

# Putting Research to Work for Military Families



Focus:  
Army

## Military Families: Measurement of Community Resource Adequacy

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**SUMMARY:** In this study, a community resource adequacy measure was examined among military families and health care providers. The objective was to assess community factors that may help or hinder deployment-related stress and to improve resource availability for military families. Findings indicated that measuring community resource adequacy is beneficial in assessing commonly used community services among military families.

### KEY FINDINGS:

- Resources located on and off the military installation were identified as two domains of community resource adequacy.
- Participants identified eight community services, which they believed met the needs of military families, including physical health care, mental health care, retail and food services, recreational services, child care services, religious activities, family activities, and housing.
- The community resource adequacy measurement indicated that greater resource adequacy or use of community services was common among Service members and spouses off of the military installation.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS:

Programs could:

- Educate military families of available community service resources located on and off the military installation
- Create workshops that allow military families to connect with one another to build a sense of community and support well-being
- Evaluate the need for resources that are easily accessible to military families who reside on or near a military installation for community cohesiveness

### IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICIES:

Policies could:

- Encourage training for professionals who work with military families on identifying and providing information about community resources
- Continue to provide support for future research on developing measures to assess community resource adequacy to improve the availability of resources among military families
- Promote programs that support and improve resource availability for Service members' and their families

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## METHODS

- Participants were invited to participate in the study if they were a Service member or spouse or a medical staff member of a hospital, chaplain, or family service program on a military installation.
- Data were collected through questionnaires assessing military and civilian community factors that may contribute risk or protection to deployment stress.
- Statistical analyses were conducted to examine the reliability of the community resource adequacy measure.

## PARTICIPANTS

- The sample included 717 participants from four U.S. Army installations, 432 (60.3%) were Service members or military spouses and 285 (39.7%) were health care providers.
- Participants were comprised of 562 women (78.4%) and 155 men (21.6%). They were primarily White (51.9%) followed by Black (29.4%), and other (14.8%).
- A majority of the sample was married (85.5%), had a mean age of 37.3 years old (SD = 10.6), and had children at home (85.3%).

## LIMITATIONS

- The survey measured respondents' self-report opinions of resource availability, which limits the reliability in developing the community resource adequacy measurement.
- A majority of the sample were female Service members or spouses, thus limiting the generalizability of the study's findings to male Service members or spouses, and health care providers.
- Much of the sample resided off of the military installation, thus it is difficult to interpret perceptions of resource availability on the installation.

## AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could:

- Evaluate Service members, their families, and health care providers' personal satisfaction with resources on and off military installations
- Utilize the community resource adequacy measurement developed from this study to further examine use and availability of resources for military families
- Investigate available and commonly used community resources in samples with other branches of the military

## ASSESSING RESEARCH THAT WORKS



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