

# RESPONDENTS INCLUDING MILITARY SPOUSES SERVICE MEMBERS & VETERANS

MILITARY FAMILIES ARE ASSETS TO NATIONAL DEFENSE AND THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES. They are central to the health and capability of the All-Volunteer Force and are good neighbors actively engaged in making their civilian communities great places to live.

Blue Star Families' annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey provides a comprehensive understanding of what it means to serve as a military family and is a blueprint for strengthening America by supporting military families.



IN COLLABORATION WITH:



Funding for the 2018 Military Family Lifestyle Survey provided through the generosity of our presenting sponsor USAA and from supporting sponsors Lockheed Martin Corporation, CSX Corporation, Facebook, BAE Systems, Northrop Grumman Corporation, and the Walmart Foundation.



# 2018 MILITARY FAMILY LIFESTYLE SURVEY RESULTS

# **TOP 5 ISSUES**

MILITARY SPOUSES	Amount of time away from family	51%
	Military spouse employment	45%
	Dependent children's education	42%
	Impact of deployment on children	39%
≝	Military pay/benefits 3	5%

Amount of time away from family	/	52%
Military family quality of life	35	%
Dependent children's education	34	%
Military pay/benefits	339	%
	Military family quality of life  Impact of deployment on children  Dependent children's education	Impact of deployment on children 35  Dependent children's education 34

,	Military pay/benefits	37%
	Veteran employment	36%
NS	Amount of time away from family	34%
ERANS	PTSD/combat stress/TBI	33%
VET	Impact of deployment on children	28%

# IMPACT OF SERVICE ON QUALITY OF LIFE

MILITARY FAMILIES WANT TO SERVE. THEY WORRY SERVICE MAY HURT THEIR FAMILY'S WELL-BEING.

# TOP LIFESTYLE STRESSORS

- Financial Issues/ Stress
- **X** Deployments
- Relocation Stress

## FAMILY SEPARATION

**41%** 6+ months of separation in last 18 months

had a child who experienced separation anxiety/sleeping problems due to parent's deployment

## FAMILY FINANCIAL HEALTH

70% Millennials two incomes vital to family's well-being

# BEST WAYS DOD CAN IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

Better housing options/increase BAH

Adequate manning levels and reduce OPTEMPO

More military career control

# COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS & BELONGING

MILITARY FAMILIES ARE GOOD NEIGHBORS, YET MANY FEEL THEY DO NOT BELONG.

## COMMUNITY BELONGING

48%

feel they don't belong in local civilian community; 43% feel they don't belong in military community

Military spouses have lowest sense of belonging and least connection to both communities of all respondent groups

#### BEST WAY TO IMPROVE SENSE OF BELONGING

Service member and military spouses increase military spouse jobs

#### TRANSITION

Employment in early transition **positively impacts** veteran families' community connections and belonging

# TOP WAY TO IMPROVE TRANSITION EXPERIENCE



Strong **support** network

<sup>\*</sup> Top issues for service members differ by gender

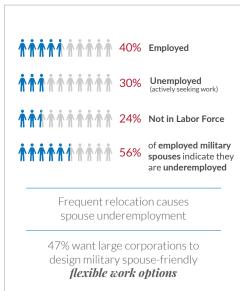


# 2018 MILITARY FAMILY LIFESTYLE SURVEY

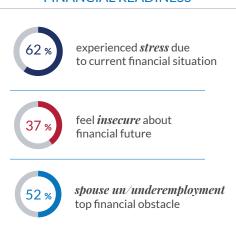


# SNAPSHOT of the MILITARY LIFESTYLE

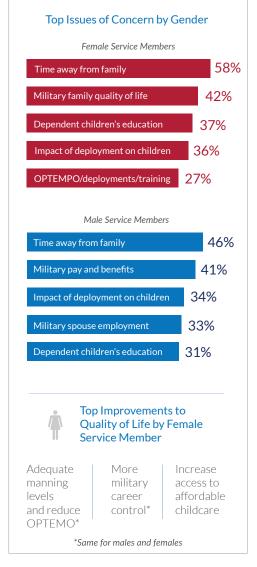
## SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT



#### **FINANCIAL READINESS**



#### WOMEN IN UNIFORM



## CIVIL-MILITARY DIVIDE

18%

feel the general public understands their sacrifices 19%

feel the general public is *aware of* challenges military service places on families

96%

working with neighbors to imbrove communities important



## **MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS**

of veterans and service members say better appointment availability would make seeking mental health care more comfortable

Spouses and veterans top improvement full dependent alternative care coverage

32%

of LGBT feel better health care most important quality of life improvement

Families who have a *child with special needs* significantly less likely than peers to feel Tricare provides appropriate medical support

## **SUICIDE**

Experienced suicidal thoughts during time in military Active Duty Service Members Veterans Post-9/11 (8% in past year) Veterans Military Spouses Veteran Spouses

#### MILITARY CHILDREN

of families *cannot* obtain reliable childcare

lived apart from service member due to children's education during military service

want *more training* for school professionals on military life experiences

## MILITARY SPOUSE CAREGIVERS



**BEST WAY TO SUPPORT:** increased access to childcare

78% need childcare



Report significantly lower levels of family resilience factors (open communication, meaning making of adversity, family connectedness, and internal family support) than peers