

## **9 Children Who Are Separated from Their Parents**

Children who are separated from their parents can exhibit anxiety, withdrawal, anger, aggression, and other disorders that affect socialization and ultimate school performance. Separations occur when parents are called to active duty for the military. Some separations are for extended periods of time. It is these instances that require special care and attention.

There is a human need for people to connect with one another. From birth, humans seek to be connected with their primary caregiver. The caregiver, usually a parent, must learn how to provide safe and secure care for the infant. Developing early trusting, secure relationships set the foundation for all relationships throughout life. A secure psychological attachment develops when emotional, physical and personal needs of the infant are met without feelings of undue stress. This is called a healthy attachment. Unhealthy attachments develop when children are left alone to cry or fend for themselves for long periods of time. They learn that they cannot trust that their physical or emotional needs will be met. How are you assuring that you stay connected emotionally and physically with your children? I'm Dr. Karen DeBord with North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension.