



## **Defense Health Agency (DHA) Clinical Communities Speaker Series**

### **2025 APR CCSS: Cultivating the Wellbeing of our Military Children and Youth and Families**

#### **2025 APR CCSS S03: Supporting Military Parents in Pediatric Clinics: A 6-Step Field Guide to Meet the Mission**

#### **Resource List**

According to the article [Building Resilience in US military Families: Why it Matters](#) (2022), service members and their families have endured significant stressors over the past nineteen years in support of the nation's engagement in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is critical for healthcare providers to ensure the success of the military spouse and military-connected child. Providers can support the physical and psychological health needs of military families through identification of military family members in clinical practice and providing culturally competent care that correlates the unique lifestyle and physical and psychological health exposures associated with spousal/parental military service. The leading factor associated with retention of the service member on Active Duty or in the Reserve or National Guard is the satisfaction of the at-home spouse. Disenfranchising the military spouse and lack of services and support for military-connected children could create a gap in meeting recruitment goals creating a threat to national security in the United States.

The journal article [Cultivating Knowledge of Resiliency and Reintegration Among Military Youth Through a National Youth Leadership Program](#) (2021) states that youth in military families are frequently challenged by the adjustment demands associated with the deployment and reintegration of a parent. A positive youth development approach was undertaken by the Boys and Girls Clubs of America to develop and implement a Military Teen Ambassadors (MTA) training for youth in military families that would facilitate knowledge of resiliency and reintegration and foster leadership skills to build assets for themselves as well as their peers within their local communities. The study examines perceived participant learning outcomes associated with MTA on variables pertaining to knowledge acquisition, perceived skill acquisition, and community needs awareness to determine if MTA was functioning as intended and to refine future programming. The findings indicate significant mean increases over time in knowledge and awareness of resiliency and reintegration, perceived leadership skills, and community awareness.

The journal article [Supporting Military Family Resilience at the Transition to Parenthood: A Randomized Pilot Trial of an Online Version of Family Foundations](#) (2020) examines whether family resilience can be enhanced among military families via an online prevention program for military couples at the transition to parenthood. Military families experience normative stressors similar to those of civilian families, as well as military-specific stressors, such as deployment, frequent moves, and uncertainty. The participants were heterosexual couples who, at the time of recruitment, were expecting their first child and were living together. A pretest was administered upon recruitment during pregnancy, and posttest was administered at six months postpartum. The study findings indicate significant program impact on parent depression, mothers' report of coparenting support, and infant mood and calmability. The study suggests online delivery of prevention programming is a potentially effective means of enhancing military family well-being and resilience.



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### **References**

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