Well-being of Adolescents in Military Families: Examining the Intersections of Resilience and Vulnerability

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Adolescent Well-Being: Empirical Support for Contrasting Models of Vulnerability and Risk

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Context-Specific or Military-Related Risk Factors

• **Empirically established risk factors**
  – Parental deployment (Chandra, et al., 2010; Chartrand, Frank, White, & Shope, 2008; Reed, Bell, & Edwards, 2011)
  – Multiple transitions (Bradshaw, Sudhinaraset, Mmari, & Blum, 2010)
  – Parental Rank of Enlisted (Booth et al. 2007; Lucier-Greer et al., under review)
  – Living outside the U.S. (Blakely, Hennessy, Chung, & Skirton, 2012; Lucier-Greer et al., under review)

• **Theoretically or anecdotally noted risk factors**
  – Multiple military parents (Drummet, Coleman, & Cable, 2003)
  – Geographic dispersement (living further from military installation) (Werber, Harrell, Varda, Hall, Beckett, 2009)
Normative Risk Factors

• Minority status  (Gaylord-Harden & Cunningham, 2009)

• Family disruptions  (Hartman, Magalhaes, & Mandich, 2011)

• Social isolation  (Hall-Lande, Eisenberg, Christenson, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2007)
How do we operationalize risk?

- **Additive Model**
  - Each risk factor uniquely influences outcomes

- **Cumulative Model**
  - The collection of risk factors influences outcomes

- **Interactive Model**
  - Relative effect of normative and military risks on outcomes
Conceptualizing Risk

Additive Effects Model

- Parent Deployed
- Multiple Moves
- Rank (Enlisted)
- Multiple Military Parents
- Living outside the US
- Live 30 min away
- Minority
- Biological parents not married
- Isolation

Cumulative Effects Model

- Depressive Symptoms
- Academic Performance
- Efficacy

Interactive Effects Model

- Self-Efficacy: Persistence
- Military Risk Factors
- Normative Risk Factors
- Military X Normative Interaction

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Additive Effects Model

Note. RMSEA = .03; CFI = .94. Standardized coefficients
Note. RMSEA = .06; CFI = .94. Standardized coefficients
Interactive Effects Model: Minority Status

Parent Deployed
Multiple Moves
Rank (Enlisted)
Multiple Military Parents
Living outside the US
Live 30 min away

Depressive Symptoms
Academic Performance
Self-Efficacy: Persistence

RMSEA = .03; CFI = .92.

Note. Betas for white participants noted above the line; betas for participants of a minority race/ethnicity indicated below the line. Standardized coefficients.
Interactive Effects Model: Non-Married Parents

Parent Deployed
Multiple Moves
Rank (Enlisted)
Multiple Military Parents
Living outside the US
Live 30 min away

Depressive Symptoms
Academic Performance
Self-Efficacy: Persistence

RMSEA = .03
CFI = .93

Note. Betas for participants whose parents are married are noted above the line; betas for participants whose parents are not married are indicated below the line. Standardized coefficients.
Interactive Effects Model: Social Isolation

Parent Deployed

Multiple Moves

Rank (Enlisted)

Multiple Military Parents

Living outside the US

Live 30 min away

Depressive Symptoms

Academic Performance

Self-Efficacy: Persistence

RMSEA = .03
CFI = .94

Note. Betas for participants who have many social connections are noted above the line; betas for participants with few indicated below the line. Standardized coefficients.
So what?

• Each of the models demonstrated good fit:
  – Additive effects (RMSEA = .03; CFI = .94),
  – Cumulative effects (RMSEA = .06; CFI = .94)
  – Interactive effects (RMSEA = .05; CFI = .97)

• Benefits with each model
• Additive effects model:
  – Provided details on the unique influence of each risk factor
  – Accounted for the most variance
  – Findings were that deployment and multiple school transitions were not significantly associated with the outcomes examined.

• Cumulative effects model:
  – Higher cumulative risks = higher levels of depressive symptoms, lower academic performance, and lower self-efficacy
  – May help identify the number of risks that accounts for a major decrement in youth well-being

• Interactive effects model:
  – Provides evidence that normative risk factors are more strongly associated with maladjustment than military-related risks
  – Presence of normative risk factors appears to amplify the effects of military-related risks, especially for academic performance