Parent-Teen Activity Series
Unexpected Deployment Boxes

When a parent is unexpectedly leaving on a mission, it's always comforting to take along a little something from home. Also, it's comforting for the teen to have a little reminder of his/her parent. Just before a deployment, parent and teen can exchange personalized deployment boxes that contain items that help them feel connected and supported when apart.

♦ Have a box for both parent and teen. Each person must maintain the box for the other person (i.e., parent maintains teen’s box and teen maintains parent’s box).

♦ Update boxes monthly, weekly, or daily depending upon the potential for unexpected deployments or how each person feels about the task.

♦ Boxes can contain anything you want them to contain to remind you of your teen or to remind you of your parent.

♦ **Suggestions for box contents:** current pictures of teen/parent/family, current addresses/contact information, cassettes of voice messages, stationary & envelopes, stamps, pens/pencils, small gift picked out specifically for parent/teen (baseball, magnet, key chain, post card, cross, key, special rock, etc.), generic letter written for when the parent goes away expressing love and affection for the other person (should be uplifting and positive, can discuss shared memories, experiences, etc.), news clippings of special events to remember and more!

How will this activity promote the parent-teen relationship?

This allows parents and teens to share something special and significant between each other when they are separated.

It’s a way to allow parents and teens to be comforted when their relationship is under stress from the unique demands of military life.

This allows parents and teens to be honest and express their true feelings with each other without the pressure of face to face interactions.

A point to consider . . .

Your deployment box can be as small or large as you wish and it can contain as many or as few items as you feel necessary. The contents should be special and important and can be like a time capsule; also, do not let the other person view the contents of the box until there is a deployment, that way the contents will be a surprise!!