

**IT'S NOT JUST THEIR JOB, IT'S OUR
WHOLE LIVES: AN EXPLORATION OF HUMAN
RIGHTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
FROM ARMED FORCES FAMILIES.**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

The UK, devolved and local governments must teach all adults about how forces life can detrimentally impact on children and their rights, so they are better able to mitigate the impact and support them to access justice when needed.

The UK Government, Scottish Government, Local Authorities, and services must develop Child friendly complaints procedures and appropriate advocacy services.

The UK and devolved Governments must design a robust information transfer system for education and healthcare to minimise disruption when moving across the home nations.

The UK Government, Scottish Government and Local Authorities must do all they can to ensure children and young people from armed forces and veteran families are supported to maintain hobbies, interests and friendships, no matter where they move.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UK GOVERNMENT

The MOD and UK Government must review the Get You Home Pay and X-Factor to ensure it is sufficient to support regular face to face contact for those bases away from their families.

The Ministry of Defence must review the UK Armed Forces Family Strategy to acknowledge children in their own right and include more specific measures for children.

The Ministry of Defence must review existing parental support initiatives to help ensure whole families feel supported and equipped with their mental health and wellbeing.

The Ministry of Defence must develop and deliver appropriate support for children who lose their connection to the armed forces, regardless of why it is lost. Policies must be reviewed or developed to support this.

The MOD should ensure that planning and support for leaving active service includes children and young people. It must start early, allow adequate time for the child to understand the change and have their voice heard within the planning process.

The MOD must put mechanisms in place to identify those children affected by their parent leaving service early or being discharged at short notice and which considers the child's needs specifically to ensure the right support is in place.

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MOD AND SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

The MOD and Scottish Government must commission research to understand the impact of service-related separation on children, hearing directly from children and young people.

The MOD and Scottish Government must conduct a CRIA on any policy which has the potential to affect children from armed forces and veteran families.

The UK and Scottish Government must ensure sufficient resources to mitigate the impact children and young people of service-related challenges through whole family wellbeing support and targeted mental health support.

The UK Government must make sure Service Family Accommodation is up to standard and the Scottish Government ensure smooth housing transition when leaving SFA for whatever reason.

The UK and Scottish Governments must do more to understand the impact on children and young people of transitioning to veteran status, including ensuring social security assessments do not leave them financially disadvantaged

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

The Scottish Government must publish a co-produced strategy detailing how it will protect the rights of children and young people from armed forces and veteran families living in Scotland.

The Scottish Government should specifically mention forces families as recipients of their whole family support strategy and funding.

The Scottish Government must ensure good quality childcare is available in all areas across Scotland.

The Scottish Government must strengthen its commitment to guarantee funding for young people going into higher and further education from a forces background.

The Scottish Government must strengthen the implementation of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004.

The Scottish Government should invest in the participation of children and young people from armed forces and veteran families, recognising their experiences as lesser-heard community. They must ensure inclusion of their voices in policymaking and service design.

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND HEALTH BOARDS

Local Authorities must work with schools and children and young people to co-produce a whole school approach to support children from forces families.

The Scottish Government and Regional Health Boards must co-produce Mental Health and Wellbeing services that address this group's unique challenges and needs. This must include a commitment to maintaining a child's place on NHS waiting lists or receipt of treatment following a service-related move to or within Scotland.

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