



## FAST FACTS

### Question and Answers about Military Families and Work-Family Role Strains

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#### How does being in the military affect a service members' relationships with their relatives?

- **Fact 1:** "One veteran mother's experience of feeling 'disconnected from herself and from her child'." (McGaw, et al 2019:2947).
- **Fact 2:** "All participants described the emotional volatility and unpredictability of family life with a veteran partner with PTSD, including their concern for the impact on their children." (McGaw, et al 2020:461).
- **Fact 3:** "The majority of studies reported themes around the caring responsibilities assumed by the children or partner, including feelings of guilt or responsibility for the veteran parent's mental health or safety." (McGaw, et al 2020:459)

#### What effect does deployment have on marital functioning/satisfaction?

- **Fact 1:** "Female dual-military spouses reported lower marital quality compared with male dual-military spouses or civilian spouses." (Woodall, et al 2020:2054).
- **Fact 2:** "Marriages of dual- and nondual military couples are similarly impacted by military stress experiences and work-family conflict." (Woodall, et al 2020:2057).

- **Fact 3:** “Recent deployment was indirectly linked with marital functioning through symptoms of PTSD.” (Allen, et al 2010:6).

### **How is being a female service member in a military family different than that of a male?**

- **Fact 1:** “Family factors, particularly career support from spouse, were associated with both married women officers’ Air Force satisfaction and career intentions.” (King, et al 2020:689).
- **Fact 2:** “Female service members may feel pressure to occupy traditional gender roles in their marriages but progressive roles within the workplace, where they are working alongside their male counterparts.” (Woodall, et al 2020:2056).

### **What effect does deployment have on children in military families?**

- **Fact 1:** “Children exhibit more problem behaviors during deployment and that these behaviors taper off during reunion and reintegration.”(O’Grady, et al 2018:578).
- **Fact 2:** “A greater number of reported injury-related stressors was associated with more child conduct problems.” (Briggs, et al 2020:84).

### **How does PTSD affect children in military families?**

- **Fact 1:** “Children of fathers with greater levels of PTSD symptomatology are perceived to have more difficulties.” (Parsons, et al 2018:924).
- **Fact 2:** “Parental PTSD symptoms have an effect on children’s internalizing and externalizing symptoms, including depression, social emotional adjustment in young children, increased anxiety in early childhood, and adjustment problems in school-age children.” (Creech, et al 2017:11).
- **Fact 3:** “The findings highlighted a small but significant association between military parental PTSD severity and preschool child separation anxiety.” (Creech, et al 2017:12).

## How does PTSD affect marital relationships within military families?

- **Fact 1:** "Husbands' current PTSD symptoms were associated with lower marital satisfaction, confidence in the relationship, positive bonding between the spouses, parenting alliance, and dedication to the relationship for both husbands and wives." (Allen, et al 2010:1)
- **Fact 2:** "A pattern of initially low PTSD symptoms prior to deployment that increased significantly to clinical levels immediately following deployment and remained elevated through the 2-year postdeployment follow-up." (Polusny, et al 2017:357).
- **Fact 3:** "Husbands' PTSD symptoms were significantly correlated with all indices of marital functioning for both husbands and wives." (Allen, et al 2010:5).

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### **About the Author**

Drew Brenner is a sophomore student at Ithaca College majoring in politics with a minor in sociology. His career plans are to pursue a professional career in special operations within the U.S. Military following obtaining his bachelor's degree in May 2023.