

Strengthening the  
**MILITARY FAMILY  
READINESS SYSTEM**

for a Changing American Society




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# STUDY SPONSOR

Office of Military Community and Family Policy  
U.S. Department of Defense



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## STATEMENT OF TASK

- What can be learned from the positive experiences military families have and the protection conferred on them through supports provided by the DoD and service branches?
- How do the challenges presented by military life, such as frequent moves, exposure to trauma, and economic and other stresses for parents, influence children's social-emotional, physical, biochemical, and psychological development?
- What are the mechanisms by which resilience can be fostered in military children and families?
- What is needed to strengthen the support system for military families?


## STUDY METHODOLOGY

- Six in-person closed session meetings to deliberate findings, conclusions, and recommendations
- Virtual meetings and conference calls
- One public information-gathering session
- Comprehensive review of the scientific literature
- Memos from 14 individual experts and 8 organizations
- Commissioned papers on digital interventions, big data analytics, community engagement programs, implementation science, and success factors for effective systems of support for military families

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**SUPPORTING THE WELL-BEING OF MILITARY  
FAMILIES IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURING THE  
READINESS OF MILITARY PERSONNEL.**

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page featuring a stylized American flag. The top left corner shows the blue field with white stars, while the rest of the graphic consists of flowing, wavy red and white stripes that sweep across the bottom of the page.

Strengthening the  
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## WHAT IS THE ‘MILITARY FAMILY READINESS SYSTEM’?

- A portfolio of programs and services aimed at promoting the quality of life of Service members and their families
- Serves both active duty and reserve component Service members and families
- Majority of services & activities delivered by individual military Services
- Includes community partners



## KEY MESSAGES

1. DoD recognizes the centrality of families to the performance of service members and has built a Military Family Readiness System to actively support families. There is no U.S. civilian equivalent.
2. Continuous conflict over the past two decades and the associated increases in operational tempo, prolonged duration, and regular reliance on the reserve component, with an all-volunteer force, have increased the need for and demands on the Military Family Readiness System.

## KEY MESSAGES

3. DoD and the Service branches do not employ a coordinated and comprehensive approach to matching the unique needs of individual families to available programs.
3. DoD programs for military families should be evidence-based, or evidence-informed, and include the infrastructure to continuously assess program quality, relevance, and population impact so programs may be adapted or retired when necessary.
4. DoD must be ready to rapidly develop and deliver interdisciplinary family-centered services for emerging threats to military family well-being within a Military Family Readiness System that is flexible, adaptive, and responsive to the needs of families as they exist.