

MAINTAINING FRIENDSHIPS ACROSS THE MILES



Military-connected youth face social-emotional challenges as they relocate on average six to nine times over the service member's career. One of these challenges is maintaining long-distance friendships.

TIPS TO HELP YOUR CHILD MAINTAIN FRIENDSHIPS ACROSS THE MILES

PRIOR TO PCS:

CREATE A GAME PLAN OF HOW YOU INTEND TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH FRIENDS:

1. Host a farewell party with friends.
2. Create a care package filled with items that spark positive memories.
3. Be intentional about your communication. Set dates and times to connect with friends.
4. Follow up with friends after a PCS move, asking what is new with them.



ARRIVING AT YOUR DESTINATION:

FOSTERING LONG-DISTANCE FRIENDSHIPS:

1. Use FaceTime, WhatsApp calls, Google Meet, TEAMS to video chat. Helping children build the understanding that PCSing doesn't always mean a permanent goodbye.
2. Create opportunities to engage in activities together, such as virtual watch parties or online gaming.
3. Create a friendship music playlist.
4. Share and celebrate big moments and milestones such as birthdays, making a team (sports/school groups), recitals/performances, grade promotions, graduations, etc.
5. Develop a virtual project. This encourages check-ins with one another's progress, offering support, and sharing best practices. Think arts and crafts, Lego builders, collaboratively writing music or lyrics, digital media, or gaming.



Many resources and tools are available to help stay connected with one another. Take the opportunity to find creative ways for children to stay connected with friends across the miles.

Connect with your local School Liaison and Child and Youth Programs on best practices for staying connected.