



A Discussion Toolkit for Parents

TALKING TO YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER ABOUT THE ARMY

So your son or daughter is thinking about joining the Army. Or maybe you're thinking about recommending the Army to your child. Either way, it's an important decision. And it requires truly open communication. To facilitate the discussion, we've developed this toolkit, which contains five valuable tips you might find helpful.

TIP #1: DO THE RESEARCH

Read through the For Parents section on GoArmy.com to learn more about why the Army is a viable option for your child. It's a good resource whether or not you support your child's interest.

Once you have enough information, explain how much research you've done. This will show your son or daughter that you're interested in starting a real dialogue.

TIP #2: START SLOWLY

If your son or daughter surprised you with his or her interest in the Army, it's okay to take a step back and start the discussion later. It's vital you both feel ready to talk. But don't wait too long.

WHERE TO TALK

- A quiet, private place where you will both be comfortable
- Perhaps go to your son or daughter's favorite restaurant
- Avoid your child's room; it will help if you're on neutral turf

TIP #3: KEEP AN OPEN MIND

A discussion this critical must be a two-way street. Remember, this is about your child's future. So listen to what he or she has to say. Of course, make sure that favor is returned. You have a big say in this, too.

Enlisting in the Army is bound to bring up a lot of concerns on your part. As a parent, you have every right to express these concerns. But do so calmly. Your son or daughter may still be your little baby, but don't treat him or her like one. It takes a lot of courage to even consider the Army. Respect that.

WHAT TO CONSIDER

- What does your son or daughter want to get out of the Army?
- What direction does your child want to take in life?
- Has he or she thought about going to college before or after the Army?
- How does your child want to enlist: Army Reserve or Active Duty?

TIP #4: KEEP IT GOING

After your initial discussion, talk about next steps together. Chances are, you're not in total agreement about joining the Army. After all, there are a lot of factors involved. So set up another time to talk.

TIP #5: MEET WITH A RECRUITER

Army Recruiters are some of the most experienced Soldiers in the Army—which means they are extremely qualified to tell you what the Army has to offer. Talking to a Recruiter is a great way to ask specific questions with your son or daughter. A Recruiter can help you make a decision that's right for your family.

Recruiters can also determine the right timetable for enlistment and help your son or daughter prepare for Basic Training. Only by working with a Recruiter can you tailor an Army experience to meet your child's goals, wants and needs.

WHAT TO ASK

- What kind of service would be best: Active Duty, Army Reserve or ROTC
- How long will my son or daughter serve?
- What kind of job training can he or she qualify for?
- Where will my son or daughter be stationed?
- How can the Army help my child get a college education?

This toolkit is just a starting point for a truly important discussion with your son or daughter. Hopefully you've found these tips helpful. If you have more questions about the U.S. Army or want to contact a Recruiter, call 1-800-USA-ARMY, ext. 181. Or visit GoArmy.com.

