11,228 RESPONDENTS INCLUDING SERVICE MEMBERS, MILITARY SPOUSES & VETERANS

Military families are assets to national defense and their local communities. They are central to the health and capability of the All-Volunteer Force and are good neighbors actively engaged in making their civilian communities great places to live.

Blue Star Families’ annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey provides a comprehensive understanding of what it means to serve as a military family. For that reason, it is a blueprint for strengthening America, identifying how we can continue to enhance military family life.

IN COLLABORATION WITH:

2019 MILITARY FAMILY LIFESTYLE SURVEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MILITARY SPOUSES</th>
<th>SERVICE MEMBERS*</th>
<th>VETERANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military spouse-employment</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>Amount of time away from family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of time away from family</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>Military family stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent children’s education</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>Lack of military career control</td>
</tr>
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<td>Military family stability</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>Military pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of military career control</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>Dependent children’s education</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Military Family Stability: Predictability and choice enhance the capacity to thrive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP LIFESTYLE STRESSORS</th>
<th>FAMILY SEPARATION</th>
<th>VIBRANT COMMUNITIES: Validating military family experiences supports capacity to belong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Financial Issues/Stress</td>
<td>39% 6+ months of separation in last 18 months</td>
<td>Families with orders 2 months or less had significantly less belonging to local community than families with more notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Relocation Stress</td>
<td>52% find friends most helpful during separation</td>
<td>Most cited reasons: flexibility for family time, stabilizing child’s academics, poor public schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Isolation from Family/Friends</td>
<td>39% no one in local community to talk to</td>
<td>11% are homeschooling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>RELOCATION &amp; EFFORTS TO STABILIZE</th>
<th>RESOURCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48% of EFMP families cite relocation as a top stressor; 40% can’t receive a referral and be seen in a reasonable amount of time</td>
<td>50% of National Guard families</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>CULTURAL COMPETENCE</th>
<th>VETERAN TRANSITION</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47% feel their local civilian community has limited awareness of, appreciation, understanding, support, and respect for military and veteran families</td>
<td>Female veterans are more socially isolated than male veterans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
<th>VETERAN RESOURCES</th>
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<tr>
<td>50% of National Guard families</td>
<td>46% of National Guard families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43% of Reserve families</td>
<td>45% of Reserve families</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Female veterans are not prepared to navigate resources in local community and feel local civilian support agencies aren’t effectively addressing their needs.

Female veterans are more socially isolated than male veterans.
**SNAPSHOT OF THE MILITARY LIFESTYLE**

### SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT
- **Employed** (in labor force): 76%
- **Unemployed** (in labor force and actively seeking work): 24%
- **Not in Labor Force**: 38%

### WOMEN IN UNIFORM

#### Top Issues Ranked by Gender

**Female Service Members**
- Amount of time away from family: 54%
- Military family stability: 48%
- Lack of military career control: 42%
- Dependent children’s education: 32%
- Access to military/VA health care: 28%

**Male Service Members**
- Amount of time away from family: 47%
- Military family stability: 42%
- Lack of military career control: 41%
- Military pay: 35%
- Dependent children’s education: 31%

### MILITARY CHILDREN’S EDUCATION

- Children with strong sense of belonging to school have: friends, activities/clubs, good teachers/staff, and school welcoming practices
- 32% lived apart due to child’s education (40% for civilian spouse’s career)

### LOCAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- Families want better engagement, communication, and understanding from local civilians

### CIVILIAN-MILITARY DIVIDE

- 40% do not feel a sense of belonging to their local civilian community
- 27% neutral*
- 8% feel the general public understands their sacrifices
- 7% have no opinion*
- 12% feel the general public is aware of challenges military service places on families
- 7% have no opinion*

### CHILDCARE

- 62% of female service members
- 51% of male service members

- Families want better childcare: flexible work, flexible scheduling, remote/telework
- 68% can’t always find childcare for current situation

### SUICIDE

- Experienced suicidal thoughts during time in military
- 10% (Military Members), 11% (Veteran Members), 15% (Active-Duty Veterans), 16% (Post-9/11 Veterans)

### FINANCIAL READINESS

- Top contributors to current financial stress
  - Un/Underemployment: 45%
  - Out-of-pocket housing costs: 34%
  - Out-of-pocket relocation costs: 34%
  - Excessive credit card debt: 27%
  - Out-of-pocket childcare costs: 24%

*Question asked differently in 2018*