



Lifting the lid on TRANSITION

- being better prepared

AFF recently published research that looked into the challenges families face when their soldier leaves the Army. The findings provide useful information and guidance for families to help them be better prepared, regardless of how soon their soldier is leaving the Army.

Transwhat?

Transition is the process of preparing for life after the Forces. This affects the whole family, and all benefit from being involved in planning and preparations.

Transition usually culminates in Resettlement for the soldier, which is a package of support to help them prepare for, and find, a job after the Army. Resettlement is just one part of transition.

Research conclusions

Our research gave us a clear insight into transition and how families can have a positive experience of it.

- The more pro-active families are about seeking information and support about re-joining civvy street, and the earlier they start planning, the more successful their move is likely to be.
- Transition is about more than a Service leaver's employment (which is often what people focus on when thinking about leaving the Forces); it includes: housing, wellbeing, employment, health, education & children, finances and lots more!
- More support must be available for those families leaving military life, not just the soldier. Where this support is already available, it needs to be better marketed to families.
- The impact that leaving the Forces can have on the wellbeing of the soldier and their family shouldn't be understated.

* Full list of recommendations available on pages 34-38 of the 'Lifting the Lid on Transition' report, available on the AFF website *

Tackling your transition today

Someday your soldier will leave the Forces. That is the only certainty of Service life! It is never too early to start planning for life back on civvy street, even if you don't yet know when your soldier might leave.

"Get to grips with the reality of life outside the Army so that nothing is a shock."

- What would your family do if your soldier was medically discharged and had to leave sooner than planned?
- Where will you live on civvy street?
- What will you and your soldier do for money after the Army?
- Do you have children who will need to move schools if you move to a new area?

...Unexpected doesn't have to mean unplanned!

Top transition tips

- Get to grips with civvy street housing before your soldier leaves the Forces.
- Familiarise yourself with timescales for receiving your soldier's pension entitlement.
- Register your child as a Service child with their school while your soldier is still serving, otherwise they may miss out on the chance to receive Service Pupil Premium for up to six years after you leave the military.
- Give yourself plenty of time to save the money you need for life after the Forces. Why not make use of Service-specific financial services while your soldier is still in, such as MoneyForce or the BenefitsApp?
- Talk to each other! Make plans as a family so any issues and concerns can be addressed early.
- As a spouse/partner of a soldier, if you want to work once your soldier leaves the Army, consider getting a job before they leave. Our research shows this can help families by providing some routine and stability and a second income during resettlement.

Find out more

Visit AFF's transition page under 'Family life' at aff.org.uk for lots of useful information.