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“The Effects of Military Deployment on Family Health”

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David R. Segal, Professor of Sociology, and Director of the Center for Research on Military Organization, University of Maryland

Robert W. Blum, William H. Gates Sr. Professor and Chair, Department of Population, Family and Reproductive Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Cmdr. (Dr.) Gregory H. Gorman, U.S. Navy, Department of Pediatrics, Uniformed Services University and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center

Valerie Maholmes, Director, Social and Affective Development/Child Maltreatment and Violence Program, *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development



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The Impact of Deployment on Young People:
preliminary findings from
The Military Child in Hawaii Study



Protecting Health, Saving Lives—*Millions at a Time*

Johns Hopkins Investigators and Collaborators

- **Robert Wm Blum MD, MPH, Ph.D.**
- **Lynne Michael Blum MS, Ph.D.**
- **M.E. Hughes PhD**
- **Kristin Mmari MA, Dr.PH**
- **May Sudhinaraset Ph.D.**

University of Hawaii

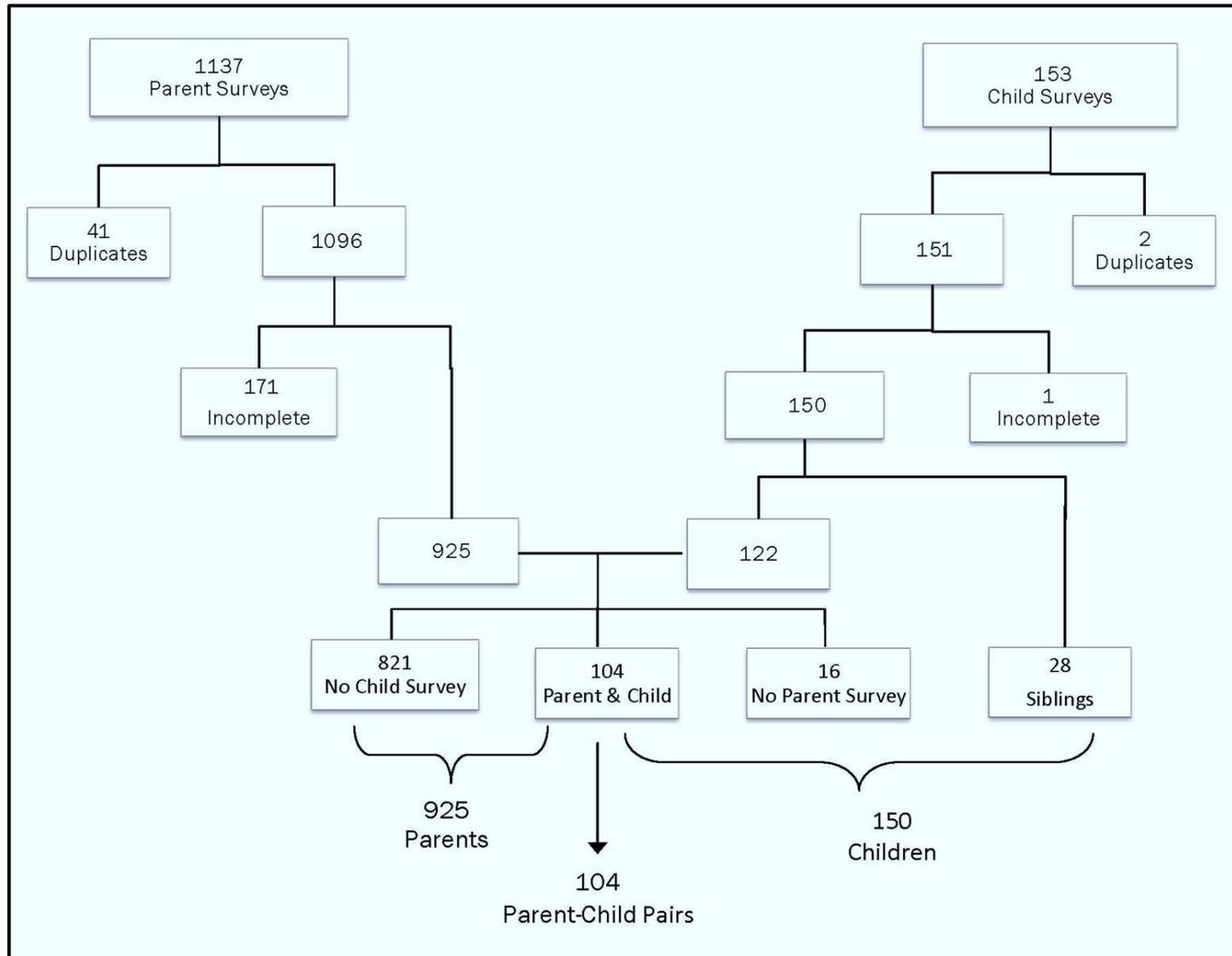
- **Kathleen Berg Ph.D.**



Sample Description



Parent, Parent-Child and Child Samples



Military Status of Respondent

Military Status	Frequency	Percent
Active Duty	456	49.67
Military Spouse	462	50.33
Total	918	100



Respondent's Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
29 or under	82	8.86
30 to 39 years old	490	52.97
40+ years old	353	38.16
Total	925	100



Respondent Education Level

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
Less than High School	10	1.08
High School	181	19.57
2 Year College or Tech	212	22.92
4 Year College Degree	265	28.65
Graduate School	257	27.78
Total	925	100



Deployment and its Impact



Ever Deployed: Respondent or Spouse

Deployed	Frequency	Percent
Neither	220	28.46
Respondent	227	29.37
Respondent and Spouse	18	2.33
Spouse	308	39.84
Total Deployed	553/773	71.54%



Deployed While in Hawaii

Deployment	Frequency
Respondent	102
Respondent and Spouse	3
Spouse	173
Total	278



Effects of Deployment on Respondent: Did deployment increase family problems?

Effect	Frequency	Percent
No	149	61.32
Yes	94	38.68
Total	243	100



Consequences of Deployment for Service Member

Consequence	Frequency	Percent
Injury	5	5.56
Psychological Problems	28	31.11
None	52	57.78
Total	90	100



Likelihood of Redeployment

How likely will be deployed again	Frequency	Percent
Certain	42	17.28
Highly Likely	28	11.52
50-50 chance	40	16.46
Unlikely	87	35.80
Definitely not	31	12.76
Don't know	15	6.17
Total	243	100



Outcomes of Deployment (N=465)

	Number	Percent
Made us more religious	81	17.42
Made us stronger/closer	69	14.84
Made it harder for family to get along	90	19.35
Separation more likely	52	11.18
Divorce more likely	32	6.88
Separation or divorce more likely	63	12.60



Factors Associated with Deployment Impact on Respondent/Spouse

- **Respondent Age (older, $p < .05$)**
- **Respondent education (4 year college + vs. less; $p < .01$)**
- **Race (Latino/White vs. Black/Other; $p < .05$)**
- **Knowledge of Neighbors (directly proportionate; $p < .05$)**
- **People in Hawaii welcoming (directly proportionate; $p < .05$)**
- **Time spent in Hawaii (directly proportionate; $p < .001$)**



Impact of Deployment on Children (Parent Perspective)



Effect of Deployment on Child Mental Health

Effect	Frequency	Percent
No	120	50
Yes	120	50
Total	240	100



Factors Associated with Deployment Impact on Child

- **Respondent Age (older, $p < .001$)**
- **Race (White vs. Other; $p < .001$)**
- **Knowledge of Neighbors (directly proportionate; $p < .05$)**
- **Engaged in the community (some or more vs. none; $p < .001$)**
- **Number of deployments (one vs. 2+; $p < .05$)**



From The Child's Lens

- **Two-thirds of the sample (103/151) had a parent who had been deployed**
- **Two thirds of children who had a parent who was deployed reported more emotional or behavioral problems as a consequence of deployment (62/100)**
- **Only factor identified associated with moderating the emotional consequences of deployment was the perspective of how welcoming people in Hawaii are ($p < .05$)**
- **Nineteen (18.33%) indicated that they wished that they could speak with someone about deployment but didn't feel that they could.**



Effects of deployment on the Family: Child Perspectives

Were any of the following true?	Percent endorsement
Made us more religious	14 (13.59%)
Made us closer as a family	64 (62.14%)
Harder to get along as a family	10 (9.71%)
Worried parents would separate or divorce	10 (9.71%)
Parent has nightmares, easily angered	4 (3.88%)



The Cycle of Deployment



Worst Part of Deployment: self/family?

Worst Part	Frequency	Percent
Before	110	22.77
During	239	49.48
Redeployment	47	9.73
Reunion	87	18.01
Total	483	100



Worst Part of Deployment: Child

Worst Part	Frequency	Percent
Before	47	9.73
During	365	75.57
Redeployment	23	4.76
Reunion	48	9.94
Total	483	100



Pre-deployment

- ***“The deployment part is easier when it’s just a couple of days notice because I’m not planning, I’m not cleaning the house, I’m not washing his laundry. We don’t have enough time to fight before he goes.”***
- ***“I’ve always said my perfect deployment would be one where he calls me in the morning and says, ‘I forgot, we’re leaving today.’ Because it’s a torturous thing when the countdown begins.. ‘this is the last Tuesday night we’re having spaghetti’, etc.”***



For some *Pre-deployment* is worst

“ For me, it’s hardest in the first two or three weeks before you leave, because you’re going through that anxiety. You know you’re leaving and, of course, we’re able to mostly detach or start that process, but the kids don’t really sense it until we’re gone.” (military parent)



The early weeks of separation are the most difficult:

Week 3 is most difficult. Week 3 is when you realize that it's no longer just a local operation, it is done. I mean, you are in charge, you've got 5 months to go and you're solely responsible for everything that happens in the house. Up until then, because our husbands all do weekly ops, they can be out for 10 days, two weeks – and that is normal. Week 3 is when it's 'this is deployment.' (military spouse)



The Effects of Separation on the Family

“Yeah, it’s hardest when he [father] is gone. It’s hard to concentrate during school, cause I’m thinking about him so much – and I started getting not so good grades.”

(military child)

“When my dad is deployed, I keep thinking about all the bad things that could happen to him, and that makes me sad a lot – and I cry a lot more.” (military child)



Deployment means missing out....

“My son graduates from high school here in May... But, he doesn’t want to go to the graduation ceremony. Dad’s deployed. He says, “Dad’s not here, what does it really matter?” (military spouse)



Children know that parents suffer:

- ***“My mom really just shuts down – like she’s not the same. She acts differently and makes it really hard for us.”*** (military child)
- ***“My mom was really stressed out. Sometimes when we were talking to her, she would just walk to her room. She would close the door and tell us that we needed to go in our rooms and leave her alone.”*** (military child)



Reentry is difficult

“Actually, my husband already left at the beginning of this week, but they are pulling in today just for two hours to refuel. He knows the girls have off school and he asked me to bring them down to see him... I said , ‘No, they are done with you, you are gone. They have said their goodbyes and have worked through this. You are going to kill me if I have to go through that again.’” (military spouse)



Reunion can be stressful

“I don’t like it when my dad gets back, he does a lot of cussing. He cusses all the time, and I think he got used to it during deployment. It usually takes him about 6 months after he gets back from the war to stop.” (military child)



Reunion can be stressful

“Well, and then if they’re gone for a year – they are different and you’re different, and the kids are different. I mean, my youngest is 5 and in the last 4 years, he has been gone 2 and ½ years. She doesn’t know him. And you come into this new family, that now everyone has to figure out their way again.” (military spouse)



There may be positives with deployment

- ***“I actually think deployment brings us closer as a family. We kind of just have to help each other more. It also makes you think how you’re grateful for family because you know what it’s like when they’re gone.”*** (military child)
- ***“I’m more low-key than my husband, and when he’s home, the stress level gets turned up a bit. There’s more ‘we have to do this for Daddy’s work, we have to go this function, this barbecue, etc.’ When he’s gone, I’m like, ‘what do you guys want to do today? You want to go the beach. Okay, we’ll go to the beach’.”*** (military parent)



There may be positives...

- ***“Every deployment, we now know what to expect... We know we’re going to have about one to two weeks of a honeymoon, two to four weeks of somebody hates somebody and why did we ever get married, and then we’ll get back to a pretty good honeymoon, and feeling glad that we’re together. If you’re in the military, you get more honeymoons than anybody else and you don’t even have to get remarried.”*** (military spouse)

