



# Military- and Veteran-Connected Families in Hampton Roads





# The Blue Star Families Mission

Building strong communities of support around military families,  
to improve our military readiness

**Listen**

**Share**

**Partner**

**Act**



- ★ Blue Star Families conducted its **12th annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey** from April to June 2021
- ★ **Largest and most comprehensive survey** of active-duty, National Guard, and Reserve service members, Veterans, and their families.
- ★ Used by **federal lawmakers, military leadership, local communities, and philanthropic actors** for its crucial insight and data

2021 Results

8,004

respondents

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

“Programs like the ones provided by Blue Star Families to our military members and families are extremely important.... **BSF is vital to the military community.**”

- Veteran-connected attendee of MFLS Launch Event

“**I regularly take Blue Star Families research and recommendations to our unit’s military and civilian leadership.** Our unit has used it to justify continued funding for spouse resilience programs and to inform what the intended outcomes of that programming should be.”

- Military personnel and STRONGER Panel Participant, MFLS 2019 Data Launch

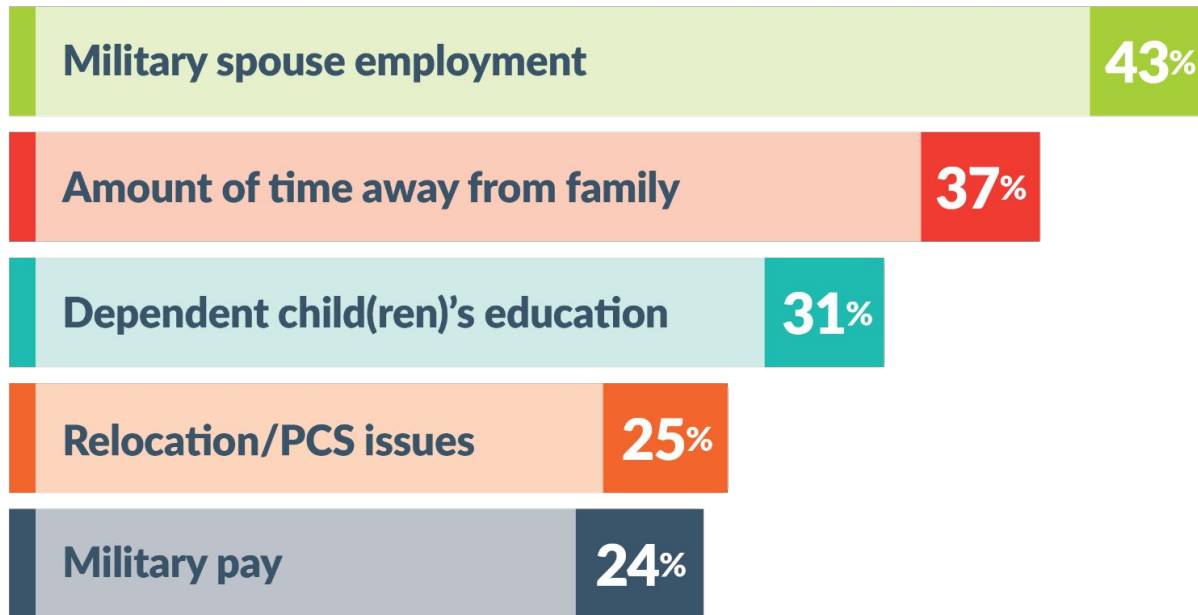


# **Military Children and K-12 Education**



# 2021 Top 5 Issues

Active-Duty Family Respondents



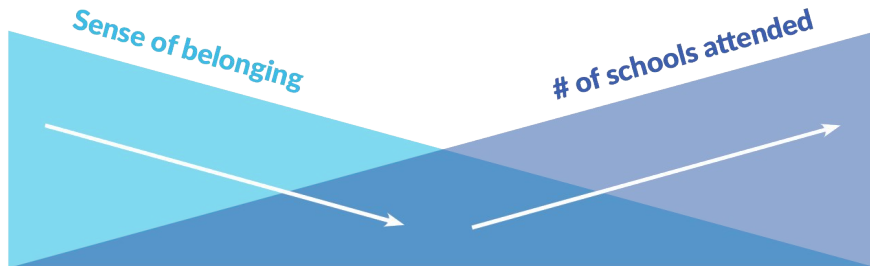


# Finding: Children's Education

Nearly two-thirds (61%) of active-duty family respondents report their oldest child is thriving in school and 54% feel a sense of belonging to their school, but these educational experiences may be offset due to factors related to military life (such as relocation) and the current delivery method of education (such as virtual or hybrid schooling).

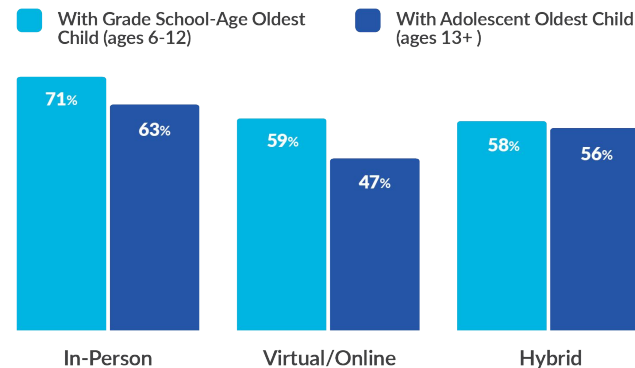
## Sense of Belonging to School and Relocation

As the number of schools attended **increases**, sense of belonging to school **decreases**



## Percent Who Agree That Their Oldest Child is Thriving in School

Active-duty family respondents (n=1,790)





# Finding: Children's Mental Health

While active-duty family respondents report the average mental health of children in their family is good, they report poorer mental health for adolescents; families experiencing a separation or those reporting concerning relationship behaviors also report lower average mental health of their children.

Most parents report the average mental health of children in the family is good, but poorer mental health for adolescents and those separated from the service member.

17% report they would like their child to receive mental health care, but they currently do not.

## Top 5 Reasons for Not Receiving Care

I don't believe telehealth mental health care would be effective for my child	38%
Cannot find an available provider who will treat my child	30%
It is difficult to find time for an appointment	28%
It is difficult to find child care for my other children	23%
<b>Concern about a mental health diagnosis preventing future military service for my child</b>	<b>21%</b>



# Veterans and Transition

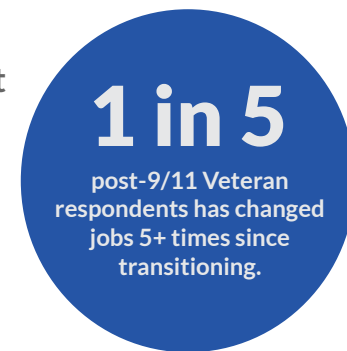




# Spotlight: Veterans

At the 20-year mark of the War on Terror, post-9/11 Veteran respondents, on average, show strong employment and financial positions. However, a greater proportion of those with a service-connected disability experience transition difficulties and a lack of preparedness for themselves and their families.

**Post-9/11 Veterans** have higher employment rates than non-Veteran peers, but often change jobs or careers after transitioning. Those with service-connected disabilities report more difficulty with transition, increasing with the level of service-connected disability.



Transition Difficulty for Respondent by Service-Connected Disability Rating				
Post-9/11 Veteran respondents with a service-connected disability rating				
	10-40% Disability Rating (n=74)	50-90% Disability Rating (n=208)	100% Disability Rating (n=146)	Any Disability Rating (n=432)
Transition process was "difficult" or "very difficult"	58%	66%	75%	68%





# Spotlight: Transition

For all Veteran respondents, current feelings of social isolation were significantly associated with transition difficulty; perceived social isolation was highest in those reporting very difficult transitions.

## *Feelings about Transition*

**56%**

Veteran respondents feel their transition was difficult or very difficult.

**42%**

Veteran respondents feel they are not well prepared to navigate transition.

## *Preparing for Transition*

**47%**

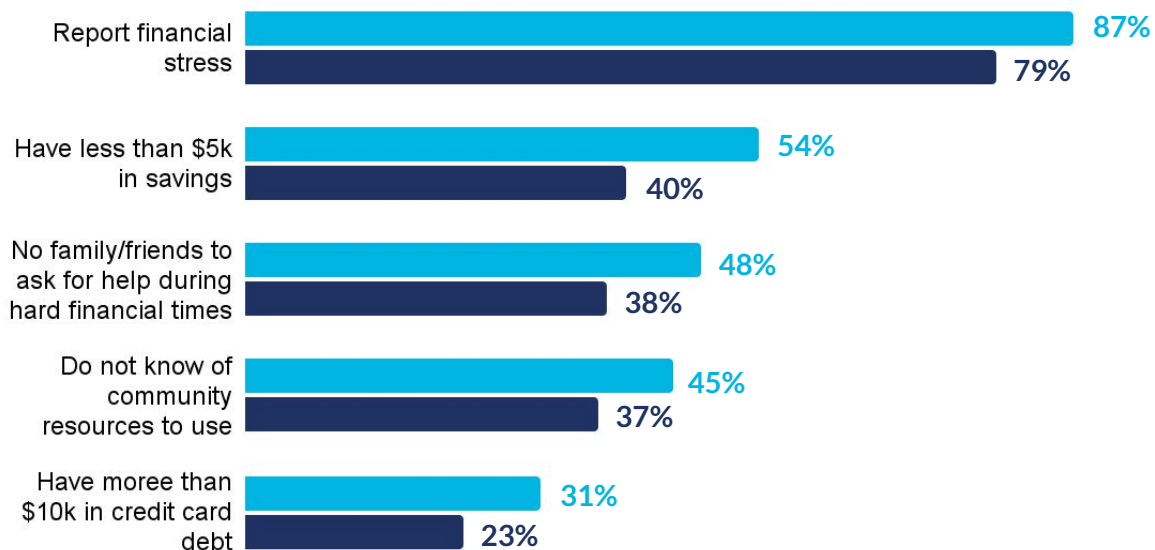
Veteran respondents started preparing for their transition less than a year before separating.

**17%**

Veteran respondents did not prepare or were not able to prepare for their transition.



# Spotlight: Female Veterans & Transition





# Questions?

**Get in touch!**

Ashley Scott

Policy & Innovation Coordinator

[ascott@bluestarfam.org](mailto:ascott@bluestarfam.org)