



Defence School Mentors

Defence Community Organisation

Supporting children's education

Defence School Mentors (DSMs) are positioned in primary and secondary schools across Australia to provide support to the children of mobile Defence families.

Defence School Mentors are funded by Defence but are employed by the local state or territory department of education.

Supporting Defence students

Defence School Mentor activities include:

- assisting children and families to integrate into the new school and local community,
- coordinating welcome and farewell community activities for relocating families,
- smoothing the transition between schools and different education systems (including minimising the impact of relocation on children's learning outcomes),
- monitoring the social, emotional and academic wellbeing of Defence students,
- helping students develop self-confidence, self-reliance and resilience,
- directing students to programs, services or opportunities that suit their needs,
- enhancing awareness and appreciation of the unique Defence lifestyle in schools and communities, and
- providing support to children during times of parental absence.

Mentors can provide extensive support to Defence children, but are not teachers and do not work with one child on a long-term basis.

To find out which schools have Mentors in place, visit the DCO website at www.defence.gov.au/dco or contact the all-hours Defence Family Helpline on **1800 624 608**.

Education assistance

Defence Community Organisation offers a wide range of other education support services for Defence children including specialised staff to advise families on education issues, financial assistance for some education costs incurred by relocation, resources for relocating students and information about the different state and territory schooling systems.

Defence Community Organisation offers a wide range of support services for the families of ADF members.

For more information and resources about relocating your school age child and the different state and territory school systems, visit the 'kids' education' page on the [DCO website](http://www.defence.gov.au/dco).

For more information on this factsheet and other Defence Community Organisation support services visit www.defence.gov.au/dco or call the all-hours Defence Family Helpline on **1800 624 608** or email defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au.

