

## A Letter to Military Children from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

I want to take this opportunity to recognize the extraordinary contributions of our Nation's military families, who have faced many challenges - from family separations to frequent moves - with great courage. I would especially like to acknowledge a special source of inspiration: children of military families.

You are patient and understanding when duty calls and your Mom or Dad cannot attend a soccer game, music recital, birthday party, or other important family or school activity. You are heroes in a quiet, thoughtful way, and I am grateful for the unconditional love you give your Mom and Dad. Many of you have experienced the sad and sometimes frightening experience of having your Mom or Dad far from home, serving around the globe in places like Iraq and Afghanistan. Through your personal courage and support, you serve this Nation too - and I am proud of you!

Frequent moves are a way of life for the military child. It is never easy to say goodbye to friends and familiar routines, to begin again in a new school, a new neighborhood - and sometimes a new country! But your resilience and self-confidence are strengths that others admire, including your parents.

Growing up in a military family offers some challenges, but it also provides some special rewards. You can be proud of your Mom and Dad for their brave defense of this great country. Your love and support sustains them. So thank you for being there for Mom and Dad. You are American patriots and role models for us all.

PETER PACE

General, United States Marine Corps  
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff