



Preparing to return

The reunion of your family can be a building block or a stumbling block. There are things you can do as a parent and as a family to prepare for your return.

Use the checklist below as a guide to help prepare you and your family for your return.

AS A PARENT, I:

- Write a letter to each child to plan a special event.
- Remind each child how much I have missed him or her and that I look forward to coming home.
- Reassure my children that my love for them is constant, even if other things have changed.
- Talk about my feelings about returning home with others.
- Think about the mixed emotions I have about coming home.
- Think about my children and how each might react to my return.
- Realize that a new child born during my deployment will need time to know and adjust to me.
- Think about how I'll make the transition from soldier to parent again, and that I need to treat my family as a family and not as a military unit.
- Think about the problems I left behind and how I will cope with them when I return.

AS A FAMILY, WE:

- Plan a reunion celebration.
- Talk about not expecting a perfect reunion.
- Talk about everyone in the family changing in some way while I've been away.
- Talk about how stressful change is for everyone.
- Recognize that it might take time for all of us to readjust.



IMAGINE STEPPING INTO
YOUR CHILD'S WORLD
AND SEEING THINGS
FROM HIS OR HER POINT
OF VIEW.

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