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 the results that only includes active-duty families. When referencing this data, please consider the following sample demographics:

- 75% are white, non-Hispanic
- 89% are female
- 76% are active-duty spouses
- 51% are enlisted, 44% officer ranks
- 30% are affiliated with the Army, 24% Air Force, 24% Navy, 9% Coast Guard, and 8% Marine Corps
- The average age of respondents is 38
- 87% have children
- 33% are unpaid caregivers

220
ACTIVE-DUTY FAMILY
RESPONDENTS

IN COLLABORATION WITH

OVERALL TAKEAWAYS

The majority of Maryland respondents report experiencing financial stress.

Over a third (38%) of military spouse respondents in Maryland report COVID-19 worsened their employment situation.

Though most (53%) Maryland military family respondents feel welcome in their local civilian communities, only one in three feel a sense of belonging to them.

Nearly three in four (73%) military family respondents in Maryland struggle to find child care that works for their situation.

Questions about the annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey and how you can offer support? Contact survey@bluestarfam.org

Questions about Blue Star Families’ Baltimore Chapter? Contact maryland@bluestarfam.org

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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 the results that only includes veteran families. When referencing this data, please consider the following sample demographics:

- 70% are white, non-Hispanic
- 52% are male
- 69% are veterans, 31% are spouses of veterans
- 45% are affiliated with the Army, 27% Navy, 19% Air Force, 7% Marine Corps, and 1% Coast Guard
- The average age of respondents is 53
- 45% are unpaid caregivers

**Top Veteran Family Issues (n=142)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time away from family</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to military/VA health care</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military pay</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTSD/combat stress/TBI</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military benefits</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top Veteran Family Stressors (n=138)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressor</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deployments</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial issues/stress</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional/mental health issues</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job stress</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation from family/friends</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Financial Readiness**

- 31% experience stress due to current financial situation (n=118)
- Top contributors to current financial stress (n=59):
  - Un/Under-employment: 31%
  - Major Home Repairs: 27%
  - Student Loans: 24%

**Veteran Employment**

- Are you currently employed? (n=76)
  - Yes: 45%
  - No, but I want or need paid employment: 13%
  - No, and I don’t want or need paid employment: 4%
  - Retired: 38%

**Belonging**

- 71% feel welcome in their local civilian community (n=127)
- 57% feel a sense of belonging to their local civilian community (n=127)

**Transitioning**

- 50% say their/their service member’s transition to veteran status was difficult (n=117)
- Key transition challenges: (n=122)
  - Loss of connection with military community: 53%
  - Loss of sense of purpose/camaraderie: 47%
  - Navigating VA health care system: 39%

**Food Insecurity**

- In the past year, it was sometimes true that:
  - I ate less than I should because there wasn’t enough money for food (n=109): 12%
  - I was unable to afford to eat balanced meals (n=110): 15%

**Mental Health**

- Do you currently receive mental health care? (n=101)
  - Yes: 62%
  - Yes, I do: 25%
  - No, but I would like to: 13%

**Local Connections**

- Have two or more friends in their local community (n=108): 73%
- Know two or more people in their local community well enough to ask for a favor (n=108): 72%