

# Strengthening the **MILITARY FAMILY READINESS SYSTEM** for a Changing American Society

The U.S. military has been continuously engaged in foreign conflicts for almost two decades. The strains of these deployments, the associated increases in operational tempo, and the general challenges of military life affect not only service members but also the people who depend on them and support them as they support the nation—their families. Supporting the well-being of military families is essential to ensuring the readiness of military personnel. Family members provide support to service members while they serve or have difficulties, and they are central influences on whether members continue to serve.

Recognizing the importance of supporting service members and their families to promote readiness and resilience, the Department of Defense (DoD) asked the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to appoint a committee to study the challenges and opportunities facing military families and what is known about effective strategies for supporting them.

## CHALLENGES

1

Military families can be adversely affected by some aspects of military life.

2

Military family experiences are not all equivalent.

3

DoD policies and programs do not reflect an understanding of military families that is current with the breadth and diversity of military families.

4

The DoD and the Service Branches do not have a coordinated and comprehensive approach to matching the unique needs of individual families to available programs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS



**ENHANCE**  
UNDERSTANDING OF TODAY'S  
SERVICE MEMBERS AND  
THEIR FAMILIES



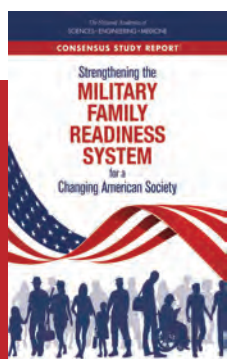
**IMPROVE**  
MILITARY COMMUNITY AND  
FAMILY POLICY PROGRAMS  
AND SERVICES



**STRENGTHEN**  
THE BROADER MILITARY  
FAMILY READINESS  
SYSTEM

### DoD MUST BE READY TO

rapidly develop and deliver interdisciplinary family-centered services for emerging threats to military family well-being within a Military Family Readiness System that is flexible, adaptive, and responsive to the needs of families as they exist.



Learn more at [nap.edu/strengtheningmfrs](http://nap.edu/strengtheningmfrs)

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