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Title:

The Lived Experiences of Highly Mobile Military Adolescents and Their Search for Identity

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ACCEPTED

Session Title:

Research Poster Session 1 (Saturday/Sunday, 16 & 17 November)

Slot:

RSC PST1: Sunday, 17 November 2019: 11:45 AM-12:15 PM

Abstract Describes:

Ongoing Work/Project

Applicable Category:

Clinical, Academic, Students, Leaders, Researchers

Keywords:

Adolescent, Identity Development and Military

References:

Kroger, J. & Marcia, J. E. (2011). The identity statuses: Origins, meanings, interpretations. S. J. Schwartz, K. Luychx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 31-53). New York, NY: Springer.

Milburn, N. G. & Lightfoot, M. (2013). Adolescents in wartime US military families: A developmental perspective on challenges and resources. *Clinical Child & Family Psychology Review*, 2013(16), 266-277. doi: 10.1007/s10567-013-0144-0

Abstract Summary:

Participants will learn about the lived experiences of military adolescents and their search for identity. This population is often faced with identity challenges relating to frequent relocations. Understanding their lived experiences will help healthcare professionals learn how they can support identity exploration and achievement through interdisciplinary collaboration.

Content Outline:

1. Introduction
 1. Purpose of Study
 2. Background Information
 1. Identity in Adolescents
 2. Developmental Milestones in Military Adolescent Population
2. Body
 1. Identity Status Theory
 1. Review of Identity Statuses
 1. Identity Diffusion
 2. Foreclosure
 3. Moratorium
 4. Identity Achievement
 2. Review of the MAMA Cycle
 1. Moratorium-Achievement-Moratorium-Achievement is a cyclical process that occurs throughout one's life based on their lived experiences
 2. Review of Pilot Study
 1. Population
 2. Sampling
 3. Data Collections
 3. Methodology/Methods
 1. Qualitative Analysis
 2. Interpretive Phenomenology

4. Findings
 1. Participants Reports of Experiences
 2. Emerging Themes
3. Conclusion
 1. The Nurse as Part of the Interdisciplinary Team
 1. Implications for Nursing Practice
 2. Individual Benefits
 3. Societal Benefits
 4. Plans for Future Research

Topic Selection:

Research Poster Session 1 (Saturday/Sunday, 16 & 17 November) (25745)

Abstract Text:

Military adolescents experience several challenges related to the military lifestyle. Frequent relocations, adaptation into new schools and social settings, and parting from established peer relationships could play a role in a military adolescent's confusion about self and purpose. Yet, despite these challenges, adolescents within military families should be encouraged to maintain a high exploration of identity, with the goal of reaching identity achievement. When exploration is high and an individual is actively seeking and exploring identity forms, a healthy developmental process towards identity achievement takes place (Kroger & Marcia, 2011).

The military child population is well understudied, especially as it pertains to developmental milestones (Milburn & Lightfoot, 2013). A review of literature using the terms "military", "children", and "Identity" in the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINHAL), PsychInfo, and the Education Research Information Center (ERIC) databases yielded a lack of research focusing on identity development within this population. The purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of highly mobile military adolescents and their search for identity. Through interpretive phenomenology, emerging themes will be drawn from the data. Further, the integration of James Marcia's Identity Status Theory in the research of a military adolescent's lived experiences relating to identity development could contribute to more understanding of the parental and interdisciplinary community support needed to promote identity exploration and achievement.

This study offers many individual and societal benefits, including a participant's greater sense of identity through self-reflection, encouragement of support groups and/or programs promoting identity exploration within military communities, and the potential to review and revise stabilization guidelines for military assignments to support the development of service member's children. Further, implications for nursing practice and the nurse's role as part of an interdisciplinary team to assess and meet the needs of adolescents within the military communities will be established. Nurses will feel empowered advocate for this population and work to develop ways to support highly mobile military adolescents.