceas>
- <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/mental-wellbeing/dealing-with-mental-health-challenges-and-stress>
- <https://www.army.mod.uk/people/support-well/the-army-welfare-service-aws/>
- <https://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/our-services/advice-and-support>
- <https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/careers/royal-marines/what-do-i-get/support-your-family>
- <https://www.rafbf.org/about-us/useful-links-and-resources/welfare-and-wellbeing-support>
- <https://www.winchester.ac.uk/collaboration/widening-participation/military-service-children/>
- <http://mkcheroes.co.uk/>
- <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-support/physical-and-mental-wellbeing>
- <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/disability-support/additional-needs-and-disability-support/fandf-membership-form>
- <https://www.army.mod.uk/people/support-well/army-parents-network/>
- <https://aldershothive.blogspot.com/search/label/Education>



# What if...

We can't help children change their behaviour by making them feel bad for what they've done.



Remember, they already feel bad.

Instead, show them that you care and help them find calm.



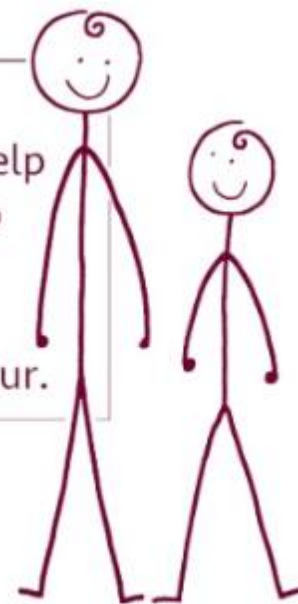
Sometime later, when you feel regulated...



...choose a quiet moment and ask them, with kindness in your voice, to be curious about what happened...



...then you'll help them to change their behaviour.



# ...we are curious about behaviour?