Deployment-Related Needs of Children of Army Reserve Soldiers
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INTRODUCTION
The spouse of a deployed Army Reservist said that her 5 year old was the only child in his kindergarten class whose daddy was in the military. He would sit in a corner and cry during school yet refuse to talk to his daddy on Skype. Concerned for her child’s health she attempted unsuccessfully to find a child therapist to help her son. Additionally, there were none with experience caring for the unique physical and psychological healthcare needs of military children. The school, while willing to help, lacked the knowledge and expertise to fully comprehend the impact of parental military service on children. Furthermore, the family did not live near an active duty military post, however even if they did, her spouse’s reservist status would significantly limit services available to her child.

PURPOSE
• This project identifies gaps in the literature regarding deployment concerns of Army Reserve (AR) children and provides the first ever public description of this population.
• Assess knowledge gaps of civilian healthcare providers and educators caring for AR military children.
• Identify recommendations for research and policy to address and improve:
  • Identification of AR children in the civilian sector
  • Long-term effects of parental deployment in order to minimize physical and psychological sequelae
  • Identification of community resources specific to AR children

BACKGROUND/SIGNIFICANCE
• Approximately 2.2 million Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve service members have been tasked for 3.3 million deployments since the onset of military action in Iraq and Afghanistan.
• 70% of children of Active Duty service members are under the age of 11 years old and 80% of Reserve component children are under the age of 15 years old.
• While military children as a whole are an understudied group, even less research is available regarding AR children specifically.
• Because of their geographic distribution, AR children are often the only military child in their school, church, and other community organizations.
• Knowledge regarding these unique needs is critical to meeting the educational needs as well as the physical and psychological healthcare needs of this underserved population.

RESULTS
1. The physical, social, emotional and academic needs of Children of Army Reserve Service members are not accounted for in the literature.
2. The majority of the research literature focuses on Active Duty military personnel.
3. The physical, social, emotional and academic needs of Children of Part-time and Active Guard and Reserve National Guard members are similar yet different from Children of Army Reserve Service members.
4. The mental health needs of Children of Military Service members receives more attention in the research literature.

METHODS & NEXT STEPS
• Systematic review of the literature on the physical, social, emotional/mental health and school needs of children of deployed Reserve Component (RC) Soldiers
• To date, review of 11 research papers published between 1990–2017.
• Descriptive analysis of AR Child and Youth Services (CYS) Programmatic Needs AND Services Needs Assessment Surveys regarding the needs of AR dependents ages 0 – 18 years old.
• Utilize a convenience sample of approximately 6,000 parents attending a pre-deployment Yellow Ribbon Program or parents completing online CYS Survey.
• Finalize UNC Charlotte IRB Approval and Executed Data Sharing Agreement with US Army Reserve.
• Anticipate Fall 2017 Completion Date

BACKGROUND/SIGNIFICANCE

METHODS & NEXT STEPS

REFERENCES
Available upon request.