Empowering Military Families

Center for Persons With Disabilities

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EMPOWERING MILITARY FAMILIES

November 8, 2011 by cpehrson

Moving is a necessary and inevitable part of military life. It can cause a lot of stress on families, but it can be an even greater challenge for families that have members with special needs.

A new guidebook is now available to military families who need special accommodations while they are preparing to travel and move into a new home. The pocket guidebook, titled “Traveling and Accessibility Tips for Military Families with Children with Special Needs,” was created to share with the families at Hill Air Force Base in Clearfield, Utah as a special needs resource.

“It will be a very useful tool for members of the military,” states Alma Burgess, evaluator for the Utah Military Family Support 360 project, an initiative at the CPD. “Our hope is that when military personnel from HAFB relocate to other military installations, they will share the booklet and information that is in it to help other families who have members with disabilities. We want other bases to customize it for their situation and make it work for their families.”

For now, the guidebook helps families at HAFB in planning for their specific needs when they travel--having enough medication, being prepared for any medical emergencies that could occur, looking for accessible restaurants and motels, traveling with a service dog, protecting a wheelchair, and many more tips.

It also gives suggestions for making sure that their next home will fit their family’s needs by looking at the accessibility of doorways, bathroom safety, and assistive devices for the home. Specific modifications are listed for certain disabilities such as hearing, vision, cognitive, and mobility impairments.

At the end of the booklet are some answers about where to find the resources they might need and where to get financial assistance to purchase them.

For more information about this booklet, contact Amy Notwell, program coordinator of the Utah Military Family Support 360 project.