# 2015 Military Family Lifestyle Survey

## Top 5 Issues

- **Military Pay/Benefits**: 65%
- **Change in Retirement**: 51%
- **Military Spouse Employment**: 40%
- **Deployment Impact on Children**: 37%
- **Children’s Educational Opportunities**: 28%

**Ranked as Most Concerning**

- Military Pay and Retirement Benefit Changes are the top two concerns for all respondents.
- Spouse Employment, Military Suicide & Veteran Employment round out the top 5 issues overall from all survey respondents.

## Spouse Employment

**Top Challenges to Employment**

- 52% Poor Job Market Alignment
- 36% Service Member’s Job/Work Obligations

**Financial Readiness**

- 45% have a full- or part-time job
- 58% are not working would like to be employed outside the home
- 75% reported being a military spouse had a negative impact on their ability to pursue a career

## Transition

- 28% described their overall transition from active duty to veteran as "difficult" or "very difficult"
- 43% of veterans had some form of TAP & 57% agreed that it prepared them to successfully transition from active duty to civilian life
- 87% feel the military has prepared me to be a leader in the civilian workplace and community
- 97% feel pride from accomplishments during military service

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**6,291 Respondents Including Military Spouses, Service Members & Veterans**

Military families are assets to national defense and local communities. They are central to the health and capability of the all-volunteer force and are good neighbors actively engaged in making their civilian communities great places to live.

Blue Star Families Annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey provides a comprehensive understanding of what it means to serve as a military family and is a blueprint for strengthening America by supporting military families.

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**Blue Star Families**

In collaboration with:

- **Syracuse University Institute for Veterans and Military Families**
- **UnitedHealthcare Military & Veterans, Rent-A-Center, Health Net Federal Services, Facebook, and the USO**

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SNAPSHOT OF THE MILITARY LIFESTYLE

45% WOULD RECOMMEND MILITARY SERVICE TO THEIR OWN CHILD

VIEWS OF SERVICE

90% FEEL THE GENERAL PUBLIC DOESN'T TRULY UNDERSTAND THE SACRIFICES MADE BY SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

85% JOINED MILITARY FOR FINANCIAL SECURITY

57% WOULD RECOMMEND MILITARY SERVICE TO A YOUNG PERSON WHO IS CLOSE TO US

DEPLOYMENTS

60% DEPLOYED MORE THAN 12 MONTHS SINCE 9/11

52% AWAY FROM HOME MORE THAN 12 MONTHS DUE TO TRAINING, TEMPORARY DUTY AND REASONS OTHER THAN DEPLOYMENT

50% WITH CHILDREN REPORTED HAVING A CHILD WHO EXPERIENCED MODERATE OR GREATER WORRY AS A RESULT OF A PARENT'S DEPLOYMENT

21% EXPERIENCED RELATIONSHIP CHALLENGES IN THE PAST YEAR RELATED TO WORRY OVER FUTURE DEPLOYMENTS

MOVING

73% INCURRED UNEXPECTED EXPENSES AS A RESULT OF THE MILITARY LIFESTYLE; OF THOSE, 86% RESULTED FROM MOVING/PCS

60% HAVE MOVED 3 OR MORE TIMES IN THE CONTINENTAL US

52% HAVE MOVED/LIVED OUTSIDE OF THE U.S.

BENEFITS

15% removing the BAH support for dependents from the GI Bill benefit would impact the amount of time they or their service member planned to stay in service

40% would be less likely to serve a full, 20-year career if the retirement plan was changed to a defined contribution retirement plan

45% not at all or not very confident in receiving their healthcare benefits post-retirement

76% have transferred or plan to transfer their Post-9/11 GI Bill to spouse or child

CHILD CARE

Finding childcare that meets needs increases both active duty and spouse satisfaction with the military lifestyle.

27% spent $500 or more per month on childcare

35% are not able to find childcare that fits their current situation

CAREGIVER

32% of respondents identified as caregivers

11% are providing care to active duty spouse or child over 18

37% are providing care to a parent or grandparent

CIV-MIL DIVIDE

46% do not always have enough information to vote in local elections

59% had "no" or "hardly any" confidence in the federal government

65% volunteered last year; of those 70% volunteered in their civilian communities

94% Indicated desire to serve country was a reason to join the military

SUICIDE

Admit suicidal thoughts during time in military

7% Active Duty Spouses (2% in past year)

7% Veterans (4% in past year)

10% Active Duty Service Members (3% in past year)

14% Post-9/11 Veterans (7% in past year)