



A cheeky 3 year-old from Cyprus is the new star of the second welfare book by author and editor of 'the bulletin' Gerry Waters. Jessica and her Mum Sgt Bex Coates - who is stationed at RAF Akrotiri - are both the central characters of the kiddie's paperback *'My Mummy Is A Soldier'*.

Following the successful release of her first book *My Daddy Is A Soldier* and with public pressure from serving female soldiers Gerry has produced a 'Mummy' version, which addresses the same issues of a parent deploying and the difficulty of separation that is inevitable within a military family.

This latest book in the series follows the same easy to read and photographic template of its predecessor *My Daddy Is A Soldier*. The story is told in simple text and Jessica tells the tale of her mother who disappears on operations. The pictures are well composed with a military flavour and although targeted at under 6's the book is a joy for all ages to read.

Interest in the books has snowballed since the launch of 'My Daddy' in November 2008. "I can't believe how well they've been received within our military environment," says Gerry "It's been amazing. The feedback has been incredible and is what prompted me to put together the My Mummy book. I can count on one hand the welfare books available specifically for our community and am as yet unaware of any exclusively for mummy soldiers. I also wanted to redress the fact that female soldiers as the minority often feel they are over looked."

But that interest is not restricted purely to the military community as Gerry explains, "Our book sales have recently gone to a different level; Surrey County Council have taken delivery of 2 000 copies of each of the books for their 'Diversity Book Box' and we've already had enquiries from other councils."

However this is not the end of the series of books, Gerry is in discussion with the Gurkha Battalion about producing a version of 'My Daddy Is A Soldier' in Nepalese to support the Gurkha families.

And it doesn't stop there for the Army Daughter, Wife and Grandmother after talks with Kevan Jones MP, Under Secretary for Defence as a short film version of the book is now in the planning stages.

The Afghan Appeal Fund will yet again benefit from the sales of the new book. President of the Afghan Appeal Fund Lady Caroline Richards, wife of General Sir David Richards Chief of the General Staff designate says, "Gerry has once again found that magic formula of humour in face of the difficulties encountered by small children when their parents deploy. It helps them to come to terms with a situation beyond their comprehension - and gives them the comfort and reassurance in seeing that an absent loved one will always return - despite some tears in the short term.

I would also like to thank Gerry for supporting the Afghan Appeal Fund, which strives to help children in Afghanistan - who may not even have the opportunity of owning a small book like this to read with their parents at night. Our soldiers are in Afghanistan to help provide a better future, not just for Afghan children - but a safer world for all our children."

Books can be bought from 'the bulletin' office at a cost of 6 euros or on line at [www.mymummyisasoldier.co.uk](http://www.mymummyisasoldier.co.uk)

More information on the appeal at:  
[www.afghanappealfund.org](http://www.afghanappealfund.org)

