



# Parent to Parent Workshop List

## Back to School Basics

- **Back to School Basics** - This workshop will provide parents information they can use to help improve school performance and start the year off on the right foot. It provides common sense tips from parents and research-based insight from experts on communication, routines, homework, test-taking, organization and the importance of parental involvement.

## Chart Your Course

- **Chart Your Course, Part 1 The Academic Plan for Middle School and High School:** This is the first part of our Chart Your Course workshop series that addresses how middle and high school students can map out their academic plan to graduate on time in spite of multiple transitions and also fulfill common college entrance requirements for incoming freshmen. We will focus on the circle of success, where we discuss the importance of academics, activities, and life skills. Then we will lay out the MCEC's recommended academic plan and conclude by discussing how to develop good study habits and stay organized by compiling a student portfolio.
- **Chart Your Course, Part 2 College Readiness for High School Students:** This is the second part of our Chart Your Course workshop series that addresses what we can do to get our high school students ready for college. We will focus on college admission criteria and discuss in greater detail academics, diversity, extracurricular activities, and connection. This will be followed by a brief discussion on what to include in the college portfolio.
- **Chart Your Course for Middle School and High School -Full Length:** This is the full-length version of Chart Your Course. It addresses how middle and high school students can map out their academic plan to graduate on time in spite of multiple transitions, fulfill common college entrance requirements, and be ready for college. The workshop focuses on the circle of success, where we discuss the importance of academics, activities, and life skills. Then we will lay out the MCEC's recommended academic plan. We will discuss how to develop good study habits. After that we go into college readiness and focus on academics, diversity, activities, and connection. We will conclude by addressing the student portfolio.

## College Application and Financial Aid

- **The College Application Process (1 hour):** Let us help you navigate the college application process. College criteria, choosing the right college, getting letters of recommendation, tracking application deadlines, researching financial aid and searching for scholarships are just some of the things that we will cover in this workshop.
- **The College Application Process (3 hour):** (An expanded version of the basic workshop.) We will take you through the MCEC six-year academic plan, college criteria, choosing the right college, getting letters of recommendation, tracking application deadlines, researching financial aid and searching for scholarships. Then

we add a mock interview, resume-writing session, and dig deeper into how to make your application stand out from the crowd. This in-depth workshop is ideally suited to both the parent and the college applicant.

Recommended for parents/students in 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades.

- **Financial Aid Literacy:** Paying for college is a big concern for many of us as our children grow older. Join us as we shed some light on the financial aid process and the resources available to support you in planning for this huge milestone in your family's life. We will cover cost of college, ways to pay for it, qualifying for aid, different types of aid, and warnings about scams. We will also discuss FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), the concept of Expected Family Contribution and how schools determine financial aid packages.
- **FAFSA and CSS Profile:** College is expensive. As the cost of college increases, families are looking for ways to pay for their child's education. The most common way is by receiving financial aid. Today we are going to provide a general overview of two of the financial programs available, the FAFSA and the College Scholarship Service Profile, commonly known as the CSS Profile.
- **Grants and Scholarships:** Grants and scholarships can help pay for your military-connected student's post-secondary education. This workshop will discuss grants and scholarships that are available at the federal and state level as well as at post-secondary institutions and organizations. We will also talk about scholarship restrictions, including possible restrictions when students are using transferred GI Bill benefits, and address how to spot red flags when searching for scholarships.
- **Playing at the Next Level:** This workshop gives an overview of the three athletic associations' rules and academic eligibility requirements, including what to know if athletes are looking for an athletic scholarship. It addresses the athletic portfolio, transitions during high school, and provides numerous tips on preparing the athlete for planning ahead.
- **Preparing to Fly the Nest:** Senior year in high school can be an emotional time not only for the seniors. As parents, we may worry if they are ready to leave our homes. We may wonder what else we can do to prepare them for their independent lives. In this workshop, we are going to talk about some of the things that you can do to prepare your child to fly the nest.

## Creating Strong Families

- **Creating Strong Families** - In this workshop we will explore qualities that make military families strong. This workshop will examine daily habits that build lasting connections with children. We will also share strategies for building, fostering and strengthening enduring family bonds.

## Deployment Related

- **Deployment Activities and Resources** - Spend time sharing ideas about activities and projects families can do to remain connected during a deployment. We will also discuss a variety of resources available to support you during this time.

- **Reconnecting to Your Child's Education After Deployment** - The Family Puzzle: Join us to explore some strategies to make reunions less stressful on your entire family and make your child's education part of the reintegration process.
- **Staying Connected to Education During Deployment** - Effective communication, planning and staying involved in a child's education are all essential ingredients to maintaining strong connections within the family while experiencing separations. This workshop reinforces the importance of parental involvement in a child's education during deployment. Learn what resources are available for deploying parents and tips for staying involved with your child's education during deployment
- **Deployment GLU** - In this workshop we will discuss how parents and caregivers can use books as a way to talk with children about feelings and issues related to deployment. GLU (Growing, Learning and Understanding) is an early literacy program that provides hands on tools and activities to make the world of books come alive.

## Early Explorations - Infant and Preschool Workshops

It is never too early to start exploring the world with your children. Learn ways to introduce your toddler and preschooler to math, science, music and reading concepts they will see in school.

- **Early Explorations - Baby Sign Language** - Babies are happiest when they can communicate with the people who love them the most – their families. Did you know that babies can actually understand spoken language before they are physically able to speak? Signing is a tool that can be the key into your baby's thoughts and the springboard for future language development. The benefits of using baby sign language range from increased bonding with the parent or caregiver to a positive impact on cognitive and verbal development.
- **Early Explorations – Building Blocks to Literacy** - From several decades of research, we have learned a lot about how children learn to read and write. This research tells us that to become more skilled and confident readers over time, children need lots of opportunities to learn and be exposed to the building blocks of literacy. In this workshop we will explore the nine building blocks and offer suggestions on how to build them into your child's daily life.
- **Early Explorations – Helping Your Baby Learn through Play** - In early infancy, often it seems that our babies are too young to benefit from traditional concepts of play. However, research shows that the number of connections between brain cells more than triples in the first four months of life and the richness of a baby's environment can change his IQ level as much as 20 points up or down! Join us for some tips on creating an environment with lots of interaction and fun things for baby to explore in those initial months of infancy.
- **Early Explorations - Learning through Play** - "Play is a Child's Work." It can be easy to forget how much young children are actually learning when they engage in everyday fun activities. Join us to learn more about the physical, cognitive, social and language benefits of play at different stages in our young child's life as well as fun activities to support that development.
- **Early Explorations - Math** - All young children learn by tasting, touching, and manipulating objects. This lays the foundation for more abstract thinking later. Spend some time with us learning how activities such as sorting, pattern making, and even cooking can be used to instill an early love and understanding of mathematical concepts.
- **Early Explorations - Power of Music - Research** shows that music education develops brain areas, increases spatial intelligence, and improves math skills, among many other benefits. Join us for some easy ideas of how to

incorporate music into your daily routines and simple crafts that allow you to make instruments out of common household items.

- **Early Explorations - Power of Music - Move, Groove and Read** – For babies, 75% of brain development occurs during the early years of life. It is important as parents and caregivers, we are providing as many positive opportunities for intellectual, physical, social and emotional growth. And repetition of these positive experiences makes those brain connections even stronger. Exposing children to music and reading as early as possible will aid in developing brain areas, increase spatial intelligence, and improve math skills, among many other benefits. This workshop includes introducing songs and finger play while also sharing the benefits of the power of music.
- **Early Explorations - Science** - Young kids are natural explorers and science experiments can be as easy as dropping a raisin in a glass of soda. Join us for a look at the benefits of early forays into the world of science and fun ways to engage our children in scientific thought - and perhaps even get excited ourselves!
- **Benefits of Using Sign Language with Young Children** - Young children are happiest when they can communicate with the people who love them the most – their families. Did you know that babies can actually understand spoken language before they are physically able to speak? Signing is a tool that can be the key into your child’s thoughts and the springboard for future language development. Join us to learn more about the benefits of using sign language with your young children.

## Early Literacy - "Book-based" Workshops

- Join us for an early literacy event that includes a story and activities for your child. We also share tips and ideas for things you can do at home to make the world of books come alive for your child.

## Exceptional Needs (Special Needs)

- **School Transitions with Exceptional Needs:** Navigating the IEP (Individual Education Plan) process and special education policies in a new state can be confusing and sometimes frustrating. Come learn what resources are available in your area and learn how to make a school transition a positive educational experience for the entire family.

## Finding Your Fit

- **Finding Your Fit** - Often when we move to a new community it can seem as if everyone has their role already and finding a place where we can make a contribution and become involved can be daunting. But we all have something unique to offer any group and the benefits to your child and yourself of getting involved are extensive. Join us to explore where your talents and hobbies might bring you and your community the greatest satisfaction.

## Growth Mindset

- **Growth Mindset** – As parents of military-connected children, we can influence the development of our kid’s mindsets based on how we parent, what we model and the things we say. During this workshop we will provide an overview of Dr. Carol Dweck’s theory of growth and fixed mindsets, as well as, share tools, strategies and

resources to guide parents on how to help their children better approach obstacles and challenges, increase effort, utilize constructive criticism, and learn to improve.

## Homework

- **Avoiding Homework Hassles** - Research reinforces the value of homework, with the support and encouragement of engaged parents, as a contribution to good study habits and, ultimately improved academic success. This workshop will explore ways to encourage good study habits, provide support and motivation at home as well as how to work with your child's teacher to help your child get the most out of homework.
- **Tackling Homework Hassles** – Using a football theme, this workshop will explore ways to encourage good study habits, provide support and motivation at home as well as how to work with your child's teacher to help your child get the most out of homework.
- **Middle and High School Homework Help** - This workshop is specifically geared towards middle and high school students. We will explore ways to encourage good study habits and share ways to provide support and motivation at home.

## Internet and Screen Time

- **Establishing Screen Time Boundaries** - Are you experiencing a never-ending battle over screen time with your children? Do you have concerns about what your children are accessing and how much time they are spending on their devices? Join us as we share what research says about the benefits of establishing healthy limits on the amount of time our military children spend in front of the TV, computer and hand-held devices. We will also talk about practical ways you can help your children develop healthy viewing habits, establish positive routines, and offer alternatives to the "screen".
- **Internet Safety** - Whether they are 8 or 18, most of our kids are on the internet, and often at the cutting edge of the latest tech trends. This workshop is all about internet safety, how we can lead our children to safer use of it, and how we as parents can understand how our children use and access it. We will look at the benefits and concerns of internet usage and how to stay connected to our children's online experience. Join us for some great resources to help you keep your children's internet experience safe.
- **Internet and Screen Safety** – Is the never-ending battle over screen time really worth it? Are you more and more concerned about what your children are accessing on their devices? Join us as we cover what research says about the benefits of establishing limits on the time our children spend in front of the TV, computer and hand-held devices. We'll share some ideas for developing healthy viewing routines and share what other parents have found that works in their homes.

## Keys to Success in Elementary School

- **Keys to Success in Elementary School** – This workshop will focus specifically on three keys to success for elementary school students. Parental involvement, communication and organization. We will also talk about how to get the most out of your student's parent teacher conferences.

## Keys to Success in Middle School

- **Keys to Success in Middle School** - Setting a strong foundation in middle school will lead to success in high school. *Keys to Success in Middle School* examines both the social and academic aspects of school. Key topics in this workshop include effective communication, organization and the importance of routines. Parents will learn how they can help their students achieve academic success by setting a strong foundation in these key areas.

## Kids in the Kitchen

- **Kids in the Kitchen** - Do you cook with your kids? It is not as time consuming as it might seem. In fact, you may be amazed at how many things your child can do to help you with a recipe. From stirring to shredding, there are many kitchen activities your child will enjoy. Best of all, basic literacy, math, and science skills can be practiced in a joint cooking project. Come join us for a workshop that includes some fun recipe and great activity ideas.

## Kindergarten

- **Kindergarten Readiness** - Starting Kindergarten is exciting for a parent and child. This workshop will focus on tips and strategies that parents can use to make it a successful first year of school for their child. We will help parents prepare for this important step in their child's life.

## Learning Styles

- **Learning Styles** - Everyone has a personal learning style. It may be one or a combination of ways in which one learns best. Knowing your child's personal learning style will help capitalize on his/her strengths at school and at home. Learn about the various learning styles and how to identify what style works best for your child.

## Math

- **Math Matters - Elementary School Math** - Join us to learn what scientific research says about how children learn to do mathematics and activities parents can do with their children at home to improve their mathematics ability. We will discuss how we communicate mathematically and how to strengthen problem solving skills in your child.
- **Middle School Math** - Middle school students have more opportunities available to them in mathematics than ever before. *Middle School Math* will address some of the many math options and choices, along with some considerations specifically for military families as they transition. Join us to learn practical ways that parents can support math success at home.

## Organization

- **Understanding and Helping Your Unorganized Child** - Organization is a life-long skill that we can help teach our children (and perhaps ourselves!). Educators from all over the world would agree that when a student is not organized it impacts their entire lives. It is not just about school, it really is about every aspect of their lives. If a child is organized it should lead to academic success. In this workshop we will share coping strategies to aid in understanding and helping kids with organization.

## Parent Teacher Conferences

- **Parent Teacher Conferences** - Just in time for school conferences! Get the most out of your parent teacher conference. Learn how to communicate effectively during a parent-teacher conference. We will share ideas on how to plan for the conference, stay in touch with your child's teacher after the conference, and a team-building approach to resolving any issues that might arise.

## Parental Involvement

- **Parental Involvement for Parents of All Ages** - Research shows that children with involved parents are more likely to achieve academic success and do well in life. When parents are engaged in their child's education, they send the message that the family values education. Learn ways to become involved in your child's life at school and in the community. This workshop will help you develop a plan for ongoing parental involvement.
- **Communication 360** – Establishing and keeping the lines of communication open between parents, students and teachers is critical for academic success. Join us as we share practical ideas and strategies on how to build and maintain 360-degree communication between you, your child and your child's teachers.
- **SPORTS: Playing at the Next Level** - This workshop gives an overview of the three athletic associations' rules and academic eligibility requirements, including what to know if athletes are looking for an athletic scholarship. It addresses the athletic portfolio, transitions during high school, and provides numerous tips on preparing the athlete for planning ahead.

## Portfolios

- **Elementary Post-it Note/ Showcase Portfolios** - Does your child bring home a seemingly endless trail of papers from school? Do you secretly sneak out the to the trashcan at night to dispose of them? Or are you stockpiling boxes of these papers in case they are ever needed? Join us to learn how these papers can become a tool in teaching your child about goal setting. As a bonus, these papers can also become the foundation for building your child's portfolio. Serving as a portable record for your child's education, portfolios are also a great way to ease the transition between schools and when changing duty assignments.
- **Elementary Transition Portfolio** - Transitioning to a new school is never easy! A portfolio is a great way to keep accurate, up to date records for your child. Learn how easy it is to build and maintain your student's portfolio. Preparing a portable record for your child's education documentation is a great way to ease the transition between schools and when changing duty assignments.
- **Middle and High School Showcase Portfolio** This workshop shares how to create an academic "showcase" portfolio for middle school and high school students, particularly, those who are college bound.
- **Middle and High School Transitions Portfolio** - Transitioning to a new school is never easy! A portfolio is a great way to keep accurate, up to date records for your child. It also is a great tool for older students who are starting to build a competitive resume for college. Learn how easy it is to build and maintain your student's portfolio. Preparing a portable record for your child's education documentation is also a great way to ease the transition between schools and when changing duty assignments.

## Preparing for the Journey (three parts)

Parent/child interactions beginning at birth impact academic success. We'll share information and fun activities to assist parents in establishing a strong foundation for their children (birth to 8 years), which will contribute to their success in school.

- **Part One Birth to Three Years** - Parent/child interactions beginning at birth impact academic success. We'll share information and fun activities to assist parents in establishing a strong foundation for their children (birth to 3 years), which will contribute to their success in school.
- **Part Two Preschool and Kindergarten** - Starting school can be an exciting and stressful time for parents and children alike. Join us for a discussion on finding the right preschool or kindergarten for your child as well as preparing your child to start these new and exciting stages in their lives.
- **Part Three First and Second Grade** - Graduating kindergarten and entering the ranks of the "numbered" elementary school classes is a big step for our kids. Join us to learn more about what to expect in first and second grade and how we can best support our young elementary school children.

## Preventing the Summer Slide

- **Preventing the Summer Slide** - Research shows, on average, children's reading skills regress by 25% over summer vacation. Math skills also suffer during this break in learning and it typically takes teachers anywhere from four to six weeks to get students back on track in the fall. Educators commonly refer to this phenomenon as the "summer slide". This workshop will uncover simple ways parents can engage their children in educational activities during the summer without them even noticing they are doing it!

## Reading

- **Building Blocks to Literacy** - From several decades of research, we have learned a lot about how children learn to read and write. This research tells us that to become more skilled and confident readers over time, children need lots of opportunities to learn and be exposed to the building blocks of literacy. In this workshop we will explore the nine building blocks and offer suggestions on how to build them into your child's daily life.
- **Coaching a Home Run Reader** - Join us for this highly interactive sports-themed workshop as we cover challenges our kids face and activities we can do with them to build their reading skills.
- **Growing Great Readers** - Nothing will substitute for a strong foundation in reading. Success in every school subject is dependent on being able to read and understand the material. Join us as we discuss the building blocks of reading and activities we can do with them to build their reading skills.
- **Reading in Middle School** - In this workshop we will look at the benefits of reading for older students. We'll cover ways parents can help increase interest, guide students to try new books, and even how to prepare kids to read books they don't particularly want to read (but need to for school).

## Resiliency

- **Resiliency and Deployment** - We will identify opportunities to build and strengthen resiliency skills during a deployment cycle and share how parents can utilize proven strategies to help their children cope effectively with these challenges.
- **Coping Skills** - This workshop will help parents understand the importance of raising resilient children. We will share coping strategies to aid in building and strengthening resiliency skills in children during times of transition such as moving to a new place and starting a new school.
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## Resiliency (Bullying)

- **Bullying** - The first line of defense against bullying is to build activities and discussions into our family life that create awareness and enhance resiliency. Join us to learn more about what we can do as parents to promote the social skills, values, and behaviors that "bully proof" our children. We will discuss specific tools and strategies for navigating this issue both at school and online.

## Science

- **Science Literacy** – Children are natural explorers and science experiments can be as easy as dropping a raisin in a glass of soda. Join us for a look at the benefits of early exposure into the world of science and fun ways to engage our children in scientific thought - and perhaps even get excited ourselves!

## STEM Workshops

- **STEM: Using Building Bricks to Reinforce K-3 Math** - This workshop will provide a brief overview of STEM education and its relevance. It will also help parents recognize their state standards, math vocabulary and skills for grades K-3 and then apply those concepts to playing with building bricks.
- **STEM: Show Me the Money: Teaching Kids the Value of a Dollar** - A primary goal for us as parents when it comes to modeling and teaching our kids the "value of a dollar" is to instill in our kids that money comes from hard work. Paying children for chores at home and fostering a moneywise home environment can provide opportunities to teach math concepts and key life skills. This workshop will address saving, spending, budgeting, entrepreneurship and investing.

## Test Taking Strategies

- **Test Taking Strategies - All** children take tests. Learn what parents can do to help their children be the best test takers possible. Understanding the why and the how of test taking makes it easier to deal with and we will share proven strategies to help parents help their children and eliminate some of the stress and anxiety from the testing process.
- **Test Taking Strategies for Middle and High School Students** - Testing is part of education. In this workshop, we will address why schools test students followed by a discussion of state-specific and standardized tests that middle and high school students take. We will focus on the challenges that military-connected students face and explore possible ways to help mitigate those challenges. The last section of the workshop will address a variety of test-taking techniques for students.

## Time Management

- **Time Management for Kids** - Now that school and after school activities are in full swing, it is time to get organized! We all know it takes careful planning for parents and kids to accomplish all the necessary tasks that are required of school, sports and activities over the course of a 24-hour day. This workshop will provide parents with a range of tools and techniques they can use to help their children manage time to accomplish specific tasks, projects and goals.

## Transitions

- **Easing your Child's School Transitions** - Positive school transitions can build resilience in our children. We'll share key ingredients to facilitate successful transitions.
- **Transitions: What Every Parent Should Know** - Moving in the military is difficult enough. but when transitioning with children, changing schools, finding child care and addressing the social and emotional impact of a move can bring added stress to the family. This workshop addresses these issues and more and provides proven techniques and resources for parents with children of all ages.
- **School Transitions with Exceptional Needs:** Navigating the IEP (Individual Education Plan) process and special education policies in a new state can be confusing and sometimes frustrating. Come learn what resources are available in your area and learn how to make a school transition a positive educational experience for the entire family.

## TMAS

- **Tell Me A Story™ - Community Event:** The Tell Me A Story™ program mission is to empower our military children by using literature and their own stories in a way that fosters: skills for resilience, strong peer and parent connections, a sense of pride and accomplishment, and a caring community. TMAS™ events show military parents and children how to use literature to make connections and find support. Stories have the capacity to open discussion on potentially difficult topics such as family separations or the fear of moving to a new location. The books for each TMAS™ event have been carefully selected for their content, literary value, and illustrations. Each book also presents character traits of positive, optimistic people which research shows result in people being more resilient, healthier, and happier.