PennState

CLEARINGHOUSE
FOR MILITARY FAMILY READINESS

Military-Connected Students' Educational Success

Literature Review

Jennifer K. Karre, PhD & Daniel F. Perkins, PhD

July 21, 2022

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

In response to a request from the Defense-State Liaison Office, Military Community & Family Policy, Department of Defense, the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State conducted a literature review on military-connected children's educational success. The purpose was to provide a comprehensive review of the current state of the research literature. This review includes publications related to dependent children of active duty and reserve component Service members in kindergarten through 12th grade general education and special education. Furthermore, this review includes information on military-connected students' outcomes related to academic performance, social-emotional development, and mental health. The information for this literature review was drawn from academic journals, government reports, and non-government reports.

Two-hundred ten publications, spanning January 2002 to April 2022, were identified for this review. Table ES.1 outlines risk and protective/promotive factors that were identified in the quantitative and qualitative literature.

Table ES.1
Summary of Risk and Protective/Promotive Factors

General Military-Related Risk Factors	
Dual military family	Having multiple risk factors
Geographically isolated	Parent with a traumatic brain injury
Enlisted[a] (compared to officer)	*Aversion to help-seeking*
Normative Risk Factors	
Age (older)	Avoidant coping
Racial or ethnic minority	Community poverty
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender	Parental depressive symptoms
Unmarried parents	Having multiple risk factors
Socially isolated	
General Protective and Promotive Factors	
Officer (compared to enlisted[a])	Positive social relationships
Self-efficacy	Program participation
Effortful control	Maternal community connections
Adaptive coping	Positive family relationships
Use of e-communication to make friends	*Positive school climate*
Participation in military activities	*Community understanding of the military lifestyle*
Factors That May be Risk or Protective Factors Depending on Outcome	
Gender	
Deployment-Related Risk Factors	
Longer single deployment	*Less access to help with homework*
Cumulative months of deployment	*Military-related bullying*
Combat deployment	*Schools with fewer military-connected students*
Timing of deployment	*Lack of military culture training for school personnel*
At-home parent's mental health and well-being	

Deployment-Related Protective Factors	
At-home parent social support Social support from other military-connected students	*Schools with consistent and high expectations*
Transition-Related Risk Factors	
Timing of move *Schedule type differences* *Differences in curricula, content pacing* *Differences in standards and exit exams* *Differences in state requirements*	*Exclusion from extra-curricular activities* *Exclusion from gifted and talented programming* *Lack of military culture training for school personnel* *Understaffed SLP[b] offices*
Transition-Related Protective/Promotive Factors	
Online learning opportunities *Extra-curricular activities* *School personnel*	*Peer ambassador programs* *Effective SLP[b] staff*
Transition-Related Challenges for Students who are Eligible for Special Education Services or Have a Disability	
Non-compliance with the law *Services availability* *Delays in service access* *Lack of continuity of services*	*Strained relationships between staff and parents* *Understaffed EFMP & SLP[b] offices* *TRICARE system navigation*
Transition-Related Supports for Students who are Eligible for Special Education Services or Have a Disability	
Parent training in advocacy *Effective EFMP and SLP[b] staff* *Hand-carried IEPs*	*OSN standardization of processes* *TRICARE coverage*

Note. Light purple indicates quantitative statistical evidence; grey and italics indicates evidence from qualitative studies. EFMP = Exceptional Family Member Program; SLP = School Liaison Program; IEP = Individualized Education Plan; OSN = Office of Special Needs. [a] Current research related to educational outcomes does not separate paygrade beyond enlisted and officer; recent research on veterans (VETERANetwork, 2022) suggests that there may be important differences between different groups of enlisted Service members (e.g., junior enlisted vs. senior enlisted). [b] SLP provides a variety of services related to children in general and special education; in the research literature, the program is discussed most frequently in relation to transitioning families and families receiving special education services.

Introduction

In response to a request from the Defense-State Liaison Office, Military Community & Family Policy, Department of Defense (DoD), the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State (Clearinghouse) conducted a literature review on military children's educational success. The purpose was to provide a comprehensive review of the current state of the research literature (i.e., identify the existing research, synthesize the research, present the current state of empirical knowledge regarding the topic, and identify gaps in the research). The review includes publications related to dependent children of active duty and reserve component Service members in kindergarten through 12th grade general education and special education. Furthermore, this review includes information on military-connected students' outcomes related to academic achievement, social-emotional development, and mental health. The information for this literature review was drawn from academic journals, government reports, and non-government reports.

Methods

Publications were identified for this review using multiple methods. First, the peer-reviewed literature was searched using Pro-Quest. The search terms and the number of results returned for those search terms are found in Table 1. When multiple search terms are listed, an "AND" condition was applied, so all terms were required for the result to return.

Table 1
ProQuest Search Terms for Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	# of Results
Military	Children	School		1643
		Education		615
		Academic		206
	Adolescent	School		1446
		Education		552
		Academic		169
	Special needs			54
	Disability	Children	School	114
		Adolescent	School	81
	Exceptional	Family	Member	73
	Family	Student		437
	Dependent	Student		32
Military-connected	Schools			65
	Student			57

Next, government and non-government reports were identified by searching Google and specific websites. Search engine/website and search terms are listed in Table 2.

Table 2
Search Engine/Website Search Terms for Government and Non-Government Reports

Website	Search Terms
Google	Military family school experiences
	Military student identifier
	Military interstate compact
	Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission
	Military student advance enrollment
	Military children advance enrollment
	Purple Star Schools
	School supports for students in military families
	GAO military child education
RAND	School (filtered by military families)
	Education (filtered by military families)
Government Accountability Office	Education (reports)

Within the search parameters, the publication date was restricted to January 2002 to present (April 2022). Furthermore, the search criteria excluded dissertations. Upon examining the search results, publications were further excluded if they were not relevant to this literature review (e.g., focused on family outcomes as opposed to school outcomes) or if the data were collected prior to 2002. Students attending Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools were not purposely excluded from this literature review. However, although a thorough search was completed, very few publications were found that included data on students in DoDEA schools. Therefore, findings in this literature review should be interpreted as reflecting students in public schools. Moreover, reports and articles where data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic were excluded from the general literature review as they likely do not represent a typical military-connected student educational experience. Nevertheless, a section is included in this review that summarizes COVID-19-related data from two reports for which data were collected in 2020 and 2021, which was when the pandemic was greatly affecting educational practices.

Additional sources were identified when they were cited by articles and reports found in the search. Moreover, once a non-governmental report source was identified, that organization's website was further examined for additional reports. Furthermore, a relevant Government Accountability Office (GAO) report was released in May 2022, after the literature search was completed. We became aware of the report and included it in this review.

A total of 210 publications were reviewed for this literature review. Table 3 lists the number of each type of publication that was reviewed.

Table 3
Number of Publications Reviewed for Literature Review

Type	Number
Journal articles	154
Books/book chapters	7
Government report	20
Government-sponsored reports	7
Non-government report	18
Website articles	4
Total	210

Both quantitative and qualitative studies were included in this review of the research literature as both types of studies provide unique information that contributes to our understanding. Quantitative studies allow for statistical analyses, larger sample sizes, and the potential for generalizability of findings. The purpose of qualitative studies is to provide a rich understanding of individuals' experiences and involves smaller samples; therefore, by their nature, findings from qualitative studies cannot generalized beyond the individuals studied. Thus, without systematic, quantitative data, one cannot know the impact a phenomenon can have on long-term outcomes or how widespread a certain problem may be.

Results & Discussion

This section will summarize the literature on military-connected students' educational success. First, military-connected students will be discussed in general terms, and the difficulty with aggregating up to the entire military-connected student population will be explored. Second, general risk factors will be discussed. Third, protective factors related to educational success will be explored. Fourth, risk and protective factors related specifically to deployment and transition will be examined. Fifth, programs designed to help military-connected students succeed will be discussed. Finally, policies related to military-connected students' educational experiences and outcomes will be summarized.

Military-Connected Students

There are over 900,000 school-age students with a military parent (i.e., total force; DoD, 2020a). (Hereafter, references to "students," "children," and "adolescents" should be interpreted as military-connected students, children, and adolescents unless otherwise noted.) The vast majority of those students attend public school (Department of Defense Education Activity [DoDEA], 2015). In general, military-connected parents feel that their children are thriving, and the majority of parents indicate that their children's school is welcoming to their child (Blue Star Families, 2019).

However, one of the top five concerns that military-connected parents report is related to their children's education (Blue Star Families, 2019). When a student's educational environment is not understanding of the unique needs of military-connected students and is not actively working to support those students, there is a greater likelihood of the student experiencing school failure or failure to graduate on time (Bradshaw et al., 2010). Furthermore, when military-connected families have significant concerns, these families may choose to homeschool their children, choose to have the Service member relocate to their new location on Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders while the family remains behind, or retire early (Kimitto et al., 2011). Indeed, 9-11% of military families report homeschooling compared to 3% in the general U.S. population (Blue Star Families 2019; Military Child Education Coalition [MCEC], 2012). When military families do choose to homeschool, 32-48% report doing so due to poor public school performance, and 28-47% report doing so for continuity and stability due to school transitions (Blue Star Families 2019; MCEC, 2012). Moreover, when done to alleviate parents' concerns with schools, these two options can have negative consequences. Children who are homeschooled may have difficulty returning to public school when they PCS into a desirable school district (MCEC, 2012). Moreover, lengthy PCS-related family separations can have negative financial and family consequences (Brown et al., 2019). Thus, actively supporting students by setting them up for success in their local public school could be a reasonable prevention effort.

Overall, the literature that examines whether being in a military family, in and of itself, is a risk factor for student school-related outcomes is mixed. This is likely because military-connected children are not all the same and cannot be lumped into one homogenous group. Furthermore, potential risk associated with specific military-related factors (e.g., deployment, school transition) may be dependent on other factors such as the child's age, grade in school, developmental stage, deployment characteristics (e.g., combat vs. non-combat, length), the interaction of military-related variables and other variables (e.g., parental mental health), and the cumulative effect of multiple risk factors. Because of this, studies that examine military-connected children too broadly may produce differing results.

Several studies examine the difference between children and adolescents with a parent in the military and those without a parent in the military. Many of these studies were conducted with the same very large dataset. With very large datasets, one must use caution when interpreting the results as, due to the nature of statistical significance testing, statistical significance is relatively easy to obtain even if the magnitude of the effect is small (Hubbard & Lindsay, 2008). In all analyses, and especially analyses with very large sample sizes, examining effect sizes (i.e., the magnitude of the difference) is essential to discerning the actual effect. This is not to say that poor outcomes are acceptable if they only happen to a small percent of the population. Attempts should always be made to mitigate negative outcomes; however, the process used to mitigate those outcomes will depend on the scope of the problem, which is one reason why effect sizes are important. In addition, the participants in the abovementioned large dataset were all located in one region of one U.S. state (i.e., Southern California), which may have implications for generalization.

In the studies using the same large dataset, adolescents with a parent in the military were found to be more likely to carry a weapon to school, to experience more physical victimization at school,

to be more likely to have suicidal ideation and behaviors, to engage in more substance use, to have more depressive symptoms, and to have lower well-being (Cederbaum et al., 2014; de Pedro et al., 2016; de Pedro & Shim-Pelayo, 2018; Gilreath et al., 2014; Gilreath et al., 2016). However, for most of these outcomes, although statistically significant, base rates were low, and the increase in likelihood of negative outcomes was also low. Furthermore, different analyses of the same dataset found no difference in well-being (de Pedro et al., 2018), suicidal ideation, depressive symptoms (Cederbaum et al., 2014), or recent drug use (Gilreath et al. 2013) between adolescents with a military parent and those without.

Studies using different datasets also found mixed results. Adolescents with a military parent may be more likely to be at risk for elevated behavioral and emotional functioning difficulties (Vannest et al., 2021), and adolescent females with a military parent have reported lower quality of life (i.e., a standardized measure of youth quality of life including relationship with parents, looking forward to the future, feeling good about oneself, life satisfaction, and loneliness; Reed et al., 2011). In contrast, compared to national prevalence rates, adolescents with a military parent were found to engage in less sexual intercourse, alcohol use, cigarette use, and marijuana use (Hutchinson, 2006). Furthermore, state-level data from South Carolina found that military-connected children and adolescents did better on standardized tests and end of course assessments and have a higher 4-year graduation rate than students in the state as a whole (South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, 2018). In addition, in qualitative studies, school staff mention that adolescents in military families are more mature than their civilian counterparts (de Pedro et al., 2014; MCEC & Center for Public Research and Leadership at Columbia University [CPRL], 2017) and also discuss military-connected students' resilience, ability to cope with change, and acceptance of differences (Arnold et al., 2014; Garner et al., 2014).

Overall, this literature suggests that examining differences based solely on whether a student has a military parent or not may be of limited use. Military-connected students are quite diverse in terms of their military and non-military experiences and characteristics. A more fruitful strategy could be to examine which children in military families are doing well and which are struggling rather than examining them as a homogeneous group.

General Risk and Protective/Promotive Factors

This section will highlight factors that may increase risks related to students' school success. Students' success is discussed broadly, in terms of academic achievement, social-emotional development, and mental health. A robust empirical literature has found that academic success (e.g., grades, standardized test scores, graduating on time) is greatly influenced by internal factors (e.g., social-emotional and mental health) in addition to external factors (e.g., school quality, school climate) (e.g., Daily et al., 2019; Durlak et al., 2011). Thus, examining school success without including social-emotional development and mental health would be incomplete and inaccurate.

Note, a negative outcome will not always arise from a risk factor. A risk factor is simply indicative of an increased likelihood for negative outcomes. Frequently, multiple variables need to interact

to produce a negative outcome. Furthermore, in subsequent sections of this literature review, we will discuss protective factors that can moderate the relationship between risk factors and outcomes.

General Military-Related Risk Factors

Several military-related factors are related to student outcomes. Although efforts typically cannot be made to change the largely unmalleable military-related factors, awareness of the potential risk can help with prevention and identification of difficulties.

Three risk factors related to demographic-type characteristics have been shown to be related to poor outcomes. First, being in a dual military family may come with a unique set of challenges, including the potential for two parents to deploy - concurrently or consecutively. Adolescents in dual military families report less self-efficacy, which is then related to more depressive symptoms and lower grades (Lucier-Greer et al., 2014). Second, enlisted families may experience military life differently than officer families (e.g., lower socioeconomic status [SES]). Adolescents in enlisted families report lower grades, more depressive symptoms, and less self-efficacy (Lucier-Greer et al., 2014; Richardson et al., 2016). Third, when families live farther from an installation or at a more remote installation, they may have access to fewer services. This may put them at a disadvantage compared to other military families. Indeed, adolescents who are more geographically isolated report less self-efficacy (Richardson et al., 2016). Finally, though quite under-researched, there is some evidence to suggest that children of parents with a traumatic brain injury experience declines in behavior, emotional health, and social activities within 2 years of the injury incident (Brickell et al., 2018).

Military-related barriers to help-seeking may lead to some adolescents and parents not seeking help when it is indicated. In a qualitative study that examined barriers to adolescent help-seeking, adolescents, parents, and clinicians reported several factors that discouraged help-seeking, and these include confidentiality concerns (e.g., effect on the Service member's career, Service member learning about family problems while deployed), stigma (e.g., mental health problems being seen as a weakness), the ethic of self-reliance, and logistical barriers (e.g., transportation especially during deployment; Becker et al., 2014). Furthermore, some military parents are reluctant to seek help when needed due to the fear of career ramifications (Blue Star Families, 2019). In the Blue Star Families' 2019 Military Family Lifestyle Survey, 44% of participants (i.e., active duty and reserve component Service members, veterans, and their family members) who had suicidal thoughts or attempts did not seek help. The perceived consequences of help-seeking are illustrated by this quote from a military spouse, "My husband's command would punish him. When I expressed that I need help, my husband was punished by his superiors…" (Blue Star Families, 2019, p. 24). This has consequences not only for the parent, but, as discussed in subsequent sections, parent mental health is consistently related to child and adolescent well-being. In addition, this reluctance may also extend to participation in non-clinical programs. Some parents report not wanting their child to participate in deployment-related support programs because their family is self-sufficient or due to concerns about their child being negatively influenced by children who are not coping well (MCEC, 2012).

Normative Risk Factors

In addition to being influenced by military-related risk factors, military-connected children and adolescents are also influenced by normative risk factors. Normative risk factors are risk factors that are not specifically related to military life.

Several unmalleable factors are related to student outcomes. As previously discussed, awareness of the potential risk can help with the prevention and identification of difficulties. When compared to males, female children are at more risk for social-emotional difficulties (MacDermid-Wadsworth et al., 2016) and female adolescents are more at risk for depressive symptoms and anxiety (Lucier-Greer et al., 2015; Mancini et al., 2015; Walker O'Neal et al., 2017). Older children are also at increased risk for social-emotional difficulties as compared to younger children (MacDermid-Wadsworth et al., 2016), and older adolescents are at greater risk for more depressive symptoms, more anxiety, and lower grades as compared to younger adolescents (Lucier-Greer, 2016; Mancini et al., 2015; Walker O'Neal et al., 2017). Adolescents who are racial or ethnic minorities are more at risk for lower self-efficacy and, by extension, more depressive symptoms and lower grades (Lucier-Greer et al., 2014). Military-connected youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender are more likely to report cigarette use, and transgender youth are more likely to report alcohol use than military youth who are not lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (de Pedro & Shim-Pelayo, 2018). Finally, adolescents with unmarried biological parents are at higher risk for depressive symptoms and lower grades than those with married biological parents (Lucier-Greer et al., 2014). However, the civilian literature has provided evidence that it is not being unmarried, per se, that is related to poor outcomes, but factors that are sometimes associated with being unmarried (e.g., lower SES, lack of a parenting partner) (Kelly & Emery, 2003).

Several malleable risk factors were also identified. Risk factors that are malleable can be addressed from two separate approaches. Protective factors can be introduced to ameliorate the risk, or efforts can be made to eliminate the risk factor. For adolescents, being socially isolated is related to depressive symptoms (Lucier-Greer et al., 2014), and avoidant coping is associated with emotional symptoms (Morris & Age 2009). In a study of military children, community poverty was related to social-emotional difficulties (MacDermid-Wadsworth et al., 2016). In addition, parental depressive symptoms are related to child social-emotional difficulties (MacDermid-Wadsworth et al., 2016) and maternal depressive symptoms are related to child and adolescent sadness and anxious behavior (Finkel et al., 2003).

Cumulative Risk

Recently, researchers have begun examining cumulative risk related to military children and adolescents. Multiple studies have examined the combination of military-related variables (e.g., current deployment, dual military family, number of school transitions, rank) and normative risk factors (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, lack of social connections, parental mental health). These studies find that the more risk factors children and adolescents have, the more negative outcomes (e.g., less self-efficacy, more depression, lower grades, less persistence, poor social-emotional

outcomes) a child experiences (Kaeppler & Lucier-Greer, 2020; Lucier-Greer et al., 2014; Lucier-Greer et al., 2015; MacDermid Wadsworth et al., 2016). Furthermore, one study examined the effect of cumulative military-related risk factors and cumulative normative risk factors separately. Although a higher number of military-related risk factors and a higher number of normative risk factors were each predictive of negative outcomes, cumulative normative risk factors were more influential than cumulative military-related risk factors (Lucier-Greer et al., 2014).

General Protective and Promotive Factors for Military-Connected Students

Overall, military-connected children and adolescents thrive (Easterbrooks et al., 2013). Several factors may promote students' success or provide protection against identified risk. These factors fall into five categories: demographic, internal, interpersonal, community, and family. The literature discussed in this section primarily focuses on adolescents as that is the population for whom the vast majority of the research has been conducted.

Adolescents who are <u>female</u> and who have an <u>officer</u> parent report better social connections and support and better interpersonal relationships as compared to adolescents who are male and who have an enlisted parent (Lucier-Greer, 2016). Furthermore, female adolescents report better grades then males (Mancini et al., 2015).

Internal factors that lead to positive outcomes in adolescents include self-efficacy, effortful control (e.g., attention, ability to inhibit responses), and an active coping style. Adolescents who report more <u>self-efficacy</u> also report better academic performance, higher quality friendships, less social isolation, and less depression (Arnold et al., 2017; Landers-Potts et al., 2017). Adolescents with more <u>effortful control</u>, which is precursor to self-regulation, experience fewer emotional symptoms and fewer conduct problems (Morris & Age, 2009). Finally, adolescents who <u>engage in multiple types of adaptive coping</u> behaviors report lower depressive symptoms then those with fewer types of coping behaviors (Okafor et al., 2016). Note, these skills can be taught (see Dweck).

Interpersonal relationships and social connections play an important role in adolescent well-being. E-communication can have a negative effect on adolescent friendships. In general, military-connected adolescents who use e-communication (e.g., texting, email, chat, video calls, Facebook) more frequently have less deep friendships (Landers-Potts et al., 2017). However, when military-connected adolescents use <u>e-communication</u> to make new friends, as opposed to using e-communication for other reasons (e.g., to talk to established friends, to gossip, for entertainment, to pass time), e-communication is associated with deeper friendships and, subsequently, less social isolation (Landers-Potts et al., 2017). Landers-Potts and colleagues (2017) note that this finding was in contrast to similar research conducted with civilian adolescents. Furthermore, taking part in <u>military activities</u> is related to better social connections and support and better interpersonal relationships (Lucier-Greer et al., 2016). <u>Positive social relationships</u> are then related to more self-efficacy, better grades, fewer depressive symptoms, and less anxiety (Lucier-Greer et al., 2015; Mancini et al., 2015; Richardson et al., 2016). Moreover, adolescents who report <u>participation in programs</u>, in general, report better grades

(Lucier-Greer et al., 2015), and program participation may act as a buffer against depressive symptoms and anxiety for adolescents in dual military families (Richardson et al., 2016).

In the qualitative literature, factors related to school climate were frequently mentioned as being important for student success. Parents emphasized the importance of schools that are supportive to military culture (Culler et al., 2019), and schools have acknowledged the need to incorporate transiency considerations into the everyday running of the school (e.g., peer-to-peer support for new students) and to be culturally sensitive (e.g., understanding that Father's Day may be difficult for children with a deployed father; Garner et al., 2014). However, although the majority of families report a positive school climate, 38% of parents report that their child does not have a strong sense of belonging to their school (Blue Star Families, 2019). Furthermore, positive school climate factors such as safety, high expectations, meaningful participation, school connectedness, and caring relationships were found to be related to student outcomes (i.e., less physical and nonphysical victimization, fewer depressive symptoms, less suicidal ideation, and better well-being) when examining military-connected and civilian students in military-connected school districts (de Pedro et al., 2016; de Pedro et al., 2018).

Families' perceptions of community support and feelings of community connectedness are related to adolescent well-being. Civilian mothers' community connections are related to mothers' resilient coping, which is in turn related to less maternal anxiety, more adolescent self-efficacy, less adolescent anxiety, and fewer adolescent depressive symptoms (Walker O'Neal et al., 2017; Walker O'Neal et al., 2018). Furthermore, parents' perceptions of their community's understanding of the military lifestyle are related to feelings of belonging in that community (Blue Star Families, 2019).

Although family relationships, in general, are beyond the scope of this literature review, family relationships, as they relate to school outcomes, are critical. This also speaks to programming discussed in subsequent sections related to supporting the whole family within the school environment. In general, family factors such as family cohesiveness, family support, being able to use the family as a coping resource, perceived maternal support, positive parenting quality, positive parent-child interactions with the military parent, and positive feelings toward the mother are related to positive social, emotional, and academic outcomes in children and adolescents. These positive outcomes include higher self-esteem, more self-efficacy, less fear of negative evaluations, less loneliness, less anxiety, fewer depressive symptoms, and better academic performance (Arnold et al., 2017; Finkel et al., 2003; Kaeppler & Lucier-Greer, 2020; Lucier-Greer et al., 2015; Mancini et al., 2015; Morris & Age 2009; Walker O'Neal et al., 2017).

Deployment- and Transition-Related Risk and Protective/Promotive Factors

Deployments and school transitions, due to PCSs, are the most studied aspects of students' well-being and school success. Like the literature related to having a military parent versus not, these two factors also have the most mixed results. This is likely because there are many factors that interact to produce positive or negative outcomes during a deployment or a PCS-related school transition.

Deployment

Variation in results related to child and adolescent outcomes and deployment are likely related to a number of variables including child developmental stage; timing of deployment; length of deployment; point in the deployment cycle; how deployment is measured (e.g., ever deployed, currently deployed, recently deployed); parental mental health; school supports; and other demographic, social, and family factors. Thus, future investigations that explore the interactions and examine differences based on specific individual variables will be valuable. Overall, this research suggests that, in order to provide them with the supports that they need, students need to be understood at an individual level as opposed to aggregated at a category level.

As a whole, the investigations that examine deployment as a homogeneous experience produce mixed results. For example, studies that examine the effects of ever having had a parent deploy, as opposed to being a civilian or having a military parent who has never deployed, find students have a lower quality of life and more depressed moods (Reed et al., 2011) but also find no differences in general well-being (de Pedro et al., 2018). These differing results suggest that more specificity in examining these families is necessary. Indeed, when examining children and adolescents with a parent who has ever deployed, experiencing a longer single deployment, more cumulative months of deployment, and combat deployment (as opposed to non-combat deployments) are associated with lower academic achievement, depression, and externalizing behaviors (Engel et al., 2010; Fairbank et al., 2018, Lester et al., 2010; Mansfield et al., 2011; Reed et al., 2011, Richardson et al., 2011). However, this does not suggest that every child and adolescent who face parental deployment experience these negative outcomes. Indeed, other variables may interact with these deployment characteristics to produce differing outcomes. When simultaneously accounting for social limitations of the at-home parent that are caused by emotional or health problems, other studies have found no effect of combat deployment on adolescent well-being (Fairbank et al., 2018).

Studies that examine children and adolescents who are experiencing a current deployment as a homogeneous experience also demonstrate mixed results. Some studies find associations between current deployment and anxiety in children and substance use in adolescents compared to their civilian counterparts (Lester et al., 2010; Acion et al., 2013). Furthermore, adolescents, parents, and school staff discuss adolescents' pre-deployment sadness as well as sadness and worry during deployment, which can lead to difficulty focusing on schoolwork (Baptist et al., 2015, Huebner et al., 2007; MCEC, 2012, Mmari et al., 2009). Conversely, no association was found with depression or internalizing symptoms as compared to a normative sample (Lester et al., 2010). Studies that compare children of deployed parents with children of military non-deployed parents have found children and adolescents of currently deployed parents to have more internalizing symptoms, externalizing symptoms, attention issues, and school issues (Aranda et al., 2011; Gorman et al., 2010; DoD, 2010). However, when these outcomes do occur, they may be temporary and reversible with intervention (Chandra, Martin et al., 2010; MCEC, 2012; Richardson et al., 2011). On the other hand, other studies have found no effects of current deployment on academic engagement, grades, depressive symptoms, anxiety, problem behaviors, or peer problems (Chandra, Lara-Cinisomo et al., 2010; Lucier-Greer et al., 2014).

Moreover, the quantitative investigations that found no effect of current deployment accounted for several other variables in their analyses, including at-home caregiver mental health. This finding indicates that other variables are important contributors to child and adolescent well-being during deployment.

Specific factors related to the current deployment may have more of an influence on outcomes than the current deployment itself. Longer deployments and the timing of the deployment (e.g., occurring during important exams or milestones) may be related to depressive symptoms, emotional problems, and academic performance in children and adolescents (Engel et al., 2010; Meadows et al., 2016; MCEC, 2012; Mmari et al., 2009). However, these effects may be confined to the deployment period (Meadows et al., 2016).

Non-military-specific factors influence how children respond to a parent's deployment. Although, even in the face of deployment many military families thrive, certain factors may lead to difficulties for some families. The most consistent factors related to child and adolescent outcomes, which appear in both the quantitative and qualitative research, are the at-home parent's mental health and well-being. Poor at-home parent mental health and well-being are related to child and adolescent psychosocial difficulties, internalizing, externalizing, depression, academic engagement problems, school difficulties, anxiety, emotional difficulties, and peer problems (Baptist et al., 2015; Chandra, Lara-Cinisomo et al., 2010; Flake et al., 2009; Huebner et al., 2007; Lester et al., 2010; MCEC, 2012; MCEC & CPRL, 2017; Mmari et al., 2009; Mmari et al., 2010; Richardson et al., 2011; Thompson et al., 2017). Furthermore, military spouses report that the most important factor for helping children cope with deployment is a stable household routine (DoD, 2010.)

Thus far, the qualitative deployment research points to two mechanisms by which at-home parent mental health may be related to student school difficulties. First, although a certain level of increased responsibility during deployment (e.g., helping out with younger siblings) may be good for children and adolescents (MCEC, 2012; Mmari et al., 2009), when this is taken to an extreme level, this excessive responsibility becomes unhealthy and has been termed parentification. Some adolescents report examples of parentification, such as having to take care of their younger siblings (e.g., getting them ready for school, ensuring they get to school), managing their siblings' emotions, and managing their at-home parent's emotions (Baptist et al., 2015; Huebner et al., 2007; Richardson et al., 2011; MCEC, 2012; Mmari et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2017). School staff echo concerns about parentification and its effect on schoolwork and behavior (Chandra, Martin et al., 2010). School staff also report that language such as "you are now the man of the house" may be especially stressful for children and adolescents (Richardson et al., 2011). Second, some adolescents report a maladaptive level of self-reliance when the at-home parent is not functioning well. They report feeling alone, not being able to express their own emotions because they have to help siblings manage their emotions, withdrawing so they do not add stress to the at-home parent or to reduce conflict, and finding their at-home parent is too distressed to help them (Baptist et al., 2015; Huebner et al., 2007; Thompson et al., 2017). Overall, school staff report that stress from home affects students at school, and these school difficulties often reflect the student's parent's difficulties (MCEC, 2012; Mmari et al., 2010.)

Qualitative studies identify additional factors that may impact children with a deployed parent. Students, parents, and school staff report that some students have less access to help with homework during deployment either because the deployed parent is the one who would typically help with homework or because the at-home parent is too busy to help with homework (MCEC, 2012; Richardson et al., 2011). In addition, some adolescents report having to deal with military-related bullying or having to defend against perceived derogative messages from the media (Baptist et al., 2015). Finally, students who are in a school that does not have many military-connected students may feel isolated (Richardson et al., 2011).

Parents' mental health continues to be an important factor for child well-being during reintegration. The reintegrating parent's mental health, the at-home parent's mental health, and couple relationship difficulties are related to children's reintegration difficulties, depression, internalizing behaviors, and externalizing behaviors (Knobloch et al., 2017; Lester et al., 2010). In addition, school staff discuss that students can have difficulty paying attention during reintegration and that shifting roles and responsibilities at home can affect children's behaviors at school (MCEC, 2012).

In addition to the challenges that come with deployment, many students and parents report positive aspects of deployment: maturation, hope, resilience, pride, patriotism, emotional strength, and sensitivity to others (Baptist et al., 2015; MCEC, 2012).

Social support (e.g., feeling supported by a military organization or group, feeling supported by a non-military organization or group, participating in extra-curricular activities, having quality friendships) is important for the at-home parent and the student. When at-home parents feel supported, their children have better psychosocial functioning (Flake et al., 2009). Furthermore, social support from other military children during deployment is related to lower anxiety, depression, conduct problems, emotional problems, and peer problems and to less need for mental health services, higher life satisfaction, and more prosocial behavior (Meadows et al., 2016). Non-military-related social support may also play an important role in helping students during deployment. Students report that friends, school, and extra-curricular activities can provide support and distraction and can be used as an escape and to keep busy (MCEC, 2012; Mmari et al., 2009). To get additional support, parents report that their students get extra counseling, attend a support group, participate in activity-based programs, and receive informal supports from teachers (MCEC, 2012).

School staff, in general, believe that schools can provide positive support to military-connected students during deployment. Schools can provide consistent and high expectations for students, which fosters resilience; be a place for friendships and adult connections; and be a safe place (MCEC, 2012; Richardson et al., 2011).

Schools, however, often have challenges that can exacerbate difficulties for children who could use extra support during deployment. Both parents and school staff report that teachers and counselors are not adequately trained for working with children with a deployed parent (Mmari et al., 2009). In addition, adolescents report that counselors often do not understand what the adolescent is experiencing (Mmari et al., 2009). Furthermore, school staff report that they often are not aware of the deployment until problems begin to arise (MCEC, 2012; Mmari et al., 2009).

Although some adolescents feel that school personnel knowing about a deployment is helpful, school staff report that some parents do not want to inform the school because they do not want their child to be treated differently (Mmari et al., 2009). Moreover, some students do not want to inform the school because they do not want to be seen as being different or having a problem, and they do not want to be teased (MCEC, 2012; Mmari et al., 2009). In addition, students may be reluctant to talk about deployment with non-military students (Mmari et al., 2009).

Although school staff want to support military-connected students as much as possible, they acknowledge that that support can interfere with the military-connected student's development or the classroom or school environment. For example, school staff report that younger children can be emotionally needy, which can interfere with instruction (Chandra, Martin et al., 2010; Richardson et al., 2011). Furthermore, although school staff feel that it is important to support absences related to deployment, these absences can disrupt routines and stability, can increase gaps in learning, can increase the teacher's workload, and may impact funding that is based on average daily attendance (MCEC, 2012; Richardson et al., 2011).

Relocation and Transition – General Education

Similar to the literature on deployment, the literature on relocation and school transition for students in general education has produced mixed results. Also similar to the literature on deployment, relocation is measured in several ways.

As children transition to a new town and a new school, the <u>initial transition</u> period may be difficult. Indeed, when children and adolescents have spent less time in their current residence, they report more loneliness, more difficulty with peer relationships, more fear of negative evaluation, and lower self-esteem (Finkel et al., 2003). However, the longer-term consequences and the effect of the cumulative number of moves are less clear. This is likely because there are many individual and family differences that may impact a student's adjustment to a new school. For adolescents who have changed schools more than twice in the last 5 years, studies find that these students have more anxiety, but they also have more self-reliance/optimism, and there is no association with depression or self-efficacy (Lucier-Greer et al., 2016; Richardson et al., 2016). Similarly, in studies that examine more relocations versus fewer relocations, the results indicate that adolescents with more relocations report more depressive symptoms, but children and adolescents report less problem behavior, and there is no association with the number of suspensions, the need to repeat a grade, or scores on a psychological evaluation (Mancini et al., 2015; Weber & Weber, 2005). Finally, in studies that look at the rate of school changes, results indicate that more school changes in a shorter period of time were not related to anxiety or total difficulties in children, were not related to depression or grades in adolescents, but were related to more social isolation in adolescents (Landers-Potts et al., 2017; Lucier-Greer et al., 2014; MacDermid-Wadsworth et al., 2016). The mixed nature of this literature suggests that research studies need to examine individual and family variables in the context of relocation in order to understand which students are thriving and which are struggling during relocations and transitions to new schools.

There are multiple factors in several domains that contribute to students' educational success, and, likely, there is wide variability in experiences. The available qualitative research begins to explore those factors and experiences. Although transitions certainly provide challenges to all families, 75% of parents report no problems related to transitions (MCEC, 2012). However, the hyper local nature of the U.S. public education system exacerbates a challenging situation and can cause difficulties for some students (CPRL & MCEC, 2018). Although the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (Compact) has been implemented by all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia, and may ease some of the burden on transitioning military families, challenges still exist.

When students move in the middle of the school year or just before their senior year of high school, the timing of the move can cause challenges related to students losing credits or not graduating on time (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Mmari et al., 2010; MCEC, 2012; MCEC & CPRL, 2017). The challenges of moving in the middle of the school year can be further exacerbated when a student moves from a 7-period day to a block schedule or vice versa (MCEC, 2012). Furthermore, regardless of when the move occurs, additional schedule differences can lead to challenges. Moving from a traditional school year to a year-round school year or vice versa could result in lost credits (MCEC, 2012). Moreover, the wide variety of school start dates can be difficult. A family may need to request a change in orders in order to start school on time or keep their orders as they are and enroll late (MCEC, 2012).

Differences in school quality, state requirements, curricula, content pacing, achievement standards, and exit exams can lead to challenges, such as students retaking a previously taken class, learning the same subject matter multiple times, losing credits, missing critical topics resulting in knowledge gaps, not advancing to the next grade, having to make up credits on their own time, and missing out on advanced course work due to retaking other classes (Arnold et al., 2014; Bradshaw et al., 2010; MCEC, 2012; MCEC & CPRL, 2017; CPRL & MCEC, 2018; Mmari et al., 2010; Richardson et al., 2011). Even with the Compact in place, differences in course names or sequences and rigid requirements still result in difficulties for some students (MCEC & CPRL, 2017). Moreover, when these experiences happen multiple times, they can lead to learned helplessness as illustrated by this quote from a student, "Why do I have to do this? Who knows, maybe the next school won't require [the course]. Why sometimes bother?" (CPRL & MCEC, 2018, Appendix B.). When moves occur in the last 2 years of a student's high school career, there can be consequences for graduation. Exit exams, differences in graduation requirements, variation in grading systems, credit transfers, state exams, and progressive or sequential courses can hinder graduation timing (MCEC, 2012). Although the initiation of the Compact has helped, repeating classes and losing credits still occur (MCEC & CPRL, 2017). Furthermore, honors classes, grading, and weighting GPA still differ among states and schools. (MCEC & CPRL 2017). Finally, for college-bound students, foreign language requirements may be particularly challenging as different schools offer different languages and students may not be able to complete the required number of years of a single language (MCEC, 2012). A positive finding within the qualitative research is that online learning can ease some of these challenges (MCEC, 2012; MCEC & CPRL, 2017). Although these issues are concerning, without systematic research,

it is not possible to know how widespread the problem is. Therefore, determining what strategies would best ease the challenges is difficult.

Students and parents point to extra-curricular activities as creating important opportunities for making new friends and assimilating into a new school (MCEC & CPRL 2017). Although the Compact provides for facilitating eligibility for extra-curricular activities, and most schools work with students to ensure eligibility and participation (MCEC, 2012), there are still instances in which the Compact implementation is inconsistent (MCEC & CPRL 2017). Furthermore, there are reports of students not making a team or not being placed in a starting position on a team due to the likelihood that the student would be moving soon (Bradshaw et al., 2010; MCEC, 2012).

Difficulties also persist with gifted and talented programming. Eligibility designations and program content for elementary and middle school gifted and talented programming and high school honors courses vary widely by state (Kitmitto et al., 2011; MCEC, 2012, CPRL & MCEC, 2018). Some schools will accept a previous school's designation, while other schools require retesting before placing students. Furthermore, although not required by federal law, some states (e.g., Pennsylvania, Tennessee, New Mexico) require an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for gifted and talented programming, which can lead to delays in enrollment (MCEC, 2012). High school Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs are not subject to the same inconsistencies as they are run by national/international organizations (MCEC, 2012); however, application deadlines are not always waived for these and other specialized programs (MCEC & CPRL 2017; CPRL & MCEC, 2018).

Military-connected students are reported to be adaptable, to make friends more easily than their civilian counterparts, to be more mature, to be more accepting of diversity, and to have better communication skills (Bradshaw et al., 2010). However, students can find developing close friendships difficult due to the frequent transitions (Bradshaw et al., 2010). Students report different experiences going into a new school; sometimes they feel respected for their military connection, and other times they feel discriminated against (Bradshaw et al., 2010). Some students find making friends with other military-connected students easier than making friends with non-military-connected students (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Mmari et al., 2010). However, when interacting with other military students, a balance is necessary. Students desire informal spaces to interact with other military-connected students, but they also want to fit into the school's general population (MCEC & CPRL 2017). Students and School Liaisons (SLs) have reported that the peer ambassador program, Student 2 Student®, is helpful for students who are transitioning into a new school (MCEC & CPRL 2017; Kitmitto et al., 2011).

Although school personnel can help ease the transition for military students, staff encounter barriers. As discussed in the section about deployment, teachers often lack training related to military-connected students' experiences (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Garner et al., 2014). In addition, although this may change with the implementation of the Military Student Identifier, school staff frequently do not know who the military students are (Blue Star Families, 2019; Bradshaw et al., 2010; de Pedro et al., 2014; Garner et al., 2014). Furthermore, although support is typically available from school counselors or psychologists, these services are often under resourced (MCEC & CPRL 2017). Some schools use a socio-emotional screener during enrollment.

Professionals tend to like the screeners, but effectiveness studies of the screeners are lacking (MCEC & CPRL 2017). Finally, even when school counselors and psychologists are available, they may be underused as students may not feel that the counselors understand them, and parents may fear that use of the school counselor will be reported to command, which, they believe, may damage a Service member's career (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Mmari et al., 2009).

The School Liaison Program (SLP) is run by the military Services and is intended to support the installation community (i.e., families, installation leadership, schools, and the civilian community). One component of the SLP is to help families during relocation and transition. Qualitative studies have revealed inconsistencies in implementation; some participants report that SLs were helpful in facilitating a smooth transition (MCEC, 2012), and other participants report that they did not have good experiences with SLs (MCEC & CPRL, 2017). These inconsistencies may be due to staff turnover and large caseloads (MCEC & CPRL, 2017). Furthermore, in one region on the U.S. East Coast that contains a large military population, one third of the teachers were unfamiliar with SLs (Garner et a., 2014).

Relocation and Transition – Special Education and Disability

The literature on relocation and school transition for students who are eligible for special education services and students with disabilities is less ambiguous than that for students in general education. Challenges these students face fall into four categories: general challenges, service availability, continuity in services provided, and delays in services. In extreme circumstances, when these challenges are especially burdensome or seen as detrimental to a child's well-being, families may choose to have the Service member PCS to a new duty station while the family remains in their current location (Brown et al., 2019; Davis & Finke, 2015), which creates another set of challenges.

In general, parents describe instances of general non-compliance with the law (e.g., inaccessible schools, lack of inclusive programs), lack of staff knowledge or training to help the student, and a perception of school staff delaying services until the family PCSs again (Aleman-Tovar et al., 2022; Jagger & Lederer, 2014). SLs have expressed similar concerns, specifically related to the quality of special education services in some areas, schools not following IEP regulations, and non-inclusion (Kitmitto et al., 2011).

Parents also report concerns about services availability in schools and in the community, and these are most noticeable and disruptive when a family PCSs. These concerns include transferring into schools that have limited services available; not having access to all the interventions, services, resources, and equipment that are needed; and experiencing a lack of providers in the DoD healthcare system and among community providers, which can lead to military-connected families driving hours to receive a diagnosis (Aleman-Tovar et al., 2022; Blue Star Families, 2019; Davis & Finke, 2015; Farley et al., 2022; GAO, 2007; Jagger & Lederer, 2014; MCEC, 2012).

Concerns about <u>delays in service access</u> and the effect these delays may have on students' progress are also articulated in the literature. Parents report delays in getting a referral, delays in seeing a specialist, and waitlists for services (Brown et al., 2019; Blue Star Families, 2019; Davis & Finke, 2015; Farley et al., 2022). For example, in one study, 72% of families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) had to wait 3-4 weeks or more to receive a referral, and 22% had to wait 2-3 months for a referral (Farley et al., 2022). Families may then have to wait for an appointment with a provider, wait for an assessment and/or intake, and wait for therapeutic services to begin (Farley et al., 2022). Parents worry that their children will lose therapeutic gains while services are being reestablished (Jagger & Lederer, 2014). Furthermore, some states require a doctor's signature to qualify for special education services, and this can cause months-long delays (Richardson et al., 2011).

Once services are in place, families often find that there is a <u>lack of continuity</u> in the type of services provided, the quality of services, and the particular evidence-based practices used (Brown et al., 2019; Davis & Finke, 2015; Farley et al., 2022; Jagger & Lederer, 2014). Furthermore, sometimes services are discontinued because of state-level differences in what qualifies for an IEP (Jagger & Lederer, 2014; MCEC, 2012; Richardson et al., 2011).

Even when schools are fully compliant with the law, discontinuity of services can lead to <u>strained relationships between school staff and parents</u>. There is latitude in how federal policies are implemented and discretion in determining what would be the most effective intervention for an individual student (Jagger & Lederer, 2014; MCEC, 2012; CPRL & MCEC, 2018). In addition, funding may influence what services are available at a particular school (MCEC, 2012; CPRL & MCEC, 2018). Thus, while parents may expect the same services at the new school, those services may not exist due to policies, practices, or funding (Kitmitto et al., 2011). These inconsistencies may then be interpreted by parents as the school staff not serving their child's needs (Jagger & Lederer, 2014).

Several factors have been identified as being helpful regarding students who are eligible for special education services or have a disability and who are transitioning to a new school. Some parents have found the program Specialized Training of Military Parents (STOMP) to be useful (Jagger & Lederer, 2014). Furthermore, parents find when Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) staff provide a warm handoff to the new installation and help with IEP meetings, the process goes more smoothly (GAO, 2018). However, some schools do not allow "outside persons" to attend IEP meetings, and some EFMP programs do not let EFMP staff attend school meetings (Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research, Cornell University [Cornell] & Beach Center of Disability, The University of Kansas [UK], 2013). In addition, EFMP staff support of military-connected families related to the school's legal responsibilities (e.g., providing comparable services from the previous IEP until a new IEP can be completed) can be beneficial (Cornell & UK, 2013). Moreover, some families have found that, when the Service member wears his or her uniform while attending IEP meetings, this was helpful (Aleman-Tovar et al., 2022). School personnel have reported that having a hand-carried unofficial copy of an IEP is useful for expediting the process (MCEC, 2012). In addition, some researchers have suggested refining the IEP process by making IEPs more transportable (e.g., detailed notes, quantitative measures; Classen et al., 2019).

As mentioned previously, when effective EFMP staff are in place, staff provide a warm handoff, and staff are able to attend IEP meetings, military families have reported that the EFMP is beneficial (Cornell & UK, 2013; GAO, 2018; Jagger & Lederer, 2014). However, the literature contains many reports of inconsistencies and difficulties regarding the EFMP program. Screening and implementation practices vary by Service (GAO, 2012; GAO, 2018; Meadows et al., 2021[1]), which can cause difficulties at joint bases, and programming and staff competencies are inconsistent across installations within a Service (Aleman-Tovar et al., 2022; Brown et al., 2019; Cornell & UK, 2013; GAO, 2007; GAO, 2018; Jagger & Lederer, 2014). At some installations, families find EFMP offices to be understaffed, to have high caseloads, to have high turnover, to have slow paperwork processing, and to be unhelpful (Aleman-Tovar et al., 2022; GAO, 2012; GAO, 2018). In general, there appears to be dissatisfaction with the lack of consistency in the services provided by EFMP (GAO, 2018).

In addition, although enrollment in EFMP is required, under-enrollment persists (GAO, 2012). Under-enrollment may be due to communication, in which families are not aware that they are required to enroll, or could be due to stigma because families are worried about adverse effects to the Service member's career (DoD, 2013; GAO, 2012; GAO, 2018). Although perceived stigma related to EFMP services endures, a study that reviewed Marine Corps records found no evidence that EFMP status has a negative impact on length of service, highest grade achieved, or years to highest grade (United States Marine Corps, 2016).

Furthermore, it is possible that the family support component of EFMP is not being used to its full potential, either due to families opting not to use its services or due to programmatic difference by Service or installation. Indeed, compared to the number of families enrolled in EFMP, relatively few have service plans in place (GAO, 2018). However, the lack of data on military-connected family service needs and service utilization provided by the military and civilian sectors makes it difficult to understand exactly how EFMP programs are being used (GAO, 2007).

The DoD is taking steps to address the above-mentioned challenges. The 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA; National Defense Authorization Act, 2021) requires each military Service to provide legal services related to special education to military families at installations that meet certain criteria. The Services are meeting this requirement by either training current attorneys in special education law and/or hiring attorneys who specialize in disability-related or special education law (GAO, 2022). In addition, the 2021 NDAA requires increased standardization of EFMP across the military Services (NDAA, 2021).

Furthermore, the Office of Special Needs (OSN) was established in 2011 to enhance and monitor the Services' EFMP programs (GAO, 2012). In the last few years, the office has taken multiple steps intended to improve the experiences of EFMP families, including those with students who are eligible for special education services or have a disability. OSN has developed several

---

[1] Meadows et al. (2021) provides a detailed analysis of how the Services' EFMP policies compare with each other and with the relevant DoD Instruction (DoDI).

standardized forms and processes, a staffing tool, trainings for staff, a data repository, a family support feedback tool, an e-newsletter, trainings for families, and web-based resources and information for families (DoD, 2020b). Although OSN has developed these tools to support families and Service EFMP programs, at the Service level, OSN has no enforcement abilities (GAO, 2012).

In addition to its role in aiding transitions, which was mentioned previously, and other roles, the SLP can help students who are eligible for special education services or have a disability by providing referrals to EFMP and other resources (Military OneSource, 2021). SLs report that one of the top three areas where most severe problems are encountered is regarding students with special needs (Aronson & Perkins, 2013). However, similar to the EFMP program, inconsistencies between installations are reported; some SLs are perceived as great, and others are perceived as being unhelpful (GAO, 2018; Jagger & Lederer, 2014). Furthermore, the relationship between EFMP staff and SL staff is also inconsistent. Some studies report a disconnect between EFMP and SL staff (GAO, 2018), and others report good relationships between SLs and EFMP staff - particularly with the Marine Corps implementation of the SLP (Kitmitto et al., 2011). OSN is currently updating its guidance pertaining to the relationship between SLP and EFMP (GAO, 2022).

Families rely on TRICARE for the referrals and specialists they need to support their student. However, parents report that TRICARE is difficult to access and navigate (Aleman-Tovar et al., 2022). Once families can access and navigate the system, overall, they report being very happy with the coverage (Aleman-Tovar et al., 2022). However, poor reimbursement rates for providers and arguments between the school district and TRICARE regarding who pays for services have been reported (Jagger & Lederer, 2014; Richardson et al., 2011) and need to be further investigated.

The number of systems, policies, and laws that must be navigated and understood by military families with students who are eligible for special education services or have a disability is considerable. Within the military system, families must navigate TRICARE, EFMP, and SLP. The EFMP enrollment process has been described by families as redundant and burdensome (Cornell & UK, 2013). In addition, PCSing with TRICARE requires new referrals for services (Blue Star Families, 2019) and may include differences in health plan options in different regions (TRICARE, n.d.). Families also need to navigate inconsistencies in SLP services (GAO, 2018; Jagger & Lederer, 2014). Furthermore, families must also be familiar with federal policies, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and the free appropriate public education (FAPE) provision of Section 504. Moreover, given the flexibility within the federal laws (Jagger & Lederer, 2014), families also must understand each state's interpretation of the federal laws and each school district's interpretation of the state law with each PCS.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic affected children and adolescents worldwide as many schools closed and then moved to virtual and/or hybrid (i.e., a mix of in-person and virtual learning) education. The Blue Star Families organization has been conducting the Military Family Lifestyle Survey annually since 2012. Although they do not track the same families across time, these surveys can provide some insight into how the pandemic may have affected military-connected students' school experiences. All findings discussed in this section are from the 2019, 2020, and 2021 Blue Star Families' Military Family Lifestyle Surveys and refer to active duty families only (Blue Star Families, 2019; Blue Star Families, 2020; Blue Star Families 2021).

In the fall of 2020, 51% of families with children reported that their children were participating in virtual education. In late spring 2021, 21% reported their children were participating in virtual education; 26% in hybrid education, and 52% in in-person education. In both 2020 and 2021, a larger percent (13%) of families reported homeschooling than in 2019 (11%); however, statistical tests were not performed on this difference.

In 2019, 70% of families reported that their oldest child was thriving in school; in 2020, this dropped to 56%; in 2021, this rebounded to 61%. Similarly, in 2019, 62% of families reported that their oldest child feels a sense of belonging to their school; this dropped to 54% in 2021 (results from 2020 were not available). In 2021, parents of children and adolescents in in-person education were more likely to report that their child was thriving as compared to parents of children and adolescents in virtual or hybrid education. Furthermore, parents of children were more likely to report that their child was thriving as compared to parents of adolescents.

In the open-ended questions in the 2021 survey, some parents reported that their child/adolescent excelled in virtual education, while some parents reported that their children struggled. This variability may be contributing to the lack of differences found in parent reports of children/adolescent's mental health as it related to education modality. In 2021, there were no differences in adolescent's mental health between in-person, virtual, or hybrid education. For elementary school-aged children, a smaller proportion of children participating in hybrid education (56%) had "good" or "excellent" mental health as compared to children participating in in-person (65%) or virtual education (67%).

Children who are eligible for special education services or have a disability likely had additional challenges during the pandemic. Indeed, in the fall of 2020, 39% of families with a child with special education services reported losing some services, and an additional 39% reported losing all services. Families with a child who was eligible for special education services or had a disability and PCSed between March and September/October 2020 experienced additional challenges. Fifty-one percent of those with an IEP reported having trouble transferring their IEP, and 48% of those with a 504 Plan reported having trouble transferring the 504 Plan. Furthermore, 50% of families who PCSed reported difficulties getting a referral and seeing a specialist. Clearly, the pandemic presented massive challenges for children who receive special education services or have a disability.

In addition to the direct effects of the pandemic on children and adolescents, military spouses were also impacted. Between March 2020 and September/October 2020, 30% of non-dual-military spouses stopped working to support their child/adolescent's care and education. Of those, 72% were still not employed in September/October 2020. Furthermore, the percent of spouses who reported feeling a sense of belonging in the civilian community dropped from 40% in 2019 to 29% in 2021. These factors likely impacted family finances and spouse well-being, which likely further impacted children and adolescents.

Albeit limited due to its methodology and scope, the Military Family Lifestyle Survey from 2019, 2020, and 2021 support the current data from the civilian sector about the challenges and negative impact of the pandemic on children, adolescents, and their parents. However, time and much more research are needed to assess whether there will be long terms consequences to this historical event. For certain, the most vulnerable students experienced significant disruption, and much support is needed for them to progress toward success.

Programs, Policies, and School Supports to Enhance Military Students Success

Four initiatives have recently been put forth to support military-connected students' educational success. Each of these initiatives require action and/or adoption at the state level. This process increases the likelihood of inconsistencies in what is implemented, how thoroughly the initiative is implemented, and whether there is any enforcement of the policies. Thus far, there is little to no research regarding the implementation or effectiveness of these initiatives.

Advance Enrollment is an initiative that encourages states to adopt policies that allow military families to temporarily enroll in school, register for courses, and apply for special programs without presenting proof of physical residence within the school district (Military OneSource, 2022a). However, parents need to provide proof of residence within a specific amount of time (e.g., 10 days) after their arrival date. Thirty-four states have adopted this policy. The literature search found no research on the implementation or effectiveness of this initiative. Table 4 provides a list of the status of each state's advance enrollment implementation.

The Compact, which has been adopted by all 50 states and Washington D.C. (Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission, n.d.), addresses timely enrollment, class placement and excused absences, eligibility for academic and extra-curricular activities, and ensuring on-time graduation (Military OneSource, 2022b). However, the literature search found no systematic evaluations of the implementation or effectiveness of this initiative. Recent qualitative studies have produced anecdotal reports of inconsistent implementation of the Compact. Some school staff report that the Compact gives them the permission to be flexible; however, some students still report that they have to retake classes because of minor differences in course names (MCEC & CPRL, 2017). In addition, there are inconsistencies in staff and parent knowledge and understanding of the Compact; some schools are unaware of what the Compact allows, and some parents are unclear about the limitations of the Compact (MCEC & CPRL, 2017).

The Military Student Identifier, required throughout the United States by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, requires schools to collect data about whether a student has a parent or guardian who is active duty military (MCEC & CPRL, 2017). There is no research on the implementation or effectiveness of this initiative. Although the law only requires data collection related to active duty families, some states also identify National Guard families, Reserve families, families who are experiencing deployments, or veteran families (South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, 2018; Texas Education Agency, 2019). Under this law, military-connected student status is reported by the parent. However, school staff report that often parents do not check the box that identifies their child as having a military parent (MCEC & CPRL, 2017). Previous research has suggested that some military families do not want to be identified as such (de Pedro et a., 2014). Indeed, in South Carolina, for the 2016-2017 school year, the state-collected data reflected only 77% of the DoDEA estimate for the number of military students in that state that year (South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, 2018). Furthermore, the use of the Military Student Identifier at the individual school level appears to vary. Some teachers are told if they have a military-connected student; other teachers must examine an individual student's data to determine if the student is in a military family (MCEC & CPRL 2017).

The Purple Star Schools Program is a state-level program that is enacted through the state's Department of Education or through a legislative process in which criteria are established to designate a school as military-friendly (MCEC & CPRL, 2021). Thirty states currently have a Purple Star Schools Program (Military OneSource, n.d.). Multiple organizations (e.g., MCEC, SLP) can provide guidance for implementation of the Purple Star Schools Program, but each state is responsible for designing their own program (MCEC & CPRL, 2021). Therefore, there is variability in criteria for designation and in program execution (MCEC & CPRL, 2021). One qualitative study presented anecdotal reports of school staff and military-connected parents and students finding the program beneficial (MCEC & CPRL, 2021). The literature search identified no comprehensive implementation or outcome evaluations of the program. Table 4 provides a list of the status of each state's Purple Star Schools Program.

Table 4
State Uptake of Nation-Wide Initiatives

State	Advance Enrollment	Purple Star Schools Program
Alabama	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Alaska	Introduced	Policy Passed
Arizona	Policy Passed	No Action
Arkansas	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
California	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Colorado	Policy Passed	No Action
Connecticut	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Delaware	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
District of Columbia	No Action	No Action
Florida	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Georgia	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Hawaii	No Action	No Action

State	Advance Enrollment	Purple Star Schools Program
Idaho	Policy Passed	No Action
Illinois	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Indiana	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Iowa	No Action	No Action
Kansas	No Action	No Action
Kentucky	Policy Passed	No Action
Louisiana	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Maine	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Maryland	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Massachusetts	Introduced	Introduced
Michigan	No Action	Introduced
Minnesota	No Action	No Action
Mississippi	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Missouri	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Montana	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Nebraska	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Nevada	No Action	Policy Passed
New Hampshire	Introduced	Policy Passed
New Jersey	Policy Passed	Introduced
New Mexico	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
New York	Policy Passed	Introduced
North Carolina	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
North Dakota	No Action	Policy Passed
Ohio	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Oklahoma	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Oregon	Policy Passed	No Action
Pennsylvania	Introduced	Introduced
Rhode Island	No Action	No Action
South Carolina	No Action	Policy Passed
South Dakota	Policy Passed	No Action
Tennessee	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Texas	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Utah	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Vermont	Introduced	Introduced
Virginia	Policy Passed	Policy Passed
Washington	Policy Passed	Introduced
West Virginia	No Action	Policy Passed
Wisconsin	No Action	No Action
Wyoming	Policy Passed	No Action

Source: Military OneSource.

The SLP is implemented by all of the Services. The program is intended to connect the local schools/districts, military parents, and installation commanders. SLs have a large number of tasks: provide information resources to stakeholders (e.g., transitions, parental absence, post-secondary education), communicate information about policy and regulations to stakeholders, support military family transitions, facilitate support programs for military children, provide technical assistance, connect families with appropriate resources (e.g., EFMP), inform local

school districts about federal and state funding sources, help schools understand the challenges of military-connected students, build organizational capacity, collaborate with other military Services, and develop strategic communications (DoD, 2019). No implementation or outcome evaluations of SLP were identified. In the qualitative research literature, comments related to the SLs are variable. Some parents and school staff report positive experiences with SLs, while other report not having good experiences with SLs (GAO, 2018; Jagger & Lederer, 2014; MCEC, 2012; MCEC & CPRL 2017; Richardson, 2011). This variability is, in part, why the type of experience was classified as a risk or protective factor.

In addition to the five above-mentioned programs/initiatives, the literature provides suggestions for many different types of programs, policies, and school supports to enhance military-connected student success, yet very few of these programs, policies, and supports provide any evidence of their effectiveness. However, there are a few exceptions. Staying Strong with Schools is a program for elementary schools that involves teacher training; information exchanges between the school counselor, teacher, and the parent culminating in a "resilience support plan"; classroom activities; and a school-wide military awareness event (Ohye et al., 2020). An evaluation of this program found fewer internalizing symptoms and increased perceived social support among elementary school students in program schools compared to students in control schools (Ohye et al., 2020). Signs of Suicide (SOS) is a suicide prevention program for middle and high school students (Schilling et al., 2014). In a middle school setting with 85% of participants in military-connected families, the developers found that among those with suicidal ideation at pretest, there was less suicidal ideation, planning, and/or attempts at posttest (Schilling et al., 2014). However, no effect was found for help-seeking. In addition, for program participants in general, there was greater knowledge of depression and suicide at posttest than at pretest. SOS is placed as Unclear + on the Clearinghouse's Continuum of Evidence.

Table 5 lists programs and types of programs that were mentioned in the literature. Unless otherwise mentioned, the program or type of program has not been evaluated for its effectiveness. This is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all programs that are available, but it is a list of strategies found in the literature that were mentioned as recommended, requested, or tried. Other programs for military-connected students are available (e.g., Anchored4Life, BOUNCE). However, our investigation found no evidence that they had either been systematically evaluated or discussed in the qualitative literature; therefore, they are not included.

Table 6 includes programs that are listed on the Clearinghouse's Continuum of Evidence. These programs were not necessarily designed for, nor evaluated with, a military-connected population. Nevertheless, these school-based programs target academic performance, school culture, social competency, and/or emotional competency and are considered evidence-based. Programs listed in this table are placed as either Promising or Effective, are not intended for a high-risk or clinical population, are not for specific academic subjects, and do not focus specifically on drug use as evidence suggests military children are at less risk for drug use. Note, just because academic performance is not identified in the table as being a topic, this does not mean that downstream effects do not include academic performance; it simply means that the program does not list that topic as one of its target outcomes. Research has established a link between social-emotional skills and academic performance (Durlak et al., 2011).

Table 5

Recommended, Requested, or Implemented Programs/Types of Programs Discussed in the Literature

Program/Program Type	Reviewed Publication(s) that Discuss the Program
School Level	
School climate/culture (e.g., whole-school approach, caring relationships, safety, belonging, respect for family background, high expectations, meaningful participation)	Astor et al., 2013; Berg, 2008; de Pedro et al., 2016; de Pedro et al., 2017
Online access to grades, coursework, attendance accessible to parents	GAO, 2011
Dedicated staff for military or transitioning students	GAO, 2011; Garner et al., 2014; Kitmitto et al., 2011; MCEC, 2012; MCEC & CPRL, 2017
Military Social Work social workers in schools	Esqueda et al., 2014
Transition centers	Berg, 2008
School-based health center (currently implemented in some on-base schools)	Greene & Dawson, 2016
Universal screening to identify needs	Fenning, 2021
Universal programming (in order to reduce stigma of program participation)	Culler et al., 2019
Multi-Tiered System of Supports	Fenning, 2021
Signs of Suicide (SOS)*	Schilling et al, 2014
Because Nice Matters	de Pedro et al., 2017
School staff training/professional development	
Topics	
Military culture, resources available for military families, mental health programs, at-home parent mental health and stress, strengths of military children, supporting parental connectedness in the community, supporting student connection to peers, family-centered approaches, the Compact	Waliski et al., 2012; Berg, 2008; St. John & Fenning, 2020
Programs	
Staying Strong with Schools*	Ohye et al., 2020
Keeping Students at the Center (for SLs)	DoDEA, 2015
Online trainings	
School Resources to Support Military-Connected Students (https://schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/modules/)	
Uniformed Services University Center for Deployment Psychology (https://deploymentpsych.org)	
Military Family Research Institute teacher resources (https://www.mfri.purdue.edu/wp-content/uploads/resources/hth/HowToHelp_Teachers.pdf)	
Books	
Supporting Students from Military Families book series	Astor et al., 2012; funded by DoDEA grant
School Supports for Students in Military Families	Fenning, 2021

Program/Program Type	Reviewed Publication(s) that Discuss the Program
School Level (continued)	
Funding mechanisms	
Impact Aid	GAO, 2011
DoD Impact Aid Supplemental Assistance	GAO, 2011
DoD Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (managed by DoDEA)	GAO, 2011
Elementary and Secondary Education Act/Every Student Succeeds Act economic disadvantage funding	GAO, 2011
IDEA Funding	GAO, 2011
DoDEA Partnership Grants	
General Information & Resources for School Staff and Families	
Military OneSource (https://www.militaryonesource.mil)	
Military Child Educational Coalition (https://www.militarychild.org)	
National Military Family Association (https://www.militaryfamily.org)	
Military Kids Connect (https://militarykidsconnect.health.mil)	Blasko 2015; Murphy & Fairbanks, 2013
PTSD Family Coach (Department of Veterans Affairs developed app)	McGraw et al., 2019
Operation Autism (www.operationautismonline.org)	Huebner, 2019
Branch Military Parent Technical Assistance Centers and Parent Centers (for military families with a child who is eligible for special education services or has a disability)	DoDEA, 2015
Military Students as a Group	
Deployment support groups	GAO, 2011; MCEC, 2012; Mmari et al., 2009
Informal support groups centered around a fun activity	MCEC, 2012
Reintegration information	MCEC, 2012
Group counseling	MCEC, 2012
Expressive arts group series	Kim et al., 2011
Psychoeducation/counseling group	Rush & Akos, 2010
Group-based format for teens	Esposito-Smythers et al., 2011
After-school programming during deployment	Richardson et al., 2011
FOCUS (Families OverComing Under Stress) School-based Skill-building groups	Garcia et al., 2015
Individual Military Students	
Peer-to-peer support (e.g., Student 2 Student®, buddy system, meet & greet, new student party)	Berg, 2008; Easterbrooks et al., 2013; GAO, 2011; Kimitto et al., 2011; MCEC, 2012; Mmari et al., 2010
Counseling/programs for students and parents/family members	GAO, 2011; MCEC, 2012
Literacy coaches	GAO, 2011
Tutor.com	GAO, 2011; MCEC & CPRL 2017

Program/Program Type	Reviewed Publication(s) that Discuss the Program
School-Installation Collaboration	
School mental health staff work with military units to offer support groups for children and at-home parents	Mmari et al., 2010
Child, Adolescent & Family Behavioral Health Service's School Behavioral Health program (currently implemented in some on-base schools)	Lemmon & Stafford, 2014
Joint Venture Education Forum (partnership between Hawaii Department of Education and United States Pacific Command [now United States Indo-Pacific Command])	Berg, 2008
Military and Family Life Counseling (MFLC)	Richardson et al., 2011
School Liaison Program	DoDEA, 2015; GAO, 2011; MCEC & CPRL, 2017
Adopt-a-School program	MCEC, 2012; Richardson et al., 2011
Practical application of learning with field trips to the installation	MCEC, 2012
DoDEA-School Collaboration	
DoDEA Educational Partnership Grants	DoDEA, 2015; GAO, 2011
FMA LIVE! Forces in Motion (student STEM program at military-impacted schools)	DoDEA, 2015
School-Community Collaboration	
San Diego Military Family Collaborative	Buehrle et al., 2013
Building Capacity in Military-Connected Schools	Murphy & Fairbanks, 2013
District Level	
Military Impacted Schools Association	Fenning, 2021
State Level	
Military liaison at states' Department of Education	Kimitto et al., 2011
DoD/Service Level	
Army's Senior Stability Policy (Army Regulations 614-200 and 614-100)	MCEC, 2012
U.S. Department of Education (DOE)-Department of Defense (DoD) Collaboration	
DOE & DoD Memorandum of Understanding	DoDEA, 2015
Troops to Teachers	DoDEA, 2015
Impact Aid Program	DoDEA, 2015

Note. An * indicates that the program has been evaluated. Impact Aid is underfunded (South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, 2016); funding that is received typically goes into schools' general funds (GAO, 2011). The application process for DoD funding assistance for students with severe disabilities is reported to be so burdensome that schools may not apply (GAO, 2011).

Table 6

School-Based Programs with a Promising or Effective Placement on the Clearinghouse Continuum of Evidence

Program Name	Middle Childhood	Adolescence	School Culture	Academic	Emotional Competency	Social Competency	Placement
PATHS® (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)	x				x	x	Effective RCT
Aban Aya Youth Project	x	x				x	Promising
Achievement Mentoring Program	x	x		x			Promising
Aussie Optimism	x				x	x	Promising
Bridges to High School		x		x			Promising
Child-Parent Center Program	x				x	x	Promising
Cognitive Relaxation Coping Skills		x			x		Promising
Coping Power	x	x			x		Promising
Coping with Stress Course		x			x		Promising
Family Check-Up®	x	x			x	x	Promising
Fast Track	x	x			x	x	Promising
I Can Problem Solve	x				x	x	Promising
Lions Quest Skills for Adolescents		x		x	x	x	Promising
Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction		x			x		Promising
MyTeachingPartner		x		x			Promising
Open Circle	x		x		x	x	Promising
Penn Resilience Program	x	x			x		Promising
Primary Project	x				x	x	Promising
Positive Action	x	x		x			Promising
Raising Healthy Children	x	x		x	x	x	Promising
Resolving Conflict Creatively Program	x	x			x	x	Promising
S.S.Grin (Social Skills GRoup INtervention)	x				x	x	Promising
Say it Straight™	x	x			x	x	Promising
Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports	x		x	x			Promising
Steps to Respect	x				x	x	Promising
Teaching Students to be Peacemakers	x	x			x	x	Promising
The 4Rs (Reading, Writing, Respect & Resolution)	x	x		x	x	x	Promising
The Incredible Years® Child Training Programs	x				x	x	Promising
The Incredible Years® Teacher Classroom Management Program	x				x	x	Promising
Tuning into Kids®	x	x			x		Promising

Federal Policies Related to Military Student Educational Success

A myriad of federal policies are tied to military-connected student educational success. Military-connected students are subject to all policies that all students, civilian or military, are subject to and also to military-specific policies. Table 7 outlines these policies. Furthermore, each Service also has its own set of policies, which are not discussed here due to the overwhelming number of relevant policies. Moreover, each state also has its own set of policies that apply to military students when they are living in that state. Additional policies that are related to military-connected student education may exist. The listed policies were identified in the literature and policy search; however, U.S. law is expansive.

Table 7
Federal Policies Related to Military-Connected Student Educational Success

Name	Number	Topic
U.S. Policy		
National Defense Authorization Act	e.g., Public Law 11-84 (FY2010)	General DoD
Department of Defense policy and plans for military family readiness	10 USC 1781b	Military Family Readiness Programs
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	20 USC 1232g	General Education
Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965	20 USC 6301	General Education
Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)	Public Law 107-110	General Education
Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)	34 CFR Part 200, 34 CFR Part 299, 10 USC 101, 20 USC 7703	General Education, Military Student Identifier, Federal Impact Aid
Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children	32 CFR part 89	Military Student Education
Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)	29 USC 794, 34 CFR Part 104	Disabilities
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II)	42 USC 12131-12134, 28 CFR part 35	Disabilities
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	34 CFR 99.31, 300.101, 300.106, 300.111, 300.201, 300.301, 300.305, 300.307, 300.309, 300.323, 300.662	Disabilities
Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)	32 CFR part 75	Disabilities

Name	Number	Topic
Office of Community Support for Military Families with Special Needs	10 USC 1781c	Office of Special Needs
Improving Access to Mental Health Services for Veterans, Service Members, and Military Families	(3CFR 13625) Executive Order 13625	Mental Health
Department of Defense Policy		
Department of Defense Education Activity	DoDD 1342.20	Military Student Education
Military Family Readiness	DoDI 1342.22	Military Student Education
Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children	DoDI 1342.29	Military Student Education
Youth Services Policy	DoDI 6060.04	Military Student Education, School Liaison Program
The Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)	DoDI 1315.19	Disabilities
Nondiscrimination of the Basis of Handicap in Programs and Activities Assisted or Conducted by the Department of Defense	DoDD 1020.1	Disabilities
Provision of Early Intervention and Special Education Services to Eligible DoD Dependents	DoDI 1342.12	Disabilities
Implementation of Early Intervention and Special Education Service to Eligible DoD Dependents	DoDM 1342.12	Disabilities

Conclusion

Military-connected students encounter challenges that are unique to the military context; however, military-connected students are not all the same. Many factors may influence student outcomes. Table 8 outlines risk and protective/promotive factors that have been identified in this literature review. As the research related to risk and protective factors for military-connected students grows, this list will also grow. Research related to relocation-related school transitions, particularly, would benefit from additional quantitative research to understand risk factors and promotive/protective factors related to school transitions.

Table 8

Summary of Risk and Protective/Promotive Factors

General Military-Related Risk Factors	
Dual military family	Having multiple risk factors
Geographically isolated	Parent with a traumatic brain injury
Enlisted[a] (compared to officer)	*Aversion to help-seeking*

Normative Risk Factors	
Age (older)	Avoidant coping
Racial or ethnic minority	Community poverty
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender	Parental depressive symptoms
Unmarried parents	Having multiple risk factors
Socially isolated	

General Protective and Promotive Factors	
Officer (compared to enlisted[a])	Positive social relationships
Self-efficacy	Program participation
Effortful control	Maternal community connections
Adaptive coping	Positive family relationships
Use of e-communication to make friends	*Positive school climate*
Participation in military activities	*Community understanding of the military lifestyle*

Factors That May be Risk or Protective Factors Depending on Outcome	
Gender	

Deployment-Related Risk Factors	
Longer single deployment	*Less access to help with homework*
Cumulative months of deployment	*Military-related bullying*
Combat deployment	*Schools with fewer military-connected students*
Timing of deployment	*Lack of military culture training for school personnel*
At-home parent's mental health and well-being	

Deployment-Related Protective Factors	
At-home parent social support	*Schools with consistent and high expectations*
Social support from other military-connected students	

Transition-Related Risk Factors	
Timing of move	*Exclusion from extra-curricular activities*
Schedule type differences	*Exclusion from gifted and talented programming*
Differences in curricula, content pacing	*Lack of military culture training for school personnel*
Differences in standards and exit exams	*Understaffed SLP[b] offices*
Differences in state requirements	

Transition-Related Protective/Promotive Factors	
Online learning opportunities	*Peer ambassador programs*
Extra-curricular activities	*Effective SLP[b] staff*
School personnel	

Transition-Related Challenges for Students who are Eligible for Special Education Services or Have a Disability	
Non-compliance with the law	*Strained relationships between staff and parents*
Services availability	*Understaffed EFMP & SLP[b] offices*
Delays in service access	*TRICARE system navigation*
Lack of continuity of services	

Transition-Related Supports for Students who are Eligible for Special Education Services or Have a Disability	
Parent training in advocacy	*OSN standardization of processes*
Effective EFMP and SLP[b] staff	*TRICARE coverage*
Hand-carried IEPs	

Note. Light purple indicates quantitative statistical evidence; grey and italics indicates evidence from qualitative studies. EFMP = Exceptional Family Member Program; SLP = School Liaison Program; IEP = Individualized Education Plan; OSN = Office of Special Needs. [a] Current research related to educational outcomes does not separate paygrade beyond enlisted and officer; recent research on veterans (VETERANetwork, 2022) suggests that there may be important differences between different groups of enlisted Service members (e.g., junior enlisted vs. senior enlisted). [b] SLP provides a variety of services related to children in general and special education; in the research literature, the program is discussed most frequently in relation to transitioning families and families receiving special education services.

Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations highlight additional research that could further the understanding of how to support the school success of military-connected students.

Recommendation 1: Prioritize research examining individual and environmental factors that are associated with military-connected students who thrive and military-connected students who struggle instead of the current focus of research, which examines broad groups of military-connected students (e.g., students with a military parent, students with a deployed parent, students who are transitioning schools).

Recommendation 2: Utilize existing qualitative studies to inform development of quantitative studies with the goal of elucidating the scope of military-connected students' successes or difficulties when transitioning to a new school.

Recommendation 3: Evaluate homegrown or locally used programs intended to support military-connected student success. See Chapter 7 in the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine 2019 report for a discussion of program evaluation. Use these evaluations to make recommendations for use or refinement and to develop standards for future program development.

> Recommendation 3a: Systematically catalogue existing homegrown programs with the intention of developing a comprehensive understanding of current and recent programming related to military-connected student educational success.

Recommendation 4: Evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of Advance Enrollment, the Compact, the Military Student Identifier, and the Purple Star Schools program.

References

Acion, L., Ramirez, M. R., Jorge, R. E., & Arndt, S. (2013). Increased risk of alcohol and drug use among children from deployed military families: Substance use among military children. *Addiction*, *108*(8), 1418–1425. https://doi.org/10.1111/add.12161

Aleman-Tovar, J., Schraml-Block, K., DiPietro-Wells, R., & Burke, M. (2022). Exploring the advocacy experiences of military families with children who have disabilities. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *31*(3), 843–853. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-021-02161-5

Aranda, M. C., Middleton, L. S., Flake, E., & Davis, B. E. (2011). Psychosocial screening in children with wartime-deployed parents. *Military Medicine*, *176*(4), 402–407. https://doi.org/10.7205/MILMED-D-10-00202

Arnold, A. L., Lucier-Greer, M., Mancini, J. A., Ford, J. L., & Wickrama, K. A. S. (2017). How family structures and processes interrelate: The case of adolescent mental health and academic success in military families. *Journal of Family Issues*, *38*(6), 858–879. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X15616849

Arnold, P. L., Garner, J. K., & Nunnery, J. A. (2014). Understanding teaching and learning with military students in public school contexts: Insights from the perspectives of teachers. *Children & Schools*, *36*(1), e9–e17. https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdt044

Aronson, K. R., & Perkins, D. F. (2013). Challenges faced by military families: Perceptions of United States Marine Corps school liaisons. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *22*(4), 516–525. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-012-9605-1

Astor, R. A., de Pedro, K. T., Gilreath, T. D., Esqueda, M. C., & Benbenishty, R. (2013). The promotional role of school and community contexts for military students. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, *16*(3), 233–244. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-013-0139-x

Astor, R. A., Jacobson, L., & Benbenishty, R. (2012). *The pupil personnel guide for supporting students from military families.* Teachers College Press.

Astor, R. A., Jacobson, L., & Benbenishty, R. (2012). *The school administrator's guide for supporting students from military families.* Teachers College Press.

Astor, R. A., Jacobson, L., & Benbenishty, R. (2012). *The teacher's guide for supporting students from military families.* Teachers College Press.

Baptist, J., Barros, P., Cafferky, B., & Johannes, E. (2015). Resilience building among adolescents from National Guard families: Applying a developmental contextual model. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *30*(3), 306–334. https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558414558592

Berg, K. F. (2008). Easing transitions of military dependents into Hawaii public schools: An invitational education link. *Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice*, *14*, 41–55.

Blasko, K. A. (2015). MilitaryKidsConnect: Web-based prevention services for military children. *Psychological Services*, *12*(3), 261–266. https://doi.org/10.1037/ser0000025

Blue Star Families. (2019). *2019 Military Family Lifestyle Survey - Comprehensive report*. https://bluestarfam.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/BSF-2019-Survey-Comprehensive-Report-Digital-rev200305.pdf

Blue Star Families. (2020). *2020 Military Family Lifestyle Survey - Comprehensive report*. https://bluestarfam.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/BSF_MFLS_CompReport_FULL.pdf

Blue Star Families. (2021). *2021 Military Family Lifestyle Survey - Comprehensive report*. https://bluestarfam.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/BSF_MFLS_Results2021_ComprehensiveReport_3_22.pdf

Bradshaw, C. P., Sudhinaraset, M., Mmari, K., & Blum, R. W. (2010). School transitions among military adolescents: A qualitative study of stress and coping. *School Psychology Review*, *39*(1), 84–105. https://doi.org/10.1080/02796015.2010.12087792

Brickell, T. A., French, L. M., Lippa, S. M., & Lange, R. T. (2018). The impact of deployment and traumatic brain injury on the health and behavior of children of US military service members and veterans. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, *23*(3), 425–441. https://doi.org/10.1177/1359104517740405

Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research, Cornell University & Beach Center on Disability, The University of Kansas. (2013). *Department of Defense Exceptional Family Member Program benchmark study*. https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/ResourceGuides/EFMP-Benchmark.pdf

Brown, J. A., Carlson, M., Geary, C., Gomez, S. A. Q., Via, C., & Warren, E. (2009). *Exceptional family member program survey: Assessing the needs of exceptional Army families*. Public Health Assessment Division, Health Promotion and Wellness Directorate, U.S. Army Public Health Center. https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/AD1095007.pdf

Buehrle, J. (2014). "Us" as the United States: Sparking community-based solutions for supporting military-connected children and their families. *Children & Schools*, *36*(1), 60–63. https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdt045

Cederbaum, J. A., Gilreath, T. D., Benbenishty, R., Astor, R. A., Pineda, D., DePedro, K. T., Esqueda, M. C., & Atuel, H. (2014). Well-being and suicidal ideation of secondary school students from military families. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *54*(6), 672–677. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2013.09.006

Center for Public Research and Leadership at Columbia University & Military Child Education Coalition. (2018). *Mitigating the impact of school mobility: An effective practices model and guide for educators*. https://cprl.law.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/Publications/CPRL_2019_MCEC%20Toolkit_FINAL.pdf

Chandra, A., Lara-Cinisomo, S., Jaycox, L. H., Tanielian, T., Burns, R. M., Ruder, T., & Han, B. (2010). Children on the homefront: The experience of children from military families. *Pediatrics*, *125*(1), 16–25. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2009-1180

Chandra, A., Martin, L. T., Hawkins, S. A., & Richardson, A. (2010). The impact of parental deployment on child social and emotional functioning: Perspectives of school staff. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *46*(3), 218–223. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2009.10.009

Classen, A. I., Horn, E., & Palmer, S. (2019). Needs of military families: Family and educator perspective. *Journal of Early Intervention*, *41*(3), 233–255. https://doi.org/10.1177/1053815119847235

Culler, E., Moeller, J., Runion, M., Perkins, K., Morgan, N., Aronson, K. R., Perkins, D. F., Dailey-Perkins, J., & Embler, S. (2019). School utilization of spouse perspectives on military parental absence for program planning. *Children & Schools*, *41*(3), 169–178. https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdz012

Daily, S. M., Mann, M. J., Kristjansson, A. L., Smith, M. L., & Zullig, K. J. (2019). School climate and academic achievement in middle and high school students. *Journal of School Health, 89,* 173-180. https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.12726

Davis, J. M., & Finke, E. H. (2015). The experience of military families with children with autism spectrum disorders during relocation and separation. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, *45*(7), 2019–2034. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-015-2364-2

de Pedro, K. T., Astor, R. A., Gilreath, T., Benbenishty, R., & Berkowitz, R. (2016). Examining the relationship between school climate and peer victimization among students in military-connected public schools. *Violence and Victims*, *31*(4), 751–766. https://doi.org/10.1891/0886-6708.VV-D-15-00009

de Pedro, K. T., Astor, R. A., Gilreath, T. D., Benbenishty, R., & Berkowitz, R. (2018). School climate, deployment, and mental health among students in military-connected schools. *Youth & Society*, *50*(1), 93–115. https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X15592296

de Pedro, K. T., Esqueda, M. C., Cederbaum, J. A., & Astor, R. A. (2014). District, school, and community stakeholder perspectives on the experiences of military-connected students. *Teachers College Record: The Voice of Scholarship in Education*, *116*(4), 1–32. https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811411600404

de Pedro, K. T., Pineda, D., Capp, G., Moore, H., Benbenishty, R., & Astor, R. A. (2017). Implementation of a school districtwide grassroots antibullying initiative: A school staff and parent–focused evaluation of because nice matters. *Children & Schools*, *39*(3), 137–145. https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdx008

de Pedro, K. T., & Shim-Pelayo, H. (2018). Prevalence of substance use among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth in military families: Findings from the California healthy kids survey. *Substance Use & Misuse*, *53*(8), 1372–1376. https://doi.org/10.1080/10826084.2017.1409241

Department of Defense. (2010). *Report on the impact of deployment of members of the armed forces on their dependent children*. https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/Report-to-Congress-on-Impact-of-Deployment-on-Military-Children.pdf

Department of Defense. (2019). *Youth services (YS) policy* (DoD instruction 6060.04). https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/606004p.pdf

Department of Defense. (2020a). *2020 demographics profile of the military community*. https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2020-demographics-report.pdf

Department of Defense. (2020b). *Annual report to the Congressional Defense Committees on the activities of the Office of Special Needs—2019*. https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/mos-osn-report-to-congress-2019.pdf

Department of Defense Education Activity. (2015). *Assistance to local educational agencies for defense dependents' education (update)*. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED578542.pdf

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82(1),* 405-432. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x

Easterbrooks, M. A., Ginsburg, K., & Lerner, R. M. (2013). Resilience among military youth. *The Future of Children*, *23*(2), 99–120. https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.2013.0014

Engel, R. C., Gallagher, L. B., & Lyle, D. S. (2010). Military deployments and children's academic achievement: Evidence from Department of Defense Education Activity schools. *Economics of Education Review*, *29*(1), 73–82. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2008.12.003

Esposito-Smythers, C., Wolff, J., Lemmon, K. M., Bodzy, M., Swenson, R. R., & Spirito, A. (2011). Military youth and the deployment cycle: Emotional health consequences and recommendations for intervention. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *25*(4), 497–507. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024534

Esqueda, M. C., Cederbaum, J. A., Pineda, D. M., Malchi, K., Benbenishty, R., & Astor, R. A. (2014). Military social work field placement: Analysis of the time and activities graduate student interns provide to military-connected schools. *Children & Schools*, *36*(1), 41–50. https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdt043

Fairbank, J. A., Briggs, E. C., Lee, R. C., Corry, N. H., Pflieger, J. C., Gerrity, E. T., Amaya-Jackson, L. M., Stander, V. A., & Murphy, R. A. (2018). Mental health of children of deployed and nondeployed US military service members: The Millennium Cohort Family Study. *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*, *39*(9), 683–692. https://doi.org/10.1097/DBP.0000000000000606

Farley, B. E., Griffith, A., Mahoney, A., Zhang, D., & Kruse, L. (2022). Brief report: Identifying concerns of military caregivers with children diagnosed with ASD following a military directed relocation. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, *52*(1), 447–453. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-021-04936-7

Fenning, P. (2021). *School supports for students in military families*. The Guilford Press.

Finkel, L. B., Kelley, M. L., & Ashby, J. (2003). Geographic mobility, family, and maternal variables as related to the psychosocial adjustment of military children. *Military Medicine*, *168*(12), 1019–1024. https://doi.org/10.1093/milmed/168.12.1019

Flake, E. M., Davis, B. E., Johnson, P. L., & Middleton, L. S. (2009). The psychosocial effects of deployment on military children. *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*, *30*(4), 271–278. https://doi.org/10.1097/DBP.0b013e3181aac6e4

Garcia, E., de Pedro, K. T., Astor, R. A., Lester, P., & Benbenishty, R. (2015). FOCUS School-Based Skill-Building Groups: Training and implementation. *Journal of Social Work Education*, *51*(Supppl.1), S102–S116. https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2015.1001292

Garner, J. K., Arnold, P. L., & Nunnery, J. (2014). Schoolwide impact of military-connected student enrollment: Educators' perceptions. *Children & Schools*, *36*(1), 31–39. https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdt026

Gilreath, T. D., Astor, R. A., Cederbaum, J. A., Atuel, H., & Benbenishty, R. (2014). Prevalence and correlates of victimization and weapon carrying among military- and nonmilitary-connected youth in Southern California. *Preventive Medicine*, *60*, 21–26. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2013.12.002

Gilreath, T. D., Cederbaum, J. A., Astor, R. A., Benbenishty, R., Pineda, D., & Atuel, H. (2013). Substance use among military-connected youth. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, *44*(2), 150–153. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2012.09.059

Gilreath, T. D., Wrabel, S. L., Sullivan, K. S., Capp, G. P., Roziner, I., Benbenishty, R., & Astor, R. A. (2016). Suicidality among military-connected adolescents in California schools. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, *25*(1), 61–66. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00787-015-0696-2

Gorman, G. H., Eide, M., & Hisle-Gorman, E. (2010). Wartime military deployment and increased pediatric mental and behavioral health complaints. *Pediatrics*, *126*(6), 1058–1066. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2009-2856

Government Accountability Office. (2007). *DOD Exceptional Family Member Program*. https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-07-317r.pdf

Government Accountability Office. (2011). *Education of military dependent students—Better information needed to assess student performance*. https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA538579.pdf

Government Accountability Office. (2012). *Military dependent students—Better oversight needed to improve services for children with special needs*. https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-12-680.pdf

Government Accountability Office. (2018). *Military personnel—DoD should improve its oversight of the Exceptional Family Member Program*. https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-18-348.pdf

Government Accountability Office. (2022). *Special education—DoD programs and services for military-dependent students with disabilities.* https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-22-105015.pdf

Greene, J. P., & Dawson, R. (2016). School-based health center model within the military health system: The role of the adolescent medicine physician. *Military Medicine*, *181*(9), 1046–1049. https://doi.org/10.7205/MILMED-D-15-00346

Hubbard, R., & Lindsay, R. M. (2008). Why *p* values are not a useful measure of evidence in statistical significance testing. *Theory & Psychology, 18(1),* 69-88. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354307086923

Huebner, A. J., Mancini, J. A., Wilcox, R. M., Grass, S. R., & Grass, G. A. (2007). Parental deployment and youth in military families: Exploring uncertainty and ambiguous loss. *Family Relations*, *56*(2), 112–122. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2007.00445.x

Huebner, C. R. (2019). Health and mental health needs of children in US military families. *Pediatrics*, *143*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2018-3258

Hutchinson, J. W. (2006). Evaluating risk-taking behaviors of youth in military families. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *39*(6), 927–928. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2006.05.015

Jagger, J. C., & Lederer, S. (2014). Impact of geographic mobility on military children's access to special education services. *Children & Schools*, *36*(1), 15–22. https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdt046

Kaeppler, C., & Lucier-Greer, M. (2020). Examining impacts of cumulative risk on military-connected youth and the role of family in coping. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, *49*(4), 581–602. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-020-09544-7

Kelly, J. B., & Emery, R. E. (2003). Children's adjustment following divorce: Risk and resilience perspectives. *Family Relations, 52,* 352-362. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2003.00352.x

Kim, J. B., Kirchhoff, M., & Whitsett, S. (2011). Expressive arts group therapy with middle-school aged children from military families. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, *38*(5), 356–362. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2011.08.003

Kitmitto, S., Huberman, M., Blankenship, C., Hannan, S., Norris, D., & Christenson, B. (2011). *Educational options and performance of military-connected school districts research study – Final report*. American Institutes for Research. https://silo.tips/download/educational-options-and-performance-of-military-connected-school-districts-resea

Knobloch, L. K., Knobloch-Fedders, L. M., Yorgason, J. B., Ebata, A. T., & McGlaughlin, P. C. (2017). Military children's difficulty with reintegration after deployment: A relational turbulence model perspective. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *31*(5), 542–552. https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000299

Landers-Potts, M. A., O'Neal, C. W., & Mancini, J. A. (2017). Electronic communication use and socio-emotional well-being among military youth. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *26*(12), 3266–3277. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-017-0833-2

Lemmon, K., & Stafford, E. (2014). Advocating for America's military children: Considering the impact of parental combat deployment to Iraq and Afghanistan. *Family Court Review*, *52*(3), 343–354. https://doi.org/10.1111/fcre.12096

Lester, P., Peterson, K., Reeves, J., Knauss, L., Glover, D., Mogil, C., Duan, N., Saltzman, W., Pynoos, R., Wilt, K., & Beardslee, W. (2010). The long war and parental combat deployment: Effects on military children and at-home spouses. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, *49*(4), 310–320. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaac.2010.01.003

Lucier-Greer, M., Arnold, A. L., Grimsley, R. N., Ford, J. L., Bryant, C., & Mancini, J. A. (2016). Parental military service and adolescent well-being: Mental health, social connections and coping among youth in the USA: Parental military service and adolescent well-being. *Child & Family Social Work*, *21*(4), 421–432. https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12158

Lucier-Greer, M., Arnold, A. L., Mancini, J. A., Ford, J. L., & Bryant, C. M. (2015). Influences of cumulative risk and protective factors on the adjustment of adolescents in military families. *Family Relations*, *64*(3), 363–377. https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12123

Lucier-Greer, M., O'Neal, C. W., Arnold, A. L., Mancini, J. A., & Wickrama, K. K. A. S. (2014). Adolescent mental health and academic functioning: Empirical support for contrasting models of risk and vulnerability. *Military Medicine*, *179*(11), 1279–1287. https://doi.org/10.7205/MILMED-D-14-00090

MacDermid Wadsworth, S., Cardin, J.-F., Christ, S., Willerton, E., O'Grady, A. F., Topp, D., Coppola, E., Lester, P., & Mustillo, S. (2016). Accumulation of risk and promotive factors among young children in US military families. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *57*(1–2), 190–202. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12025

Mancini, J. A., Bowen, G. L., O'Neal, C. W., & Arnold, A. L. (2015). Relationship provisions, self-efficacy and youth well-being in military families. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, *40*, 17–25. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2015.02.003

Mansfield, A. J. (2011). Deployment and mental health diagnoses among children of US Army personnel. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, *165*(11), 999–1005. https://doi.org/10.1001/archpediatrics.2011.123

McGraw, K., Adler, J., Andersen, S. B., Bailey, S., Bennett, C., Blasko, K., Blatt, A. D., Greenberg, N., Hodson, S., Pittman, D., Ruscio, A. C., Stoltenberg, C. D. G., Tate, K. E., & Kuruganti, K. (2019). Mental health care for service members and their families across the globe. *Military Medicine*, *184*, 418–425. https://doi.org/10.1093/milmed/usy324

Meadows, S. O., Myers, D. Y., Miller, L. L., & Trail, T. E. (2021). *The Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP): Policy alignment between the Department of Defense and the services*. RAND Corporation. https://doi.org/10.7249/RR-A742-1

Meadows, S., Tanielian, T., & Karney, B. (Eds.). (2016). *The Deployment Life Study: Longitudinal analysis of military families across the deployment cycle*. RAND Corporation. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1388.html

Military Child Education Coalition. (2012). *Education of the military child in the 21st century: Current dimensions of educational experiences for Army children*. https://www.militarychild.org/upload/files/EMC21_Full_Report.pdf

Military Child Education Coalition, & Center for Public Research and Leadership at Columbia University. (2017). *The challenges of supporting highly mobile, military-connected children in school transitions*. https://www.militarychild.org/upload/images/CPRL/Military_Student_Transitions_Stu.pdf

Military Child Education Coalition, & Center for Public Research and Leadership at Columbia University. (2021). *A study of the Purple Star School Designation Program—Summary report*. https://www.militarychild.org/upload/files/purple%20star/MCEC_Purple_Star_Report_Final_20.04.pdf

Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission. (n.d.). *Interactive map.* https://mic3.net/interactive-map/

Military OneSource. (n.d.) *Key Issue Status Tracker Purple Star Schools Program.* https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil/status-tracker/purple-star-schools-program

Military OneSource. (2021, July 27). *How school liaisons help students realize education goals and more.* https://www.militaryonesource.mil/education-employment/for-children-and-youth/changing-schools/school-liaisons/

Military OneSource. (2022a, May 5). *Advance enrollment for military children.* https://www.militaryonesource.mil/education-employment/for-children-and-youth/changing-schools/advance-school-enrollment/

Military OneSource. (2022b, January 31). *The Interstate Compact makes changing schools easier for military children.* https://www.militaryonesource.mil/education-employment/for-children-and-youth/changing-schools/interstate-compact-for-military-children/

Mmari, K. N., Bradshaw, C. P., Sudhinaraset, M., & Blum, R. (2010). Exploring the role of social connectedness among military youth: Perceptions from youth, parents, and school personnel. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, *39*(5), 351–366. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-010-9109-3

Mmari, K., Roche, K. M., Sudhinaraset, M., & Blum, R. (2009). When a parent goes off to war: Exploring the issues faced by adolescents and their families. *Youth & Society*, *40*(4), 455–475. https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X08327873

Morris, A. S., & Age, T. R. (2009). Adjustment among youth in military families: The protective roles of effortful control and maternal social support. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, *30*(6), 695–707. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2009.01.002

Murphy, R. A., & Fairbank, J. A. (2013). Implementation and dissemination of military informed and evidence-based interventions for community dwelling military families. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, *16*(4), 348–364. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-013-0149-8

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2019). *Strengthening the military family readiness system for a changing American society.* https://doi.org/10.17226/25380

National Defense Authorization Act, Public Law 116-283 116th Congress. (2021). https://www.congress.gov/116/plaws/publ283/PLAW-116publ283.pdf

Ohye, B. Y., Jakubovic, R. J., Zakarian, R., & Bui, E. (2020). Staying Strong with Schools: Testing an elementary school-based intervention for military-connected children. *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*, *49*(5), 595–602. https://doi.org/10.1080/15374416.2018.1547971

Okafor, E., Lucier-Greer, M., & Mancini, J. A. (2016). Social stressors, coping behaviors, and depressive symptoms: A latent profile analysis of adolescents in military families. *Journal of Adolescence*, *51*(1), 133–143. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2016.05.010

Reed, S. C., Bell, J. F., & Edwards, T. C. (2011). Adolescent well-being in Washington state military families. *American Journal of Public Health*, *101*(9), 1676–1682. https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2011.300165

Richardson, A. F., Chandra, A., Martin, L. T., Setodji, C. M., Hallmark, B. W., Campbell, N. F., Hawkins, S. A., & Grady, P. (2011). *Effects of soldiers' deployment on children's academic performance and behavioral health*. Rand Corporation. https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG1095.html

Richardson, E. W., Mallette, J. K., O'Neal, C. W., & Mancini, J. A. (2016). Do youth development programs matter? An examination of transitions and well-being among military youth. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *25*(6), 1765–1776. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-016-0361-5

Rush, C. M., & Akos, P. (2007). Supporting children and adolescents with deployed caregivers: A structured group approach for school counselors. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, *32*(2), 113–125. https://doi.org/10.1080/01933920701227034

Schilling, E. A., Lawless, M., Buchanan, L., & Aseltine, R. H. (2014). "Signs of Suicide" shows promise as a middle school suicide prevention program. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, *44*(6), 653–667. https://doi.org/10.1111/sltb.12097

St. John, L. V., & Fenning, P. (2020). Supporting the behavioral and mental health needs of military children. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth*, *64*(2), 99–105. https://doi.org/10.1080/1045988X.2019.1680945

Texas Education Agency. (2019). *Military connected students - The Military Student Identifier*. https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/Military%20Student%20Identifier%20SY%202020%202021.pdf

Thompson, D. E., Baptist, J., Miller, B., & Henry, U. (2017). Children of the U.S. National Guard: Making meaning and responding to parental deployment. *Youth & Society*, *49*(8), 1040–1056. https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X15570883

TRICARE. (n.d.). *Life events*. https://www.tricare.mil/LifeEvents/Moving/Prime/ADFM

United States Marine Corps. (2017). *Analysis of the impact of exceptional family member program enrollment on individual Marine career progression and promotion—Final report*. http://www.mccshh.com/pdf/EFMP_Final_Report_May2017.pdf

Vannest, K. J., Carrero, K. M., Patience, B., Price, G., Altmann, R., Haas, A., & Smith, S. (2021). Military-connected adolescents' emotional and behavioral risk status: Comparisons of universal screening data and national norms. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *30*(1), 134–145. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-020-01887-y

VETERANetwork. (2022). *Unique characteristics of enlisted Service members: E1 to E6 Paygrades.* [Data Driven Action Brief]. https://veteranetwork.psu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Penn-State-VETERANetwork-Enlisted-Veterans-Informational-Sheet-24January2022.pdf

Waliski, A., Kirchner, J. E., Shue, V. M., & Bokony, P. A. (2012). Psychological traumas of war: Training school counselors as home-front responders. *The Journal of Rural Health*, *28*(4), 348–355. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-0361.2012.00404.x

Walker O'Neal, C., Mallette, J. K., Lanier, A. R., Mancini, J. A., & Huebner, A. J. (2017). Worried, concerned and untroubled: Antecedents and consequences of youth worry. *Child & Family Social Work*, *22*(2), 801–812. https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12298

Walker O'Neal, C., Mallette, J. K., & Mancini, J. A. (2018). The importance of parents' community connections for adolescent well-being: An examination of military families. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *61*(1–2), 204–217. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12222

Weber, E. G., & Weber, D. K. (2005). Geographic relocation frequency, resilience, and military adolescent behavior. *Military Medicine*, *170*(7), 638–642. https://doi.org/10.7205/MILMED.170.7.638