SALUTE the KIDS
A Recognition Program For Children of the Army National Guard Soldiers

By
Copyright 2012
Michele L. Rook

Submitted to the graduate degree program in Architecture
and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Chairperson Richard Branham

Michael Eckersley

Lois Greene

Date Defended: 04/12/2012
Abstract

Military children experience long periods of separation from a parent. The parent/parents choose to dedicate themselves to our country through the military, but the children don’t have a choice. Children need to be recognized for their sacrifices and time lost. This project will research the need for recognition.
Introduction:

The United States has been at war for ten years and counting, sending thousands of mothers and fathers overseas, causing a generation of children to grow up with deployed parents. (Alter, 2010) “Military children are often referred to as ‘unsung heroes.’” (Wilson, 2010) Recognition for these children needs to be implemented along side of the soldier and significant other’s appreciation for their sacrifices.

The parent chooses to join the National Guard and do their duty to their nation. Children don’t make these choices they are born into the National Guard. This makes the children powerless when faced with the situation of deployment. No matter the child’s age: anxiety, sadness and anger are emotions that are dealt with daily throughout the deployment. There are many things that distract and keep children’s minds occupied to deal with the absence of their parent. Not many people come right out and say, “Thanks for the sacrifices that you have gone through for the deployment period.”

We are a military family. Through personal experience of two deployments of a year or more each, noticed the need to give the children recognition that it was tough on them also. My boys have experienced this at two different age levels and both times the National Guard only recognized the soldier and their significant other. My children are the ones that brought this issue up when we returned home from a reintegration program. They felt that they didn’t exist to the National Guard during their father’s absent. Therefore, this thesis will develop a way to recognize the children of deployed soldiers.

This proposed thesis project intends to develop a program to recognize the children of deployed soldiers in the Missouri Army National Guard (MOANG). Classify age groups and determine what actions are appropriate. Develop a type of recognition appropriate for the children of deployed soldiers.
Research Question:

How could the Army National Guard best recognize to the Children of deployed soldiers for their sacrifices and time lost?

Military children are often referred to as unsung heroes. (Wilson, 2010) Recognition for these children needs to be implemented along side of the soldier and significant other’s appreciation for their sacrifices. What type of recognition would validate the stress and time lost to children?

Methods:

Interview soldiers, experts in existing programs in the ANG, family members, and children that have experienced a deployment to gather what exists now in recognition for children. During this process information has been gathered to add to a brainstorming pool of ways to recognize children of deployed soldiers of the ANG. Through literature research gathering the age groups of how to separate children according to age for effectiveness of the recognition will be determined.

Surveys will be created electronically and will be taken by subjects that have experienced deployments. Two to three scenarios of children’s experience/views of their experience of any recognition after deployment will be created.

Literature Review:

“Most people who have never served in the military, or had family members who have served, could not fully understand the harsh emotional stress put upon a family when a soldier is deployed. Deployment affects everyone. moms, dads, wives, children, girlfriends and friends. Everyone in that soldier’s life is affected to some degree.” (Children and the effect of deployment, 2010)

Arguably the most vulnerable are the children and youth left at home. While younger children may not fully comprehend why a parent must leave, older children and adolescents must cope with parental deployment during a critical and rapid stage of social and emotional development, which is challenging the most supportive and stable of environments. The emerging body of research specifically on the effects of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom deployments associated with child well-being problems, particularly increases in stress levels, reports of child maltreatment, and increases in school difficulties. (Chandra, 2010)

The amount of difficulty that the children bares In 2009, approximately 1.98 million children had one or both parents in the military; 1.25 million had parents
in the Active Component and 728,000 had parents in the Reserve Components. (Chandra, Martin, Hawkins, & Richardson, 2010) Living with a deployed parent or the possibility of being deployed has become the new normal for military children. Serving alongside those 1.1 million others who are also experiencing the stresses and strains of a life of deployments — military children. The stress of a deployment intensifies as it spreads down through the layers of a family. It starts with the soldier, continues to their significant other, and then onto the children. (Wong & Gerras, 2010)

Very young children may exhibit separation anxiety, temper tantrums, and changes in eating habits. School-age children may experience a decline in academic performance, and have mood changes or physical complaints. Adolescents may become angry and act out, or withdraw and show signs of apathy. The child difficulties were greater for families experiencing longer periods of parental absence in the last three years.

There are programs available for the families to deal with issues that arise during deployment. It has been shown that keeping the children active and involved in many activities keeps their minds off the stresses and worries of their deployed parent. With all of the efforts to recognize the soldier and their families the children are still in the background. As a military mother with children put it: “A lot of people have said to me, ‘Oh, it must be hard.’ Well, I can handle it, but I think it’s harder on the children. - Let them know that we recognize that you are serving this country, too.” This isn’t happening at this time, just saying thank you for your sacrifices would make all of the stress that the children go through validated along with their parent’s sacrifices.

Programs available:

Month of the Military Child:
April
Children of military personnel have been recognized since 1986.
Activities centered on children of soldiers.
Send out “hero packs”

- After asking soldiers, parents, and children if they knew what month was designated to honor the Military Child it was overwhelming that they had no knowledge that there was a month designated to the Military Child.

Our Military Kids:
Guard and Reserve families are financially stretched for activities.
Activities are crucial to a child’s sense of well-being.
Reserve and Guard families live too far from military bases and installations to access the available support services.

A grant program that pays for children’s activities during a deployment.
Packet is sent to the child thanking them for their service to our country and modifying them of the award. (Our Military Kids, 2011)

Yellow Ribbon:
Connect to resources throughout the deployment cycle.
BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER
Promote the well-being of National Guard and Reserve members, the families and communities. (About Us, 2011)

- Yellow Ribbon program offers a place for the soldier and the significant other resources that may be required throughout the deployment as issues arise. Through personal experience this program is great for solving issues that arise during the deployment and reintegrating the soldier after he returns from deployment. Our children weren’t involved in going through the program with us at all. There were baby-sitters and activities to keep the younger kids busy, but nothing for adolescent.

ZERO TO THREE:
Meet the Short- and Long-term Needs of children from zero to three. (ZERO-TO-THREE, 2011)

Recognition:
A soldier advances his career by advancing up the ranks.
Gifts are given by groups to show appreciation.
Certificates and plaques are common.

Results:
Take the input from the questionnaire/interview from the families and children who have experienced deployment to:
Create scenarios from the input from the families.
Gather up all input for brainstorming idea generations.
Recommend a form of recognition for children of deployed soldiers. Develop a program to propose to the MOANG.

Time Table:
I am continuing to interview families and children of soldiers that have experienced deployments.
February 24, 2012
Gather information from the interviews of program experts, soldiers, family and children.
Finalize thesis committee.
Set date to present Thesis and make arrangements.

March 2, 2012
Create a preliminary program for recognition.

March 9, 2012
Create a thesis presentation from all information and process of research.

March 30, 2012
Finalize all of the thesis elements for presentation.

April 18, 2012
Upload thesis to KU.

**Family/Children Questionnaire:**

1. Is one of your parents in the National Guard?

2. Which one?

3. Have they been deployed?

4. During the time your parent was deployed did anyone tell you Thank You for what you sacrificed?

5. If someone were to say Thank You how would you like to receive the Thank You?
   These are just ideas to explain the question
   a. In a ceremony.
   b. One on one.
   c. In the form of a token.

**Thesis Statement:**

**Implications of Research:**

Establishing if the children of deployed soldiers are thanked for their sacrifices and time away from their loved one. Develop a program to recognize these children for what they have sacrificed.
Works Cited


Salute the Kids

A Recognition Program For Children of Army National Guard Soldiers.

Michele Rook, 2012
Design Management Thesis
University of Kansas School of Architecture, Design & Planning
Contents

Overview................................................................................................................................................................. 5
Personal Motivation.................................................................................................................................................. 6
Thesis Focus............................................................................................................................................................. 7
Problem..................................................................................................................................................................... 8
Programs Available................................................................................................................................................ 10
Personas .............................................................................................................................................................. 15, 17
Interview............................................................................................................................................................... 16, 18
Survey ..................................................................................................................................................................... 19
Conversations......................................................................................................................................................... 27
Solution.................................................................................................................................................................... 28
“Military children are often referred to as ‘unsung heroes.’”

(Wilson, 2010)
Overview

Military children experience long periods of separation from a parent. The parent/parents choose to dedicate themselves to our country through the military, but the children don't have a choice. Children need to be recognized for their sacrifices and time lost. This project will research the need for recognition.
Personal Motivation

We are a military family. Through personal experience of two deployments of a year or more each, noticed the need to give the children recognition that it was tough on them also. My boys have experienced this at two different age levels and both times the National Guard only recognized the soldier and their significant other. My children are the ones that brought this issue up when we returned home from a reintegration program. They felt that they didn’t exist to the National Guard during their father’s absent. Therefore, this thesis will develop a way to recognize the children of deployed soldiers.
Thesis Focus

This thesis is focusing on finding out if children of deployed soldiers of the Army National Guard have been Thanked for their sacrifices and time lost.
Problem

The United States has been at war for ten years and counting, sending mothers and fathers overseas, causing a generation of children to grow up with deployed parents. (Alter, 2010)

**CHALLENGES**

**ANXIETY**
Family units deal with a deployed member.

Children in military families face challenges that are different from other children.

**EMOTIONAL**

This occurs throughout the United States.

**SOCIALY**

Children in military families face challenges that are different from other children.

**ACADEMICALLY**

Schools deal with children of all ages going through this experience of a parent being deployed.

**WITHDRAW**

Parents choose to serve - children aren't given a voice in the decision of whether or not a parent serves.

**SOLDIER AND SUPPORT MEMBER ARE RECOGNIZED**

National Guard families are often without the access to services available on active duty military bases.

**ANGER**

Children go thru this experience - parent comes home - there is about a year of adjustment (reintegration).

**MILITARY FOCUSES ON MOM AND DAD’S RELATIONSHIP.**

**SADNESS**

**LOSE**
Program to honor children of deployed soldiers.

How do children see themselves in the context of a deployment situation.

Recognize children in unique way along with their parents.

Children feel part of the deployed family unit.

Prototype a program of recognition

Program that considers children as participants in the deployment experience.

Conceptual

Procedural

Appearance

Behavioral

Conceptual

Program to honor children of deployed soldiers.

Are children thanked?

What types of recognition are appropriate.

Recognize children in unique way along with their parents.

Children feel part of the deployed family unit.
April

Children of military personnel have been recognized since 1986.

Activities centered around the children.

Send out “hero packs”

Guard and Reserve families are financially stretched for activities. Activities are crucial to a child’s sense of well-being. Reserve and Guard families live too far from military bases and installations to access the available support services.

A simple grant program that pays for children’s activities.

Packet is sent to the child thanking them for their service to our country and motivating them of the award.

Connect to resources throughout the deployment cycle.

BEFORE
DURING
AFTER

Promote the well-being of National Guard and Reserve members, the families and communities

Meet the Short-and Long-term Needs of children from zero to three.
Month of the Military Child: April

Children of military personnel have been recognized since 1986.

Activities centered on children of soldiers.

Send out “hero packs”

There are 1.7 million American children and youth under 18 with a parent serving in the military and about 900,000 with one or both parents deployed multiple times.

April is designated as the Month of the Military Child, underscoring the important role military children play in the armed forces community. The Month of the Military Child is an opportunity to recognize military children and youth for their heroism, character, courage, sacrifices and continued resilience.

After asking soldiers, parents, and children if they knew what month was designated to honor the Military Child it was overwhelming that they had no knowledge that there was a month designated to the Military Child.
Our Military Kids:

Guard and Reserve families are financially stretched for activities.

Activities are crucial to a child’s sense of well-being.

Reserve and Guard families live too far from military bases and installations to access the available support services.

A grant program that pays for children’s activities during a deployment.

Packet is sent to the child thanking them for their service to our country and modifying them of the award. (Our Military Kids, 2011)
Yellow Ribbon:
Connect to resources throughout the deployment cycle. BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER
Promote the well-being of National Guard and Reserve members, the families and communities.

Yellow Ribbon program offers a place for the soldier and the significant other resources that may be required throughout the deployment as issues arise. Through personal experience this program is great for solving issues that arise during the deployment and reintegrating the soldier after he returns from deployment. Our children weren't involved in going through the program with us at all. There were baby-sitters and activities to keep the younger kids busy, but nothing for adolescent.
ZERO TO THREE:

Meet the Short-and Long-term Needs of children from zero to three.

(ZERO-TO-THREE, 2011)
Taylor and Zach

We were born into a military family. Our dad has always been gone once a month or longer for the Army National Guard. The things that we remember the most about him being gone that he was never home for our birthday parties. He would be gone for the weekend or come home after they were over. He has also traveled to many different countries and we always get something unique from where ever he had returned from.

Our parents choose to go full time Army National Guard six years ago, so now the military is our way of life. Our parents have always explained what was happening and never keep anything from us for as long as we can remember. We have been through two deployments so far and sure to have more to come. The older that we got the deployment were harder to go through. Maybe, because we understand what could happen and understand time.
Interview
 Vaughn and Ashton

We were born into a military family. Our dad has always been in the Army National Guard. He has been deployed to Afghanistan for over a year. After that deployment, our parents choose to go full time Army National Guard.

Vaughn was a sophomore and Ashton was in third grade. Vaughn remembers that year as being very hard dealing with the unknown. Ashton remembers that her dad was gone and would be home sometime after the summer.
Interviews
Survey

Have You Been Thanked?

1. Is one of your parents in the National Guard?
   - Yes
   - No

2. Which one?
   - Mom
   - Dad

3. Have they been deployed?
   - Yes
   - No

4. During the time your parent was deployed did anyone tell you Thank You for what you sacrificed?
   - Yes
   - No

5. If someone was to say Thank You how would you like to receive the Thank You?
   - In a ceremony.
   - One on one.
   - In the form of a token.
   Please provide ideas of how you would like to be thanked.

[Submit]
### Surveys Answered

#### 1. Is one of your parents in the National Guard?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>97% (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total Responses: 30, 100% of submissions

#### 2. Which one?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>24% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>76% (22)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total Responses: 29, 97% of submissions

#### 3. Have they been deployed?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>100% (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total Responses: 29, 97% of submissions

#### 4.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>90% (26)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total Responses: 29, 97% of submissions
### Questionnaire Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Is one of your parents in the National Guard?</th>
<th>2. Which one?</th>
<th>3. Have they been deployed?</th>
<th>4. During the time your parent was deployed did anyone tell you (the child) Thank You for what you sacrificed?</th>
<th>5. If someone was to say Thank You how would you like to receive the Thank You? In a ceremony. One on one. In the form of a token. Please provide ideas of how you would like to be thanked.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>someone saying thank you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>A simple thank you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>acknowledge that it happened to me also - token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>thanked with something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>something that shows it happened to me also.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>one on one token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>token.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>either one on one or in the form or a token.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Additional Notes:**

- Michele—I printed this and took it to bingo last night, because I knew one person there that fit the requirements—Alisha from Huntsville, MO (junior in high school) filled out the paper—Do you need me to send the paper? If this works—LOVE, Mary.

- I feel a ceremony just for kids of not only returning but also those military kids whose parents haven't deployed. They are affected by the Soldier leaving for duty. It would be nice to do at a yellow ribbon to recognize the sacrifice that they made to ensure our safety. A one on one would be good also to let them know they are appreciated.

- my name is Troy Crawford and my dad was deployed 18 months to Afghanistan. I would like to be thanked with a token... thank you, Troy.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Is one of your parents in the National Guard?</th>
<th>2. Which one?</th>
<th>3. Have they been deployed?</th>
<th>4. During the time your parent was deployed did anyone tell you (the child) Thank you for what you sacrificed?</th>
<th>5. If someone was to say Thank You how would you like to receive the Thank You? In a ceremony... One on one... In the form of a token... Please provide ideas of how you would like to be thanked.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I don't have a parent in the national guard, but my significant other is active duty and I got a &quot;Thank you&quot; one time and it meant a lot to me because I feel like the support roles are often forgotten about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>One on one. Especially teachers at school - school is very hard when Mom is deployed, especially when she is the only real parent. Teachers may need some ideas to help us. Also a real short ceremony followed by a big cookout where I can invite 5 friends who supported me while she was gone, and they should get a small token too, like a gift card to Walmart, because they were my support while she was away. At the cookout there should be organized games for me and my mom like three-legged race - balloon-toss, obstacle course, hot-air balloon rides - something really cool to remember... Thanks, Jesslyn Clark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A token. A military coin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>A military coin designed just for thanking children would be something I could keep and remember.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Results

1. Children who filled out the survey had a parent in the National Guard.
2. Out of all the children surveyed 24% had their mothers deployed and 76% had their fathers deployed.
3. Children who filled out the survey had a parent deployed.
4. Out of all the children surveyed 10% had been thanked and 90% had not been thanked.
5. Ideas that the children submitted for recognition ideas:
   One on One recognition: 27.5%
   “Acknowledge that it happened to me also.”
   “A one on one would be good also to let them know they are appreciated.”
   “A real short ceremony followed by a big cookout where I can invite 5 friends who supported me while she was gone, and they should get a small token too.”

Given a token for recognition: 52.5%
   “Something that shows it happened to me also.”
   “Something to remember the hardship.”
   “Token to remember.”
   “My dad was deployed 18 months to Afghanistan ...I would liked to be thanked with a token...”
In a ceremony: 7.5%
“A real short ceremony followed by a big cookout where I can invite 5 friends who supported me while she was gone.”
“I feel a ceremony just for kids of not only returning but also those military kids whose parents haven’t deployed.”
“Ceremony with a token.”

Thanked with something: 7.5%
“Thanked with something.”
“Something that shows it happened to me also.”

A Thank You: 7.5%
“Just a thank you would do.”

Recognition anything: 2.5%
“Anything would do.”
Conversations

I engaged conversations with numerous families with children that have been through deployments. The consisted of children with varying ages and number of deployments. The children and parent that were home during the deployment confirmed that being thanked for their hardships didn’t exist.

I contacted the Soldier and Family Support Division at the Army National Guard Bureau to verify the what they actually do for the children of the deployed soldiers. The direct you to different organizations that give options for problems and issues that may occur during the deployment. They don’t do anything to thank the families members that are left behind due to regulations and funding issues.

Through these conversations the children aren’t thanked for their hardships during their parents deployment.
Solution

Create a program that would distribute a token that represents their hardships and sacrifices as part of the deployment along with their parent.

Naming of the program represents respect and acknowledgement. A salute is a gesture or other action used to display respect. This is a symbol/gesture used by the military and other organizations. By using this symbol and gesture the children have an understanding of what it represents.

Salute the KIDS
Solution cont.

Token:
Creating a military coin that represents the mission in which their parent’s deployment was issued. These coins can only be earned by being a child 18 years old and under with a parent away on a deployment.
Solution cont.

The United States has been at war for ten years and counting, sending thousands of mothers and fathers overseas, causing a generation of children to grow up with deployed parents. (Alter, 2010) “Military children are often referred to as ‘unsung heroes.” (Wilson, 2010)

The amount of difficulty that the children bares In 2009, approximately 1.98 million children had one or both parents in the military; 1.25 million had parents in the Active Component and 728,000 had parents in the Reserve Components. (Chandra, Martin, Hawkins, & Richardson, 2010) Living with a deployed parent or the possibility of being deployed has become the new normal for military children. Serving alongside those 1.1 million others who are also experiencing the stresses and strains of a life of deployments — military children.

Problem

Getting funding for the production of the coins and methods of distributing them.
## Pricing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coin Type</th>
<th>Prices Per Coin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5&quot; Challenge Coins</td>
<td>$4.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coins with No Color</td>
<td>$5.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coins with One Side with Up to 7 Colors</td>
<td>$5.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coins with Up to 7 Colors on Both Sides</td>
<td>$5.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coin Type</th>
<th>Prices Per Coin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.75&quot; Challenge Coins</td>
<td>$5.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coins with No Color</td>
<td>$5.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coins with One Side with Up to 7 Colors</td>
<td>$6.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coins with Up to 7 Colors on Both Sides</td>
<td>$6.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coin Type</th>
<th>Prices Per Coin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0&quot; Challenge Coins</td>
<td>$5.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coins with No Color</td>
<td>$6.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coins with One Side with Up to 7 Colors</td>
<td>$7.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coins with Up to 7 Colors on Both Sides</td>
<td>$7.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Solution cont.

One on One Thank You

Recognition for these children needs to be implemented along side of the soldier and significant other's appreciation for their sacrifices. Incorporating this into the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program that the soldier and their significant other participate in after the deployment.

A. Having a designated time and place for the soldier and their children to receive one on one recognition with a token presented.
B. During the divisions soldier and significant other recognition, include the children.
C. Upon return to the unit and their families recognize the children and families and distribute tokens through a receiving line.
Feedback on Proposed Program

Taylor and Zach think that the idea is perfect for children of deployed parents. They feel that it would give acknowledgement of the hardships that they have experienced through deployments.

Vaughn and Ashton liked the one on one thank you and the coin would be something for them to remember what they and their father went through.

I asked my friend Amy Clark to present the idea to her daughters that I knew answered the survey and they loved the idea. I also received the following email from her:

It just so happens that the Civilian FRG State Sponsor for the 35th EN BDE, works right next to me, and she thinks it is a great idea. With your permission, she would like to present it to the State FRG/Yellow Ribbon Coordinator.