This month is the Month of the Military Child and schools across the country will “Purple Up! for Military Kids” and wear purple as a visible way to show thanks to the military youth for their strength and sacrifice.

“Coping without a parent, and in some cases without both parents, for months at a time while they serve this country is normal in the life of a military child,” said Cherise Imai, executive director of the Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission. “It is only fitting that we acknowledge the Month of the Military Child. We can show how much they are appreciated, and thank them for the sacrifice they face as a military child.”

Not only do military children face long periods of time without a parent, but they also often deal with moving states and schools. In fact, most military students will move schools an average of 6-9 times between kindergarten and 12th grade.

Latest data from the Defense Manpower Data Center shows there are 551,479 military connected students ages 5-18 in the United States of which, 502,543 are enrolled in public schools, and 21,256 are enrolled in schools operated by the Department of Defense on seven military installations.

In 2006, an advisory task force was convened by The Council of State Government’s National Center for Interstate Compacts and the U.S. Department of Defense to develop the Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission. The compact eases education transition issues faced by the military children transferring between school districts and states.

The compact was created with input from policy experts and stakeholders from 18 different organizations and national associations, including representatives of parents, teachers, school administrators, military families, and federal, state, and local officials.

The compact covers most school transitions across state borders and all fifty states are members of the compact, including the District of Columbia. Through a memorandum of agreement, the compact also includes transitions between Department of Defense Educational Activity schools both in the U.S. and abroad.

Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission invites you to join with them and wear purple on April 25 to celebrate military children. Purple was selected because it symbolizes all branches of the military, combining Army green, Marine red, and Coast Guard, Air Force, and Navy blue. Use the hashtag #kidsservetoo to share your support on social media for “Purple Up! for Military Kids.”

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