

Military Social Work and Behavioral Health Conference

UT Austin

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Mission

MCEC® supports all military-connected children by educating, advocating, and collaborating to resolve education challenges associated with the military lifestyle.

Vision

Every military-connected child is college-, work-, and life-ready.



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History of MCEC and Research



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- Coalition Incorporated, 1998
- Secondary Education Transition Study (SETS), 2001
- MCEC Science Advisory Board (SAB), 2008
- Education of Military Children in the 21st Century (EMC21), 2012
- Military Kids NOW Education Survey, 2020



Top Academic Concerns

Students say:

1. Being unprepared for curriculum differences (learning gaps)
2. Addressing variations in state academic standards
3. Moving mid-school year
4. Understanding state/national testing differences/requirements
5. Transferring credits

Parents say:

1. Addressing variations in state academic standards
2. Being unprepared for curriculum differences (learning gaps)
3. Moving mid-school year
4. Accessing gifted education programs
5. Understanding state/national testing differences/requirements

Professionals say:

1. Moving mid-school year
2. Being unprepared for curriculum differences (learning gaps)
3. Addressing variations in state academic standards
4. Transferring special education documentation (IEP, 504 Plan, Behavior Plan, HS Transition Plan)
5. School-year calendar discrepancies (conflicting start- and end-dates)

Top Social-Emotional Concerns

Students say:

1. Feeling of Acceptance/"Fitting In" (school and local culture)
2. Making friends
3. Managing stress
4. Building self-confidence
5. Dealing with parent deployment/reunion

Parents say:

1. Making friends
2. Feeling of Acceptance/"Fitting In" (school and local culture)
3. Building self-confidence
4. Dealing with parent deployment/reunion
5. Managing stress

Professionals say:

1. Dealing with parent deployment/reunion
2. Feeling of Acceptance/"Fitting In" (school and local culture)
3. Making friends
4. Addressing behavioral/mental health concerns (anxiety, depression, substance abuse, etc.)
5. Managing stress

5 Trends We Assess as Highly Concerning to Military Family & Students



1. Youth Mental Health and Wellness/Well-Being

- Connection/Loneliness/Community
- Giving Military-Connected Children a Voice
- Stress/Resilience
- Equity and Inclusion
- LGBTQ

2. Youth in Caregiver Roles

3. Transitions – moving, school transitions, transition out of the military, EFMP

4. Separations – not only deployment related

5. Life Readiness – including post-secondary preparation

Sources:

- MCEC Education Survey 2020
- Blue Star Families
- National Military Family Association
- U.S. Surgeon General, National Academies of Science
- Military Family Advisory Network

THE MILITARY CHILD *Well-being* TOOLKIT



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1 Definition & Purpose of Well-being

The MCEC Military Child Well-Being Toolkit was created to provide social-emotional supports and resources to parents, educators, and other youth-serving professionals working with military-connected youth.

The Toolkit aligns with Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), Whole Child Design, Social Emotional Academic Development (S.E.A.D.), national resources, and the U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on Youth Mental Health (2021).





2 Topical Strategies & Tools

- PTSD, TBI, Invisible and Physical Injury
- DEI, Social Justice, and LGBTQIA
- Suicide Prevention and Awareness
- Emotional Intelligence
- Mindfulness and Overall Well-being



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3 Relevant Partner Resources

The MCEC Military Child Well-being Toolkit is a comprehensive resource designed to help military families navigate state-by-state academic policies and to provide social-emotional support as they transition around the world. Our research consists of private organizations, state and national agencies, and organizations.



Hidden Helper Initiatives

Student Leadership Program

Ten students selected for the inaugural Hidden Helpers Student Leadership Program held in San Antonio, TX, April 14-19, 2023

Parent Support Webinar Series

Four webinars presented/upcoming: Define & Identify Youth Caregivers; Supporting the Well-being of Youth in Caregiver Roles, Strengths and Challenges of Hidden Helpers; and Healthy Caregivers: A Focus on the Needs of Youth in Caregiver Roles

Hidden Helper ECHO (Professional Learning Community)

Piloted a 4-session cohort for professionals who support military-connected youth in caregiver roles

Student Roundtables

Monthly events providing structured leadership experience for Hidden Helpers and raise awareness amongst peers

MCEC Podcast Series

Eight podcasts elevating the experiences and challenges of Hidden Helpers and their families



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Community Support and Resources

MCEC Programs

Student Achievement

- MCEC provides support to military-connected students through peer-to-peer mentoring programs, the Frances Hesselbein Student Leadership Program, and student-focused roundtables.

Parent Support

- MCEC empowers parents through informative and interactive workshops, webinars and podcasts addressing challenges associated with the military family lifestyle.

Professional Services

- In education, healthcare, childcare, business, and other disciplines, MCEC trains professionals to address the unique challenges facing our military-connected children.



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MCEC 360 Summits

Supports Purple Star Readiness

- Provides training in peer-to-peer program to welcome new students (MCEC Student-to-Student)
- Provides professional development for educators serving military-connected students
- Opportunity for parent workshops

High Impact Event

- Two days and one evening
- Customizable
- Collaborative with School Liaisons, MIC3, installation, and local community





MCEC[®] GLOBAL TRAINING SUMMIT

Looking Back. Reaching Forward.

15 years

The premier professional development opportunity for those who serve and support the educational needs of military- and veteran-connected children.

**WASHINGTON, DC: LIVE + VIRTUAL
JULY 24-26, 2023**

MCEC Resources



- Month of the Military Child Toolkit (April): [MilitaryChild.org/MOMC Toolkit](https://militarychild.org/MOMC-Toolkit)
- Call for the Arts: [MilitaryChild.org/programs/the-call-for-the-arts](https://militarychild.org/programs/the-call-for-the-arts)
- **Military Student Consultant:** [MilitaryChild.org/MS-C](https://militarychild.org/MS-C)
- Pete Taylor Partnership Awards: [MilitaryChild.org/programs/pete-taylor-partnership-of-excellence-awards](https://militarychild.org/programs/pete-taylor-partnership-of-excellence-awards)
- Learn more about Purple Star School Designation (PSSD) at [MilitaryChild.org/purplestarschools](https://militarychild.org/purplestarschools)
- Study of PSSD Program Report (MCEC|CPRL) at: [MilitaryChild.org/purplestarschools](https://militarychild.org/purplestarschools)
- Register for and share the SchoolQuest™ Transition Tool at: [SchoolQuest.MilitaryChild.org](https://schoolquest.militarychild.org)
- Helping MilKids Soar: [MilitaryChild.org/helpingmilkidssoar](https://militarychild.org/helpingmilkidssoar)
- Videos for Education Professionals [MilitaryChild.org/programs/videos-for-education-professionals](https://militarychild.org/programs/videos-for-education-professionals)
- **NEW** Military Child Well-being Toolkit [MilitaryChild.org/wellbeingtoolkit](https://militarychild.org/wellbeingtoolkit)

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