



Seekers Create Workshop

SCIP Conference 29/11/2023

The following information was taken from conversation with approximately 30 attendees of the SCIP Conference.

The process included art engagement to create meaningful conversations. Seekers Create Collaborated with The University of Portsmouth on their Creative Forces Day to enhance conversations which enables rich qualitative data.

Key Themes

1. Value of Unique Experiences: Many of these children treasure the unique experiences and gifts associated with being in a service family, like collecting souvenirs from different countries.
2. Resilience and Adaptability: They speak about developing resilience, as they are used to their parents being away for extended periods. This experience helps them maintain connections over distances and times of absence.
3. Misunderstandings and Awareness: There's a significant theme around the misunderstandings they face from their peers. They wish more people understood what being a service child entails and the unique challenges it brings.
4. Independence and Personal Growth: The experience of having a parent in the service seems to foster a sense of independence and personal growth. They talk about being more self-reliant and better at making friends.
5. Family Relationships and Dynamics: The dynamic of their family relationships is a prominent theme. They discuss how their relationships with parents and the impact of parents' absences shape their lives.
6. Community and Belonging: There's a strong sense of community among service children. They value opportunities to connect with others who share similar experiences.
7. Future Aspirations and Career Choices: The children reflect on their future, considering whether to follow in their parents' footsteps or pursue different paths.
8. Education and Personal Development: They discuss how their unique experiences might benefit them in educational settings or future careers.



9. Emotional Challenges: The emotional aspect of having a parent in service, such as dealing with absence and readjustment upon return, is a recurring theme.

10. Need for Greater Understanding and Support: A desire for greater understanding and support from their schools and peers is evident, suggesting a need for educational initiatives about the lives of service children.

Quotes

1. Value of Unique Experiences

- "The gifts you get from when they go on deployment, like the fridge magnets and the t-shirts."
- "So like he's been to Gibraltar, Spain, New York, it gets me more from like every country."

2. Resilience and Adaptability

- "So like if you don't see that person for a long time it's not like that connection has ever gone anywhere."
- "Your personal life really stays the same."

3. Misunderstandings and Awareness

- "The thought you have to explain what service child is to people."
- "It's just like there are struggles that come along with it. We don't see our parents for months on end."

4. Independence and Personal Growth

- "When you're a service child, everyone thinks it's something complicated."
- "Nothing changes with how you act to them."

5. Family Relationships and Dynamics

- "That's just how a navy dad is."
- "They're going to still have to be together. It's different."

6. Community and Belonging

- "So i know there's a service child here that I can relate to."
- "It's just like they just find out naturally, like, you don't have to announce it."

7. Future Aspirations and Career Choices

- "It's really you follow in your parents' footsteps because you... it's actually feeling obliged to it as they went through it."

8. Education and Personal Development

- "The fact that you've had the experience of, like, your parents talking to you about all the stuff that they've done."
- "I've always wanted to go to Oxford or Cambridge for university."



9. Emotional Challenges

- "You just it just gets to the point where you get used to it."
- "They're going to have to readjust of having him back and then he's just going to go again."

10. Need for Greater Understanding and Support

- "We gave them the assembly and then they gave him a better understanding of what it, what it is, and why we are service children."
- "It could give other people a chance to understand how we feel all the time."

Key Questions

1. Unique Aspects of a Service Child's Identity

- Resilience and Adaptability: Service children often develop resilience due to the nature of their parents' work, which includes long absences and frequent relocations. "So like if you don't see that person for a long time it's not like that connection has ever gone anywhere."
- Cultural Exposure and Global Awareness: They gain unique cultural experiences and global awareness from their parents' travels and deployments. "So like he's been to Gibraltar, Spain, New York, it gets me more from like every country."

2. Evolution of Service Children's Identities

- Emotional Maturity: Service children might develop a heightened emotional maturity due to the challenges they face, like handling long separations from parents. "They're going to have to readjust to having him back and then he's just going to go again."
- Independence and Self-Sufficiency: Frequent parental absences may foster a sense of independence and self-sufficiency from a young age. "Nothing changes with how you act to them."

3. Integrating Understanding of Service Children in Work

- Professionals, especially educators and counselors, can integrate this understanding by fostering supportive environments and being sensitive to the unique challenges service children face.
- They can create programs or activities that acknowledge and celebrate the diverse experiences of service children. "It could give other people a chance to understand how we feel all the time."

4. Strategies to Recognize and Value Service Children's Identities

- Educational Programs: Implementing educational programs in schools to educate peers and teachers about the life of service children.
- Support Groups: Establishing support groups or forums where service children can share experiences and feel validated.

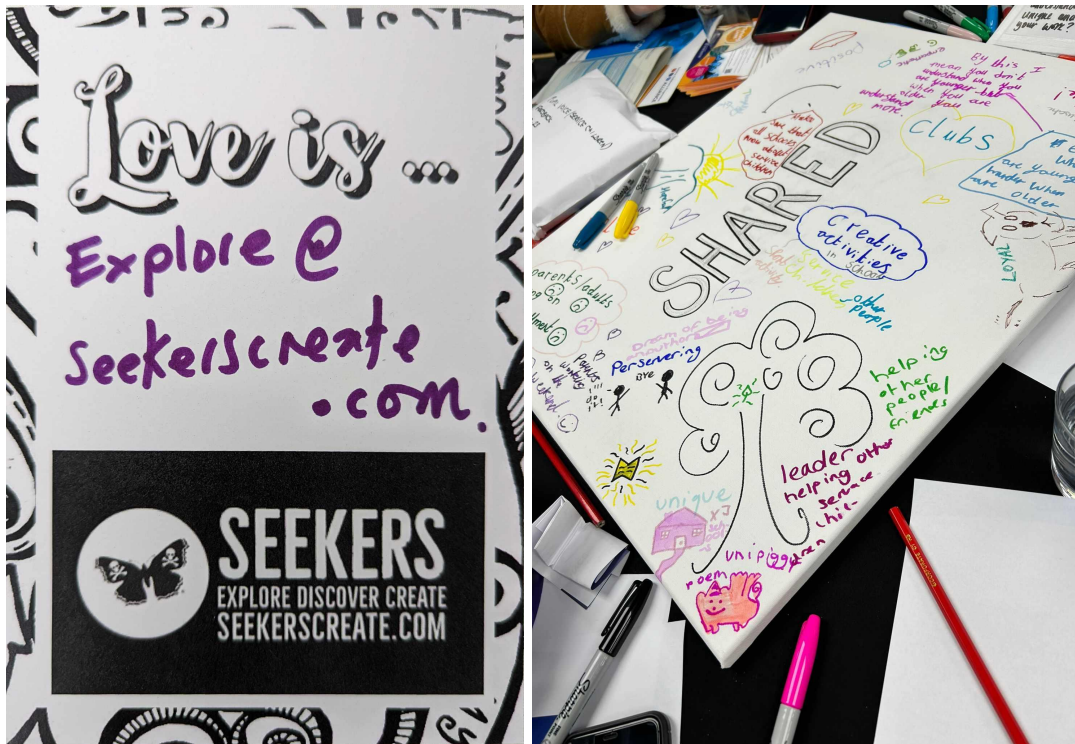
5. Enhancing Awareness in the Alliance Community



- Community Events: Organizing community events that focus on the experiences of service families, fostering understanding and empathy.
- Storytelling and Media Representation: Encouraging storytelling or media representation that highlights the lives and challenges of service families.

6. Adjusting Work Methods for Service Children's Identities

- Flexible Policies: Adopting flexible policies in schools and communities that cater to the unique needs of service children, such as counseling services or special considerations during parental deployments.
- Inclusive Practices: Ensuring that practices in educational and community settings are inclusive and considerate of the diverse backgrounds and experiences of service children.



Contact information:
Explore@seekerscreate.com

Clair Martin
 Steve baker