

New Teen on the Block: Resources to Help Military Youth Acclimate After a PCS

“Being a teenager is easy,” said no one, ever. Pressure to fit in, taking risks, and learning how to navigate the world are all cornerstones of normal teenage life. On top of these pressures, military teens have the added stress of Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves.

When a PCS occurs, teens often feel sad leaving their friends and anxious about finding a new social group. While this can be an overwhelming and difficult time, Military and Family Life Counselors (MFLCs) can help ease the transition into a new place by inviting teens to join lunch groups, connecting them to peers with similar interests, and sharing local events. In addition to MFLC support, there are resources available for teens and parents as they acclimate to their environment.

Youth Resources

- On-post youth centers offer military youth a fun, safe place with activities for a variety of interests. At these centers, teens can connect with their peers and support staff.
- Military teen adventure camps, [Operation Purple](#), the Boys and Girls Club, the YMCA, and 4-H all offer age-appropriate opportunities for military kids to join a social group, learn new skills, and build confidence.
- School programs such as [Student 2 Student](#) can help teens feel supported and connected when starting a new school.

Parent Resources

- Military OneSource provides information on the Interstate Compact and the Exceptional Family Members Program, which can be useful to parents when they register their children in school and have concerns about loss of credit hours or setting up 504 or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) plans.
- The Military Child Educational Coalition offers resources for families such as a PCS checklist and a military student consultant.

A PCS move during the teen years can be life-changing for military-connected kids. However, with the help of MFLC support and the many resources available to them, it can also be a fun, exciting, and positive experience.

Sources

- <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/benefits/military-youth-teen-programs/>
- <https://www.militarychild.org/programs-and-initiatives/military-student-consultants/>