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.

This infographic represents a geographic cross-section of the results that includes active-duty (44%), veteran (29%), National Guard (17%), and Reserve (10%) family respondents. Unless otherwise stated, all statistics reflect the full sample who selected “self” or “spouse” when asked about their relationship to the service member. When referencing this data, please consider that the sample is not representative of all demographic groups: 77% are White / Non-Hispanic, 69% are spouses of service members or veterans, 65% represent senior enlisted ranks, and 37% are affiliated with the Navy. The average age of respondents here is 41, 77% are female, and 36% report they are unpaid caregivers. Additionally, the distribution of this sample is not comparable to other Blue Star Families Chapters or to the national sample.

### TOP 5 ISSUES RANKED

1. Amount of time away from family
2. Military family stability
3. Military pay
4. Current housing conditions/BAH [tie]
5. PTSD/Combat stress/TBI [tie]

(n=103)

### TOP LIFESTYLE STRESSORS

1. Financial issues/stress
2. Deployments
3. Separations [tie]
4. Isolation from family/friends [tie]

(n=111)

### BOLSTERING BELONGING

#### LOCAL CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- 52% feel local civilians support military families
- 21% have no opinion

(n=105)

#### SENSE OF BELONGING

- 56% feel welcome in their local civilian community
- 24% have no opinion

(n=96)

#### LOCAL CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- 41% feel local civilians are aware that military and veteran families’ experiences may differ from their own
- 12% have no opinion

(n=105)

#### SENSE OF BELONGING

- 33% feel they do not have a voice in local civilian community
- 30% have no opinion

(n=94)

#### LOCAL CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- 36% feel local civilians appreciate the sacrifices local military families make
- 18% have no opinion

(n=105)

#### SENSE OF BELONGING

- 30% do not feel a sense of belonging to their local civilian community
- 27% have no opinion

(n=96)

*Question asked differently in 2018

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**CHICAGO RESULTS**
## SNAPSHOT OF MILITARY FAMILIES IN CHICAGO

### MILITARY FAMILY STABILITY

#### FAMILY FINANCIAL READINESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience stress due to current financial situation (n=84)</th>
<th>Top contributors to current financial stress (n=64)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>77%</td>
<td>1. Excessive credit card debt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Un/underemployment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Out-of-pocket housing costs [tie]</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Out-of-pocket childcare costs [tie]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### EMPLOYMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are “not at all likely” to identify military affiliation in interview (n=74)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Feel local employers are eager to hire military-connected employees (n=102)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

#### HOUSING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Say all in local civilian community do not have access to safe and affordable housing (n=82)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

“I would like better awareness that military families are present. It seems that because we are not stationed at a formal base, the community is surprised that active duty families even reside in our community, therefore, leaving few [or] no resources for them.”

-MILITARY SPOUSE IN CHICAGO

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions about the annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey or ways to support?

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Questions about Blue Star Families’ Chicago Chapter?

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