



## Exploring the Impact of Parental Military Deployment/Field Posting on Adolescents in Indian Military Families

Misra, P., & Singh, V. (2014). Exploring the impact of parental military deployment/field posting on adolescents in Indian military families. *Psychological Studies*, 59, 36-43. doi:10.1007/s12646-013-0224-8

**SUMMARY:** 22 Indian military youth, most of whose fathers were currently deployed, participated in focus groups regarding risk and protective factors surrounding deployment. Military teens cited numerous challenges across the deployment cycle, especially regarding role ambiguity and feelings of loss. Relationships with mothers tended to be the strongest protective factor.

### KEY FINDINGS

- The most stressful aspects of parental deployment for teens were changes in family roles, lack of parental help for homework, family geographic move during deployment, and missing parental involvement in activities.
- Youth appreciated the relaxed rules that occurred during parental deployment
- Teens cited difficulties in reconnecting with their parents upon homecoming from deployment.
- Adolescents noted that their mothers were the primary source of stability and strength across the deployment cycle

### IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS

Programs could:

- Develop engaging programs for non-deployed parents and their children to strengthen their relationship during the Service member's deployment
- Offer tutoring programs to help youth of deployed parents
- Provide "welcome packages" for families that move to new installations to help them settle in their new homes

### IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICIES

Policies could:

- Continue funding a range of services for both Service members and their families after homecoming from deployment
- Allocate funding for professional development courses for community providers to educate them about the unique experience of military youth during parental deployment
- Recommend providing transportation for military children from school to afterschool activities, especially during deployment

# Putting Research to Work for Military Families



## METHODS

- Three 90-minute focus groups were conducted, each with 6-8 participants.
- Two of the groups were with children of junior commissioned officers; the other group had youth whose parents were colonels or lieutenant colonels.
- Focus groups were audio taped, transcribed, and analyzed via content analysis.

## PARTICIPANTS

- 22 military youth (age 12-19) living in Field Area Family Accommodations of Allahabad, India.
- All youth had experienced at least one parental deployment.
- Parents of most youth were currently deployed and had been gone approximately 6 months.

## LIMITATIONS

- Neither the recruitment process nor the response rate were described.
- The sample was relatively small and homogenous, limiting the ability to generalize the findings.
- There was no information provided about the qualitative data analytic approach.

## AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- Future research could supplement the youth's data with information from the at-home parents.
- Longitudinal research can examine the functioning and needs of military youth over time.
- Research could examine gender differences in the risk and protective factors for military youth.

## ASSESSING RESEARCH THAT WORKS



For more information about the Assessing Research that Works rating scale visit:  
<https://reachmilitaryfamilies.umn.edu/content/assessing-research-works>