Impact of deployment on family

29%

Question and answer choice wording changed slightly from previous MFLS surveys.

Active-duty family respondents who indicate military spouse employment is a top issue of concern.

Active-duty family respondents who indicate military children’s education is a top issue of concern.

Operational tempo.

Active-duty family respondents who have a spouse or child of a different race/ethnicity.

Active-duty spouses who are not also active-duty service members.

Indicates one or more circumstances of underemployment.

Top 5 issues affecting active-duty families¹ (n=298)

Military spouse employment 38%
Amount of time away from family 36%
Relocation/PCS issues 29%
Impact of deployment on family 29%
Dependent child(ren)’s education 27%

What would best address concerns about military spouse employment?² (n=111)

Remote work opportunities
Flexible work schedules
Control over where we move

What would best address concerns about dependent children’s education?² (n=76)

Training for teachers/staff on military lifestyle and impacts on children’s education
Control over where we move
The ability to extend time at current duty station

Family Separation

1 in 3 active-duty family respondents have been separated from their family/service member for a total of six or more months in the past 18 months (n=273)

67% characterize OPTEMPO as stressful or very stressful for healthy work/family life. (n=285)

Only 18% of spouses agree that they feel a sense of belonging to the unit/command spouse group (n=204)

Active-duty family members and their civilian communities

38% of active-duty family respondents feel a sense of belonging to their local civilian community (n=286)

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

Are supportive of local military and Veteran families (n=285)
Truly appreciate the sacrifices made by local military and Veteran families (n=284)
Truly understand the sacrifices made by local military and Veteran families (n=284)

Spouse Employment⁴ (n=175)

53% Employed
24% Want/need to work
22% Do not want/need to work

72% of employed military spouses are underemployed in some way⁷ (n=92)

72% of employed spouses agree that the work they do is meaningful (n=82)

Caregiving

18% consider themselves to be an unpaid caregiver (n=263)

20% are enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) (n=260)

In collaboration with

2021 MILITARY FAMILY LIFESTYLE SURVEY

1Question and answer choice wording changed slightly from previous MFLS surveys.
²Active-duty family respondents who indicate military spouse employment is a top issue of concern.
³Active-duty family respondents who indicate military children’s education is a top issue of concern.
⁴Operational tempo.
⁵Active-duty family respondents who have a spouse or child of a different race/ethnicity.
⁶Active-duty spouses who are not also active-duty service members.
⁷Indicates one or more circumstances of underemployment.
Two-thirds of Florida respondents report stress related to OPTEMPO.

Access to unit/command spouse group is a top needed resource. Fewer than 1 in 5 spouses feel a sense of belonging to the unit/command spouse group.

Military spouse employment is the top issue for Florida respondents. The majority of employed spouses report some form of underemployment.

A majority of Florida respondents rate their child(ren)’s school as above average or excellent and agree that their child is thriving in his/her school.

Financial Readiness

52% report their family’s current personal financial condition causes them some or a great deal of stress. (n=229)

Top Contributors to Financial Stress (n=114)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spouse un/under-employment</th>
<th>Student loans</th>
<th>Excessive credit card debt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

owe $10,000 or more on their credit cards (n=225)

Housing

Which of the following best describes where you currently live? (n=231)

- Military housing: 15%
- Rent civilian housing: 24%
- Own civilian housing: 58%
- Live rent-free with family/friends: 1%
- Live in temporary housing: 2%

Top housing situation concerns (n=222)

- Local housing market is unaffordable
- Cost of housing rental is too high

Military Children’s Education

Type of School of Oldest Child in K-12 (n=167)

- Public school: 79%
- Homeschool: 13%
- Private school: 6%
- DoDEA: 0.6%

54% rate the overall quality of the school their oldest child attends as above average or excellent. (n=126)

agree that their oldest child enrolled in K-12 education is thriving in their school (n=135)

Health and Mental Health

17% do not currently receive mental health care but would like to. (n=241)

18% report their child(ren) does not receive mental health care but they would like them to. (n=213)

Top reasons for child(ren) not receiving care (n=39)

- I do not believe telehealth would be effective for my child
- Cannot find a provider who will treat my child

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

Questions about Blue Star Families’ Jacksonville Chapter? jacksonville@bluestarfam.org

Questions about Blue Star Families’ Tampa Bay Region Chapter? tampa@bluestarfam.org

2021 MILITARY FAMILY LIFESTYLE SURVEY

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