

4,111

active-duty
family respondents

1,133

active-duty
family respondents of color

This study explores the extent to which exposure to racially/ethnically-motivated discriminatory behaviors impact belonging, willingness to recommend local civilian communities, and willingness to recommend military service, as well as the attributes that contribute to respondents' sense of belonging to the community.

Data for this report were drawn from the 2022 Military Family Lifestyle Survey.



In collaboration with



Experiences of racial/ethnic discrimination appear to impact military family well-being, civilian communities, and military recruitment and readiness.

Five Types of Discrimination

- 1 My child experienced racially/ethnically motivated-bullying.
- 2 I was racially profiled by the police.
- 3 I was subject to racial/ethnic slurs or jokes.
- 4 I feared for my personal safety because of my race/ethnicity.
- 5 I was threatened or harassed due to my/my family's race/ethnicity.



Those who experienced these instances of discrimination in their current communities:

- >> Report **significantly less belonging** to the local civilian community
- >> Were **significantly less likely to recommend the community** to a family like theirs
- >> Were **significantly less likely to recommend military service** to a young family member

Building bridges to belonging requires collaboration “across the fence line” with local communities.

 **BLUE STAR FAMILIES**



“We met friends the first day. We did hang outs. All the kids hang out after school and weekends. It felt like home away from home.”

Hispanic Active Duty Spouse

Understanding of the military lifestyle, friendship, and safety are key contributors for all families, but for military families of color, a community that embraces diversity is also important – more so than for their white peers.

Military Family Lifestyle Cultural Competence

Likelihood of Recommending Community

Belonging to the Civilian Community

Belonging to the Civilian Community is correlated with:

- >> Military Family Lifestyle Cultural Competence¹
- >> Likelihood of Recommending the Community²



Top 5 community attributes that contributed most to respondents' sense of belonging³
 Active-duty families of color



16% of white respondents⁴ selected "Community members embraced diversity" as a top contributor to belonging

¹ Military Family Lifestyle Cultural Competence is the perception that local civilian community members have understanding, awareness, appreciation, support, and respect for military and Veteran families (called "military family lifestyle cultural competence.")

² To another family like theirs.

³ In the civilian community where their family felt the greatest sense of belonging.

⁴ White respondents not in multiracial/multiethnic families.