



The Impact of Shared Location on the Mental Health of Military and Civilian Adolescents in a Community Affected by Frequent Deployments: A Research Note

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INTL Military

Civilian-Focused Article



This research assessed the mental health and well-being (i.e., depression, self-esteem and suicide ideation) for Canadian Military Forces (CF) and civilian adolescents living in a community affected by frequent deployment, by comparing these youth to a national sample of adolescents.

Key Findings:

- Civilian youth scored higher on the well-being measures when compared to the national sample, but CF males did not differ significantly from their national counterparts, and CF females had significantly lower suicide ideation scores than females in the national sample.
- Young people living in the deployment-affected community were more likely to have contemplated suicide when compared to the national sample.
- Having a parent in the CF did not predict more depression, low self-esteem, or suicide ideation than found in the civilian or national samples.
- Interview findings indicate that adolescents in the community (CF and civilian) share peer networks and a variety of common experiences related to military life (family friends in the CF, loss of friends due to relocation, etc.).

Implications for Programs:

- In communities where there is a high level of integration and overlapping peer networks between military and civilian youth, evidence-based programs to enhance well-being might be suited for both groups.
- Given over-lapping peer networks and similar community experiences, a peer mentoring support program may help facilitate support for military youth.

Implications for Policies:

- Schools located in vulnerable communities may consider a strategic integration of well-being and mental-health programming into their student health curriculum.
- Schools located in vulnerable communities may also develop preventative strategies to include school-based well-being screenings for civilian and military youth.

Avenues for Future Research:

- Future research should integrate other key variables that affect well-being such as SES and other community level factors.
- Additional studies should follow adolescents longitudinally to account for changes over time.
- Future research should replicate this study in larger communities, with less of a relationships with the military base.

Prepared by Military REACH Team.

For additional information, please visit <http://reachmilitaryfamilies.arizona.edu>



Background Information

Methodology:

- This research used quantitative analyses (ordinary least squares and logistic regression of well-being data gathered with NLSCY measures) along with qualitative interviews.
- Sample included both youth with family members in the Canadian Forces and civilian youth.

Participants:

- Total samples size was 7,184: 1,066 adolescents from one school adjacent to a large army base plus 6,118 from the 7th cycle National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth. 60 in depth interviews were conducted with the 424 CF high school students. None of the 642 civilian students surveyed were interviewed.
- The mean age of participants was 14.4 years old.

Limitations:

- Civilian youth were not included in the interview component (conducted with CF youth only), as such findings from the interviews may be limited in their generalizability.
- Some questions on the NLSCY were asked to targeted age groups (i.e., 14-15 or 16-17 year olds), this limited the authors ability to make comparisons to the national sample.
- Analysis was not able to account for SES which is also associated with well-being.
- Ethnicity was not reported or included in analysis which may affect generalizability.

Assessing Research that Works

Research Design and Sample				Quality Rating:	★☆☆
	Excellent (★★★)	Appropriate (★★☆)	Limited (★☆☆)	Questionable (☆☆☆)	
The design of the study (e.g., research plan, sample, recruitment) used to address the research question was....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Research Methods				Quality Rating:	★★★☆☆
	Excellent (★★★)	Appropriate (★★☆)	Limited (★☆☆)	Questionable (☆☆☆)	
The research methods (e.g., measurement, analysis) used to answer the research question were...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Limitations				Quality Rating:	★☆☆☆☆
	Excellent <i>Minor Limitations</i> (★★★)	Appropriate <i>Few Limitations</i> (★★☆)	Limited <i>Several Limitations</i> (★☆☆)	Questionable <i>Many/Severe Limitations</i> (☆☆☆)	
The limitations of this study are...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Implications				Quality Rating:	★★★☆☆
	Excellent (★★★)	Appropriate (★★☆)	Limited (★☆☆)	Questionable (☆☆☆)	
The implications of this research to programs, policies and the field, stated by the authors, are...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because authors do not discuss implications					
Overall Quality Rating					★★★☆☆

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