

My Mom is a Soldier



Written by Shawn Belisle
Illustrations by Donald V. Belisle

Introduction

This book was created by, and directed toward, Canadian Forces (CF) parents and educators of children 4-8 years old. It is intended to educate and support children in military families during an emotional and stressful time of a CF-related move.

Moving in the Canadian Forces

CF members are proud to serve Canada by defending its values, interests and sovereignty at home and abroad. CF personnel belong to air, land, sea and special operations components. There are approximately: 62,000 Regular Force members; and 25,000 Reserve Force members, including 4,000 Canadian Rangers.

Frequent relocations are a reality of military life and may contribute to a sense of isolation and lack of belonging to a community. The Military Family Resource Centre's (MFRC) mission is to promote and foster the welfare, well-being and quality of life of CF families through various programs and services. Find out more about the MFRCs at **www.mfrc.ca**

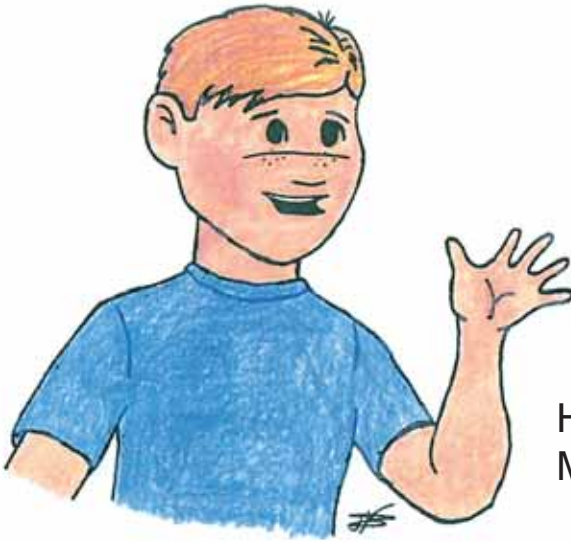
For our children,
Robert, Stephen and Jennifer.
You are our world.

About the Author and Illustrator

MCpl Shawn Belisle and her husband Donald have been married for 20 years and have three children, Robert, Stephen and Jennifer. After the birth of their first child, Donald made the decision to become a stay-at-home dad. He has the tough, but fun job of taking care of three children, ages five and under.

MCpl Belisle joined the military in 1990 as an Administrative Clerk. The Belisles spent six years at CFB Esquimalt, where Shawn worked at 741 (Vic) Communication Squadron and Marpac Headquarters. They also spent six years at MPSS at CFB Borden. They are currently at CFB Edmonton where Shawn worked at LdSH(RC) for three years and is currently posted to 1 PPCLI as an RMS Clerk. Donald is now the Youth Outreach Supervisor for the MFRC in Edmonton.

The book addresses the experience of children who leave family and friends due to postings. The story is told from the unique perspective of a five year old living in a military community where his mother is a service member. The story also explores short term taskings, such as MCpl Belisle's experience as a volunteer with Operation Recuperation during the 1998 ice storm in Eastern Ontario and Quebec.

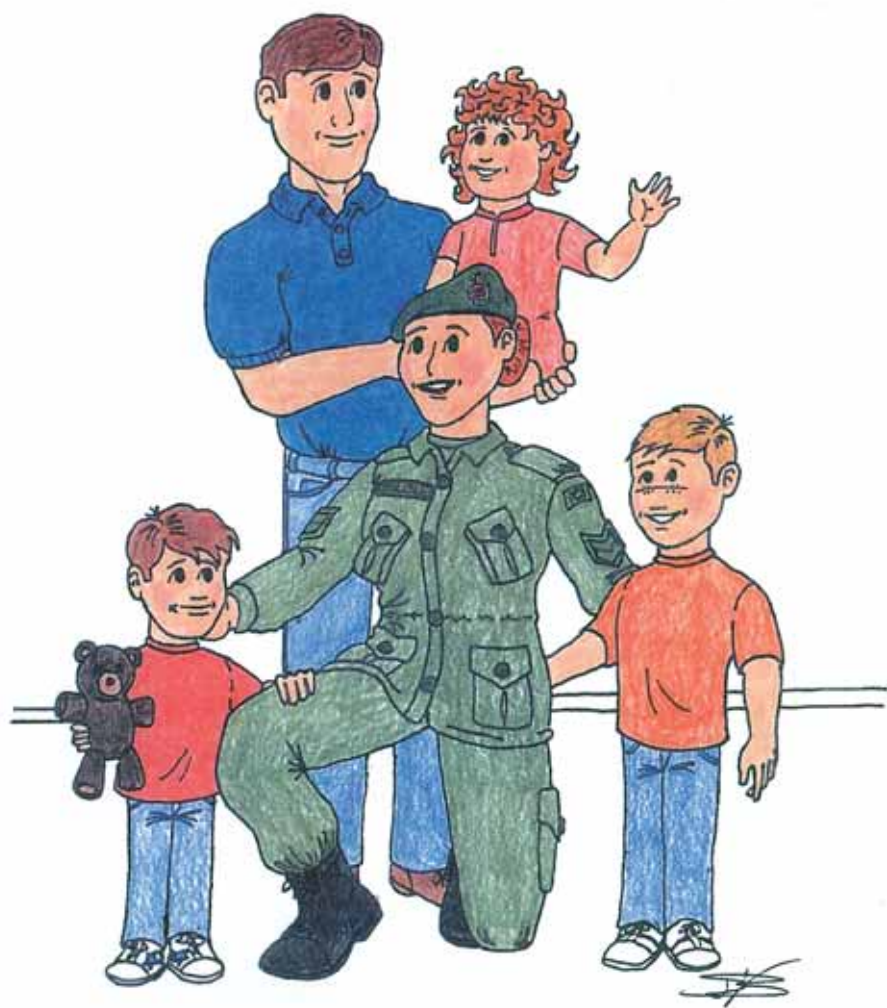


Hi!
My name is Robby.

I live at Canadian Forces Base Borden. I live here with my brother Stephen, my sister Jennifer, my Dad, and my Mom. My Mom is a soldier.

We didn't always live here. We used to live in Victoria, British Columbia.

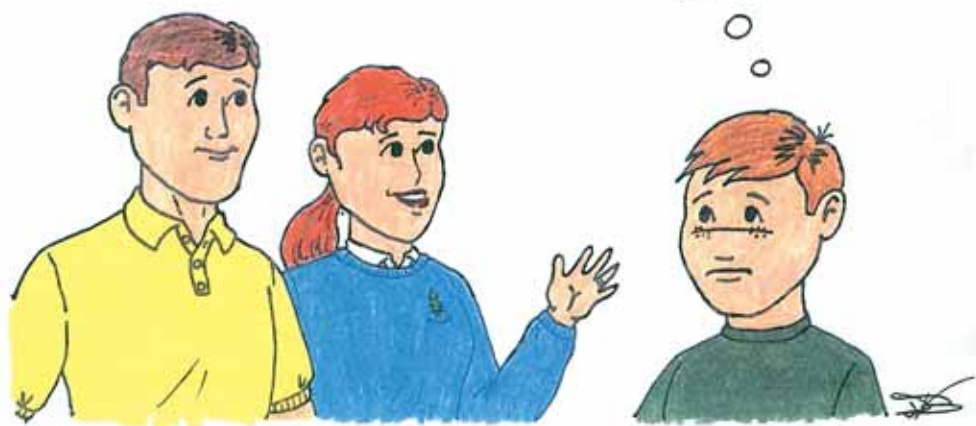




One day my Mom and Dad told me that we were going to move to a new house far away. I was a little bit scared. I didn't want to leave my house or my friends or my Grandma and Grandpa.

My Mom told me that I should be excited because I was very lucky. Since she is in the Military, we were going to move to different cities all over Canada.

It would be a big adventure! We would see different places and meet all kinds of people. Maybe some of them would be my new friends.

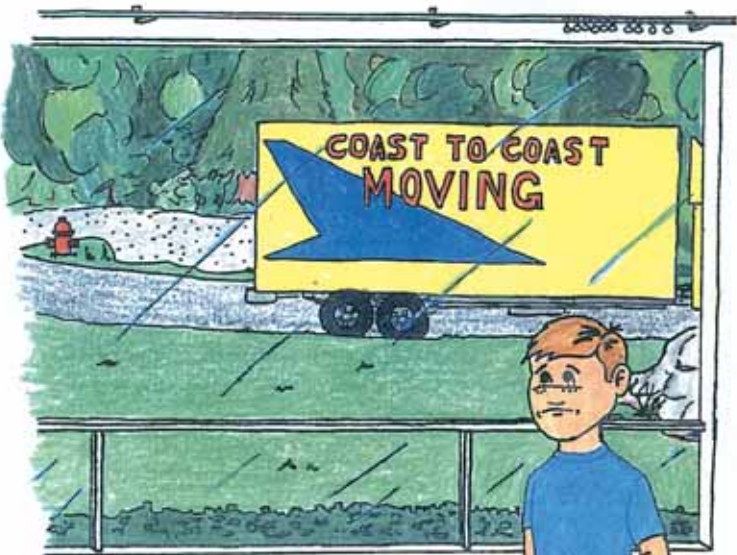




A few weeks later some men came and packed up all my toys and things and put them on a big truck. Our whole house was empty!



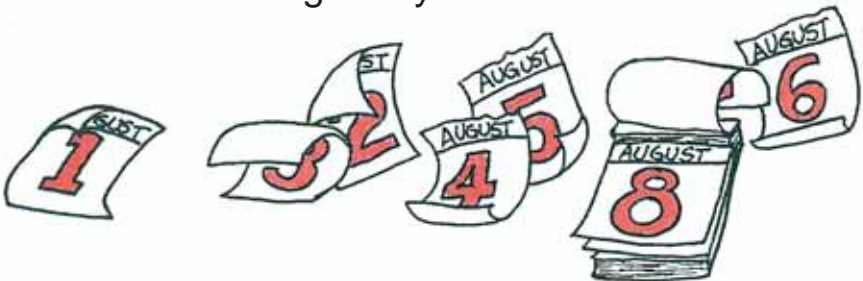
I had to say goodbye to my best friend Stirling. I cried, and wanted him to come with me. My Mom said that we would come back and visit him.

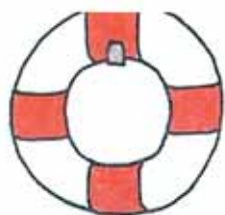




It took a long time to get to our new house. We stopped and visited my Grandma and Grandpa on their farm. We stayed in hotels that had pools so we could go swimming.

It seemed like we were driving forever! My Mom said that it took eight days.







When I saw our new house I was excited. It was bigger than our old house and we had a big tree in the front yard.

There is a boy the same age as me that lives behind us. His name is Kyle and he is my new best friend. Sometimes I still miss my other house and my other friends.

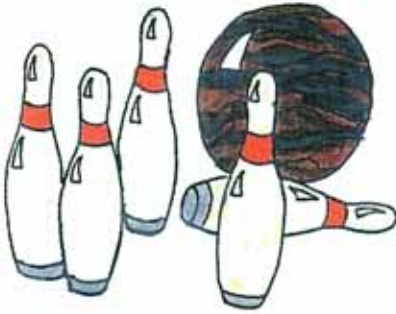


My Mom says the best thing about having friends far away, is that you get to go visit them.

The last time we visited my friend Stirling and my Grandma and Grandpa, I got to travel on a bus and then on an airplane.







I am glad my Mom is in the Forces and we live on a Military base. There is a bowling alley, a movie theatre and even McDonalds!

Every year there is a Christmas party for us kids at the Military Family Resource Centre. Santa flies down in a helicopter to talk to us and give us treats. It is really cool!



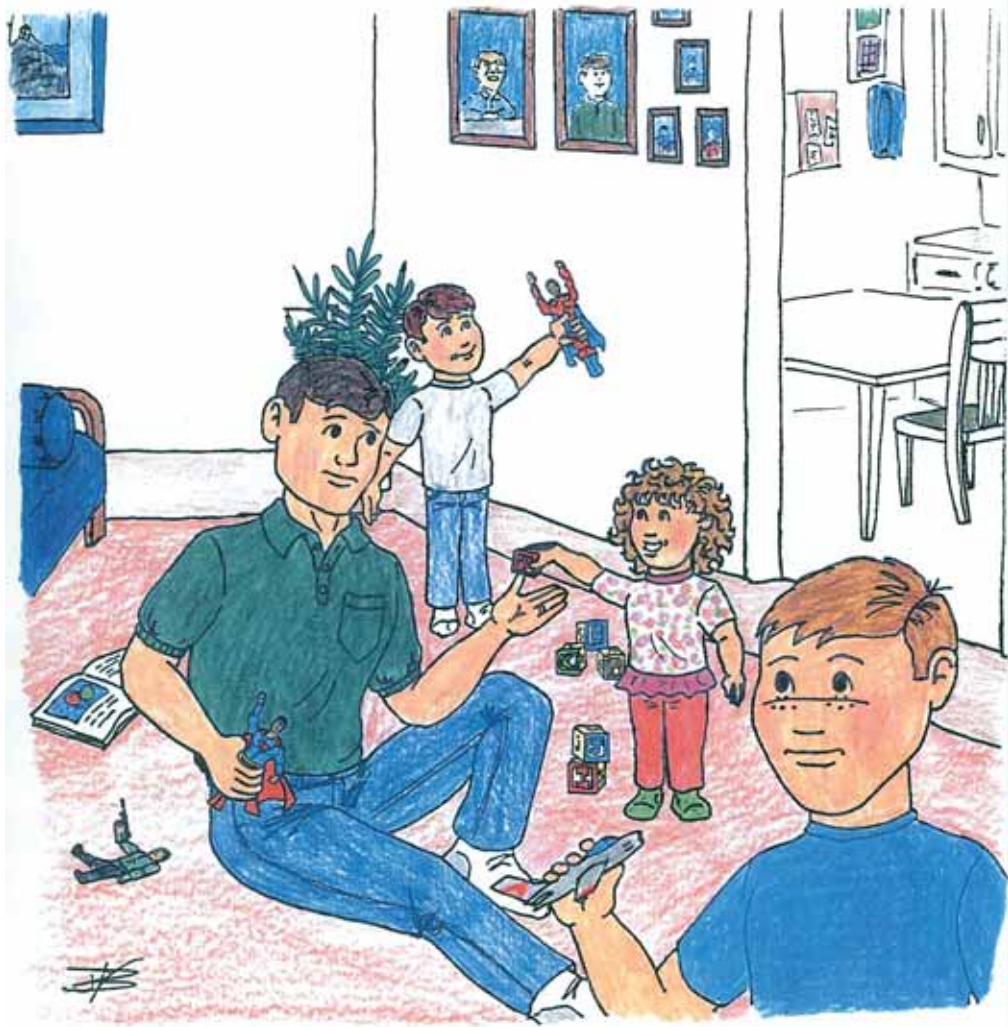




My Mom works a lot. She goes to work almost everyday. She makes me my breakfast in the morning before she goes and gives me a hug and a kiss goodbye.

When my Mom is gone, my Dad takes care of me and my brother and sister. We play games, do crafts, or watch movies. Sometimes my Mom calls me on the phone to see how I am doing.







When My Mom comes home at night I am glad. Sometimes I wish my Mom didn't have to go to work because I miss her.

When she's home we do lots of fun stuff. We go sledding, grocery shopping or take walks to the park. Sometimes I even help my Mom make cookies.





One time my Mom left for two weeks. She said she wouldn't be home to read my bedtime story or tuck me in at night because she was going to Quebec. It was very cold there and some people didn't have food or electricity.

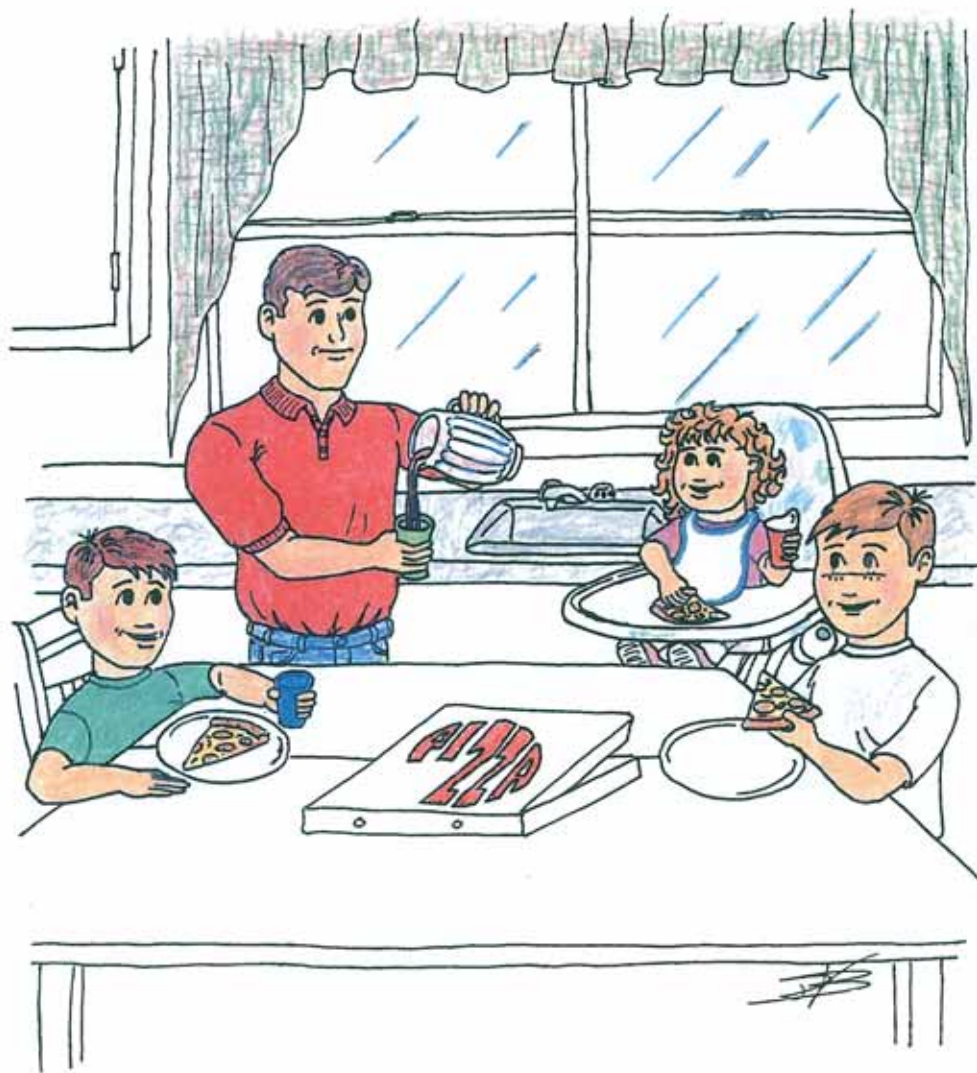
I was worried something bad would happen to her. She told me that she was going there to help, because that's what soldiers do, they help people.





While my Mom was gone, I did a lot of neat things with my Dad. He took me to playschool and the library. We visited with my friends and played outside.

My Dad made supper everyday. We ate a lot of pizza!



I was happy when my Mom came home. She said she missed me and my brother and my sister very much while she was gone.

She said that maybe some day she'll have to go away again but I know she'll be helping people, maybe even little kids like me. I know my Mom will be alright, but I will still miss her.





When I grow up I want to help people too. The police help people, and firefighters too, and so does my Mom, because my Mom is a soldier.

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