

Navy CYP Youth Sponsorship Program

The Navy Child and Youth Programs Youth Sponsorship Program provides youth sponsors to incoming military youth to help them get acclimated and feel connected with other youth already at the installation and/or school and more!

Navy's Youth Sponsorship Program consists of three key components:

Outreach: Identifying incoming youth and providing them with information and social opportunities prior to arrival at new installation.

Newcomer Orientation: Providing information and materials on services and programs available on the installation and local community.

Peer to Peer: Connecting Navy youth currently attached to the installation with incoming youth while providing social activities and outings.

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) recently conducted a world-wide survey that drew responses from military-connected students (ages 13 and older), their parents and professionals who support them¹. The survey analysis aims to allow parents and professionals who support military youth to gain a deeper understanding of ongoing challenges military youth face to be able to better support them. It is important to note that students, parents and professionals began to complete MCEC's Military Kids NOW 2020 survey weeks before the Coronavirus outbreak in the U.S. occurred. One can only infer that reported concerns have deepened with ongoing social distancing measures and continued disruptions to school and life routines.

On average, a military-connected student can expect to attend up to nine different schools from kindergarten through high school graduation. Although military youth may become accustomed to frequent moves, transitioning to a new school and community is never easy. With each move, military youth leave behind established roots, friendships and comfort zones. Military youth reported it typically takes 1-3 months to adjust to a new school². The addition of Coronavirus pandemic has made acclimation to new communities and schools even more difficult for military youth.

MCEC's Military Kids NOW 2020 survey identified several social-emotional concerns of military-connected students who regularly transition schools. The top 3 concerns reported by military children included: the challenge of making friends in a new school, difficulties feeling accepted and fitting in with a new school and its culture and finding ways to build self-confidence². When not properly addressed, these concerns can lead to increased risk for isolation, depression and loneliness³. For these reasons, the Navy feels it is critical that military youth have access to free, positive peer groups and pro-social activities.

If interested in connecting your child with a local youth sponsor, contact your installation's School Liaison or Youth Center to receive a Youth Sponsor Request form.

If you're already at an installation and would like to **be** a Youth Sponsor, contact your installation's School Liaison or Youth Center to learn more details and receive an application.

References:

¹ “MCEC Survey Reveals Significant Concerns for Military-Connected Students.” *Military Child Education Coalition*, 16 Oct 2020, <https://www.militarychild.org/news/press-releases/2020/mcec-survey-reveals-significant-concerns-for-militaryconnected-students>. Press release.

² “MCEC Military Kids Now 2020 Survey Summary Report (2020)”. *Military Child Education Coalition*, <https://www.militarychild.org/mcecsurvey>. Report, PDF download.

³ “Youth Sponsorship Program Planning Guide”. *Department of Defense*. <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Toolkits/DoD-Youth-Sponsorship-Tool-Kit.pdf>. PDF download.