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The Stressors of the Military Lifestyle and the Services Available to
Help Military Families

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fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

This quantitative, descriptive study focuses on the effectiveness of the various services available for military families from the perspective of Rhode Island military residents. A review of the literature outlines the major stressors of the military lifestyle. The services available to help military families deal with these stressors are analyzed in the study. Five Rhode Island military families participated in this study. Results revealed overall satisfaction with the resources available through the military itself, dissatisfaction with services available through other areas, such as schools, churches, or organizations, the necessity of aid during the reintegration experience, the minimal usage of the services available to military families, the need for aid when going through a problem with a child, and effectiveness of the services that are used. Implications from this study include the need for future research on the potential reasons as to why these services are used so infrequently and for such a limited amount of time. More research also needs to be done about what military families need specifically during the reintegration period, especially since the War on Terror is coming to an end and many service members will be returning home soon. This study proved the effectiveness and necessity for services to remain in action to help the service members and their families that sacrifice so much for the good of the United States.

The Stressors of the Military Lifestyle and the Services Available to Help Military Families

In United States, there are a total of 1,455,375 active personnel in the United States Military (*FindTheData*, 2014). Of the five branches of the military, there are 329,638 active personnel in the Air Force, 561,984 in the Army, 41,873 in the Coast Guard, 200,827 in the Marine Corps, and 321,053 in the Navy (*FindTheData*, 2014). All together, active personnel constitute about nine percent of the US population (*FindTheData*, 2014). This number accounts for civilians who risk their lives, stand with courage, and fight to protect our country.

Though sometimes overlooked, the family and friends that support a loved one who is serving, display courage to stand by their soldier throughout their military life. According to recent totals, 56.4% of active duty military members are married and 44.1% of the couples have children (*Statistic Brain*, 2011; *America's Promise Alliance*, 2010). Moreover, it is estimated that spouses and children constitute over half of the military culture. One source, in particular, suggests, "active duty service members (1.9 million) have more family members than there are service members (1.4 million)" (*America's Promise Alliance*, 2010). Due to the large number of families in the military, the effects of the military lifestyle on the military families are often studied.

The effects of the military lifestyle on families are extremely significant and have been quite pronounced throughout the past decade. The Global War on Terror began in 2001, with the bombing of the World Trade Center, and it has continued for over a decade. Though it is winding down in the present year, the effects of longer

and more frequent deployments have significantly affected military families. According to Carroll (2013), “some families, some children, and some marriages have really suffered” throughout this time. The relationships between each layer of the family are affected and the individual members of the family are also affected. These layers include, husband and wife, parent and child, and sibling to sibling, while the individual levels include the active duty parent in the family, the parent who is not in the military, and each individual child. Each aspect of a family is affected differently, but each effect takes a significant toll on the overall family system (*BrainlineMilitary*, 2014).

According to recent totals, 24.5% of Rhode Island residents are active military personnel (*Zip Atlas*, 2014) and there are a total of 3,950 military family members accounted for in Rhode Island (*National Alliance on Mental Illness*, 2012). This study aims to gain a better understanding of the effects of the military lifestyle on the family system and the services available to aid them during their time as a military family. The information gathered will provide further insight into the current military population and their lifestyle by conducting research, observations, and interactions with military families in Rhode Island.

This information is important to social workers because an in-depth understanding of the challenges of the military lifestyle is essential to aiding these individuals. Social workers have programs in place to work with military families, specifically children and the spouse not in active duty, the military personnel, and the veterans of war. It is important to understand these effects in order to better help these individuals and the overall family system get back to a stable dynamic

(DeAngelis, 2014). Overall, this information could be very beneficial to the people directly affected by the military lifestyle, social workers that work with or are interested in the military lifestyle, and people who are interested in the topic.

Literature Review

Significant amounts of research have been done on the effects of the military lifestyle on children. However, not as much has focused on the effects of the military lifestyle on the parents. In addition, while the majority of this research explains the effects deployment has on military families, little has focused on the overall military way of life. Deployment is a major part of the military lifestyle, but stressors such as residential mobility, parent separation or absence, trauma and loss, and reintegration are all of equal importance due to the toll these experiences take on the military family (*Child Trends*, 2014).

A previous literary work discusses the importance of working with military families, stating, “Professionals in health care, family service, education, recreation, and faith-based services who work with military families can also help reduce the distress that military families experience, and can foster individual and family resilience” (*The National Child Traumatic Stress Network*, 2014). These professionals must be aware that the literature suggests that the impact of residential mobility, parent separation or absence, trauma and loss, and reintegration are all turbulent stressors affecting the parent child dynamic and the family system.

Effects of Military Lifestyle on Parents and Children

Residential mobility. Studies have provided some information on the different effects, both positive and negative, of frequent relocations on the military

family. Though not always possible, it is the responsibility of the family to embrace the capacity for adaptation and resilience and also be able to cope with the reorganization of daily living and potential cultural changes this relocation may present. (Cable, Coleman, & Drummet, 2004; Nansook & Park, 2011; *The National Child Traumatic Stress Network*, 2014).

Studies report that military relocations are very frequent. According to Gill, Haurin, and Phillips (1994), the typical military family experienced six to seven moves in a twenty-year military service period. Davis, Flake, Johnson, & Middleton (2009) reported that 47 percent of assessed participants in a particular study had moved three or more times within the previous five years. Another study discovered that international moves were found to be four times higher for military families than the general U.S. family and that domestic moves generally involved longer distances than is true of non-military families (Cable et al., 2004).

Studies have also explored the ways in which military relocation affects parents. These studies have reported that positive aspects of the move for parents include a structured environment of job security and comparable base housing, which is provided by the military upon relocating. A negative aspect is the physical exhaustion of the move that often drains and consumes parents. Research also suggests that moving can be especially difficult for the employment of the non-military spouse because it is common to encounter employers who are hesitant to invest time, money, and training for individuals who do not necessarily have a permanent residence (Cable et al., 2004). The most significant negative effect of relocation deals with the loss of social networks including friends, coworkers,

neighbors, or family members. Naturally, these social support networks can be difficult to maintain when the frequency and distance of the military moves are unknown and sporadic (Cable et al., 2004; Davis et al., 2009).

These effects of relocation can evidently affect the parents of a military family, but studies have shown that relocating can also have effects on the children of a military family. One study presented two different sets of findings on the effects for children. The first set was centered on positive effects moving can have on the children's behavior and their overall academic achievement. Research has found that moving can provide children with the opportunity to change their behavior and academic performance by offering them a better educational system or more valuable relationships with teachers, coaches, or others. The second set focused on the negative effects of relocation and the emotional toll this change can take. Findings suggest that stress, loss, and fear can be very common among children moving: Anticipation of the new home creates stress; grievance of losses related to school, friends, and community may occur; and the fear of the unknown can create emotional havoc for a child in this situation (Cable et al., 2004). Further research suggests that the move can also disrupt school and daily routines, which could potentially increase a child's maladaptive symptoms (Davis et al., 2009). A sense of lack of control also negatively impacts a child, especially a child in a military family. More often than not, children have no choice in the move. Feelings of powerlessness and confusion, may accompany this absence of choice (Cable et al., 2004). From this prior research, it is evident that there are both positive and negative effects due to relocating for the military family as a whole.

Parent separation or absence. Another theme of prior research has been the issue of parent separation or absence. This separation or absence can occur during deployment or even during times of togetherness if a member of the family is not mentally present due to injury or distress. Of the two previously mentioned causes, the most common, is deployment, which is an ever-present possibility for an active duty member. This ever-present possibility can cause significant stress. As stated by Davis et al. (2009), “lengthy deployments, short turn-around before redeployment, and an increased sense of danger” can generate severe distress in military families (p.271). Although, less common, separation or absence can also occur when family members return from a deployment that has left them with an injury or mental instability that alters their previous way of life. Although these family members may be present in a physical sense, they are “absent” mentally. Non-deployed parents can experience mental separation, as well, especially when they are unable to manage their own distress or mental health, which can greatly impact their capability to care for the family, (*Child Trends*, 2014).

In situations of separation or absence, the deployed parent and the non-deployed parent have their own specific stressors. Deployed parents are often worried about losing touch with their children and spouse, not being remembered by their children when they return, the changes that may occur in the children and spouse during deployment, and their ability to be a good parent while deployed (*Coping with Separation*, 2012; *Military Education Coalition*, 2001). Non-deployed parents are often concerned with their increased responsibility and workload for the family, their ability to take on the role of both parents at once, social isolation,

and the anxiety they have about the absent parent (Davis et al., 2009; *Military Education Coalition*, 2001). A Coast Guard spouse is quoted in an education resource guide stating,

While our military personnel are away from home, the spouses continue to take care of not only their own responsibilities, but the deployed spouses as well. Spouses deserve to be appreciated as much as the service members, while not for the same duties, but for the same devotion. (*National Military Family Association*, 2007)

Evidently, the role of the non-deployed parent is essential, but it can be very stressful. Studies indicate that the stressors and concerns of the parent can contribute to elevated depression and anxiety, leading to an increased risk of child maltreatment (*Child Trends*, 2014; Davis et al., 2009; Gibbs, Johnson, Kupper, & Martin, 2007). According to Gibbs et al. (2007), during times of deployment, rates of child maltreatment were higher and child neglect and physical abuse were twice as great.

Often in situations of separation and absence, the child can directly reflect how the non-deployed parent is coping with the situation. Studies suggest that the most predictive factor of child wellness and his or her ability to adapt to stresses during times of deployment is parental wellness, including the depression and stress, of the non-deployed parent. It has been reported that children who will be able to best cope and adapt to these situations will be those with parents who remain positive and supportive during this difficult time (Beardslee, Duan, Glover, Knauss, Lester, Mogil, Peterson, Pynoos, Reeves, Saltzman, & Wilt, 2010; Cable et al.,

2004; Chartrand, Frank, Shope, & White, 2008; *Child Trends*, 2014; Davis et al., 2009). It has also been reported that it is beneficial to both the non-deployed parent and the child to have support systems, family resources, and coping strategies to make this difficult time somewhat easier (Davis et al., 2009). Although there are resources, they are not always present to help, which can have a negative impact on the military family.

For a child, separation from one's parent can have a negative effect on development. According to a recent research brief on the risks facing young military children, "prolonged absence of a parent or having a parent whose emotional health is compromised, can negatively impact children's emotional development, leading to increased rates of depression and anxiety" (*Child Trends*, 2014, p.4; Acker, DeVoe, Paris, & Ross, 2010). Other studies suggest that, in addition to depression and anxiety, children of deployed parents may also display behavioral problems in times of separation or absence. Behavioral problems may include sadness, clinginess, an increase in somatic complaints, and even potentially developing aggressive behavior. Studies also report that the degree of these symptoms may depend on the duration of the deployment. For example, several studies have found that duration directly affects the depressive symptoms of the non-deployed parent, which then directly affects the rates of depression in the child (Beardslee et al., 2010; Davis et al., 2009; Kuntz & Murray, 2002). Beyond these symptoms, studies have also shown that at a young age, children form attachment relationships to their primary caregivers in order to establish the foundation to form relationships in their future. Therefore, negative affects, such as being unable to these relationships, can occur if

parents are not present in the early years of their child's life (Cassidy & Shaver, 1999; *Child Trends*, 2014).

Parental separation or absence can also greatly impact the marital relationship. One study suggests that sustaining intimacy due to the inability to easily communicate is the most difficult aspect of separation (Cable et al., 2004). Though whereabouts are sometimes unknown and contact cannot always be consistent, one study has reported that communication with the deployed parent is much easier today due to the proliferation of the Internet and cell phones (Micale, 2006).

While there are many negative effects due to separation or absence of a parent, there are some positives, which are often not given much attention. Research explains positive effects for children include fostering maturity, assuming age-appropriate responsibilities, teaching independence and flexibility, building adjustment and coping skills, and strengthening family bonds as results of this separation or absence (*Military Education Coalition*, 2001). Benefits of separation for the non-deployed parent include more time to spend with friends and a chance to be independent and develop interests, which may lead to a satisfying relationship following the reintegration experience (Cable et al., 2004). From this prior research, it is evident that the effects of parent separation or absence can have both positive and negative outcomes for the children, each individual parent and the marital relationship.

Trauma and loss. Another theme of prior research is the issue of trauma and loss. Trauma and loss experiences can include death of a soldier in combat or

through suicide and detrimental physical or mental injuries from deployment. Due to the high risk of danger in the military profession, experiences of trauma and loss can be frequent in a military family (Davis et al., 2009). The Global War on Terror has consisted of very long and frequent deployments. This high level of intense deployment has resulted in more than 5,600 casualties with growing numbers of suicides among service members (Cohen & Mannarino, 2011). These experiences of trauma and loss can greatly affect the military family.

In response to these situations, children may experience either adaptive or traumatic grief. Adaptive grief, which most bereaved children experience, consists of feelings of deep sadness, an intense desire for the deceased person, and comfort from positive memories of the deceased. A small number of children experience traumatic grief, which is characterized by trauma symptoms that interfere with adaptive grieving. This form of grief consists of getting stuck on the traumatic aspects of the death, analyzing and imagining each painful detail of the death, wishing for revenge, avoiding reminders of the deceased and often expressing feelings of anger (Cohen & Mannarino, 2011). In some situations, children may also put the blame on themselves for their parent's death. Children may also not understand the permanence of the situation and may be under the impression that it is reversible. Studies show that the reaction of a child is directly related to the consistency and nurturance of the care provided by the parent in these situations (*Child Trends*, 2014).

The non-deployed parent can also experience similar forms of grief and trauma in these loss situations. When a loved one passes away, feelings of

hopelessness, stress, and anxiety surface and concern about how to raise a family on their own is overwhelming. In some situations, families may choose to relocate back to their homes of origin and, unfortunately, the supportive military community may be lost if the move takes the family away from military installation. Military support systems can provide an environment that sustains family functioning and emotional health, gives access to government housing and military commissary, and surrounds the family with people who can understand the experience (Chun, Cozza, & Polo, 2005). From prior research, it is evident that a both the parent and children can be greatly affected by the death of their loved one.

The situation can be equally challenging when a deployed parent returns home with a life altering injury or a serious mental illness. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) are the most common negative results of returning service members. Prior research shows that PTSD and TBI have been found in more than one in four of service members medically evacuated from combat over the past decade, while nearly 18 percent of service members report at least acute stress, depression, or anxiety (*Child Trends*, 2014).

Each of these mental illnesses, as well as a disabling injury, can disrupt the family dynamics. Parenting abilities can be greatly affected and healthy child-parent connections can be altered. Symptoms of PTSD, including hyper-arousal and hyper-vigilance, can heighten the individual's short temper and increase anxiety. Exposure to these symptoms, as well as those of TBI, can generate negative behavioral and physical outcomes in children, which can lead to child maltreatment. According to one study, during deployment, rates of substantiated child abuse and neglect more

than tripled (*Child Trends*, 2014). Studies report that physiological effects of trauma can impact a child's health, learning, and behavioral adjustment. In some situations, the parent-child relationship can be seriously altered if children become fearful of their parent due to their mental instability, short temper, outbursts, and increased anxiety (Anda et al., 2006). From this prior research, it is evident that the experiences of trauma and loss greatly affect the lives of military parents and children.

Reintegration experience. The final theme focuses on the reintegration process. The stages of one's homecoming include anticipation, readjustment, and stabilization for both the returning service member and the family they are coming home to. During reintegration, children and parents often share similar positive and negative feelings and responses (*Military Education Coalition*, 2001).

Research suggests that the homecoming experience can be one of joy and excitement. The deployed service member is able to be with their family again and can renew and refresh family relationships, while observing the changes that have occurred in his or her absence. The family as a whole may experience feelings of accomplishment for having successfully completed a deployment (Adler, Christenson, House, & Pincus, 2001).

During reintegration, a child can respond in many different ways depending upon the development, age, and understanding of why their loved one was gone: Children less than one year old may cry when held by the soldier because he or she is not a familiar face; toddlers may be slow to warm up to this somewhat unrecognizable individual; school aged children may be focused on getting the

attention from the returning individual, as well as getting the attention on themselves again instead of the soldier; and teenaged children may act in a variety of ways including moodiness, apathy, anger, joy, or excitement (Adler et al., 2001). Regardless of development and age, a child will be able to learn skills of making adjustments, renegotiating roles, and accepting change during the reintegration process (*Military Education Coalition, 2001*).

The most important aspect of the reintegration process is the reaction and ability to cope with stress of the non-deployed parent because they can directly impact the child's reaction. The non-deployed parent may experience feelings of anxiety and nervousness due to the worry that the returning spouse will not approve of the decisions made while they were away, as well as the fear of potential disappointment if the reunion does not live up to its expectations (*Coping with Separation, 2012*). Though it is exciting to have their service member home safely, reintegration can be very difficult when this individual has been living in a warzone for lengthy amounts of time. One study reports that three out every four families experienced the most difficult and stressful part of the deployment in the first three months after their loved one has returned home (Davis et al., 2009).

In some situations, military parents returning home may be at risk for domestic violence. The effects of combat on a soldier can be detrimental, making reintegration a difficult experience. Loss of control, stress, anxiety, depression, or more serious mental illnesses may consume the mind of the returned soldier. Studies show that these negative mental instabilities can lead to increased rates of domestic violence (Farrow, Oslin, Ross, & Sayers, 2009; Fullerton, Liu, McCarroll,

Newby, Norwood, & Ursano, 2005). Approximately, 16,000 reports of spousal abuse are made annually to the Department of Defense Family Advocacy Program. Victims of mental illnesses can express symptoms of aggressiveness, irritability, and emotional instability, often creating family turmoil, leading to these actions of domestic violence (*Child Trends*, 2014). One study reported that of a sample size of 199 military veterans over 50 percent reported a mild to moderate level of domestic abuse, close to third reported that their partner was afraid of them, and 4.4 percent reported injury to either the service member or the partner during conflicts (Farrow et al., 2009). Various forms of abuse or violence are evident in some spousal relationships upon reintegration.

Another study also discussed the difficulty in the reunification process due to the change back to previous routines and responsibilities, as well as the change in the parent-child relationship with both the non-deployed parent and the reunified parent. The non-deployed parent may act completely different while their spouse is away and, upon return, exhibit negative feelings towards this positive change. The reunified parent may try to pick up where they left off in their child's life, though it is important for them to realize that their child has potentially grown and matured since they left. In households with older children, emotional intensity and lashing out were also expressed as results of reunification. Increased emotional intensity, verbal lashing out, and increased arguments and yelling were reported as negative effects of the homecoming process (Grass, Grass, Huebner, Mancini, & Wilcox, 2007). Prior research has shown that it is important to be patient throughout the homecoming adjustment and understanding of the changes that have happened

during the deployment. For both the parent and children, this experience can be one of both positives and negatives.

The information suggested in prior research enhances the study being discussed. The literature review explains the different effects the military lifestyle can have on parents and children by focusing on the main themes of residential mobility, parent absence or separation, trauma and loss, and the reintegration process. Prior research has presented positive and negative outcomes to each situation, which has provided a better understanding of these specific experiences. The present study will discuss the stressors of the military lifestyle and the services available to aid military families during these times by means of Rhode Island military resident's perceptions and personal accounts.

Hypothesis

The military lifestyle consists of turbulent stressors that affect the military family. The most common stressor is deployment, but residential mobility, parent separation or absence, trauma and loss, and reintegration are all of equal importance due to the toll these positive and negative experiences take on the parent child dynamic and the overall family system. During the height of the War on Terror, many different services became available to help military families get through this difficult time and cope with these evident stressors. Services such as those offered through the military and at local schools, churches, or various companies and organizations provided support for parents and children prior, during, and after deployments (*Child Trends, 2014*).

Though the War on Terror is coming to an end, these services remain important, in order to continue assisting families that have been affected by these turbulent stressors. Further investigation into the effectiveness of the various services available to military families from the perspective of Rhode Island residents, is necessary, so as to understand how various support systems help families cope with these prevalent stressors. The results of such an investigation could provide data that expresses the importance of such programs remaining in service, even though the war is coming to an end.

Methodology

Over the course of roughly the last decade and a half, many services have become available to aid and support military members and their families due to the increase service in the war. This quantitative descriptive study focuses on the effectiveness of the various services for military families from the perspective of Rhode Island military residents. These services include programs through the military itself, as well as schools, churches, companies, and organizations. Surveys were completed for this qualitative descriptive study of Rhode Island residents' perceptions of the services that have been available to assist them during their time of need.

Sample

A convenience sample was used to recruit military families to participate in this study. The five participants (n=5) that completed the study have a child that is currently meeting with a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and an undergraduate Social Work Intern through Family Service of Rhode Island. Though the Family

Service workers' identified client is the child of the household, the parents are always present and taking part in the therapy sessions. In order to determine the effectiveness of various services available for military families, the parents of these clients were the targeted population and convenience sample for this study.

Four female Rhode Island residents and one male Rhode Island resident completed the study. The females that completed the study were ages 26, 26, 29, and 43. The male that completed the study is 37. The socio-economic status of these families vary, but they had the common factors of being Rhode Island residents, having an affiliation with the military through their own work or their husbands work, and having children undergoing therapy through Family Service for various reasons.

Data Gathering

The data for this study was collected using quantitative methods and a few opened ended questions if participants chose to disclose. A consent form (see Appendix A), which notified the participant about the purpose and confidentiality of the study, was distributed to each individual prior to participating in the study. A returned completed questionnaire indicated that the participant had read and understood the voluntary participation in the study, as well as the confidentiality nature of the study. Participants were able to withdraw from the study at any time if they chose to do so.

Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire (see Appendix B) pertaining to their perspectives of the services available to them as a military family. The questionnaires asked participants to share family and military demographic

information. Participants were then asked to choose which area of service best represented their response from multiple-choice options. Next they were provided a list of ten military services and asked which of the services they have heard of and then they were given the same list and asked which of the services they have used or contacted. If participants had used or contacted any of the listed services, they were then asked to complete the next section of the questionnaire. This section asked seven different questions about the service they used. Participants were able to provide answers in Likert scale form. At the end of the section, they were provided the opportunity to answer open-ended questions to explain more of the above information in-depth.

At the end of the entire questionnaire, participants were given a list (see Appendix C) with a brief description of the ten services focused on throughout the study in order to learn more about these services. Not all of the listed services are offered in Rhode Island, so the list was also meant to give participants new ideas that they could bring to their community and implement to better help the military families in Rhode Island.

Data Analysis

The researcher examined the quantitative data derived from the completed questionnaires in order to identify themes and common responses among the five participants of the study. Quantitative data from completed surveys were analyzed using tables and charts created by the program, Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS). SPSS was used to determine how military families in Rhode Island view the services available to help them throughout their time as a military family.

Through this program, comparisons and differences between answers were generated. For the ten different services being analyzed, seven different questions were asked. The open-ended question responses were used to provide more in-depth explanations of how effective certain services were for specific times of need for the family.

In SPSS, each specific service had to be entered as an individual question. For example, the question “How often did you use this service?” had multiple-choice answers for the participant to choose from. These included “less than 1 year”, “less than 2 years”, “less than 3 years”, or “3+ years”. In SPSS, each specific service was listed with the choices. For example, one SPSS variable was named LongMOS, which was labeled as “How long did you use Military OneSource?”. For this specific question, the variable is repeated nine more times for the other nine services. This is the case for each of the seven questions regarding the ten services provided. Therefore, the percentages listed in the findings section are not out of 100 for the services, rather it is out of 100 for that specific service regarding that specific question. For example, if two participants report having used MOS for less than 2 years, the percentage would be 40. If two participants report having used Family Service of Rhode Island for less than 1 year, the percentage would also be 40. To formulate the SPSS program correctly, these questions needed to split into ten specific questions for the ten services, seven different times for the seven questions. This explanation is necessary in order to understand how the findings are reported.

Findings

The study aimed to explore the effectiveness of the various services available to military families from the perspective of Rhode Island military residents.

Additionally, this study sought to learn when families need the most support due to the specific stressors discovered through the literature review. These stressors include deployment, residential mobility, parent separation or absence, trauma and loss, and reintegration.

Demographics

Family and military demographic information were gathered from each participant. Five different Rhode Island military residents were surveyed. Family demographics included the number of people in the immediate family, the ages of each individual, and the individual in the family that is in the military. Four (80.0 percent) of the families surveyed had 3-5 members in the family and one (20 percent) family had 6-8 members in the family. The adult ages in the families ranged from 26-44 years old and the child ages in the families ranged from 1 month-10 years old. All (100 percent) of the families surveyed identified the husband as the member of the family that is in the military.

Military demographics included the branch of the military, status in the military, length of time in the military, number of deployments completed, approximate number of days of deployment, number of times family has been relocated due to a military move, and whether or not the family has experienced a loss due to the military. Interestingly, all five of the military branches were represented in this study. One individual is in the Air Force (20 percent), one is in

the Army (20 percent), one is in the Coast Guard (20 percent), one was in the Marines (20 percent), and one is in the Navy (20 percent). 40 percent of individuals are on Active Duty, 40 percent of individuals are on Reserves, and 20 percent or one individual is a Veteran. Four (80 percent) individuals have been in the military for over six years. The number of years of service included 7, 10, 14, and 23 years. One (20 percent) individual has been in the military for four years. This individual is the Veteran and he is now on disability because of a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder diagnosis. Deployments ranged from 0-6 with one (20 percent) individual completing no deployments, one (20 percent) individual completing one deployment, one (20 percent) individual completing two deployments, one (20 percent) individual completing 3 deployments, and one (20 percent) individual completing six deployments. The majority (80 percent) of individuals in the military have been deployed for well over 300 days, while one (20 percent) has never been deployed. 60 percent of the families surveyed have never had to move for the military, while 40 percent of the families surveyed have had to move twice for the military. All (100 percent) participants reported that their families have not experienced a loss due to the military.

Participants' View of Areas of Service

All (100 percent) of the five participants in the study reported that the military has the largest quantity and most productive resources available for their family. Though, the responses varied when asked about the smallest quantity and least productive resources. 20 percent of participants believe schools have the smallest quantity of resources available for their family, 40 percent of participants

believe churches have the smallest quantity of resources available for their family, and 40 percent of participants believe companies or organizations have the smallest quantity of resources available for their family. 40 percent of participants believe schools have the least productive resources for their family and 60 percent of participants believe churches have the least productive resources for their family. Four (80 percent) participants agreed that the military is the area of service that they have received the most help from during their time as a military family, while one (20 percent) participant reported organizations have helped them the most. These organizations were reported to be the Wounded Warrior Project and the Semper Fi Fund.

Ten Specified Military Services

Participants were given a list of ten services available for military families through the military itself, schools, churches, or an organization. These services included Military OneSource, Operation: Military Kids, Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, Family Service of Rhode Island, Blue Star Mothers, Operation Homefront, Military Child Education Coalition, School Liaison Officers, Military Women's/Men's Study Bible Groups, and Military Appreciation Services. The majority of participants reported having heard of five or less of the services listed. No participants had heard of Blue Star Mothers, Military Child Education Coalition, or Military Women's/Men's Study Bible Groups. 100 percent of participants have heard of Military OneSource and Family Service of Rhode Island. 80 percent of participants or four families have heard of Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. 40 percent of participants or two families have heard of Operation HomeFront and Military Appreciation Services,

while 20 percent of participants or one family has heard of School Liaison Officers and 20 percent of participants or one family has heard of Operation: Military Kids.

The majority of participants reported using or contacting two or three of the services listed. No participants reported using or contacting Blue Star mothers, Military Child Education Coalition, Military Women's/Men' Study Bible Groups, and Military Appreciation Services. The only service all (100 percent) participants reported using or contacting was Family Service of Rhode Island. Four (80 percent) participants have used or contacted Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. Three (60 percent) participants have used or contacted Military OneSource. One (20 percent) participant reported having used or contacted Operation: Military Kids. One (20 percent) participant reported having used or contacted Operation HomeFront. One (20 percent) participant reported having used or contacted School Liaison Officers. Family Service of Rhode Island and Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program were most well-known among the families, so these two services are the only reported frequency tables throughout these findings.

Point in Time Service was Used

If participants had used or contacted any of the listed services, they were then asked to complete the next section of the questionnaire only for the services they had used or contacted. This section asked seven different specific questions about the service they used. The services that will be explained are Military OneSource, Operation: Military Kids, Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, Family Service of Rhode Island, Operation Homefront, and School Liaison Officers.

The first question asked at what point in time as a military family did the family use this service. Three participants reported using Military OneSource. One (20 percent) family used this service throughout Active duty, one (20 percent) family used this service during the reintegration experience, one (20 percent) family used this service twice, during both the pre-deployment and reintegration experiences, and two (40 percent) families did not answer the question because they did not use this service. One (20 percent) family reported using Operation: Military Kids during both the deployment and in the reintegration experience, while four (80 percent) families did not answer the question because they did not use this service. Four families used Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program during different times as a military family. One family used this service during both Active duty and reintegration; one family used this service during both pre-deployment and reintegration; one family used this service during Active duty; and one family used this service during pre-deployment. Therefore, 40 percent of participants used this service for reintegration, 40 percent of participants used this service during pre-deployment, and 20 percent of participants used this service during Active duty (Table 1).

Table 1

| What time did you use YRRP? | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Active and reintegration | 1 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| Active Duty | 1 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 40.0 |
| Valid Pre-deployment | 1 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 60.0 |
| Pre and Post | 1 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 80.0 |
| Didn't Answer | 1 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 100.0 |

| | | | |
|-------|---|-------|-------|
| Total | 5 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
|-------|---|-------|-------|

All participants reported using Family Service of Rhode Island during all different stages as a military family. Two (40 percent) families used this service throughout Active Duty, two (40 percent) families used this service during the reintegration experience, and one (20 percent) used this service during deployment and in the reintegration experience (Table 2).

Table 2

| What time did you use FSRI? | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Active Duty | 2 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 40.0 |
| Post | 2 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 80.0 |
| Valid deployment/Reintegration | | | | |
| During and Post | 1 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 5 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Operation HomeFront was only used by one (20 percent) family and this participant reported using the service during the reintegration experience. School Liaison Officers was also only used by one (20 percent) family and this participant reported using the service throughout Active Duty.

This information indicated that most (43.75 percent) families used some of the listed services during the reintegration experience. The next time as a military family that needed the most services was during Active duty, which 25 percent of participants used. 18.75 percent of families surveyed used services available to them during the pre-deployment stage. Finally, only 12.5 percent of families surveyed used services during the actual deployment of their spouse. It is evident

that the most heightened time of stress for a military family is during the reintegration experience. Most outside individuals would assume reintegration would be a time of happiness and joy, which is true, but this time also creates many difficulties due to the abrupt change in the absence of the individual to the sudden often appearance of this member of the family. As noted in the literature review, though families are excited to have the service member home safely, reintegration can be very difficult when this individual has been living in a warzone for lengthy amounts of time.

Usage of Service

The next question inquired about the length of time the service was used. The same six services were analyzed. Three families reported using Military OneSource. 60 percent of participants reported using this service only once and 40 percent of participants did not answer because they did not use this service. One (20 percent) family reported using Operation: Military Kids only once and four (80 percent) families did not answer because they did not use this service. 60 percent of participants reported using Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program only once and 40 percent of participants did not answer this question because they did not use this service. 80 percent of participants reported using Family Service of Rhode Island every week and one family reported using this service once a month. One (20 percent) participant reported using Operation HomeFront only once and four (80 percent) participants did not answer. One (20 percent) participant reported using School Liaison Officers only once and four (80 percent) participants did not answer.

Findings showed that the majority (58.4 percent) of the listed services were only used once. 33.4 percent of participants reported using services every week and only 8.4 percent of participants reported only using the listed services once a month and. It is evident that these were short-term services and families did not seem to rely on them to get through their difficulties.

Length of Usage of Service

The next question asked how long the family used the service. Each of the six services was analyzed and 100 percent of participants who used these services used it for less than one year. Three (60 percent) families used Military OneSource for less than one year; one (20 percent) family used Operation: Military Kids for less than one year; four (80 percent) families used Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program for less than one year; five (100 percent) families used Family Service of Rhode Island for less than one year; one (20 percent) family used Operation HomeFront for less than one year; and one (20 percent) family used School Liaison Officers for less than one year. This information further indicates that services are not used permanently or relied on to help families get through their difficulties.

Effectiveness of Service

The next question inquired how effective each service was according to the needs of the family. Military OneSource, Operation: Military Kids, Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, Family Service of Rhode Island, and School Liaison Officers were all reported as very effective from the participants that used these services. The one participant that used Operation HomeFront reported this service as effective. This information reports that the majority (83.3 percent) of families

surveyed found the services available to them to be very effective, while only 16.7 percent of families reported the services they used to be effective. Overall, it is evident that the services these families have used, though few, have been highly effective.

Reason for Using Service

The next question asked what reason the family used each specific service. Two (40 percent) families used Military OneSource for a child problem, one (20 percent) family used this service for a financial problem, and two (40 percent) families did not answer. One (20 percent) family used Operation: Military Kids for a child problem. Three (60 percent) families used Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program for a child problem, one (20 percent) family used this service for a military affiliated problem, and one (20 percent) family did not use this service, so they did not answer (Table 3).

Table 3

| What reason did you use YRRP? | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Child problem | 3 | 60.0 | 60.0 |
| | Military affiliated problem | 1 | 20.0 | 80.0 |
| | Didn't answer | 1 | 20.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 5 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

100 percent of participants reported using Family Service of Rhode Island for a child problem (Table 4).

Table 4

| | | What reason did you use FSRI? | | | |
|-------|---------------|-------------------------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Child problem | 5 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

One (20 percent) family used Operation HomeFront for a financial problem. Between the five participants, 78.6 percent of their problems were child problems, 14.3 percent of their problems were financial problems, and 7.1 percent of their problems were military affiliated problems. This information indicates that during the time as a military family, problems with their children were the most pressing issues most of these families faced.

Stressor Service Helped with the Most and the Least

The final two questions inquired which stressor the services helped the family with the most and the least. These stressors include deployment, residential mobility, parent separation/absence, trauma and loss, or reintegration. Three (60 percent) families reported Military OneSource helping with reintegration the most. One (20 percent) family reported Operation: Military Kids helping with both trauma and loss and reintegration the most. Two (40 percent) families reported Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program helping with reintegration the most and one (20 percent) family reported this service helping with parent separation or absence the most (Table 5).

Table 5

| What stressor did YRRP help with most? | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|-------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent | |
| Valid | Parent separation/Absence | 1 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| | Reintegration | 3 | 60.0 | 60.0 | 80.0 |
| | Didn't Answer | 1 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 5 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

66.7 percent of participants reported Family Service of Rhode Island helping with reintegration the most, 33.4 percent of participants reported this service helping with parent separation or absence and trauma and loss the most (Table 6).

Table 6

| What stressor did FSRI help with most? | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|-------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent | |
| Valid | Parent separation/Absence | 1 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| | Reintegration | 2 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 60.0 |
| | Parent separation and Trauma | 1 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 80.0 |
| | Parent separation and Reintegration | 1 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 5 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

One (20 percent) participant reported Operation HomeFront helping with the reintegration experience the most. One (20 percent) participant reported School Liaison Officers helping with reintegration the most.

The stressor that the listed services helped surveyed families with the most (68.8 percent) was the reintegration experience. 18.8 percent of families reported helping with parent separation or absence and 12.5 percent of families reported

these services helping with trauma and loss the most. This information further indicates the necessity of help during the reintegration experience.

Most participants that answered the previous six questions about the services they have used did not answer this final question. Participants did not answer this question for Operation: Military Kids, Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, Family Service of Rhode Island, and School Liaison Officers. Both Military OneSource and Operation HomeFront were reported to help with deployment the least.

Comparisons Among the Branches of the Military

The researcher found it appropriate to compare the findings across the different branches of the military since each branch was represented by one participant. This was done in order to see if there were any discrepancies across the branches. Military OneSource and Family Service of Rhode Island were reported as heard of by all five branches. Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program was reported as heard of by the participant from Army, the participant from the Air Force, the participant from the Coast Guard, and the participant from the Navy. The participants from the Marines and the Navy both heard of Operation HomeFront. Only the participant from the Army heard of Operation: Military Kids and only the participant from the Navy heard of School Liaison Officers.

As previously mentioned, the only service that was reported used or contacted by all of the branches was Family Service of Rhode Island. The Army participant, Air Force participant, Coast Guard participant, and Navy participant all reported using the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. The Army participant and

the Navy participant both reported using Military OneSource. Only the Army participant reported using Operation: Military Kids. Only the Marines participant reported using Operation HomeFront and only the Navy participant reported using School Liaison Officers. Due to the wide range of services used by different branches, it is evident that none of the listed resources are only available to certain branches and not others.

The different times as a military family were analyzed next to see if certain branches were more inclined to use services during certain times more than other branches. Only the Coast Guard participant and the Navy participant reported using services throughout Active Duty. Only the Army participant and the Navy participant reported using services during pre-deployment. Only the Army participant and the Air Force participant reported using services during the actual deployment. Most participants, including the Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Marines reported using services during the reintegration experience. The Army participant and the Air Force participant used services the most at 30 percent of their specified time as a military family. The Coast Guard participant used services during 20 percent of their specified time as a military family. Both the Marines participant and the Navy participant used the least amount of services during only 10 percent of their specified time as a military family.

The usage of services was discovered to be mostly consistent across all the branches. The Army participant, Coast Guard participant, Marines participant, and Navy participant all reported using certain services only once, but they all also reported using Family Service of Rhode Island weekly. The Air Force participant

reported using services once a month. From this aspect of the study, it is evident that the Army participant, Coast Guard participant, Marines participant, and Navy participant used services at various times and the Air Force participant used services less frequently.

The length of time the services were used was not analyzed because every participant reported only using the listed services for less than one year. The next area examined was the effectiveness of the services. This was also not analyzed because all participants reported the services as very effective, except for one service that was reported as only effective by the Marines participant.

The reasons the family used certain services was discovered to be consistent across all the branches. The Army participant, Air Force participant, Coast Guard participant, Marines participant, and Navy participant all reported using some services for child problems. The Coast Guard participant also reported using services for a military affiliated problem and the Marines participant reported using services for a financial problem. Overall, the most common need for assistance was due to a child problem, so there was no real differences across the branches.

The last area analyzed was the stressor that the services helped the family with the most. The Army participant and Air Force participant both indicated services helped their families with parent separation and absence. These two branches also reported that services helped their families with trauma and loss. The Army participant, Coast Guard participant, Marines participant, and Navy participant all reported services helping their families with reintegration. Evidently, reintegration was the stressor in this study that almost all branches of the military

reported needing assistance during. From these findings, it is evident that the researchers hypothesis that there may be differences among the five different branches was incorrect. Overall, there were no major differences among the branches, but rather minor ones that can be used in the future for new areas of research.

Correlations

One of the major findings in this study is the necessity of assistance during the reintegration experience. In order to examine comparisons between this discovered fact, a number of correlations were analyzed. Once these were calculated, conclusions were drawn.

Bivariate analyses of the variable “the stressor that services helped you and your family with the most” and various military demographics were analyzed. This variable proved to be the most significant because it indicated that the most difficult time families had in their military lifestyle was during the reintegration experience. A bivariate analysis of this variable with answers of reintegration as the stressor that services helped with the most and the branch of the military, the length of time the individual has been in the military, the number of deployments this family has experienced, and the combined number of days of deployment were all analyzed. The only statistical significant correlation was between reintegration and how long the individual has been in the military. A statistically significant positive correlation was found ($r(5)=1.000$, $p<.000$, one-tailed). This indicates that as the length of time these participants were in the military increased, their need for assistance during the reintegration experience also increased. This further proves the necessity for aid

during the reintegration experience, especially as the length of time as a military service member increases.

Open Ended Responses

Throughout the questionnaire, participants were given the opportunity to answer open-ended questions to explain more of the above information in-depth. Unfortunately, most participants chose to leave these areas unanswered. One participant explained that she was most pleased with the “response of how helpful these organizations are and how they treat you as an individual and not a number”. Her biggest dissatisfaction was with the “knowledge of where to get access to these resources that are available”. She stated, “The military needs to give out more information before reintegration”.

The opened ended response areas were a very disappointing aspect of this study. Participants did not answer questions and the above is the only valuable information that can be gained from the surveys. While it is minimal, it does further express the difficulty of the reintegration experience and the necessity of more services available to help in this time of need.

Summary and Implications

The goal of this study was to explore the effectiveness of services available to military families in Rhode Island, specifically those available to help families deal with military stressors. These services include programs through the military itself, as well as schools, churches, companies, and organizations. Data was gathered using quantitative methods to discover Rhode Island military resident’s perceptions of the services that have been available to assist them in this time of need. Overall, the

major themes of the study were the satisfaction with the resources available through the military itself, the dissatisfaction with services available through other areas, such as schools, churches, or organizations, the necessity of aid during the reintegration experience, the minimal usage of the services available to military families, the need for aid when going through a problem with a child, and effectiveness of the services used.

After completing the study similarities were found among participant's responses. Each participant reported that the military had the largest quantity and most productive resources available to their military family. The smallest quantity or the least productive resources had various answers of school, church, and a company or organization. Overall, participants evidently believed the military offered and provided the most help for them as a military family. The only common service each participant used was Family Service of Rhode Island. This one similarity limited the survey and made the information somewhat difficult to report on.

SPSS enabled the researcher to discover the percentages of each question to discover similarities throughout participant's responses. Through various questions, reintegration was reported to be the most difficult time period and stressor during the time as a military family. All participants reported receiving help during this specified time. Families used the majority of services very infrequently. Participants reported using some services only once or for less than one year. This either indicates the lack of permanency among the use of the service or the discontinued need for these services. All participants found the services they had used to have

high effectiveness. The most common reason for a service to be used or contacted was due to child problems. As previously mentioned, reintegration was the most reported stressor that families sought aid to get through and overcome. Previous research reports the difficulty of deployment on the family structure, but this study evidently expresses the major difficulty being the reintegration experience (*Child Trends*, 2014). A positive correlation was analyzed between the length of time in the military and the necessity of aid during the reintegration experience. There were no major findings between the differences among the branches. Overall, the findings displayed satisfaction with the services available to military families, but the number of services used and those used for lengthy amounts of time was minimal. The necessity of aid during the reintegration experience was also a frequent and major discovery from this study.

Limitations

Overall, the study was difficult to report on due to the limited number of participants. The findings cannot depict an accurate picture that can be generalized to the entire military family population. Another limitation of the limited number of participants was that there was only one participant from each branch. This was beneficial because each branch was represented, but the information when comparisons were made among the branches cannot depict an accurate picture that can be generalized to the entirety of all five branches.

Additionally, the range of responses limited the study because it was difficult to analyze correlations between the various uses of services. The participants reported varied responses due to the fact that some of them had never used or

heard of certain services that were being analyzed. This inconsistency among which services participants had used or heard of was a major limitation of this study.

Implications for Practice, Policy, Research

According to this study, Rhode Island military families are satisfied with the services they use. Participants indicated dissatisfaction with the amount of services available. The limited usage of the services indicates a need for a follow up study to explore the potential reasons as to why these services are used so infrequently and for such a limited amount of time. It is interesting that these services are reported to be effective, yet they do not seem to be used to their fullest potential. It is evident that more research needs to be done on the overall need for services for military families as opposed to specific services available in a specified area. The social work field could do a follow-up qualitative study with military families about reintegration experiences to learn of the specifics needed during this time. This would enable social workers to be more helpful and aware of their military clients needs during this specified time.

Overall, this study discovered the effectiveness of services available for military families from the perspectives of Rhode Island residents. It indicated that reintegration is reported to be the time when aid is most necessary and the study was able to discover a correlation between the amount of time as a military personnel and the need for aid during reintegration. This information is only the beginning of what needs to be discovered in order to best aid military families. Due to the ending of the war and many service members returning home and beginning their reintegration experience, it is important for more information to be gathered

about the specifics needed during this time. This study proved the effectiveness and necessity for services to remain in action to help the service members and their families that sacrifice so much for the good of the United States.

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Appendix A
Consent Form

Dear Potential Participant:

I am a Social Work major at Providence College, inviting you to participate in a study that seeks to gain insight into military families perceptions of the aid they receive from services. Over the course of roughly the last decade and a half, many services became available to aid and support military members and their families due to the increase service in the war. This questionnaire is designed to gain a better understanding of how various support systems help military families cope with the stressors of the their difficult lifestyle. Data gathered in this study will only be used in a research course at Providence College.

At this time, military families are being recruited for this research. Participation will involve answering a survey questionnaire about personal perceptions of the services available for military families. The survey will take no longer than 10 minutes.

There are no anticipated risks associated with involvement in this research study. Participation in this study is voluntary and completely anonymous; the participant may withdraw from the study at any time up until May 1st, 2014.

Benefits of participating in this study include helping researcher to better understand the effectiveness of various services offered for military families in Rhode Island. There is no compensation for participation in this study.

Confidentiality of participants will be protected by collecting forms in a way that ensures anonymity.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision to participate or to decline to participate will not influence your relationship with the interviewer or the Department of Social Work in any way.

YOUR RETURN OF A COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE INFORMATION AND THAT YOU HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK ANY AND ALL QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE ABOUT THIS STUDY, YOUR PARTICIPATION, YOUR RIGHTS, AND THAT YOU AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.

Thank you for participating in this study.

**Jacquelyn Desrosiers, Social Work Student, 401-226-6226,
jdesros3@friars.providence.edu**

Appendix B

Please indicate which answer best represents your family and military demographics.

Number of people in your immediate family: _____

Ages of the individuals in your family: _____

Who in your family is in the military? _____

What branch of the military? _____

Are they Active Duty or Reserves? _____

How long has this individual been in the military? _____

How many deployments has this individual done? _____

Approximately, how many days of deployment?
If multiple deployments, combine. _____

How many times has your family moved for the military? _____

Has your family experienced a loss due to the military? _____

Please mark which area of service best represents your response. Answer questions based on experience with the area of service or your belief.

Which area of service has the largest quantity of resources?

- Military
- School
- Church
- Company/organization
- Other: _____

Which area of service has the smallest quantity of resources?

- Military
- School
- Church
- Company/organization
- Other: _____

Which area of service has the most productive resources?

- Military
- School
- Church
- Company/organization
- Other: _____

Which area of service has the least productive resources?

- Military

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Reintegration | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

What stressor did this service help you and your family with least?

| Service | MOS | OMK | YRRP | FSRI | BSM | OHF | MCEC | SLO | MBG | MAS |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| Deployment | | | | | | | | | | |
| Residential mobility | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parent separation/ Absence | | | | | | | | | | |
| Trauma and loss | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reintegration | | | | | | | | | | |

Please choose the above stressor that most impacts/impacted your family. In your opinion, what would be the best way to aid your family to get through this difficult stressor?

Briefly express what you think of the services available to your family.

What services or aspects of certain services are you most pleased with?

What services or aspects of certain services need improvement?

To learn more about the specific services listed above, please see the attached sheet. Not all of these services are offered in Rhode Island, so these examples may provide you with an idea to bring to your community and implement to better help your military family.

Appendix C

Military OneSource: Military OneSource is a confidential Department of Defense-funded program providing comprehensive information on every aspect of military life at no cost to active duty, Guard and Reserve Component members, and their families. Information includes, but is not limited to, deployment, reunion, relationship, grief, spouse employment and education, parenting and childcare, and much more.

Source: <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/>

Operation Military Kids: Operation Military Kids is the U.S. Army's collaborative effort with America's communities to support children and youth impacted by deployment. Regardless of whether families are experiencing deployment for the first time, the second time or another in a series of multiple deployments, OMK's goal is to connect military children and youth with local resources in order to achieve a sense of community support and enhance their well-being.

Source: <https://www.operationmilitarykids.org/public/home.aspx>

Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program: The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is a DoD-wide effort to promote the well-being of National Guard and Reserve members, their families and communities, by connecting them with resources throughout the deployment cycle. Through YRRP events, Service members and loved ones connect with local resources before, during, and after deployments.

Source: <http://www.yellowribbon.mil/>

Family Service of Rhode Island: A non-profit organization that offers home-based and office-based therapy to traumatized military families at any point in the families military career. Children are the identified clients, but work is often done with the family as a whole.

Source: <http://www.familyserviceri.org/>

Blue Star Moms: The Blue Star Moms is a non-profit organization that represents all aspects of America. The mission is to support members and their sons and daughters who serve or have served, United States military personnel who serve or have served honorably and their families, Veterans' organizations, causes that will benefit military personnel, and Gold Star Families through service.

Source: <http://www.bluestarmothers.org/>

Operation Homefront: Operation Homefront provides relief, recovery and recognition to military families during difficult times. This organization provides aid during difficult financial times, for "wounded warriors", and hosts a gala each year that recognizes an extraordinary military child, as well as hosting multiple Homefront Celebrations each year to show their appreciation to military spouses.

Source: <http://www.operationhomefront.net/>

Military Child Education Coalition: The work of the Military Child Education Coalition is focused on ensuring quality educational opportunities for all military children affected by mobility, family separation, and transition. The MCEC is a non-profit, worldwide organization that performs research, develops resources, conducts professional institutes and conferences, and develops and publishes resources for all constituencies.

Source: <http://www.militarychild.org/>

School Liaison Officers: The School Liaison Program works to coordinate and assist school aged children of military parents with educational opportunities and information necessary to succeed in an academic environment. School liaison officers also network, educate and work in partnership with local schools to provide caring adults to enhance the education experience. The mission of the School Liaison is to provide military commanders with the support necessary to coordinate and advise military parents of school-aged children on educational issues and needs and to assist in solving education-related problems.

Source: <http://www.militaryk12partners.dodea.edu/resources.cfm?collId=liaison>

Military Women's/Men's Study Bible Group: The Rock Church in San Diego has regular military programs for both men and women and work hard to meet the needs of military spouses in an area where there are frequent separations and deployments that occur and service members are away.

Source: <http://www.sdrock.com/ministries/military/women/>

Military Appreciation Service: Friends Community Church in Fairbanks, Ala., holds a military appreciation service before a local brigade deploys and passes out cards to active duty spouses with a contact number for a volunteer ministry the church provides. The ministry offers help with moving furniture, or minor home or car repairs, childcare and support in other ways.

Source: <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/church-ministry-how-churches-can-help-military-families>