Blue Star Families’ annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey (MFLS) provides a comprehensive understanding of what it means to serve as a military family.

This infographic represents a geographic cross-section of 2020 MFLS data that only includes active-duty families.

When referencing this data, please consider the following sample demographics:

- 63% are white, non-Hispanic
- 90% are female
- 81% are active-duty spouses
- 81% are enlisted ranks
- 59% are affiliated with the Navy, 18% Air Force, 13% Army, 4% Marine Corps, and 1% Coast Guard
- The average age of respondents is 34
- 89% have children
- 38% are unpaid caregivers

### Financial Readiness

- **75%** experience stress due to current financial situation (n=173)

### Top contributors to current financial stress

- Excessive Credit Card Debt (35%)
- Student Loans (31%)
- Out-of-Pocket Child Care Costs (23%)

### Time Away

- **70%** find OPTEMPO stressful for healthy work/family life (n=192)

### Housing

- **43%** of those who live off-base pay more than $200 in out-of-pocket housing costs per month (n=115)

### Local Connections

- **40%** have two or more friends in their local community (n=164)
- **40%** know two or more people in their local community well enough to ask for a favor (n=173)

### Children

- **79%** cannot always find child care that works for their current situation (n=118)
- **24%** have a child with special needs (n=171)

### Mental Health

- **19%** do not receive mental health care but would like to (n=156)

### Spouse Employment**

- **35%** are employed
- **43%** No, but I want or need paid employment
- **22%** No, and I don’t want or need paid employment

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 Veteran respondents were not included in the statistics calculated within this infographic.
OVERALL TAKEAWAYS

The majority of Illinois respondents (most of whom are enlisted) reported experiencing financial stress.

Four in five (79%) Illinois military families struggle to find child care that works for them.

Despite COVID-19’s impact on K-12 education, most Illinois military families believe their children are thriving in school.

COVID-19 has negatively impacted military spouses’ employment situation, the majority of whom are women.