



VETERAN CHILDREN

WHEN PARENTS GO TO WAR

A documentary film that explores the impact of war on America's military families and children.



ABOUT THIS FILM

Veteran Children: When Parents Go To War is an award-winning documentary film that reveals the struggles, sacrifices, and strengths of **more than 2.7 million children in America whose parents have gone to war since 9/11**. Candid and unscripted, we hear the moving stories of military children as they describe the many difficulties they experience when their parents deploy to war and the many challenges they face when their parents come home.

This half-hour film raises awareness about the impacts of war on all who serve and sacrifice – soldiers, their families and their children. It provides a foundation for important discussions about war and encourages civilians to connect with military families who deserve our interest, involvement and support.

Filmed in Indiana, North Carolina, California, and Massachusetts, the film represents a broad cross-section of military families and children.

WHY THIS FILM MATTERS

Childhood is a special time, but for military children whose parents go to war there are unique psychological and emotional stresses and disruptions. With their parents' long absences, these children often experience anxiety, sadness, behavioral issues, and even secondary PTSD. **73% of military children are under the age of 12; 50% are under 5.** They take on responsibilities at an early age and are often caregivers to their injured parents. The many hardships they experience are a little-known cost of war. The film gives a voice to military children and visibility to their needs.

Veteran Children: When Parents Go To War has been well-received by diverse audiences. It was nominated for a Regional Emmy Award and has been an official selection and won numerous awards at national and international film festivals. The film screened at The National World War II Museum in New Orleans and the United States Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C.



"Military children serve alongside with their parents and one of the disadvantages is that they don't have any uniforms. So, we don't even see their service."

Dr. Harold Kudler, Duke University, School of Medicine



"We do have the hardest job. But the second hardest job after ours is being the family of a soldier."

Corporal Michael Jones, Iraq War Veteran

OUR MISSION

From our live and virtual screenings and discussions with audiences, we have learned how eager civilians are to talk about the issues of war and to know more. This is good news in a nation with an all-volunteer military, where **only 0.4 percent of the population has served in our post 9/11 wars**, and public discourse about the wars has not been common. Along with other divides in our nation, there is a military-civilian divide. We use the film to bridge that divide by inspiring conversations and connections between civilians and the military community.

The storytellers of the film are military children who are truly veterans of war and largely invisible. We hope the recognition the film provides will help them to cope and to feel valued. They need attention and services to heal from their wounds.

The reality is, military children continue to experience parents deploying to dangerous locations around the globe. This film highlights the important issue of their well-being and mental health. We hope the film will inform and influence leaders to advance policies to support them.

SCREENING AND PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We want to collaborate with organizations that provide support programs for servicemembers, their families, and children and educate the public and decision-makers in government about their sacrifices and their needs. We aim to achieve our objectives by reaching audiences across the country through live and virtual screenings and discussions with:

- Military Family and Military Child Support Organizations
- Active Duty and Veterans Organizations
- High Schools and Universities – to engage the next generation of voters and decision-makers, and young people whose lives span the post 9/11 wars
- Businesses, Community Groups, Theatres, and Places of Worship
- Local and National Governmental Organizations



Luke, a military teen whose father served in Iraq and Afghanistan, hopes many people will see the film, "because it helps them understand what's going on in our lives."



"We owe it to military families and children to better understand and address the challenges they are facing."

Mary Scott, Past Chair National Military Family Association

THE FILMMAKERS

This project was started in 2013 by Susan Hackley, the mother of a combat veteran of the Iraq war, who produced and directed the film. She was joined by Martha White Jackson, co-producer, whose son served in Afghanistan. They are first-time filmmakers who felt compelled to listen to military children and share their stories.

Renowned filmmaker Michael Nash (Climate Refugees) was the principal cinematographer. Emmy award-winning Bernice Schneider was film editor.



Susan Hackley and son Zac



Martha White Jackson and son Matt

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Visit us: www.veteranchildren.com

Watch a film clip

