

Organisations that can Help



www.aff.org.uk

UK: 0044 (0)1980 615525
Germany: 0049 (0)1520 744 9741



www.awspaderborn.com

UK: 0044 (0)1722 436569
Germany: 0049 (0)5251 101862



www.hive-bfg.co.uk/bfsws.htm



www.hive-bfg.co.uk

UK: 0044 (0)1869 256158
Germany: 0049 (0)5251 57191



www.home-start.org.uk

UK: 0800 068 6368
Germany: 0049 (0)5251 528 609



www.bfgnet.de/Community/schools/paderborn.html

Germany: 0049 (0)2161 908 2265



www.ssafa.org.uk

UK: 0800 7314880
Germany: 0800 1827395

Homecomings & Reunions



A Guide for Young People and Teenagers

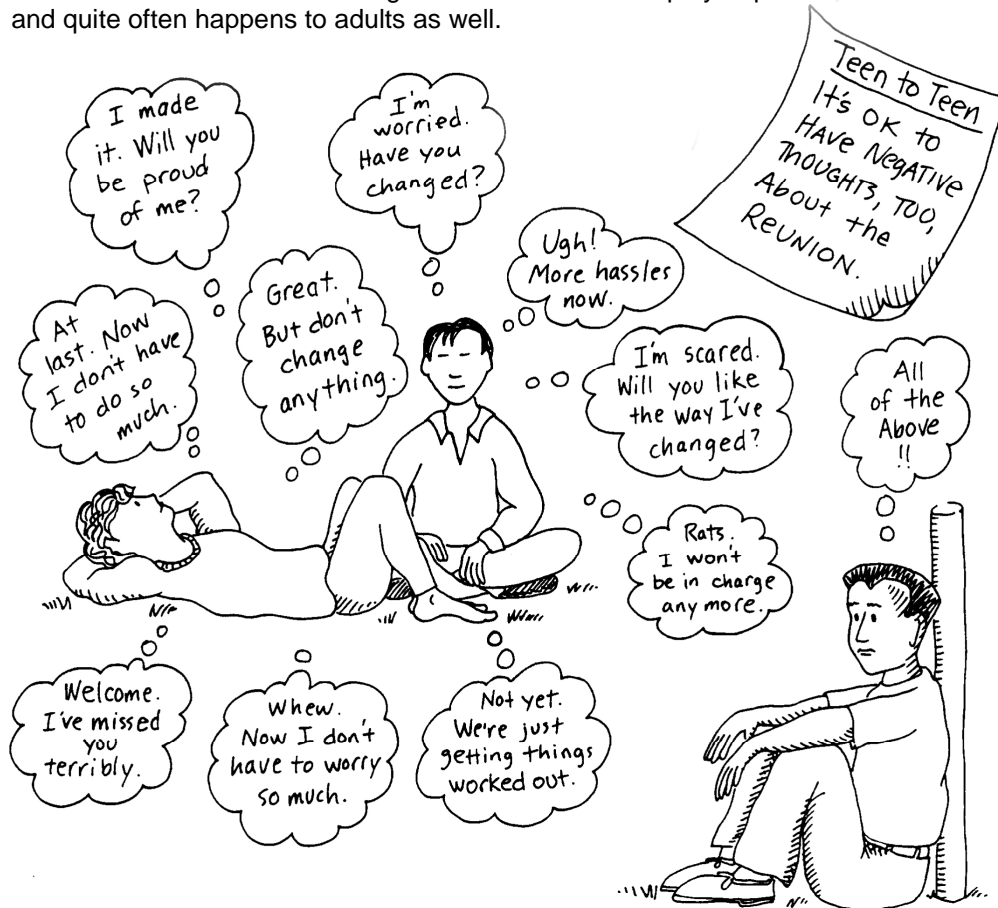


REUNION: A TIME OF MIXED EMOTIONS?

Reunion is the time everybody who loves and cares for the deployed family member longs for and wants to see happening sooner rather than later. Some reunions can be quite short such as R&R and others are long-lasting homecomings that come after the completion of a tour of duty in Iraq or Afghanistan or elsewhere.

Whether the reunion is for a long or short period of time, what most people – parents, children and young people and friends - feel when family members return from military separations is tremendous joy, excitement and relief. But there are usually other feelings too and for young people and teenagers these other feelings can be confusing because the thoughts they have can sometimes be negative. Have a look at the drawings below. The thought bubbles contain some positive and negative feelings that you might have experienced during the time that your parent has been deployed.

Teenagers and young people like you need to know that having negative or mixed emotions about the homecoming and reunion with a deployed parent is not unusual and quite often happens to adults as well.



If you are a teenager, not only have you had to cope with your own possibly mixed feelings about your parent being deployed but you are also having to adjust to changes in you that are linked to normal changes that happen to all teenagers. For example, while your parent has been away, you may well have grown quite a bit. You may also have taken on increased responsibilities within the family home. Being a teenager can also mean that you may hide your real feelings and worries about things that matter to you in an effort to protect other family members.

You have probably heard the phrase “it is good to talk”. It really is good to talk to someone close to you about things that bother you or which give you negative thoughts.

Your deployed parent has learnt how to take care of him or herself both physically and mentally when on a tour of duty. You need to learn how to take care of yourself when things bother you. Talking to close and trusted family members is a good starting point. Talking to mates – who may well be experiencing the same negative thoughts – is often a help. Within your school, there should be a teacher, tutor or other staff members you know and trust. Once you ask that person, s/he will give you the time and space to talk or help to put you in touch with someone who can help. Within the military community, there are also lots of organisations that can also help. Some of these organisations are listed on the back page of this guide.

Although it is not unusual for young people and teenagers to have mixed or conflicting emotions before and during the time that their parent is back home, what is much, much more usual is for everyone to have a great time together. You and your family have waited a long time to see your homecoming parent. So enjoy every moment together.

