

# HOT TOPICS

## MILITARY AND VETERAN FAMILY PROGRAM

Presented by Parent Network of WNY - June 2017

Military and veteran families in WNY live a civilian lifestyle. This means they do not live on a military base and children do not attend military schools. Because of this, **many military connected families are not aware of the support and resources that are available to them.** That's where we come in!

In 2015, Parent Network of WNY started a **Military and Veteran Family Program to specifically help these families that have children with disabilities.** We do this many different ways.

- **One- on-One Support Specialists** who are available by phone, email, or in person to answer families' specific questions.
- **Trainings and support groups** for parents and families of children with Autism and Developmental Disabilities.
- Collaborate with **military and veteran organizations across Western New York** such as the Veteran's One-Stop, Veteran's Outreach Center, The Connecticut Street Armory and the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station to let them know about all the ways Parent Network can help the military connected families they serve.
- **Assist families in finding doctors** and therapists that take military health insurance.
- **Resources and support to schools and teachers** by helping them understand the unique challenges military families face numerous moves, frequently starting a new school, separation from a parent or spouse for a long period of time and finding support and friends during a relocation.
- **Help families understand** their child's disability and education, developmental, and transitional needs.
- Guide parents in **becoming successful advocates** for their children
- We educate military and veteran families on the **services that are available to them in WNY.**



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## TIPS FOR RELOCATING WITH A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY

- **Talk about the move** early on
- **Keep a calendar** to track the days and weeks until the move
- **Tell your child's teacher, doctors, therapists and other professionals that you are moving**, as soon as possible
- **Ask for school records and IEP's** to be updated if necessary
- **Request copies** of all evaluations, assessments, IEP's, etc.
- **Send copies of all records to your child's new school.** Make appointments for meetings soon after you move
- **Request copies of all medical records**
- **Ask for referrals to physicians** in your new location
- Have at least a **one-month supply of all prescriptions**
- Learn about **disability benefits** in your new state

## RESOURCES

10 Resources for Special Needs Families in the Military

<http://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2013/05/27/10-resources-for-special-needs-families-in-the-military/>

National Military Family Association

<http://www.militaryfamily.org/>

Blue Star Families

<https://bluestarfam.org/>

Military Kids Connect

<http://www.militarykidsconnect.dcoe.mil/>

The Exceptional Advocate: A Newsletter for Military Families with Special Needs

<http://www.militaryonesource.mil/efmp/news>