

“What does it mean to you to be a military child?”

Being a military child means many different things to many different people. For my entire life, I have been a military child and that fact allowed me at an early age to learn to adapt and to keep a brave face. To sum it all up, for me, being a military child means the three S's: Selflessness, Service and Sacrifice. All three may seem similar, but become less alike through their deeper meaning and when tied to my personal experiences.

Selflessness means I am less concerned about my needs and more concerned about others' needs and wishes. I practiced selflessness when I share my parents with others. It may be drill, deployment, meetings or a soldier in need, I am confident that my Mom represents me well. While that is happening, I know as a military child, my military family is there for me.

As a military child, the extended family is important. The selflessness I experience, I pass on during my military camp summer experiences. For me going to a military summer camp allowed me to build relationships with my military family and demonstrate selflessness by helping other military children new to the experience. As a military child, that treatment has only been positive.

Service applies to the children and dependents of those serving, not just to our loved ones in action. Being a military child means being someone who is counted on to serve. Being a military child also means being responsible and being a leader. My service in the community is an example of this. I have successfully raised money for the American Cancer Society and rang the Bell for the Salvation Army. Service is what led me to join the American Legion Auxiliary Juniors and I have served as the President of the organization. I visited nursing homes, gave out cards, poppies and personal care products. I have packed and mailed Christmas and other holiday packages. A military child means understanding and volunteering on those important days such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

Sacrifice is having to give up things you love. As a military child, it means I gave up a parent to deploy and that I would not see her for a year. A military

child means giving up something I value, but the sacrifice is worth it for the sake of our country. As a military child, having to let go of a loved one who serves is the biggest sacrifice.

To be a military child means the three S's. Selflessness: care for others and my family as I would for myself. Service: Providing for others without reward. Sacrifice: Giving up something I value for a greater good. One thing I must not forget, to be a military child means to be a kid. While I recognize the three S', this military child laughs, loves and has fun everyday!