If You Listen Written By: Charlotte Zolotow  Illustrations By: Stefano Vitale

Goal: Children will learn how to cope with the absence of a parent.

1. Show the cover of the book and ask the children to read the title.

2. Ask the children what the little girl is doing on the cover.

3. Read the story stopping from time-to-time to ask:
   a. How long has the girl’s father been gone?
   b. What question does the girl ask her mother?
   c. What does the girl’s mother advise her to do first?
   d. What is one way the mother tells the girl how to listen?
   e. How does the mother describe the way night feels?
   f. What is another way the mother describes how to listen?
   g. What is yet another way the mother describes how to listen?
   h. When the mother speaks of the petal falling off a rose, is she describing a loud or soft noise?
   i. Can you hear the sound an apple makes when it falls from a tree?
   j. What is the final way the mother tells the girl to listen?

4. Does the girl learn to listen in the way her mother teaches her?

5. What is the girl’s only wish?

Activity:

- Ask the children to sit quietly in a circle and listen for any sound they may hear. Have them write down what they hear. Next ask them about sounds they hear at home—especially sounds that remind them of their absent military parent.

- Next, have the children write letters to their parents telling them of the sounds that remind them of their parent. Encourage the children to use pictures to relate the idea of the sound to their parent.

Lesson Plan written by:
Marcia Beene, Regional Coordinator
National Guard Child & Youth Programs
163 Morningside Dr.
La Vergne, TN 37086
mmbeene@hotmail.com
(615) 330-2285

2005