


# Dear Kids,

Someone you know must be deploying. I know how you feel; my dad had to go to Okinawa for a whole year and Iraq for five months. Sometimes it was really hard because I missed him so much. Then other times it was okay because my mom and I did special things. If someone that is special to you is about to leave on a deployment, I bet you have lots of feelings going on inside of you; I sure did. These are some of the feelings I felt when my dad was gone: angry, scared, hurt, disappointed, lonely and nervous. Maybe you feel this way too. Sometimes it's going to be tough, but you'll be okay. Your special person will be missing you just as much.

My mom wrote this book so kids like you could keep special memories and feelings until you see your special person back home again. You can share this book with that person, or you can keep it private all to yourself. The best part is that there are no rules. This is YOUR book - made to help YOU! You can write your thoughts and feelings down whenever and however you like. You can write in it daily,





weekly or once a month. You can write poems, add artwork or just write how you feel.

There's a story about butterflies that my mom told me. Butterflies begin life as fuzzy, crawly caterpillars. Then they go through metamorphosis (met-a-mor-fo-sis, a big word meaning a big change) where they make a cocoon and shelter themselves inside for days while they experience many changes. This is a lot of work for the caterpillars, and while they are in the cocoon, they are very fragile. However, if they go through the struggle, they come out as strong and unique butterflies just as you will after this experience. So keep your chin up and remember that even though you may feel fragile, you are working hard to make yourself extra awesome!

Happy journaling!

*Hanna Robertson*

