

## FAMILY SUPPORT SURVEY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What military family support services have been utilized by military families within the past 24 months? Are certain family programs more useful than others? This survey asked families to identify family support services they have used and the usefulness of those services. You participated in our survey and we have the highlights! 97% of 804 participants completed the entire survey.

### Top 3 Most Utilized Programs

- More than 80% of participants use a Family support/Readiness Group and/or a family readiness individual;
- 60% have utilized Military OneSource within the past 24 months;
- 1 out of 2 participants use installation recreation and fitness centers; and
- 20% of the survey respondents have utilized at least one of the military family support services identified.

### Of the Top 3 Programs

- 74% of Guard and Reserve respondents used Family support/Readiness group or a family readiness individual.
- 60% of active duty respondents utilized Military OneSource within the past 24 months compared to 75% of Guard and Reserve respondents.
- 2 out of 3 active duty participants have utilized the recreation and fitness centers within the past 24 months.

### Military OneSource Usage by Age

Under 25	58%
26 – 35	61%
36-45	63%
46+	55%

Compared to past National Military Family Association surveys, these numbers reflect an increase in the overall utilization of family support programs. As one Marine Corps spouse stated, “these programs are the backbone that support our military families.” Another Marine Corps spouse added, “While you don’t often use all of these programs at once, when I needed them – they were there.” Military families stressed the importance of family support programs and how they not only rely on the programs, but expect them to be available. A Coast Guard spouse shared, “Our base has been hit by the BRAC; the remaining services do not include some of the ones listed above. We are now an Air National Guard base, with active duty military still attached and not able to use services here since they are not available.”

### Top 3 Program Rating

- When asked to rate the usefulness of identified programs, 69% of families selected Military OneSource and Recreation and Fitness Centers as very useful or somewhat useful.
- Family Support/Readiness Group followed with a close second of 63% of respondents identifying the program as very useful or somewhat useful.

- 45% of respondents identified Children, Youth and Teen programs as the third option for very useful or someone useful. 80% of survey participants have dependent children.

Perhaps to deal with deployment stress, families are turning to the fitness center, as one Army spouse commented, “I can’t imagine functioning well during a deployment and in this high stress environment without the above services.”

### **Order of Importance Ranking**

While no one program collectively emerged as the most important for all survey participants, the top three are Family Support/Readiness Group, Children Youth and Teen programs and Recreation and Fitness Centers. As one Army spouse stated: “Ranking the family support services in order of importance was difficult, they are all important.”

### **Community Resources**

Not all military families are located on or near an installation. Regardless of location, more than 80% of survey respondents rely on their friends for support. 1 out of 2 utilize physical fitness activities and 50% use religious programs. Community resources “outside the gate” provide essential support services to military families.