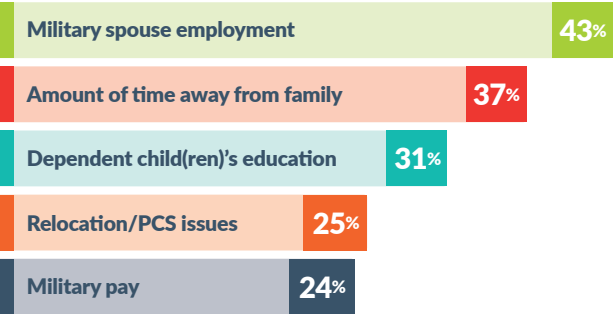
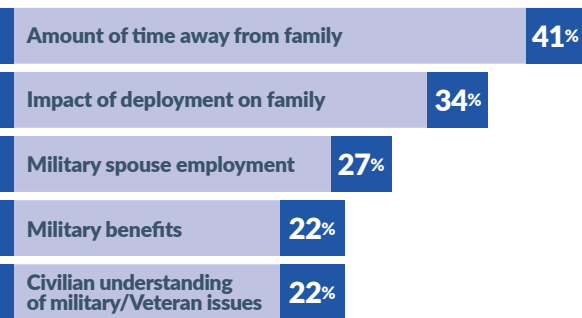


Top 5 issues affecting military families¹

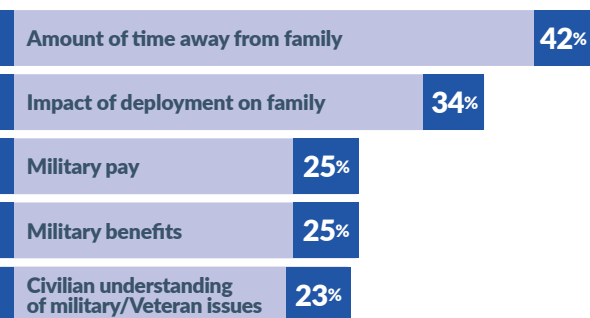
Active-Duty Families



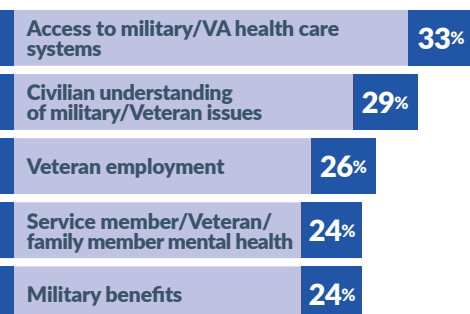
Reserve Families



National Guard Families



Veteran Families



8,004 respondents

Including active-duty, National Guard and Reserve service members, Veterans, and their family members

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 and identifying how we can continue to enhance military family life.

TAKEAWAYS

Too few military families feel a sense of belonging to their communities

Military spouses face unemployment rates that are 4x the national average

Military families continue to experience frequent separations from their service member

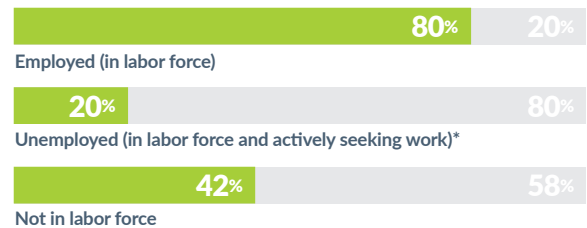
Active-duty family members and their civilian communities

30% of active-duty family respondents feel a sense of belonging to their local civilian community

Active-duty family respondents agree civilians in their local community:



Spouse Employment²



*National unemployment rate was 6% in May 2021³

63% of employed military spouses are underemployed in some way⁴

47% of employed active-duty spouse respondents report they would be looking for a new job in the next 12 months

➤➤ Of those likely to look for a new job, 33% report one reason is due to a relocation/PCS

Family Separation

8 in 10 active-duty family respondents have been separated from their family/service member in the past 18 months due to military service

31% have been separated for a total of six or more months

4% are currently geobatching⁵

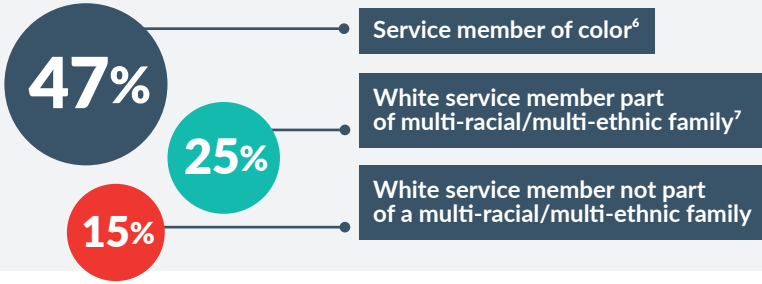
In collaboration with

¹Question and answer choice wording changed slightly from previous MFLS surveys
²Active-duty spouse respondents who are not also active-duty service members
³Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, The Economics Daily, Unemployment rates lower than national rate in 27 states, higher in 12 states and D.C., in May 2021 at <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2021/unemployment-rates-lower-than-national-rate-in-27-states-higher-in-12-states-and-d-c-in-may-2021.htm> (visited February 09, 2022).
⁴Indicates one or more circumstances of underemployment
⁵Choosing to live apart voluntarily, not including times of deployment

Snapshot of the military lifestyle



Service member respondents report **experiencing racial discrimination** in their military community



Financial Readiness

Top Contributors to Financial Stress⁸



55% of active-duty family respondents with student loan debt owe more than \$25,000

Health and Mental Health

41% of active-duty family respondents rate their adolescent oldest child's mental health as fair, poor, or very poor

21% of active-duty family respondents do not currently receive mental health care but would like to

67% of military-connected family respondents¹⁰ report challenges with family building

1 in 10 active-duty spouse respondents have experienced **one or more unhealthy relationship behaviors in the past year**

TAKEAWAYS

Spouse un/underemployment is a top contributor to financial stress

Child care remains a barrier to spouse employment

Most military kids are thriving in school, but still experience barriers to mental health care

Military Children

19% of active-duty families with an adolescent oldest child report their child(ren)⁹ does not receive mental health care but they would like them to

Of those, 23% report their child(ren) does not receive mental health care due to concerns about a mental health diagnosis preventing future military service

61% of active-duty families report their oldest child enrolled in K-12 is thriving in his/her school

13% of active-duty families are homeschooling their oldest child; Top reason: to stabilize my child(ren)'s educational experience

Child Care

24% of active-duty family respondents can find child care that works for their situation

1 in 3 active-duty spouses¹¹ who are not working report child care is too expensive as a reason

Funding for the 2021 Military Family Lifestyle Survey is provided through the generosity of our presenting sponsor USAA and from supporting sponsors Lockheed Martin, CSX, CVS Health, AARP, Starbucks, BAE Systems, Northrop Grumman, Walmart Foundation, Verizon, The Barry Robinson Center, and the USO.

⁶Includes Hispanic/Latino/a, Black/African American, Bi-racial/multi-racial, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native active-duty respondents

⁷Active-duty service member who has a spouse or child of a different race/ethnicity

⁸For active-duty families who indicated their current financial situation causes them some or a great deal of stress

⁹We are unable to determine if the child(ren) referenced by respondent is the oldest adolescent child

¹⁰Military-connected includes active-duty, National Guard, Reserve, and Veteran family respondents

¹¹Active-duty spouses who are not also active-duty service members and who want or need to work but are not currently employed