The Impact on the Life of Military Children Whose Parent(s) are Serving in Support of American Foreign Policy

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THE IMPACT ON THE LIFE OF MILITARY CHILDREN WHOSE PARENT(S) ARE SERVING IN COMBAT LOCATIONS WHILE IN SUPPORT OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

BY

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Education
Seton Hall University
2007
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincerest gratitude and appreciation go to Seton Hall University and the many faculty and staff members who guided and encouraged me during the doctoral study and dissertation process. A very special thanks is extended to Dr. John Collins, my committee chair and mentor, for his insightful comments, literal unending patience, his extensive experience, and long distance support. Dr. Victor Vance, Dr. James Caulfield, and Dr. Howard Schechter, members of my doctoral committee, each of whom contributed time, skill, and encouragement during the research and writing of the dissertation.

Personally, I would like to thank my family for their support and sacrifices so that I could complete this manuscript. A special thanks goes to my wife, Dr. Martha Gabriel, who is an innate and legitimate intellect. We have been partners in research, Cohort IV, work, and marriage. To my son, Ryan, I also extend my utmost appreciation. You endured summer camps, a myriad of strange people, places, experiences, and frequent flights to New Jersey all so your parents could complete the doctoral process.

Appreciation is also extended to the members of Cohort IV for their communal encouragement, support, and collegiality. Exceptional appreciation is extended to Seton Hall University that, though assisting in every manner possible, continued to maintain high academic standards throughout the entire process. And a very special thanks to Dr. Rita Meehan who displayed exceptional Northern hospitality, friendship and support during the time at Seton Hall. You all have made the doctoral process rigorous and ultimately most satisfying.
DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to the children of military parents. They have to endure numerous moves during a parent’s military career; they are always the “new kid” at school, and have to prove themselves all over again with each and every move. At each new location, they have to explain (again) what their parent(s) does for a living and must suffer a substantial naïveté and unwarranted criticism from those who honestly have no concept, or only a media concept, or who even choose not to know, what your parent(s) do and why your parent(s) do what they do. They have to endure long separations while a parent is conducting training at a remote location and often do not see the parent during the week because of the normally long working hours. These children, during this time in American history, are enduring separations while their parents are in deadly combat fighting a new type of war against an enemy that cares nothing for peaceful co-existence, cares nothing for economic growth or human achievement, cares nothing about the deaths of tens-of-thousands of innocent women and children, or for the richness and the rewards that come from working together as friends and neighbors. The terrorists care nothing for new inventions that would help rid mankind of disease or create clean sources of energy and care properly for the land, and an enemy who demonstratively cares nothing about human life or the richness or for the beauty of the world and the wonderful things that can be achieved. The parents of military children are in the forefront of the international War on Terror and these children wait daily for a letter or an email from their parent(s), and most importantly they wait for the day they can be together again as a family and enjoy each others company as a family is designed to do. We as a nation, thank you for your sacrifices as we thank your parents for theirs.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS........................................................................ iii
DEDICATION...................................................................................... iv
LIST OF TABLES................................................................................. viii

I INTRODUCTION........................................................................... 1

History of Military Children ............................................................. 3
The Current Study ........................................................................... 6
Statement of Purpose ....................................................................... 8
Statement of Problem ..................................................................... 13
Guiding Questions .......................................................................... 17
Importance of the Study .................................................................. 17
Scope of the Study .......................................................................... 19
Limitations of the Study .................................................................. 20
Definition of Terms .......................................................................... 21
Significance of the Study ................................................................. 25
Organization of the Study ............................................................... 26

II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE................................................ 28

Adults, Soldiers, and Stress ............................................................. 29
Children and Stress ........................................................................ 34
The Terrorists ................................................................................ 34
The Children ................................................................................. 35
Effects on Children Under Stress .................................................. 38
Infants and Toddlers ...................................................................... 39
Pre-School Children (3 – 6) ........................................................... 39
School Age Children (6 – 12) ......................................................... 40
Middle and High School Students (13 – 18) ................................. 40
Interventions for Children Under Stress ........................................ 43
The Deployment Cycle .................................................................... 44
The Emotional Stages of Deployment .............................................. 45
  Stage 1: Anticipation of Departure ............................................... 46
  Stage 2: Detachment and Withdrawal ......................................... 46
  Stage 3: Emotional Disorganization ............................................ 46
  Stage 4: Recovery and Stabilization ............................................ 46
  Stage 5: Anticipation of Return .................................................. 47
  Stage 6: Return Adjustment and Renegotiation ............................ 47
  Stage 7: Reintegration and Stabilization ...................................... 47
Guidelines For Helping Children During the War .......................... 50
Pre-Deployment ............................................................................. 53
Pre-Deployment Actions ............................................................... 54
Appendix F. TerraNova Scores for Fort Bragg Schools for 2006 .......... 153
Appendix G. Army Profile for PY 2005 ............................................. 156
Appendix H. Additional Military Terms ............................................. 158
Appendix I. Fort Bragg Samples and Schools ................................. 162
Appendix J. One Solution for Transient Military Children ............. 164
Appendix K. Quote from MG David M. Rodriguez ......................... 177
**LIST OF TABLES**

1. Fort Bragg Student Population and Data Sample .................................................. 82
10. District Pre and Post 9/11 Accumulative TerraNova Scores ............................. 101
CHAPTER I

Introduction

“I’ve Got Your Back!”

I am a small and precious child, my dad’s been sent to fight...

The only place I’ll see his face, is in my dreams at night.

He will be gone too many days for my young mind to keep track.

I may be sad, but I am proud.

My daddy’s got your back.

I am a caring mother. My son has gone to war...

My mind is filled with worries that I have never known before.

Every day I try to keep my thoughts from turning black.

I may be scared, but I am proud.

My son has got your back.

I am a strong and loving wife, with a husband who had to go.

There are times I’m terrified in a way most never know.

I bite my lip, and force a smile as I watch my husband pack...

My heart may break, but I am proud.

My husband’s got your back...

I am a soldier…Serving Proudly, standing tall.
I fight for freedom, yours and mine by answering this call.

I do my job while knowing, the thanks it sometimes lacks.

Say a prayer that I'll come home.

It's me who's got your back. (Parker, 2003)

This poem was written by Autumn Parker, the wife of a Green Beret who was serving in Iraq in 2003 and a lyrical version of the poem was recorded that same year by Damon Henrichs.

Students of military parents who are often mobile and sometimes lack a cohesive, comprehensive, and transferable student academic and social portfolio system capable of integrating into both Department of Defense Schools and state public schools. This can occur when a military family is asked to move to meet American foreign policy and internal security requirements or a migrant family moves to the next crop to be harvested. These issues are among the smallest a military child must deal with on a daily basis. The terrorist attack of 9/11 has added an additional stress to this child; that of having to live on a daily basis with the potential that their deployed parent could be killed or maimed at any time during the deployment. There have been peace-time military disasters such as have befallen the 101st Airborne Division in 1985 when an aircraft crashed in Newfoundland while returning while from an exercise in the Middle East (Sanford, 1997). Events such as this have been very rare since Viet Nam and even the first Gulf War did not present the potential psychological impact on military children members as does the current war on terror.
History of Military Children

The former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Henry H. Shelton (1997 – 2001) stated at a recent conference of military educators in Arlington, Virginia in 1998 that he had moved 26 times in his 34-year military career (Keller & Decoteau, 2000). The average American family moves three times during the first 18 years of a child’s life, and most of those moves are considered local. This is significantly less than the average soldier, Air Force, Navy, or Marine Corps member, as the average is for a family to move every 2.5 years, not counting schools and special deployments which can elevate the number of moves significantly.

For most of the United States Military’s nearly 240 (since 1775) years of official existence, families have been literally a non-issue and nearly invisible as leadership in the area of family benefits has been sorely lacking when balanced against programs and benefits for other underprivileged and/or at-risk groups. Currently, an Army corporal with a wife and two children is eligible for food stamps and the early childhood WIC program. The average corporal works at least 10 hours daily, and much more in many circumstances. A military service man/woman is basically on-call 24-hours daily, seven days-a-week, making a second job to supplement income an impossibility. It has only been recently that family and the children of military service members have been of sufficient concern enough to begin some serious research in this area. Some current statistics for the Army alone are: (a) 500,000 active duty Army; (b) 1,010 761 total Army Strength (Reserves and National Guard); (c) 54% of soldiers are married and 46% with children; (d) 6.9% are single parents; (e) 23,886 dual career soldiers; (f) 712,895
dependents of active duty soldiers; and (g) Department of Defense run schools on five continents servicing 102,600 students (Army Profile, 2005). The critical statistics here are the fact that 68% of current Army soldiers are married and have over 500,000 dependent children, not counting those living with a divorced parent.

The lifestyle of a military child can be difficult enough when a peacetime move is contemplated, it is the material possessions that seem to generate the most concern, and the transplantation of a family seems a secondary concern. Once the military family moves, however, the myriad of individual issues that accompany such a move come into play, especially for the high school student. Always being the “new kid” in school includes multiple records transfer (or do not transfer as is often the case) and always having to prove himself/herself while acculturating into a new school and social environment. There are other issues such as: (a) credit variances, (b) different grading systems, (c) different graduation requirements, (d) not being able to compete for valedictorian because of “class difficulty” and allowed credit issues, even though transferred records might allow for that (Gabriel, 2004).

These kinds of issues can make it very hard on highly competitive students, or on those students struggling just to stay at the average level. We add to these unique stresses, the fact that a parent is now in a foreign combat zone with the war being on the national news on a nightly basis can be a negative influence (Klockowski, 2003; Leo, 2003). This, combined with the constant political bickering and posturing for advantage using the national media can be a literal nightmare for a psychologically weak or unprotected child.

An analysis has found (Chapter V) that these students, even children in general, are very resilient, but that there had been a definite lack of transformational and cultural
leadership (Yukl, 2002) within the military community. In fairness, the strategic
leadership (Yukl, 2002) and the need for a serious review of family matters had been
identified for some time, but the congressional monetary authorization had not been
initially forthcoming until the 1980s. In the 1990s, the military was cut by a full one-third
again, while the need was identified, the funding was not forthcoming from Congress.
This identified need for family assistance is another of the many “unfunded mandates”
from the federal government, yet requiring the states and local communities to actualize
the edict. The 200 year-old concept that wars are fought with single, mostly men has been
replaced with a completely multicultural and basically gender-free military force without
the initial requisite funding to support ramifications of these changes.

The military lifestyle is very unique, and while it can offer some substantial
benefits (i.e., travel, languages, unique cultural experiences, etc.), the stresses that
accompany each move can have a significant impact on many of the children involved.

The study of American military children [a military child being defined as a child
whose parent or parents are on active duty in any of the United States military services
(Kinley-Albers, 2000)] in the past has been basically relegated to mobility issues and the
impact of mobility on the students’ academic achievement (Brown, 1996; Gabriel, 2004;
Petcovic, 1996). The average military child will move with his/her family seven times
during the course of a parent’s 20-year career and some will average a move 18 months
depending on the parental job assignment and/or the rank of the parent (Kinley-Albers,
2000). The results of studies will vary and do not take into account whether a parent is
deployed overseas into a legitimate combat arena.
The Current Study

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, drastically changed the way that America and most of the world views radical Islam and everyone is still deciding what may be the best method of dealing with the bloody and senseless killing of innocent men, women, and children. While there have studies concerning children in combat areas around the world (UNICEF, 1999), there have been no in-depth studies that target the impact on military children while their parent(s) are in a combat zone (Brown, 1996; Richards & Bates, 1997). These children have the potential of living daily with the possibility that one of both of their parents could be killed, wounded, or maimed.

Terrorists or the War on Terror did not begin on September 11, 2001. Previous attacks basically beginning with the Iranian embassy hostages (1979); followed by the Beirut embassy and Marine Barracks (1983); Lockerbie, Scotland Pan Am flight to New York (1988); the U.S. military complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia (1996); the Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania embassy bombings', and the USS Cole attack in Yemen. These attacks of radical Muslims on the International Trade Center, the Pentagon, overseas embassies and foreign targets such as the London Transit System and the Spanish rail system (Kinley-Albers, 2000; Terrorism Research, 2007), have dramatically changed the environment and the mission in which military parents enter when they are deployed overseas. The terrorists have now come to American soil and plan to keep on doing so.

The numbers of suicide and roadside bombings that directly target the military peacekeepers in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as, innocent bystanders have increased
dramatically since September 11, 2001 (Eggan & Wilson, 2005) and it is the parents of military children that are directly in harm’s way. There are no studies to date that attempt to measure the direct impact of these events on these military children, especially in the long term.

Children’s stresses have been measured in the areas of divorce, immigrant, inner city, and military frequent moves and different abuses (Gabriel, 2004; Kinley-Albers, 2000). It is emotionally and statistically tough enough when a child must deal with divorce and relocation, but add to that the issue of having a parent in combat and to have these operations shown daily on national television, usually portrayed in a negative sense as noted by Judy Klockowski from Stanford (2003), John Leo, the editor of US News and World Report (2003) and the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry (2004). The demands put upon these children unwittingly by external media sources, for whatever agenda, may be more than we can comprehend. It is important that such research be allowed to take place so we are able to reduce the impacts on a child’s psyche which could lead to delayed stress syndrome issues, behavior problems, or a lack of academic achievement in school. Some of these issues could affect a child at sometime during their lifetime.

The current policy of the United States is now not only to eliminate terrorist training areas, but to eliminate them where the terrorists are trained. Global terrorism is a relatively new phenomenon to the world and technological advancements now allow terrorists to be able to reach into any location and initiate violence at any time using their own timetable. The current natural goal is to make these attacks too costly to the terrorists and to eliminate, as much as possible, attacks on Americans inside the Continental United
States proper. Another goal is to attempt to establish democratically elected governments in areas of the Middle East where none have ever previously existed.

Given technological changes in the area of arms and explosives, there are now legitimate concerns by these military children that their parents may be wounded or killed and the percentages of those soldiers deployed to these very dangerous areas have risen. The casualties are statistically low in comparison to Russian losses during their incursion into Afghanistan (15,000 in nine years) (Ovationtv, 2007; Wikipedia, 2007), American citizens have not been used to these kinds of numbers of dead and wounded soldiers since World War II, Korea, or Viet Nam. The long term international impact on the United States and the world economy in this war on terror could actually be higher than those of any war in American history (Kinley-Albers, 2000).

Statement of Purpose

The central purpose of this study was to begin to identify and examine the unique influences and stressors that can be exerted upon children whose parents are deployed to a foreign combat arena in support of American foreign policy. A second purpose of this study was to see what effect a parent in combat has on a child’s academic achievement and if any additional stresses were present and their impact on the child and the nuclear family. Systematic studies of American children and the impact of stresses of a parent who have been deployed to a combat arena are extremely rare with initial papers (Brown, 1996) and short articles, but no sequential, long term studies following students through school and into the workforce and college. There are studies of how war can impact children in the Middle East (Baker, 1991; Brown, 1996), Bosnia (Goldstein, Wampler, &
and other areas, but American children have been curiously left out of such research because United States military casualties have been almost nonexistent since Viet Nam, and none of the conflicts have been on American soil. These conflicts did not greatly impact the American standard of living or the economy. The War on Terrorism could have a negative affect on the economy of the United States because of the proximity of some of the world’s largest oil reserves and the United States dependence on oil to drive the economy (U.S. Department of Energy Research News 2005).

The criminal content of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 has radically changed the way Americans think and feel on a daily basis (Hamblen, 2005). There is research on the effect of mobility on military children (Brown, 1996; Gabriel, 2004; Petcovic, 1996;) that is excellent, although they do not address a parent in actual combat factored in their analysis. The specific areas that were researched were in the nature of academic achievement after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the possible resultant behavioral changes that may or may not have had an impact on their academics, social behavior, or additional stressors within the nuclear military family.

The breadth of the research was to illuminate more focused areas that may need to be reviewed and the fact that research concerning children’s reactions to a parent’s deployment were disallowed on Fort Bragg proper by the Department of Defense, so the individual student reactions to these events were not gathered in this particular study; only the academic achievement of military children a six-year period pre and post 9/11 was gathered. The information for this study was taken in the form of the TerraNova standardized (norm referenced) testing data for the installation’s military schools for a six-year period. The three years prior to the 9/11 terrorist attack and the three years
immediately following the attack were used. The study measured not only test scores, but analyzed different types of child stresses and the impact, if any, on these children academically or socially as the data might suggest. The two specific time periods cannot be compared statistically because in 2002 a new version of the test was administered and the 2002 test results became the baseline for future comparisons. The scores were, however, reviewed and contrasted and legitimate conclusions drawn using the national percentile rankings.

This researcher wanted to verify whether there is evidence to demonstrate that having a parent in a combat situation has an impact on their children might this be socially and academically and what those specific impacts might be to the child. One way to begin this analysis is to use statistical data relating to military children to determine if a problem actually exists or is it just perception, and then use that concrete information as a basis for addressing the issue(s) that may be illuminated.

Currently, we are unaware of how many children might be suffering stress(s) related to their parent's combat livelihood, the depth or seriousness of these stresses, or how this may be impacting their academic or social/behavioral progress. This applies not only to the children of current active duty soldiers, but also to those of the Army reservists, the Army National Guard and the children of the veteran of the conflicts in our nation's history, such as Viet Nam and the initial Gulf War. We are now only now beginning to uncover issues with veterans of those conflicts and the ramifications upon their children. Though the War in Iraq and Afghanistan has technically ended, there is still substantial fighting and bloodshed taking place daily in those areas and there are many United States troops, as well as troops from other countries that are involved in a
struggle for their lives and the safety of those around them. Many of these soldiers have their own families, and those families are struggling with the issues of terrorism and deployments to areas of the world where human life, diversity of thought or other customs of other cultures are not taken as seriously as in the United States (BBC News, 2005; Council of Europe, 2002; Kurzweil, 2001; Yale Bulletin & Calendar, 2001;).

The purpose of the study lies in assisting our nation’s greatest resource – its children. Within this purpose lies an even more sinister fact; the terrorists have a long term goal of the destruction of Western economy and the way of life and that of any pro-Western state in or around the Middle East (Hayes & Brunner, 2006, Terrorism Research, 2007) that has evolved within the Continental United States and Western Europe during the last 200 years. The terrorists have clearly demonstrated this fact in the number of suicide bombers, to include the use of women and children (Leppard, 2005). These acts of desperation by the terrorists have shown the American people that the nation is still vulnerable and it is the children who may have the most difficulty with the fears caused by current events in that they fear not so much for their own safety, but for that of their parents. All of these additional potential stresses that can be placed upon children, along with the pressures of growing up and those of being a military child in peace time, are in the arena of the military child.

The military profession is a dangerous one, whether in war or peacetime. The military member of the family is subject to instant change of a duty station, overseas deployment (Gabriel, 2004; Hunter, 1977; Nice, 1978) and being put directly into a combat zone. For the military child, these stresses can be substantially increased because their father and mother could be directly in the middle of combat and political issues.
These political issues could potentially have more of a negative impact on the child because they are often commented on daily in the media by members of Congress and political pundits, such as movie stars, who may have little or no actual knowledge of the situation, but are attempting to gain political advantage. A military child could be under great amounts of stress for quite substantial amounts of time, and to a child, a nine-month or 12 month deployment could seem like a lifetime with no apparent end in sight. Stress-related problems must be recognized in these military children through the symptoms that they have and compare these issues with the non-military child. There are some problems that can be dealt with the current developed methodologies, but once stresses have been identified as being related to having a parent in combat, new types of treatments may have to be sought. This could also be true with the academic issues that many of these children may develop as a result of a parent in combat. We do not know at this time; we do know, however, that a child with fewer internal and external stresses will usually have fewer social and academic problems and this could apply directly to the military child (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2004; Dukes, 2004). The sincere desire is to identify the causes of additional stresses on military children, prevent if possible, and then to treat them successfully with whatever interventions that are necessary.

The initial methodology of identifying a possible problem is with a thorough examination of standardized test scores prior to conflict and after a conflict is underway using the same sample from the same area. Should the statistics determine there is a drop in academic achievement after a conflict begins; then we identify what kinds of additional stresses a military child may encounter. This will allow researchers to apply
previous knowledge as a starting point, then probe more deeply into the issues, and the outcome would be successful interventions for these children. The study also strives to show how stresses have been evaluated and treated throughout history, since they were not always recognized as being as legitimate as it is today. It is quite probable that the children of veterans of earlier conflicts suffered with many of the same issues, but have not been recognized as such, and therefore not treated.

The test scores taken from the three years prior to the attack when few parents were deployed to a combat area were reviewed against the three years after the attack when a much greater percentage of parents were deployed to a combat area.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of stress is one that has been misunderstood for many years. There are individuals who research stress and discuss how significant it is, such as Purdue’s Judith Myer-Walls and the National Institute of Mental Health. Their research shows that “Battle Fatigue” or stressors happen to others and not just to soldiers (National Institute of Mental Health, 2005). In recent years, it has generally been accepted that stress can spawn other problems, especially for children (Myers-Walls, 2002), and that the study of it is important. Unlike standard medical problems, such as diseases that affect the body, stress is not something that can be easily identified or as it is understood in the traditional sense.

There are treatments available for stresses and there are different concepts and theories as to what causes stress in one person and another person in the exact same situation who may not show any symptoms, whatever. For a study such as this one, it is
important to discuss interventions already in place that are effective on these children and what types of symptoms continue to be immune to these interventions. These issues now require more in-depth and careful study because establishing a democracy in the Middle East has not been accomplished before and it may require several more of ongoing deployments of Americans to an area of the world that has known very little peace or respect for human life, much less a legitimate democracy (Hayes & Brunner, 2006; Terrorism Research, 2007; Wikiopedia, 2007).

The issue of how combat stress might impact a military child arose after the first Gulf War, and then the discussions seemed to focus on the veterans themselves rather than their offspring. This awareness shed more light on stress-related issues, although mostly in adults as opposed to children, and this emergence again focused on the adults and not the children who might have to deal with these same issues from their viewpoint.

As the military again entered the Middle East in force during 2002 and the continued US military presence there, the discussion of the stresses put upon those family members at home has once again increased among military leaders (Keller & Decoteau, 2002). A series of family support groups were developed throughout military installations with increased emphasis this time. This is important, because individuals who have been the victim of something stressful and painful, or are perceived to be a victim, need the assistance that can be provided through these organizations.

This particular study dealt with military children's experiences with stress, but it is important to remember that military children are part of a nuclear family and that the extended family can also be affected by any family member in combat. The perceived stigma of having "combat fatigue" is not as significant as it once used to be and many
such mental health issues are being treated on military installations and respected as legitimate difficulties that do need treatment. A study of returning soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan estimated that nearly half of the soldiers who had a mental health issue did not seek treatment (Kellicker, 2004). What we do not know is what kind of impact these statistics may have on that soldier’s family, and most importantly on their children.

This particular issue can be difficult for those in the military because of the very specialized training, physical and mental, that they endure and the concept that a combat soldier should be able to adapt and overcome any given situation without outside help. The stigma can exist for some military individuals and it could prevent them from seeking treatment even if they realize that they are having some kinds of difficulties and they are unsure of the source. This is aggressively being pursued by the military and this opens the way for more children to be seen and helped (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2004; Amherst Outreach, 2006; National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2006; Operation Military, 2006). The military is also launching specific and detailed deployment support plans. (Burgess & Boyd, 2003)

A very specific purpose of this study was to not only identify the special stressors and needs of these children, but for these needs to be quantified in such a manner that they could be used by major school districts and individual schools to assist these children in adapting to the unique situations they face as children of military parents. A school district that is able to identify specific issues will also be able to use, or create and use interventions in such a manner so any potential negative impacts are minimal and these students can grow academically and socially as normally as possible.
This becomes especially important in the classrooms where these children are being taught on a daily basis. The principals and, more importantly, the teachers who have hours of daily contact must be aware of possible emotional issues these children face with a parent in a combat situation. Teaching methodologies have evolved (i.e., Gardner's Multiple Intelligences) so teachers can teach each and every student in a different manner and still have the students perform well in the classroom. If a teacher can identify possible internal conflicts within a student, the school counselor, drawing on research and assets from the district, might be able to intervene early and reverse or radically slow any negative consequences the special issues may have. This also has the potential to impact the entire classroom, depending on how much time a teacher must take away from instruction to deal with the issues. The quicker the diagnosis and intervention for these students, the better for all concerned. Each school district located near a major military (nine have been identified in the continental United States) complex should have staff development and additional district-level assets available to rapidly intervene for these children, not unlike they would for some other traumatic event such as the death of a student.
Guiding Questions

Research questions for any study are often closely related to the hypotheses that are seen, and this study is no exception. There were two research questions that were addressed through this study:

1. What are the identifiably unique or significantly different stresses or issues that could affect a child who has a parent or parents deployed in combat that might not impact a nonmilitary child?

2. Are there significant differences in academic achievement levels between military students that took TerraNova standardized tests during the four years before 9/11 and those students who took the tests the four years after 9/11?

Importance of the Study

The military has been the mainstay in defending the freedoms within the Continental United States and much of the current world that enjoys such freedoms. It stands to reason that the health and welfare of their children should be of paramount concern. This has importance for those currently serving in the military forces and those who might be considering a military career or see a short enlistment as a stepping stone, or means of finance, to college and beyond. The rationale was that stress is an issue that will be consistent in combat situations and the better our soldiers’ children can deal with these stresses, the more effective they will be as an instrument of foreign policy.

It is also important in being able to identify those children who are most at risk for developing combat-related and other stress-related problems and put into place interventions that may lessen the impact, or eliminate it altogether. Researching these
issues may highlight determining causes of this stress and why it can affect some children much more than others.

The study is important to the future of this kind of research because it will give initial insight into the topic and discuss many of the concerns that exist now and the treatments that are being used, as well as what is being considered for the future of the field. It is also expected to illuminate other areas of concern, whether in the same field or not, that also need to be researched and increase the effectiveness of preventions or treatments as a whole. A particular rationale of this study was that these kinds of psychological issues are relatively new to modern medicine and can be prone to misdiagnosis. This is a productive discipline in which to assist American soldiers who have chosen to put themselves between us and the enemies of our freedoms that we enjoy.

Stress-related problems within the military may seem more significant because of the very dangerous arena in which the soldiers work. Any interventions and/or solutions discovered could be applied to the civilian world and their unique stresses; most immediately to policemen and firemen who also face dangerous situations on a routine basis. The literature review will look more closely at the current research and Chapter V will illuminate what areas that more research might need to be completed.

A special importance of this study was not only to identify stressors that military children experience that are unique to them, but to also identify interventions to negate the possibility of emotional damage. These findings and interventions should be of specific importance to school districts with substantial numbers of military children, but
to also ensure the school principals, counselors and classroom teachers have the tools to identify special emotional issues and intervene before they become too serious.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this particular study is very narrow, but has the potential to be far-reaching because of the number of people who could be impacted. Unattended stresses can have an effect not only on the individual child, but on the nuclear and extended families as well. Not everyone who goes through a traumatic experience acquires a disorder and many tend to exit the event stronger psychologically. However, the potential negative impact(s) are sufficient that additional study is warranted.

Regardless of the potential impact on nonmilitary children, the focus remained on the military child and that is also where the data was gathered for the analysis. Although specific individuals were not examined for this study, I firmly believe this study warrants additional and very specific research that will expand upon what has been done here.

Nearly everyone in the country has the potential to experience stress and the accompanying symptoms, the study should provide value for various disciplines, especially those who are already in the mental health field, those who have experienced a traumatic event, or have an interest in this issue for some other reason.

From the military soldier who finds himself or herself in a dangerous combat situation, to the policeman or firefighter, there are different traumatic events that can take place in a person’s life and being able to address and overcome them is essential for survival. It is the success of coping with traumatic events that can dramatically increase
the quality of life for a person, the life of a family, or even a nation that needs healing is why such studies are conducted.

Limitations of the Study

There are nine major military posts throughout the United States; however, this study will be focused on one – Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Fort Bragg is located in North Carolina adjacent to the city of Fayetteville whose population is 120,000 without the 43,000 personnel assigned to Fort Bragg. The Fort Bragg Schools district contains nine schools with a total enrollment of 4,400 students. The military organizations located at Bragg are usually the first units to be notified in a national contingency or emergency.

The main military organizations located at Fort Bragg are the Eighteenth Airborne Corps consisting of four military combat divisions, each with a specialty, and the requisite support units required to sustain a Corps-level in a combat situation. In addition, Fort Bragg is the main location for the American Special Forces (Green Berets), the Joint Special Operations group, and specially designated aircraft located at the directly adjacent Pope Air Force Base. There is more military power located in this single area than most nations possess in their entire military inventory making the post most unique. (Global Security, 2006)

The information was gathered in the free domain arena, making the study completely legitimate, but not as sharply focused as the researcher initially desired.
Definition of Terms

1. **Academic achievement**: Refers to actions which have resulted in competence school performance where public standards of excellence are applicable (Liebert & Wicks-Nelson, 1981). In this study, academic achievement is considered as students’ reading and mathematics scores on the Terra Nova and students’ grade point averages (GPA’s).

2. **Achievement test**: An assessment that measures a student’s acquired knowledge and skills in one or more content areas (e.g., reading, mathematics, or language).

3. **Active duty**: Full time duty in a military service without regard to duration or purpose (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

4. **Activity**:
   a. A unit, organization, or installation performing a function or mission.
   b. A function or mission, e.g., schooling (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

5. **Armed Forces of the United States**: A collective phrase for all military components of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

6. **Army base**: A base or group of installations for which a local commander is responsible, consisting of facilities necessary for the support of army activities (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

7. **Assign**: To relatively permanently place units or personnel in a military organization (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).
8. **Base:** A locality from which military operations are projected or supported (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

9. **Brat:** A slang term used to denote the offspring of military personnel.

10. **Case study:** A careful, in-depth study of a situation usually using qualitative research methods; in quantitative research, an application of treatment followed by observation and measurement (Krathwohl, 1998).

11. **Command:** The authority vested in an individual of the Armed Forces for the direction, coordination, and control of military forces (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

12. **DDESS:** Acronym for Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools.

13. **Department of Defense (DOD):** The federal agency created by the National Security Act amendments of 1949, which is responsible for providing the military forces needed to deter war and protect American security.

14. **Dependent:** A child of other individual who requires the help of family (i.e. usually parents) for the basic necessities (e.g., food, clothing, and shelter).

15. **Deployment:** Assignment of military personnel to temporary tours of duty. Can be weeks, months, or years of separation (www.militarychild.org).

16. **DoDDS:** Acronym for Department of Defense Dependent Schools. These schools serve the overseas installations.

17. **DoDEA:** Acronym for Department of Defense Education Activity.

18. **Dependent student:** A student in a Department of Defense school for children of active duty military personnel.
19. **Deployment**: The positioning of troops and equipment in preparation for a possible battle.

20. **Duty station**: A military establishment or post to which an officer or enlisted person has been assigned for duty.

21. **Enlisted person**: A term used to include both male and female members of the armed forces below the grade of an officer.

22. **Family member**: A term used for a person receiving all or a portion of necessary financial support from a service member (www.militarychild.org).

23. **Fort**: A permanent post as opposed to a camp, which is a temporary installation. A fort is sometimes referred to as a “base” or “reservation.”

24. **GI**: An enlisted person in the U.S. Army.

25. **Leave**: An authorized absence from duty.

26. **Logistic support**: The provision of adequate material and services to a military force to assure the successful accomplishment of its assigned missions.

27. **Military Policy**: A broad principle or course of action in respect to military affairs, adopted at an appropriate level within a military organization and made applicable to actions that fall under such authority.

28. **Military stressors**: The term refers to prolonged absences of active-duty parents and spouses, frequent moves, isolation from civilian community, and potential loss of a family member (Ursano, Holloway, Jones, & Rodriguez, 1989).

29. **Mission**: A duty assigned to an individual or unit.

30. **Mobile student**: A student who moves from one school to another during school grade levels Pre-K through 12.
31. **Mobility**: A quality or capability of military forces which permits them to move from place to place while retaining the ability to fulfill their primary mission.

32. **Non-mobile student**: A student who has not changed location of schools during the Pre-K through 12th grade levels.

33. **PCS**: Acronym for permanent change of station.

34. **Percentile**: One of the 99 point scores that divide a ranked distribution into groups.

35. **Permanent change of station (PCS)**: Complete change of location, job position, family, and household.

36. **Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**: A psychiatric disorder defined by the American Psychiatric Association (APA). This was traditionally called shell shock or battle fatigue until research during the last two decades on Vietnam veterans identified battle-related problems that continued to show up years after any physical scars might have healed (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

37. **Rapid deployment**: An Air Force term used when a unit may deploy within 12-18 hours after notification. Most of that time is spent on duty or in crew preparation, not with the member’s family (www.militarychild.org).

38. **Sponsor**: A soldier responsible for his or her family members or close blood or affinitive relatives. (http://books.army.mil/cgi_bin/bookmgr/BOOK/R55_46/GLOSSARY).

39. **Station**: Any military or naval activity at a fixed location.

40. **Strategic mobility**: The capability to deploy and sustain military forces worldwide in support of national strategy.
41. **Student mobility:** The practice of students making non-promotional school changes (http://pace.berkeley.edu).

42. **Student stability:** The idea that students remain at the same school for a number of years (e.g., from kindergarten through sixth grade) (Nakagawa, Stafford, & Shen, 2000).

43. **Terra Nova:** A norm-referenced standardized achievement test that are reported in percentiles. A percentile is a measure of comparison that ranks one score against the scores of all the other test takers. For example, a 75 %ile score means that 75% of all test takers scored below and 25% scored above that score (DoDEA, 2002). Terra Nova is a national sample of students representing all gender, racial, economic, and geographic groups.

44. **Tour of duty:**
   a. The length of time for a prescribed duty
   b. The place of a military assignment.

Additional terms used in this research are listed in Appendix I.

**Significance of the Study**

An individual study concerning the impact on military children of one or more of their parents being deployed to a combat area has not been successfully conducted. This current study is significant because it shows that there are special and unique stresses that are thrust upon military children, and these particular issues could have an impact upon the children, as well as the deployed soldier. A soldier in the field must be able to focus entirely on their mission without distractions. A proper study will be able to identify some of these distractions and allow the soldier to refocus on their mission instead of
problems happening at home that, if properly identified, could be illuminated or dealt with in such a manner so as to be of minor psychological significance to a soldier in a combat zone.

The study will also allow the Department of Defense to identify more effectively the unique stresses that a military child is under and allow the on-post schools and the Local Education Activity (LEA) to implement intervention strategies designed for the long term academic and social success of these children. The potential for long term social and academic problems for these children is known. The violent nature of the Islamic terrorists must allow each soldier to give his or her complete attention to the task at hand.

Organization of the Study

The basic framework of the study consists of five chapters with accompanying appendices and copies of documents as required. Chapter I consist of a brief history of military children and comments from the Chief of Staff of the Army and parents, plus a brief history to provide a context from which to view the study. Chapter I provides some unique situations military children must face including having a parent in combat. Chapter II highlights some of the past and current literature concerning the topic area. Chapter III outlines the methodology used to gather the data and a table displaying the Terra Nova data three years prior to the 9/11 terrorist attack and the three years after the attack. The data necessarily cannot be directly compared because of the high mobility of the students, the situational differences and other rationale; however, it can be used to highlight some macro differences and display major shifts in academic achievement, if any. The format of Chapter IV shows the findings of the study. This chapter highlights
the hypotheses and questions followed by supporting tables and information. Chapter V discusses the findings and presents conclusions and areas that will require further study.
CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

Significant studies concerning the impact of a parent in combat on military children are very rare. The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC, 2001) conducted a series of interviews with the parents of military children. The information obtained is invaluable and has initiated several interventions to assist these children inside and outside of the military installations. No research on the children of American soldiers in combat has been formally published to date. As the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq extend, the seriousness of the issue will have to be resolved unless we want to have latent problems emerge in later years as we have seen from Viet Nam veterans (Kulka, 1988) and from those who participated in the first Gulf War. These latent issues and how they were discovered should provide an excellent catalyst for doing serious research immediately and instituting interventions prior to problems with these children becoming more serious in later years. This will also allow current researchers who are familiar with the foreign battle ground to become involved instead of having newer researchers having to learn these lessons before their serious work could begin. Initial familiarity with the background and issue currency would allow for accelerated work to be completed and the assistance for these children could begin much sooner than it otherwise would.

A review of the literature will assist in demonstrating how stress disorders are viewed from the opinions of professionals in the field and the kinds of current treatments
are available and have been successful. Although usually the patients are adults, these treatments are a beginning and when merged with known pediatric treatments techniques for other psychological disorders could become very effective.

Adults, Soldiers, and Stress

Various estimates have been given regarding the prevalence of stress disorders within the population in the United States. In 2000, it was estimated that the prevalence of it is between one and twelve percent of stress disorders. (Londborg, Hegel, Goldstein, Goldstein, Himmelhock, & Maddock, 2001). There are many populations that are at risk, however, and the range can run from 0.2 percent in postpartum women to almost 20% in those who work as professional firefighters. Teenage survivors of serious motor vehicle crashes see stress disorder rates near a 34% rate and women who have been raped see stress disorder rates of approximately forty-eight percent. In individuals who have been prisoners of war the stress disorder rates can be as high as sixty percent or higher.

“American soldiers who serve repeated tours of duty in Iraq are more likely to suffer from acute stress in Iraq, according to a mental health survey released by the Army (Barnes, 2006, p. A-9).” The survey indicated that the acute stress levels for soldiers on a second tour of duty was listed at 18.4% versus a rate during the initial survey of 13.6% and a rate of 12.5% of those soldiers during their second tour of duty The survey overseer, Colonel Edward Crandell, mentioned it is not clear why soldiers suffered higher stress levels during a second tour, but did say that “the higher stress levels may be helpful – a way to stay sharp in a dangerous situation” (Barnes, 2006, p. A-9) There are many soldiers who are beginning their third tour of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan and impact on
these soldiers is not known. It was noted that the disorder level actually dropped 1.1% during their first tour of duty from the normal 2005 average, possibly a mixture of experience and the excitement of entering a combat zone for the first time. This same report concerning the mental health of soldiers found variances in suicide rates of soldiers deployed to Iraq. “The rate in 2005 was 19.9 per 100,000, up from 10.5 per thousand in 2004. In 2003, the suicide rate (was) 18.8 per 100,000. The data based on the actual numbers of suicides among soldiers in Iraq: 22 in 2005, 11 in 2004, and 25 in 2003 (p. A-9).” The suicide rate actually dropped after the first deployment, but rose during the second deployment, though in 2003 it was still less. (Barnes, 2006, p. 2)

The treatment of a stress disorder can vary widely (Johnson, 1982; Katz, Lott, Arbus, Crocq, Lingjaerde, & Lopez, 1995; Kiser, Heston, Millsap, & Pruitt, 1991) and of often subjective in nature. Symptoms of the disease may emerge immediately after the trauma and disappear for no known reason after a few months, or possibly remain with an individual indefinitely even if it takes months for these symptoms to appear. Kluznik, Speed, Van Valkenburg, and Magraw (1986) demonstrates that over half of the individuals who have been seen to be suffering from a stress disorder have also been seen to meet these criteria after the first year. It is not uncommon for those who have been diagnosed with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to still have weekly symptoms for up to ten years after the traumatic event. Primary-care physicians should at least be aware of the potentials so they would be able to initially diagnose and refer patients to medical professionals in the proper discipline. This could be especially important for children who have a parent in combat and would not technically come under a trauma diagnosis and thereby remain untreated.
It has become apparent that some individuals who have a stress disorder diagnosis may also have another psychological disorder (National Institute of Mental Health, 2001). It has also been noted that if a patient has been previously diagnosed with a psychological disorder, the potential for developing another stress disorder is increased. The reverse is also possible (Radloff, 1977). The most common issues associated with stress disorders are depression, substance abuse, generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, bipolar disorder, phobias, and associative disorders (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2004; National Institute of Mental Health, 2001; Radloff, 1977). If simultaneous issues are detected, they should be treated together since the psychological issues cannot be easily separated. Children who have a stress disorder could exhibit some of these same behaviors during transitions such as when they have a parent or parents deployed to a combat area or upon the return from a combat area (Spann, 2003, Zitzow, 1992).

It is possible that individuals who do not meet the criteria for a complete diagnosis for a stress disorder but were still traumatized in some way in the past showed many significant symptoms of a stress disorder (Chilappagari, 1998). Within the sample of the 80 subjects, 54 reported that they had at least one symptom of re-experiencing, 33 reported that they had at least two of the symptoms of arousal, and 28 reported that they had at least three of the symptoms of avoidance. Only 12 of the 80 subjects that were studied had experienced a traumatic event had no symptoms at all. Out of the traumatized adolescents in the sample, a majority of them had significant symptoms. It would appear that symptoms of a stress disorder would occur along a severity continuum. It is possible that some of these adolescents might be considered to be in partial remission.
It was also found that improved coping techniques for the patient to use for relaxation and the patient's relationships with others can also create positive results (Solomon & Davidson, 1997). Many family physicians could possibly be dealing with patients who already have a stress disorder. There are very simple strategies that should be utilized to screen individuals and to manage those who are at the highest risk. Interventions, also, should be undertaken as quickly as possible after the traumatic event has taken place with confrontation of the irrational beliefs of the victim and empathic communication designed to put them at ease.

A stress disorder does not affect just the individual who is dealing with it, often the family experiences the effects as well (Myers-Walls, 2002; Rowan & Foy, 1993). A prerequisite to any family therapy is that those who are involved with drugs or alcohol must go through substance abuse programs so that they can be clean and sober for the therapy that they begin (Rowan & Foy, 1993). “Families are extremely important systems and constitute the most important unit for post-disaster treatment and intervention efforts” (Norris, 2001, p. 5).

A final issue concerning the mental health of a soldier is that a 1998 study found that 16% of questioned military personnel actually needed an evaluation for depression. It was also noted that 18% actually wanted mental health care, only 9% received it. It was felt that if mental health care was requested and a soldier entered the program it would go into their medical record, be available for all promotion boards, medical specialists, the office of personnel in Alexandria, Virginia, and commanders to see, and could harm their individual careers (Peterson, 2001) if the wrong person reviewed the information. It is with this background of potential adult stressors that parents who have been in combat
may have to get under control that we begin to look at the stresses on children and the special issues that military children must deal with.

We will address the stressors in the children of deployed service members, but we must remember that the parents will have additional stress put upon them, as if being a parent wasn’t enough. Deploying parents, along with ensuring they have taken their training very seriously along with the long hours required in preparing everything needed to deploy, have other concerns such as:

1. Worrying about losing touch with the children and the remaining spouse;
2. Concerned with their ability to a good parent while being deployed;
3. Concerned about whether they will be remembered by their children when they return, especially the infants and toddlers.
4. Worried about the changes that may occur in their children during deployment;
5. Concerned that if there is a problem, they will be helpless to help;
6. They know they must fully focus on the mission they have been given and do their part to keep their colleagues and themselves safe so they can return home.

The spouse that stays behind has just as much to be concerned about and must be mentally ready and up to the task: Their main concerns are as follows:

1. Concerned about the heavier workload and increased responsibility of running the entire household alone. This includes everything from the cat to the plumbing or getting a leaky roof fixed.
2. Concerned about their ability to maintain consistency in disciplining the children.
3. Concerned about their ability to fill the role of both parents while knowing the statistics concerning single parents.

4. Concerned about the finances while having to support two adults on two different continents (Military Child Education Coalition, 2001; Peterson, 2001).

These additional concerns could play heavily into whether a deployment goes smoothly for the family and the deployed service member or if it literally becomes a nightmare. It is fortunate for the military families today that the military has learned from experiences with families during the first Gulf War and has intensified its support systems (Peterson, 2001).

Children and Stress

*The Terrorists*

The way terrorism works is to create an intrinsic fear and helplessness in the targeted population, and can be especially devastating in children (American Psychological Association, 2001). “In the past decade, UNICEF has estimated that two million children have been killed in armed conflict and at least six million have been seriously injured or permanently disabled (UNICEF, 1999, pp. 1-24). “Although the impact on those children who live in war zones is most severe and damaging, there are consequences for children all over the world, whether they become aware of and concerned about the conflict or not (Myers-Walls, 2003, p. 1). It is important to know that terrorists often target the most defenseless of citizens in unprovoked, random, intentional, and to most people, totally senseless acts of violence. This intentionally created an atmosphere of internal fear often causes families to radically deviate from their
normal routines and literally "hibernate" in their homes, coming out only for the absolute
necessities of life. This type of fear impacts the economy, the standard of living, and any
social and economic growth of a community. Often this is what the terrorist group
desires, because they are often embarrassed or envious of the achievements and freedoms
of others to create societies they cannot, or are not allowed, to create. The easiest way for
these leaders to take their eyes off of their own circumstances is to take the
undereducated (kept that way often on purpose to allow a selected few to maintain a
power base), create a false enemy, and request the poor to assist in destroying it through
terror. When a group of people are educated they begin to think for themselves and for
those in power, this is not good because it can cause a radical economic and power
paradigm shift they could not live with. By the populace being kept undereducated and
poor, they will often believe or do anything they are told, especially if given or promised
certain items they are not normally accustomed to. It has been shown that there is no
correlation between poverty and terrorist events.

Clearly the rationale of a terrorist is not financial, but is a radical emotional
reaction to a real or perceived situation, that can only be corrected by a violence that is
definitely no respecter of men, women or children; with, integrity or ethics truth in the
execution being absolutely no object.

The Children

This is the kind of enemy that can have a dramatic impact on children and put
significant stressors on these children while their parents are deployed thousands of miles
Since terrorism's success is predicated on creating an atmosphere of fear, and because children possess limited coping skills, they are often the first impacted by the separation of a parent who will be fighting "those terrorists." Children are often an unnoticed subgroup of the population during a crisis or an emergency and their emotional needs are often not voiced or understood the same way as adults, or they may be confused about the facts (Myers-Walls, 2003); and their needs are often unnoticed. While children often return to, or create a normal routine very quickly, they are also more prone to keep silent about their fears or reoccurring thoughts (Dukes, 2004).

Deployments often mean additional changes in a child's routine, even those accustomed to a normal military life, which we will discuss later in this chapter. According to Colonel Stephen Cozza, Chief of Walter Reed's Psychiatry Department, "Deployments can be one of the many ordeals military families and children need to manage. ... Oftentimes they may not understand the circumstances of a deployment because of the developmental age, in a way that an adult could (Dukes, 2004, p.)." A child's biggest worry, and usually not voiced, is concerning the safety of the parent who is in the war zone. An interesting phenomenon that surfaced after the first Gulf War is while the children have these fears, other responses emerged.

After the fears, the next common reactions among a sample of children at that time were sadness and anger. The children were not only concerned about their own safety and well-being; they were also sad that other people were being killed and that children were losing their parents. They were angry that some people had decided to fight instead of working out their problems (Myers-Walls, 2003). The fact that children are more cognizant about current events was noted in that, "Since September 2001, children
as young as 2 ½ have learned to connect planes with crashing into buildings, even if their parents thought those children had no exposure to the event (Myers-Walls, p. 1-3). It was noted by Colonel Cozza that if a parent is actually injured while in a wartime deployment, “The child’s stress level increased even more (Dukes, 2004, p. 2).”

The fact is that most families deal very well with a combat deployment. However, it is often more difficult for the family members of those deployed members of the US Army Reserve and the Army National Guard. During a combat deployment, the family members may feel isolated, unsupported, and alone. They may also experience financial stress (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2004; Myers-Walls, 2003) because the military may often pay less they the deployed member was previously earning. Joyce Wessel Raezer, of the National Military Family Association (NMFA), a nonprofit advocate for military, stated in her report to Congress, “Separation is a major stressor” (Myers-Walls, 2003) for the family. She goes on to say that,

She goes on to say that financial stress can also become more acute. Some of those in the enlisted ranks who have children may depend on a second income to make ends meet. When a spouse deploys, that second income may be lost due to the fact that the children must be properly taken care of elsewhere. To a family already living on the financial edge, this could make day-to-day living much more stressful. For officers, this financial stress may not be as acute, but can still exist.

Some families have the additional stressor of having a family member killed in combat, or a friend of the family wounded or killed. It is also noted in several sources that the media can play a large part in creating fear and depression in families of those

Effects on Children Under Stress

The interventions in place for military on the nine major military concentrations in the nation are substantial (Peterson, 2001), and for the most part they have been effective (see Chapter IV). It is often difficult for even the best of interventions to succeed if the adults not deployed are over stressed or are unable to handle the situations. This can put the entire remaining family members at risk. As one parent asked, “How do I explain it to the children when I don’t understand it myself?” This kind of response appears to be fairly consistent for parents who feel isolated, vulnerable or under attack (Myers-Walls, 2002). She continues in another article to say, “Almost 25 percent of parents reported that they never talked to their children about war. Over 40 percent of children reported they hadn’t had such conversations with their parents (Myer-Walls, 2003, p. 1-3). In addition a study by Rand Corporation states that, “Many are young with poor life skills” (Buddin, p. 2). In Margaret C. Harrell’s book, Invisible Women: Junior Enlisted Army Wives, the author uses interviews from more than 100 wives of enlisted soldiers. These young couples face, “Youth, lack of education, financial difficulties, emotional and physical distance (the) from extended family and invisibility in a large bureaucracy” (p. 1). Even though most military families with a spouse deployed do very well (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2004), to ensure interventions are shared with these military children can be a chore; but it is one in which they do statistically very well.
The mass media has the ability to bring the most potent destruction right into a child’s living room from worldwide locations immediately after they occur (Myers-Walls, 2002). Children may have only scant contact with an event, but may have questions and be very confused. “This is true of children’s understanding of many wars and international conflicts (Myers-Walls, 2002). It is important to remember that children are the most emotionally vulnerable and have great difficulty during transition times. These would be events like dropping a child off at school, at bedtime (North Carolina State University Extension, 2006b), going to an after school day care facility, or being dropped off with the baby sitter. These times need to be met with early and often notifications so the child knows exactly what will happen, when and with whom.

**Infants and Toddlers**

Even infants can experience stressors that their families may have. For example, an infant may respond with disruptions in their schedules, their environment, or their lack of availability/or new caregiver by a decrease in appetite, weight loss, irritability or apathy (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2004) towards events or articles that might usually stimulate a response. A toddler may become sullen, throw temper tantrums, or develop sleep problems.

**Pre-School Children (3 – 6)**

Pre-school children (3 – 6 years of age) may regress in some previously learned behaviors such as follows: (a) toilet training or bed-wetting; (b) sleep habits or thumb-sucking; (c) they may regress back into baby talk; (d) fear of sleeping alone; (e) excessive physical ailments such as stomach aches or other pains; or (f) this age may show reverse
behaviors such as withdrawal, become more subdued, or even mute should a traumatic event occur. Further they could:

1. They once again become clingy to the remaining parent and more demanding.
2. They may fear separations, such as not wanting to go to pre-school or kindergarten.
3. Express fears such as, “Daddy left because he was angry at me;” or “Mommy stays away because she doesn’t love me.”

School Age Children (6 – 12)

Children this age could have the following problems: (a) academic performance deteriorates; (b) behavior changes: Irritability, aggression, whininess, temper tantrums; (c) could become overly fearful that a parent may get injured or die; or (d) may show signs of stress through excessive pains, stomachaches or headaches.

Middle and High School Students (13 – 18)

Children this age could have the following problems: (a) they may become self-conscience about their emotional responses and suppress their true feelings; (b) increase in problems in school such a lowering of academic achievement (grades), increased complaints about teachers or friends and an unwillingness to attend classes; (c) increased aggression or increased withdrawal; (d) more prone to high-risk behaviors; or (e) may feel the need to take over as the man or woman of the house (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2004; American Psychological Association, 2001;
Trauma also has the ability to hamper a child's ability to learn as well as interrupt a student's routine and the actual learning process (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2006). With the accompanying levels of high emotional upset, there is the potential to miss more school, become a more aggressive and disruptive student in school and have a lower grade point average. These new kinds of behaviors can continue unless there are special efforts to reach out to these students with additional resources or services (Bandler, 2006; Military Child Education Coalition, 2001; National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2006). There is also the possibility a student who reacts negatively to a deployed parent that they could be misdiagnosed as having ADD, ADHD or Educable Mentally Handicapped (EMH). A family history and a thorough discussion with the remaining spouse will be of great assistance in the final diagnosis.

A significant area for stress in children is being raised by a single parent (Rice, 1999), which is basically what the remaining parent becomes unofficially. These “single” parents are usually low on time and money. When the parent is stressed, this is often unknowingly passed on to the child thereby contributing to the stress level of the child. Children can sense when their parents are upset and this can make the child uncomfortable as well. When parents try to lessen the stress by talking to their children about important issues such as war and violence, they should be aware of the fact that there are age-appropriate discussions (Age-By-Age Insights, 2004) and specific strategies that should be used (Dove, 2004) as well as different and less threatening methods of
answering children's questions that give factual information and soften the blow, if the
information is upsetting. An important part of talking to a child about serious matters is to
be truthful and to not promise what you have no control over; such as the constant well-
being of the deployed spouse. You can tell the child that the parent has the best
equipment, the best training, and he and his unit will assist each other daily to remain safe
and healthy.

It can be sometimes difficult for a parent to determine how much stress a child is
under, even their own child, because children often do not show stress in the same
manner that adults do (Stoppler, 2004). Children may demonstrate symptoms as listed
above such as increases or decreases in sleeping or eating, regression to younger
behaviors, stomachaches and headaches, and other symptoms, as well as symptoms that
are the same in adults such as trembling, shaking, chest pain, and anxiety attacks
(Waddell & Thomas, 1992).

One more consideration, where children are concerned, is that many of them may
not feel as though they have actually experienced a traumatic event, because they were
not the ones to go off to war. Having a parent in harm's way for an extended period of
time and not knowing whether that parent will ever return can cause trauma and long-
term stress which can be difficult for a child (McCarthy, 2001). There are definite
indications that school phobias can result from this kind of stress (Paige, 1998).
Interventions for Children Under Stress

Children under stress have the innate need to feel safe in spite of whatever events may have taken place or are taking place such as deployment of a parent to a combat area. Any initial step in helping children cope with a deployment or traumatic event is to reassure the child.

Reassurance is critical to the child’s well-being and if done correctly will lay the foundation for future interventions by giving the child much less anxiety. Since terrorism is designed to create an atmosphere of fear and tension and children tend to have limited coping skills and are often unable to grasp the situation, their fears need to be reduced (Myers-Walls, 2002). Be open with them, talk to them at the age-appropriate level and most important of all, “Do not lie to them” (Dukes, 2004, p. 1-3).” Parents should maintain the integrity of information and not promise what they cannot control. A parent who promises that nothing bad will happen to a deployed spouse can risk losing the child’s trust and having the child feel betrayed (Myers-Walls, 2002). Colonel Stephen Cozza, chief of the Walter Reed Psychiatry Department, reported that when you discuss a wartime deployment with a child, their concerns may rise because of the potential of injury to the deployed parent. He continues,

The parent that is home with the children needs to reassure them about the safety of the deployed parent and be truthful in revealing information that is appropriate to their age and developmental level. It can be helpful to remind children that, unlike themselves, military parents have been well trained and are well prepared for the challenges they might face during a deployment. Parents should look for symptoms, such as behavioral changes or emotional changes –
depression, sadness or sleep disturbance – that can be indications that a child is struggling with the deployment and may need some assistance from a professional. (Dukes, 2004, p. 1-3)

When information such as a combat deployment is shared with a child, it is important for the parent to well-informed and most importantly calm and collected when talking to him or her. Body language constitutes 85% of all person-to-person communication, so if a parent is nervous, practice what you are going to say beforehand and watch your body language so as not to convey your concern you do not want transferred to the child. If you are open and truthful with the child, your body language will follow and help reassure the child. When discussing the combat deployment with a child, this is a good time to introduce religious beliefs. The meaning of life and death and the presence of a higher being may be much more meaningful at a time like this (Myers-Walls, 2002).

The Deployment Cycle

Deployments or separations are faced by all military families at some time in their careers. The frequency and duration of these separations may vary depending on the branch of service or the service member’s job, but many of the emotional issues military families face are the same.

The deployment cycle is a construct that helps us understand the emotional stages that many families go through in adjusting to family separations and reunions. The time it takes for individuals to move through the various stages of this cycle varies, and
members of different military communities may experience stages of the cycle differently.

The stress of separation may be lessened if the service member on an unaccompanied tour is able to communicate frequently, whether it is by e-mail or phone calls. Dual active duty parents and active duty single parents may face even greater challenges during times of deployment. Finding reliable, long-term childcare can be difficult, and the cost of this kind of extended care during deployments can be very expensive. Current, complete family care plans are also required of these military parents. Family service centers can assist these parents in managing the process of deploying.

*The Emotional Stages of Deployment*

As our Nation’s operational commitments have increased throughout the world, military families are now often faced with deployments in more rapid succession. In many situations, it is unknown when the deployment will end, increasing the anxiety and uncertainty for military families. Whereas the previous emotional cycles of deployment may have allowed for a period between deployments of 18 months to 2 years, some military families are now facing another deployment of the service member within 9-12 months of the member’s return. Some of the military services describe 5 stages of the emotional cycles of deployment, while others describe 7 stages.

Although the actual stages of the emotional cycle have not changed, the changes in the timing of the various stages and nature of the deployments can cause increased turmoil and stress for the military family. The “new” stages are described below
Stage 1: Anticipation of Loss. In this stage, spouses may alternately feel denial and anticipation of loss. As reality sinks in, tempers may flare as couples attempt to take care of all the items on a family pre-deployment checklist, while striving to make time for “memorable” moments. In the new emotional cycles of deployment, Stage 1 may begin again before a couple or family has even had time to renegotiate a shared vision of who they are after the changes from the last deployment. (Army One Source, 2004)

Stage 2: Detachment and Withdrawal. In this stage, service members become more and more psychologically prepared for deployment, focusing on the mission and their unit. Bonding with their fellow service members is essential to unit cohesion, but this may create emotional distance within the marriage. Sadness and anger occur as couples attempt to protect themselves from the hurt of separation. In the new emotional cycles of deployment, as this stage happens more often and more frequently, marital problems may escalate. When a husband or wife must repeatedly create emotional “distance,” they may gradually shut down their emotions. It may seem easier to just feel “numb” rather than sad, but the lack of emotional connection to your spouse can lead to difficulties in a marriage. (Army One Source, 2004)

Stage 3: Emotional Disorganization. With back to back deployments, one might think that this stage of adjusting to new responsibilities and being alone would get easier. Although a military spouse may be familiar with the routine, she (he) may also be experiencing “burn-out” and fatigue from the last deployment, and feel overwhelmed at starting this stage again. (Army One Source, 2004)

Stage 4: Recovery and Stabilization. Here spouses realize they are fundamentally resilient and able to cope with the deployment. They develop increased confidence and a
positive outlook. With back to back deployments, however, spouses may find it harder to muster the emotional strength required, but many resources are available to provide needed support. (Army One Source, 2004)

Stage 5: Anticipation of Homecoming. This is generally a happy and hectic time spent preparing for the return of the service member. Spouses, children, and parents of the service member need to talk about realistic plans and expectations for the return and reunion. (Army One Source, 2004)

Stage 6: Renegotiation of the Marriage Contract. Couples and families must reset their expectations and renegotiate their roles during this stage. The key to successful adjustment and renegotiation is open communication. Families also need to be prepared to deal with the effects of combat stress on the returning service member. Such stress and trauma can be difficult to deal with. Troops with combat stress are often irritable, guarded, and want to be alone. Some may use increased alcohol or drugs in a failed attempt to "numb" the emotional pain they are experiencing. Attempts at renegotiation may result in increasing marital arguments.

Stage 7: Reintegration and Stabilization. This stage can take up to 6 months as the couple and family stabilize their relationships anew. As noted with Stage 6, the presence of combat stress can severely disrupt the stabilization process. Reintegration and stabilization can hit more roadblocks when a family must make a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) move immediately upon the return of the service member. Back to back deployments create stress as families stabilize only to begin Stage 1 once again anticipation of loss. (Army One Source, 2004)
There are some basic actions that the remaining parent can take to assist these children cope the deployment cycles and multiple deployments a family may experience:

1. Encourage the child to discuss their true feelings about the situation.
2. Ask what they may have seen or heard, then gently correct any misconceptions.
3. Assure the children that their parents are taking care of them and will deal with anything that may make them feel afraid.
4. Limit the child’s exposure to TV, especially to coverage of war and political discussion of the war.
5. Help children recognize when they show courage when meeting a scary new situation, or when they have accomplished a goal after overcoming an obstacle or hardship.
6. Let the children know the institutions are still intact and our government is still intact.
7. Remember it is still possible for children to experience the trauma of a terrorist attack through watching TV coverage or overhearing adult conversations.
8. Don’t make promises you can’t keep or have no control over (especially those concerning the deployed spouse being injured).
9. Utilize the extended family, community, and spiritual resources and other support systems, both inside and outside of the military.
10. If you or your children are having trouble coping with a situation, do not be afraid to seek professional help.

While a deployment to a combat area can be stressful for both the deployed
and those staying behind most children can and do adjust successfully to the separation and stress involved when a parent in the military is deployed (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2004; American Psychological Association, 2001; Bandler, 2006; Myers-Walls, 2002; North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension, 2006a).

Dr. Stevanne Auerbach, known as “Dr. Toy,” is an expert in play, toys, children’s products, education, parent education, child development, child advocacy, child psychology, child care and special education (http://www.drtoy.org/about_drtoy/index.html). On her web site, Dr. Toy suggests ways to handle war and stress for children (Retrieved on January 7, 2007):

1. Obtain or provide child with comfort toys-teddy bears, soft dolls, and puppets.
2. Listen to them and observe them at play.
3. Give them the opportunity to show you how they feel—often easier with puppets and toys.
4. Play games that allow everyone to take turns and that are low on stress.
5. Provide toys that allow them to play out their feelings such as action figures.
6. Toys help children deal with their thoughts and help them to cope.
7. Spend time playing with your child.
8. Take time to play out of doors with balls and other methods of exercise.
9. Take walks in nature or in the park to get away from media and tension.
10. Read stories that provide them with positive thoughts and experiences.
11. Encourage them to listen to tapes and videos and reduce TV watching.

12. Encourage time for bike riding, skating, and other activities like jump rope and basketball (http://www.drtoy.org/drtoy/tell_kids_bout_war.htm).

Guidelines For Helping Children During the War

Diane Levin in her book, Teaching Young Children in Violent Times: Building a Peaceable Classroom (2003), gives the following guidelines:

1. Protect children, especially young children, as much as possible from exposure to news reports and from hearing adults talk about the war. The more coverage children see, the more dangerous and violent the world can seem and the more information they will have to figure out.

2. Trusted adults have a vital role to play helping children feel safe and sort out what they do see and hear. Coverage of the war so dominates the news that it’s rarely possible to protect them fully from hearing about it. They need trusted adults to help them feel safe and work out their ideas about what they do hear. How you respond will influence how children feel about talking about the war and what they learn about it.

3. Base your response on the age, understanding, and concerns of the children. While your responses need to take into account the unique ideas and responses of individual children, their age also influences how they need you to respond.

4. Young children won’t understand the war as adults do. They will often relate what they hear to themselves and worry about their own safety. They tend to focus on one thing at a time and the most salient aspects of what they see (e.g., the bombs, explosions, and images of wounded people). Because they don’t have fully logical causal
thinking, it is hard for them to figure out the logic of what happened and why, or sort out what is pretend and real. They relate what they hear to what they may already know which can lead to misunderstandings. "Planes in the war drop bombs, maybe the planes over my house will drop bombs too!"

5. Older children begin to think about underlying issues about the war and possible real world implications. They use more accurate language and make logical causal connections, but still do not understand all the meanings or motivations and can develop misunderstandings and fears. Explore the meanings behind their language. Then base your responses on what they seem to know and be asking. Do not rush in to provide more information than they are asking for.

6. When children ask questions, start by finding out what they know. Asking an open-ended question to find out more often works well. That way you can provide a response that meets individual needs. If a child asks a question about the war, you might respond by asking, "What have you heard about that?" If a child doesn't ask, you can raise the bar by asking, "Have you heard anything about a place called Iraq? What did you hear?" If they say they haven't heard, you can just drop the issue.

7. Answer questions and clear up misconceptions that worry or confuse. You do not need to provide the full story. Just tell children what they seem or want to know. Don't worry about giving "right answers" or if children have ideas that don't agree with yours. You will often need to help them distinguish real from pretend violence, help them see how they are safe despite the war. You can calmly and simply voice your feelings and concerns. End the conversation by letting them know you are available to talk about things more later.
8. Support children's efforts to use play, art, and writing to work out an understanding of scary things they see and hear. Beyond conversations, it's normal for children to use play, art, and writing in an ongoing way; to work out ideas and feelings. What they do can show you what they know and worry about. Open-ended (versus highly-structured) play materials-blocks, airplanes, emergency vehicles, miniature people, a doctor's kit, markers, and paper-help with this.

9. Be on the lookout for signs of stress. Changes in behavior such as increased aggression or withdrawal, difficulty separating or sleeping, or troubles with transition are signs that additional supports are needed. Protecting children from violent media images, maintaining routines, and providing reassurance and extra hugs help children regain equilibrium. Knowing that caring adults are there to maintain their world is usually the best antidote to worries the war can create.

10. Help children learn alternatives to the harmful lessons they may be learning about violence and prejudice. Talk about non-violent ways to solve conflicts in their own lives. As they get older and less egocentric, help them look at different points of view in conflicts. Help them sort out narrow and dehumanized ideas about real world and fantasy enemies. Point to positive experiences with people different from themselves. Try to complicate their thinking about these issues rather than tell them what to think.

11. Discuss what adults are doing to make the situation better and what children can do to help. It can help children to feel secure when they see adults working to keep them safe, taking meaningful, age-appropriate action steps themselves can help them feel more in control.
12. Talk with other adults. Work together to support each other's efforts to create a safe environment for children. This includes agreeing to protect children from unnecessary exposure to violence. Talking together can also help you meet your own personal needs in this difficult time, thereby keeping these kinds of concerns more separate from your work with children.

There are also some definite actions that can be taken before, during and upon the return to assist the child in coping with the deployment, and they will help both the deploying adult and the parent who remains behind to take on the additional responsibilities of a single parent.

*Pre-Deployment*

Pre-deployment preparation is essential for mission support and sustaining healthy families. Spouses are best adapted to deployments when they have been given correct information on location, length of duty, risk, and methods of reliable communication. Anticipating and dealing with emotional reactions to deployment is even more important than logistical concerns (Halpern & Murphy, 2005). Their research made the following conclusions:

1. Deployment stress is documented with 80% of spouses reporting stress symptoms at least once a week during Bosnia and Gulf War deployment. However, only 19% reported any adverse effect of this stress on their marriage.

2. Mission uncertainty is related to other important factors, such as spouse stress, support for mission, retention attitudes, and perceived negative effects on the family.
3. When deployment is announced, spouses want to know where, when, how long, risk level, and communication means.

4. Spouses handle daily tasks better than emotional upsets.

5. It is not clear if R&R opportunities are beneficial for family members. It appears that spouses' levels of stress and depression increase following R&R.

Pre-Deployment Actions

In this section, several suggestions are provided regarding actions that families can take prior to deployment:

1. Draw up a financial spend plan, discuss how the bills will be paid and solidify the family’s financial goals.

2. Ensure all the powers-of-attorney, wills, and any other legal paperwork is up-to-date and valid.

3. Discuss practical matters such as the car, how repairs will be made and by whom, identify outside sources of support, etc.

4. Discuss the maintenance of consistent discipline and the monitoring of the mass media news reports to reduce the stress and anxiety on the children.

5. Discuss maintaining routines as much as possible.

6. Emphasize the need for the family to pull together and that the child is a valued family member and assign some small, age appropriate chores for them to perform.

7. Discuss how often you can communicate by email, letters, or telephone
Mid-Deployment Support

In this section, several suggestions are provided regarding actions that families can take during deployment:

1. Review the pre-deployment goals and follow them as much as possible. If they need to be modified, let the deployed spouse know what they are and why.
2. Get involved with local support groups.
3. Have the children involved in several extra-curricular activities. This increases their independence and makes the time go faster.
4. Limit TV time - both the news media and cartoons.
5. Make efforts to have the children write to the deployed parent and send photos. Email and telephone conversations are not enough. Give them something to pin up on the wall wherever they are staying.
6. Plan a homecoming festival and involve the children.

Reunion and Homecoming

In this section, several suggestions are provided regarding actions that families can take upon reunion:

1. Be positive and have the home ready to relax (i.e., beds made, car washed, house neat, children’s rooms cleaned up, etc.).
2. Don’t expect everything to be exactly as it was when he/she left. There must be an integration time and renewed relationships must be eased into.
3. Plan a couple of evenings alone with the children sleeping over at a friend’s house.
4. Plan something special with the children.

5. Discuss problems, but don’t whine, complain, or be negative.

6. Don’t be afraid to say, “I don’t know.” Let them know that a disaster can be unpredictable and they can cause things that even adults have trouble dealing with. Be sure to reassure them that adults will work very hard to keep children safe. (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2004; American Psychological Association, 2001; Bandler, 2005; Military Child Education Coalition, 2001; Myers-Walls, 2002; North Carolina Cooperative Extension, 2006b).

The Positive Side of Deployments

Since deployments and long term training exercises are a part of the military child’s life and so much has been written concerning the negatives, we will address some growth opportunities and positives of deployment. Colonel Cozza states, “Military children may need to assume additional family responsibilities at home because of the fact that a parent is gone. In many cases, this leads to a greater maturation of a child” (Dukes, 2004, p. 1-3). This is where the remaining parent must grasp the situation, be positive, and provide opportunities for a child’s growth and assumption of responsibilities, possibly above what is age-appropriate if required. The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC, 2001) has some specific recommendation for the family:

1. *Fosters maturity*: Military children have broader and more varied experiences than non-military children.

2. *Growth inducing*: Military children learn more about the world and how to
function within a community at an earlier age. Assuming age-appropriate responsibilities in the service member’s absence provided a chance to develop new skills and develop hidden interests.

3. **Encourages independence**: Military children tend to be more resourceful and self-starters.

4. **Encourages flexibility**: In an ever-changing environment, military children often learn the importance of flexibility in dealing with day-to-day life.

5. **Builds skills for adjusting to separations and losses faced later in life**: In a lifestyle filled with good-byes and hellos, military children learn not only how to say good-bye, but how to begin new friendships.

6. **Strengthen family bonds**: Military families make emotional adjustments during separations and relocations that often lead to the discovery of new sources of strength and support among themselves.

The real key to having a positive deployment experience is clearly for the remaining parent to display a positive attitude. If the parents view the deployment as a growth opportunity, these feelings will automatically be transferred to the child. Conversely, if the parent is negative and is always complaining, the child will pick this up and the chance for development and growth is lost and all those involved will be miserable.

**Academic Achievement**

Information demonstrates that Department of Defense schools appear to do very well where student academic achievement is concerned (Delisio, 2005; Rope, 2005;
Silimeo, 2001; Smrekar & Owens, 2002. This is very important, because children, especially young children, must be taught, regardless of the violence that is going on in the world (Levin, 1994). Statistically these military children are learning well and are performing well as demonstrated when several were honored last year on Capitol Hill (Operation Military, 2006). Much of the work that these students do at Department of Defense Schools is performed despite stress, family problems, social and economic problems, and the changing demographic issues of the military today.

In a 2001 report published by the United States General Accounting Office entitled *BIA and DOD Schools Student Achievement and Other Characteristics Often Differ from Public Schools*. It asserts that the Department of Defense students’ academic achievement generally exceeds that of elementary and secondary students as measured by national standardized tests. DOD school administrators indicated that nearly all teachers in DOD schools are certified in the subjects or grades they teach, and the majority of teachers hold advanced degrees. This proportion is greater than the national average for public school teachers. Students’ access to computers reported by DOD administrators is greater than that reported for public schools nationwide. In addition, the vast majority of DOD schools provide their teachers with technical and instructional assistance for using computers in the classroom.

A yearlong study by Smrekar (2002) to the National Education Goals Panel details how Department of Defense Schools have high levels of student achievement. This Vanderbilt study entitled “*March Toward Excellence: School Success and Minority Student Achievement in Department of Defense School*” was highlighted in such highly acclaimed publications as *The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, The Seattle Times, The*
New York Post, Stars and Stripes, and Education Week. Both domestic and overseas schools scored at or near the top of all states in reading and writing on the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). White, African-American, and Hispanic students scored well compared to their counterparts in other states, and the achievement gap between white students and that of African-American or Hispanic students was narrower than this gap in other states.

Factors that were found to be significant for high academic achievement include the following:

1. Centralized direction setting with local decision-making.
2. Policy coherence and regular data flow regarding instructional goals, assessments, accountability, and professional training and development.
3. Sufficient financial resources linked to instructionally relevant strategic goals.
4. Staff development that is job-embedded, intensive, sustained over time, relevant to school improvement goals and linked to student performance.
5. Small school size, conducive to trust, communication and sense of community.
6. Academic focus and high expectations for all students.
7. Continuity of care for children in high quality pre-schools and after-school programs. DoDEA’s preschool and after-pre-school programs meet the guidelines of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC), and the National School-Age Care Association (NSACA). These early and out-of-school activities all contribute to students’
academic and social development. This model is an example of Gordon's (1999) concept of supplementary education which recognizes the health, human, polity, cultural, and social capital that is required for schools to increase the academic achievement of their students. (Gordon, E. W. & Meroe, A. S., 1999)

8. A "corporate commitment" to public education that is visible and responsive to parents within the school community.

Highlights of the study include:

1. Schools that serve children of military parents employ a Community Strategic Plan to set objectives for the system.

2. Schools that serve children of military parents assess every student with a standardized test. Educators use results to identify instructional strategies and to monitor and document changes in student performance.

3. There are high expectations throughout the system.

4. Competitive pay scales and access to integrated, extensive professional development opportunities have helped schools that serve children of military parents to attract and retain high quality teachers.

5. Schools that serve children of military parents are linked to an array of nationally recognized pre-school programs and after-school youth centers.

Overall a larger proportion of middle and high schools that serve children of military parents are small compared to other systems. This leads to more productive relationships between teachers and students and greater focus on achievement and development. The research on school reform suggests that small schools (defined as fewer than 350 elementary students, 600 middle school students, and 900 high school
students) enable increased academic achievement and positive teacher/student interaction. Small schools also seem to benefit low socioeconomic status and minority students most (Lee & Smith, 1997, as cited in Smrekar, 2002).

6. The “corporate commitment” of the military is both material and symbolic. There is a commitment to promoting a parental role in their children’s education that surpasses the level of investment or involvement found in most mentoring/tutoring models.

Minority Student Achievement

*March Toward Excellence* (Smrekar, 2002) highlighted the following in regards to minority achievement:

1. Students report that teachers have high expectations of all students. As an example, 85% of African-American and 93% of Hispanic students in schools that serve children of military parents report that their teachers have high expectations of them compared to 52% for African-American and 53% for Hispanics nationwide.

2. There is a sense of urgency among staff. With a mobility index of 35% and a normal tour of duty of three years, teachers know that their time is short with each individual student.

*Special Academic Issues:* All issues that accompany such a move come into play, especially for the high school student. Always being the “new kid” in school records transfer (or do not transfer as is often the case): (a) credit variances; (b) different grading systems; (c) different graduation requirements; and (d) not being able to compete for valedictorian, even though transferred records might allow for that.
These kinds of issues can make it very hard on highly competitive students, or on those students struggling just to stay at the average level. While other research has found that students, even kids in general, are very resilient, there has been a definite lack of transformational and cultural leadership (Yukl, 2002) within the military community. In fairness, the strategic leadership and the need for a serious review of family matters had been identified for some time, but the congressional monetary authorization had not been initially forthcoming until the 1980s. In the 1990s, the military was cut by a full one-third (Kozaryn, 1996); again, while the need was identified, the funding was not forthcoming. This identified need for family assistance is another of the many “unfunded mandates” from the federal government, yet requiring the states to actualize the edict. The 200 year-old concept that wars are fought with single, mostly men, has been replaced with a completely multicultural and basically gender-free military force without the requisite funding to support these changes.

The military lifestyle is very unique, and while it can offer some substantial benefits (i.e., travel, languages, unique cultural experiences), the stresses that accompany each move can have a significant impact on many of the children involved. There is now an in-depth study of military family mobility and its effects on the children involved called, Secondary Education Transition Study (SETS) (Keller & Decoteau, 2000). This involved the seven largest military posts in the United States and the associated school districts, and the overseas schools sponsored by the Department of Defense in Baumholder, Germany, as well as Taigu and Seoul, Korea.

This article was written by a knowledgeable and concerned team who have noticed the special need to focus on the military child and the transitions and sacrifices
these special students routinely make in the name of American foreign policy. Mary M. Keller was an Assistant Superintendent for the Killeen Independent School District, Killeen, Texas, a large school district adjacent to a military base in Texas. The co-author is Glynn T. Decoteau, a retired colonel, who is currently serving as the director of the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) in Killeen, Texas (Keller & Decoteau, 2000).

The article basically illuminates current attempts to address the child mobility issue, as it is related directly to military families with some major conceptual ideas concerning how some of these families are coping with the frequent moves and how this information is, for the first time, being made available to the general military population.

There are three main issues upon which I would like to amplify. The first is most important, that being the family and what happens when either spouse is deployed. The second is the student (transitional child), and some of the issues they must face during each and every move, as well as various sociological issues that most families do not have to face. The third is what some governmental and private organizations are trying to do to illuminate and address some of the issues facing these special children and adolescents.

One of the basic rationales why this issue has not risen to prominence is that over the course of American history, a military “man” has been often single, lived in barracks, and unless drafted, he had selected the military as a career. The most this kind of soldier did in the area of family was to send money home to his mother every month. Along with this mindset, a soldier usually is taught to work with any type of equipment or conditions in which he may find himself. This tradition of not publicly complaining has allowed
military family concerns to remain submerged for many years. The watch-cry was always, "make do with what you have." This kind of attitude/mind set often made military bases nice places to live because of the neighborhood atmosphere and the fostering of camaraderie among family members. In addition, this was usually a selected lifestyle, therefore it was often thought that there was no right to complain and family members were expected to comply.

When a service man or woman has to deploy with his/her unit, the remaining spouse now has to take over all the partner’s duties and responsibilities. While not unlike single-parent families, the ramifications of such things as children having more, and often more severe disciplinary problems, as well as often show lower grades in school, are no less. This could be amplified by research of (Military Child Education Coalition, 2003) that though a single move can be coped with successfully, with additional moves, the tolerance seems to decrease with multiple moves, not increase concerning the change variables. There are also significant differences between military mobility and that of a mobile civilian society. The most dramatic differences are the distances and possible moves to foreign countries that they experience (Jowers, 1997). As we consider some of the variables encountered by the military family, many are not encountered by civilian mobile population.

Issues that have an immediate impact on military mobile populations are:

1. Significant distances that they move, including to foreign countries.
2. The necessity of having to learn a foreign language.
3. New school and a complete new set of friends (again).
4. Stresses of being far from family, and of not being near enough to visit for the holidays.

5. Parent could routinely be in dangerous situations in a foreign, hostile land.

6. Routine placements of military personnel are the Middle East, Africa, and other areas where there is always a legitimate danger of violence.

7. Having to cope with terrorism and the ramifications of increased security and an increased concern for the parent involved in the area of conflict. Overseas, military families are always given some type of counter-terrorism training and the potential for a terrorist attack always exists.

8. Not being able to drive at age sixteen. In many of the European countries where many military families are stationed, the average cost just to obtain a license is $1,300. Insurance rates are substantially higher and if allowed to obtain a drivers’ license at all, the minimum age is 18. This also applies to the Far East.

9. Few fast food outlets or similar restaurants. Eating habits usually change radically and the normal places American students like to eat or gather for social interaction simply do not exist.

10. Adapting to strange customs and/or clothing. Often baggy jeans and clothing not buttoned, as is the American fashion, is not allowed, or is viewed as a fashion of wear only for criminals or troublemakers.

11. Loss of some personal freedoms we may take for granted. Often in foreign countries, there are places reserved specifically for the local population and foreigners (from any country) are simply not welcome. To go to these places, one does so at the risk
of personal physical harm. There are also specific subjects that are not discussed in public or where such discussions could possibly be overheard and misunderstood.

12. Missing school, loss of transfer credits, varying graduation requirements, missing out on honor societies, or even the opportunity to be the valedictorian or salutatorian because of loss or devaluation of credits (This is a neat trick that can be used by local school districts to keep local students in the top academic positions.). These lost opportunities often deprive a hard-working student honors they have legitimately achieved, but will not receive because of the lack of cohesive standards of credit and class transfer.

13. Lack of local university opportunities or advancement training. The United States is virtually the only country worldwide that offers university opportunities and specific job training for adults, thus providing high school students unprecedented opportunities for early exposure to higher academics or to achieve a work certification.

14. Lack of comparable benefits. It is often interesting to compare the move of a corporate executive to that of a military officer. The corporate executive often has selected the position to be moved to, the company often purchases the home or “fronts” the cost of a down payment of a new home. The military currently does not possess the funding to accomplish any of these key functions that the multinational corporate world considers mandatory to attract and hold quality workers. “You can never underestimate what mobility and deployments do to a family” (Kozaryn, 1998). (Air Force Quality of Life Programs, 1999; Harrell, 2000; Kohls, 1996; Maher & Witherell, 2001; Pollock & Van Reken, 1999)
The Tax Issue

A very controversial issue confronting military children, as they transition from one school to another, is the funding question from the local tax authority as federal lands do not pay local or federal taxes. The official term is called "Impact Aid" and uses a very complicated formula to calculate exactly what level of funding the local school district is entitled. The Learning Opportunity Threshold (LOT), in effect, rations federal monies throughout the nation (Rand Research Brief, 2001). For example, a military child who lives on a base or post is given a weight of 1.0, whereas a military child whose parents live off a military base or post is given a weight of 0.1 under the theory that the parents are paying the local taxes. The LOT formula dramatically produces a wide range of reimbursements between and within each grouping of these children. A reimbursement for a Native American child is $3,623 whose parents live on a base or post or in the community next to a school district. Whereas an African-American, Caucasian-American, or Asian-American child would be only $1,378 or $66 depending on the location of the home (Army Profile, 2001; Rand Research Brief, 2001). This complicated formula may change in relation to how the local federal agencies may interpret the information given from the school district. The local taxing authorities do have some legitimate concerns, if the number of military children within their district becomes substantial. Some examples of the actual monetary impacts at the local community level are listed below:

1. Military personnel pay no state income taxes or vehicle license fees in their state of residence.
2. Military personnel may shop at stores that may not pay local or state sales taxes that are located on many military bases. These stores do not generate income for the schools, and may, in fact, take business from what would otherwise go to local businesses.

3. These military service members usually work on nontaxable federal land, so the revenues that are normally a natural part of working in a town or city setting, such as lunches, gasoline, and making miscellaneous purchases during lunch time, or on the way home from work.

Impact Aid can be of substantial benefit to a local district, or to the same local district, it can be viewed as not worth the trouble. Transient students, as some educators call military children (not always a positive term) and may be, in fact, viewed as a detriment to the entire school district. In a study of student achievement by Vicente Parades, student achievement was compared on norm-referenced tests. The tests used were the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) for second grade, and the Norm-Referenced Assessment Program for Texas (NAPT) for third through eighth grades. This study concludes that there is a definite relationship between student mobility and achievement and that it supports the idea that mobility is one factor in students’ lives that can negatively affect student achievement (Parades, 1993). At the same time there are some very negative attitudes given by principals and superintendents concerning achievement scores. Since current research shows that transient students score lower on standardized tests, it is students who often bear the brunt of anger from local districts and are openly identified as part of the cause for a lower set of district-wide scores (Brown, 1996). While this is not sound educational practice from any framework, it does continue to exist. The
military child is very much at-risk of being left behind because of the transient lifestyle or having gaps created in the educational process until those school systems adequately recognize and accommodate the transition and assimilation requirements of this special segment of the population.

To illuminate this financial portion of this situation, we would like to quote some testimony before the House Education and Workforce Committee Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth, and Families concerning Title VIII of the Improving America’s Schools Act of 1994. These excerpts were submitted by Dr. Richard Carlson, Superintendent of New Hanover Township Schools, NJ. This school district is located near McGuire Air Force Base, NJ. Listed below are some specific comments Dr. Carlson made to the subcommittee on March 17, 1999. There is a 40% mobility rate in our district between the months of October and June of any given year:

1. 1,200 of our 1,600 students in our pre-K through 6th grade are military dependents and the local housing consists of homes ranging from $200,000 to 400,000 and 13 trailer parks. The district is one of 20 in the United States with nearly the same type of economic demographics.

2. Over 60% of our general fund consists of Impact Aid. “The Department of Education does not process the payments until almost two, sometimes three year or more years following the passage of the appropriations bill. As an example, the North Hanover Township School District received payments in December of 1999 for fiscal years 1996, 1997, and 1998. Tell me, how I as a Superintendent of Schools develop a budget when I never know, for sure, when I will get the additional funds under this subsection, nor how much I will receive (Carlson, 1999).
3. My request is quite simple, with respect to Section 8003(f). We simply ask the subcommittee to work with NAFIS to incorporate into the reauthorization of Impact Aid...the new approach in the 1999 fiscal year appropriations bill (e.g., just that they be paid in a similar judicious manner).

4. The United States military is not the only organization undergoing some severe review of how the family is looked at in the total context of national security and economic development. The European Union is studying some of the same issues and are finding, as we are, that there is not enough funding nor research to enhance the society and child-rearing (Healy, 2001).

A final area of review is what are individuals, groups, or organizations doing about the issue of taking care of the children of those men and women who defend our country and our lifestyle, and actualize much of the federal government’s visible and working foreign policy.

After nearly 200 years of invisibility, Public Law 95-561 was introduced into Law, “Defense Dependents’ Education Act of 1978.” It was then-president Jimmy Carter who ordered a review of how the children of military personnel were cared for without getting lost in the enormity of world crisis and domestic problems. The Department of Defense followed shortly by enacting Department of Defense Directives (DoD Directives). The most significant of those enacted were:


As you may have noted, the dates on directives radically post-date federal laws as they would apply to normal public schools relating to the exact same area. Federal agencies are not required to implement laws enacted by Congress in a timely manner, if at all. This goes for congressional mandates, as well as laws as they apply to the general public. Another major step forward was the institution of Family Policy for the Office of Military Personnel (DLA) listed as DLAR 1300.8, Family Policy. This directive, that is basically issued from the Department of Defense, initiated, or strengthened some of the following areas of family care and family support systems:

1. **Child Care:** to strengthen and develop quality childcare centers that can provide such options as hourly, part-day, and full-day care.

2. **Community Development:** this allows local commanders to initiate some programs for the health and welfare of military families, especially overseas. This will allow a semblance of American life and culture for the children.
3. **Consumer Affairs and Financial Planning Assistance Program**: to assist new families or those in severe debt concerning money management and budgeting. These kinds of services are normally not available overseas.

4. **Counseling**: for the individual and the family.

5. **Deployment Support**: A network of assistance when the military sponsor is deployed, often for months, to be able to work all the normal problems a single parent might have.

6. **Emergency Services**: for unforeseen events within the community.

7. **Employment Assistance**: for spouses and those getting ready to leave the military.

8. **Foster care**: for those unable to care for themselves, for short or long time periods.

9. **Mobile Military Lifestyle**: assistance in coping with the constant moving.

10. **Outreach**: family support systems, counseling, and other types of care for the family.

Again, it is important to note that in some cases these directives and initiatives are not funded, so they look excellent on paper, but are not able to be accomplished because of a lack of Congressional funding.

Nearly all of the military organizations do have a mission statement or vision (Covey, 1991) that does include statements concerning the family and the degree that they should be addressed. Generally, the military services do a very good job of caring for families given the funding level allotted.
there is no warning, and no time to “review the situation,” as that has already been accomplished by the President and State Department.

Military families are no different than any other families. They work hard, they pay their taxes, and they expect their children to be taken care of in the same manner as those who are not serving in the armed services. There is a substantial amount of research yet to be accomplished and the results will benefit the entire nation.

Possible Solution

The solution to the child segment of frequent military moves or the child of a migrant worker is to initiate a basically standardized student portfolio that can be fitted to a CD and that could be modified to fit the receiving school district’s requirements, and not penalize the student entering this district.

Solution Background

In February 1999, then Chief of Staff of the Army, General Dennis J. Reimer and Mrs. Reimer, asked the Military Child Education Coalition to conduct an in-depth study and make recommendations to improve predictability for military-connected high school aged students during the transition process. This qualitative research effort was termed the Secondary Education Transition Study (SETS). Fort Bragg and Cumberland County (NC) educators formed a partnership in April 1999 to assess how the Army and the local school system can best accommodate and respond to the needs of new students in the community. Similar studies were conducted at Fort Sill, OK; Fort Benning, GA; Forts
Bliss and Hood, TX; Fort Lewis, WA; Fort Campbell, KY; Baumholder, Germany; and the Republic of Korea. (Cumberland County Schools website)

One category that was examined by the SETS was the way that the schools manage records and the research-suggested concomitant impact on the mobile student. The SETS data, collected from students and parents, indicate that a military-connected student usually attends at least two high schools from freshman year to graduation. In any move the issue of timely transfer of records is a critical one. Student records are subject to state requirements as well as to local system policies and, eventually, are subject to the scrutiny of a high school counselor or registrar. First, the physical documents have to arrive, and then there is the chore of interpretation. The deciphering of a transcript gets more complex when integrated courses (e.g., humanities) and obscure abbreviations come into play. In the SETS analysis, delays in processing school records impeded appropriate, seamless placement. It was not uncommon for students and parents to report loss of credit or repeating courses previously completed. This is a practical problem of all mobile families and a frustration for schools (Keller, 2001, SETS, 35).

While school records are supposed to follow the child to his or her new school, experts say the mishandling and red tape involved in getting vital educational information to the right person can often make a troubling experience for a child even worse, especially if that child has special needs. (Jacobson, 2001).

Bureaucratic aggravations with records transfer were discussed in SETS interviews. School staff found that difficulties with school records frustrated their efforts to help new students. The following inconsistencies or procedural barriers were
One critical area that the 106th Congress Military Oversight Committee cited as requiring extensive monitoring and action was that of the condition and readiness of the Armed Forces, and they specifically mentioned they wanted research on the high PERSTEMP, which is the rate at which military personnel are required for deployments, and its negative impact on the family as one of the more important elements (Carlson, 106th Congress, Military Oversight, 1999). This high visibility is most welcome to the military members with families. The issues mentioned in this historical perspective have come to the forefront in Department of Defense circles in a large measure, because of the number of educational laws passed for the general public. However, these laws were not adhered to as quickly in those schools that had substantial numbers of military children or Department of Defense Schools themselves. While the amount of time the military services now spend addressing State Department foreign policy increases, and the total numbers of people available to accomplish the governments foreign demands decreases (Kozaryn, 1996), the strain upon the military family is increasing. Given the lower pay for service members, many spouses are required to work, and like the private sector, those institutions required to make the private sector work, are also required for those in public service. The demands are being driven by the non-military spouse who is demanding the same services, rights, and privileges as those in the private sector. As the corporate world has discovered, they must provide these family services, or risk losing your best people to those organizations that will provide those services.

While at times, the military may seem, and is, a financial burden on the taxpayer (> 3%, lowest since prior to WW II), when they are called upon to display their craft,
commonly reported by students, staff, and parents as impediments associated with records and interpretation:

1. Processes for requesting and sending records;
2. Acceptance of hand-carried records;
3. Transcript information on course abbreviations and titles;
4. Information on course components (especially vague courses like “computer science” and integrated courses like humanities);
5. Definition of special programs, honors, or concurrent enrollment courses;
6. In-progress “where are you” status of courses when students move off-cycle (mid-year);
7. Keys for grading scales, grade conversion, grade point calculations, and class rank;
8. Progress reporting or placement assistance using state testing or standardized testing results; and
9. Extracurricular participation and the graduation credit potential (i.e., as soccer fulfilling a physical education requirement).

Due to the wide variety of processes, documentation requirements, and programs, the SETS found that the best of “what’s working” resided in the efforts of multiple individuals on behalf of the children. When parents took proactive steps getting ready for a potential move several weeks before it occurred; when educators worked at the sending and receiving schools to ensure that processes were in place to provide for flexibility and responsiveness; and where a system was sensitive to the needs of the mobile student, then it worked. However, the SETS ascertained that all too often this was excessively reliant
on the knowledge and good will of individuals and was not institutionalized (Keller, 2001, SETS, 36).

The implications from the SETS are that students, parents, and school staff should take responsibility for school records. At Fort Bragg, they have a junior high configuration of 7-9 grades. In ninth grade, students begin to accrue high school credits. As there is no high school on post, students in grades 10-12, and who reside on post must attend the local county schools. Also, we have students whose parents will transfer to other military installations.

The military child must become emotionally and mentally strong to endure the life style, and most of them do just that. This toughness will serve them well as they grow and mature into adults with a wisdom many of their non-military peers will not possess. This is why this research is important so the men and women in the Armed Forces will do what they are called to do and not have to add the extra worry that their children are not well taken care of while they do it.
CHAPTER III

Methodology

The purpose of this research was to review the Terra Nova standardized test scores for Fort Bragg Schools during the three years prior to the September 11, 2001 terrorist bombings and review those against the scores with the three years after the terrorist bombings. Then apply the noted child and new military child stressors to both sets of data and review any outstanding results. A direct statistical comparison was not possible because the national normed-referenced TerraNova changed the test and the testing year 2002 was the first time the new test was given. The year 2002 established a new national baseline, therefore the 2002 and beyond results could not be directly compared to those of the 2001 testing year and previously. A comparison is able to be made for a given class just prior to the 9/11 terrorist attack and that same class the year after the attack even statistics show that there will be an approximate 30% change in the actual student sample (Gabriel, 2004).

Description of the Population and Sample

The sample used for the database for the study was relatively small because only a single Army Post was utilized to collect the information. The sample data collected was legitimate because of the extremely high OPTEMPO of Fort Bragg and the sheer number of highly mobile units assigned such as the 82nd Airborne Division, the Special
Operations (Joint Special Operation Command) and the Special Forces Groups stationed at Fort Bragg (See Chapter I). The children of the soldiers in these elite units come under more stress, and sooner than those military children in any of the other eight areas in the Continental Unites States that have large military centers located near their city or town. These units are always the first units selected to enter into a dangerous area in support of American foreign policy. The information was collected from the TerraNova test results of the nine schools on Fort Bragg ranging from grades third through ninth (DoDEA Data Base, 2006).

Table 1.

Fort Bragg Student Population and Data Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>GRADE LEVEL</th>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALBRITTON JHS</td>
<td>7 – 9</td>
<td>595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOWLEY ES</td>
<td>PRE-K – 4</td>
<td>471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUTNER ES</td>
<td>PRE-K – 4</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEVERS ES</td>
<td>PRE-K – 4</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOLBROOK ES</td>
<td>PRE-K – 4</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRWIN IS</td>
<td>5 – 6</td>
<td>673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCNAIR ES</td>
<td>PRE-K – 4</td>
<td>429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MURRAY ES</td>
<td>PRE-K – 4</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POPE ES</td>
<td>PRE-K - 4</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. This data is true as of April 18, 2006
The information collected on the students is considered Public Domain information and not collected inside Fort Bragg proper for because of restrictions imposed by the Pentagon.

Validity

The validity of the information contained in this study was verified statistically by using the scores published nationally by McGraw-Hill, who creates and distributes the tests, scores the tests, and publishes the scores. The researcher also used newly written articles concerning children and stress generated because of the war and analyzed these data based on older studies of children's stress. There were inferences made of the stresses on military children based on these earlier studies that can be applied directly to the current situation. The information was genuine given proven sources in the field and with that experience, how it could be applied directly to these special children prior to on-Post studies being carried out.

The assumption must be made that the authors of previous studies were ethical and that their research is valid, including the newer articles relating to military children under stress. It is from these studies that the current interventions to assist these children were drawn. The information for this particular study focused on the actual stresses put upon the military child and the academic inferences are implied because of the lack of access to student themselves.

The data regarding children's stress came from studies done by others as they related to normal American life and was not created specifically for this particular study. The originality for this study evolved from the stress research that is directly applied to
military children who experience different and specific stresses from that of normal children and the fact that their parents are literally on a worldwide stage 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. The children have the opportunity to see soldiers doing exactly what their parents are doing and the reality of war can come directly into their living room on a daily basis and can be harmful to these children (American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2004; Klockowski, 2003; Leo, 2003, ). This is unprecedented given modern new capability and the fact that this news can come from subjective sources and portrayed to be fact.

The academic data is original to this study, though still public domain, and has not been publicly analyzed in this particular manner. This gives legitimate credibility and originality to the study as it is applied to the military child and the unique stresses to which they are subjected.

Collection and Tabulation of Data

The collection of the information was through researching the more recent publications as it applies to children and stress. This information included several articles pertaining directly to the impact of a parent being in a combat situation; however, in-depth research on this subject has yet to be done. The final analysis was based on child research as it applies to the military child. Information that was read and understood but was not able to fit into the literature review was also used in determining the answers that were incorporated into the data that is analyzed in Chapter IV.

The academic data that is incorporated into the findings in Chapter IV came directly from the Fort Bragg Schools Terra Nova scores over an eight-year period from
1998 through 2006 (less the testing year 2002). Though the scores cannot be directly correlated, it is vital to a complete understanding of the information that is presented about stress and what should be the best plan of action for those that analyze the quantitative data with that of the qualitative study and determine legitimately what kind of impact a parent in combat may have on a child.

Gathering the information on stressors that impact the military child is not necessarily problematic, but applying this information directly to the targeted sample (military children) and analyzing the results may be more difficult. The importance lies in the fact that children can also experience psychological disorders as well as the actual combatant (National Institute of Mental Health, 2001). We also do not know what impact of any psychological disorders in the combat veteran may have on a child.

**Data Analysis Procedure**

Little has been written about the military child's academic performance specifically as it relates to a parent in combat, so the initial stress analysis had to be completed and applied to these students. The most direct method was to take factual information (proven standardized, norm referenced test scores) such as the Terra Nova and review the scores and subsequent academic growth, or lack of during a non-combat time period versus these same types of scores using the same types of children during a legitimate combat situation.

The data was broken down into the years 1998 through 2006 and analyzed on a yearly basis by subject. The data was then collated into a table listing the yearly percentile scores as a district and analyzed in a macro-style manner using the district as a
whole instead of yearly by grade and test discipline. The goal was to determine if there was an impact on the child, if so, how much and what kinds of interventions that we can use or develop.

The information was collected using politically neutral sources which avoided using authors' opinions, political preferences, or tendencies. When collecting the literature, however, currency was important due to the lack of any sustained studies in this area, the immediacy of the war and the articles that were used for the literature review were carefully examined so that any pertinent information was not only included in the literature review but also compiled for use in the Chapter IV. The researcher believes this is necessary because while there are sufficient studies on child stress, these studies have not yet been applied directly to these military children nor have these children been studied in a medical or academic arena to ascertain the effect of a parent in combat may have on them. If the researcher used only information that would fit in the literature review, it would not be exercising sufficient information to make this a unique study. The literature review information and the academic data information was coupled in such a way that the importance of stress as it relates to the military child can be seen based on academic performance, then expanded as special military stressors are identified and interventions adapted, and/or created to ease the tension on these children while a parent is in a combat situation.

This may appear simplistic on the surface, but the sheer volume of information concerning stress on children that must be reviewed, collated, and selected makes this a time consuming process. This is important as a precursor to in-depth studies that will be able to gather information directly from the children and select and apply the proper
interventions. The data analysis used the collected information and applied it to these military children's test scores as they would to children who have experienced other types of trauma.

A main reason for using previously published material for stress is that it is often very difficult to get traumatized individuals to discuss the incident(s). It is often difficult to discuss feelings concerning the trauma with a stranger or writing about it in enough details so it makes sense to a researcher.

The reviewed literature will be a tool as applied to the test score results reviewed in Chapter IV. The main focus was always on military children and their academic achievement as it related to the scores during the three years pre 9/11 and the three years post 9/11. The military child will remain the focus of this analysis and this study highlighted some issues that may be directly related to these children as well as uncovered new issues that much be researched.
CHAPTER IV

Analysis and Results

Chapter IV provides general background information on the data collection process and procedure. It continues with the researcher summarizing the key summary descriptive statistics and then proceeds to summarize the findings and results. Data analysis is the process of bringing meaning to a mass of detailed information. This process involved categorizing and interpreting data to get meaningful reflections concerning the problem area for study. The data was analyzed using descriptive and analytical, quantitative, and qualitative procedures. The quantitative data for this study came from the national criterion-referenced student achievement data for Department of Defense schools located at Fort Bragg, NC for the eight-year testing period from 1998 to 2006 (less 2002) (see Appendix B) and compared against nationally normed averages for this period, paying particular attention to those years after the 9/11 terrorist attack when many of their parents were deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq.

The pre-9/11 scores first cannot be quantitatively measured directly against those of post-9/11 because the TerraNova test changed and a new national baseline was established during the 2002 testing year. However, they were compared percentile-wise against the rest of the nation during these same time frames. It is also important to note that the tests and student populations with all their variables can change substantially from year to year (Gabriel, 2004; Petrovic, 1996). However, legitimate trends and
correlations can be made and analyzed by comparing academic growth percentiles against the groups’ respective normed baselines based on tests taken nationally.

Student Achievement – Data Analysis

Analysis of Data

A detailed analysis of the Terra Nova tests and associated grade level percentiles are completed in this chapter. Grades three through nine are covered individually from 1998 through 2006 in these subjects: reading, language arts, math, science and social studies.

Grade 3

In the subject of reading during the past nine years (1998-2006), Ft. Bragg third graders achieved from the 57th %ile to a high of the 68th %ile in 2001. During the same time period the range for language arts was 59th %ile to the 70th %ile, highest in 2001. For Math the range was 59th %ile to a peak of the 73rd %ile in 2006. Science had a range of the 56th to the 73rd %ile, cresting in 2006. The last subject is Social Studies with a range of the 48th %ile to the 70th %ile, topping out in 2006. Collectively, most years the school district scored above the 60th %ile in each subject. The 48th %ile in the 1998 Social Studies results was the lowest percentile in the entire data set. Some noted observations include a near doubling of students in 2003 (n = 711) from the previous year (n = 449); the students as a whole are consistently in the top 50th %ile when compared nationally despite the sample nearly doubling; and the last two years are among the top 40th and 30th percentiles.
The third grade is the first academic year that the students take a national, norm-referenced standardized test at Fort Bragg Schools. It is during this same post 9/11 time period many of the parents of these children were on second or third combat tours into Iraq and/or Afghanistan.

Table 2.

*Yearly TerraNova Percentiles for the Third Grade: 1998 – 2006*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th># OF STUDENTS</th>
<th>READING %</th>
<th>LANGUAGE %</th>
<th>MATH %</th>
<th>SCIENCE %</th>
<th>SOCIAL STUDIES %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>711</td>
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<td>2005</td>
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<td>663</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grade 4**

The range of reading during the past nine years (1998-2006), Fort Bragg fourth graders achieved from the 62nd %ile to a high of the 73rd %ile in 2001. During the same
testing year the range for language arts was 59th %ile to the 70th %ile, the highest being in testing year 2001. The math the range was from the 57th %ile to a peak of the 74th %ile in 2001. The science range was from the 57th to the 77th %ile, cresting in 2001. Social Studies had a range of from the 62nd %ile to the 74th %ile, with the highest being in 2001. The fourth grade collectively always scored above the 60th %ile in each subject with only 3 exceptions in 40 opportunities. The 57th %ile in the 1998 Math results were the lowest percentiles in the entire data set. Some noted observations include a near doubling of students in 2004 (n = 670) from the year 2001 (n = 351); the students as a whole are consistently in the top 40th %ile when compared nationally despite the sample nearly doubling the number of students; and the last year the fourth grade had an accumulative 66.5th percentile. During this same testing time period many of the parents of these children were on second or third combat tour into Iraq and/or Afghanistan.

Table 3.

Yearly TerraNova Percentiles for the Fourth Grade: 1998 – 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
<th># OF STUDENTS</th>
<th>READING</th>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>MATH</th>
<th>SCIENCE</th>
<th>SOCIAL STUDIES</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
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<td>66</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>340</td>
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<td>77</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>69</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In reading during the past nine years (1998-2006), Ft. Bragg fifth graders achieved from the 47th %ile to a high of the 67th %ile in 2001. During the same time period the range for language arts was 45th %ile to the 64th %ile, the highest being in 2003. For Math the range was 46th %ile to a peak of the 61st %ile in 2001. Science had a range of the 51st to the 62nd %ile, with the best being in 2001. The last subject is Social Studies with a range of the 52nd %ile to the 64th %ile, topping out in 2001. Collectively, the fifth grade tends to have the lowest cumulative scores of all the grades, averaging just below the 60th percentile. This will be discussed further in Chapter V. The 45th %ile in the 1998 Language Arts results was the lowest percentile in the entire data set. It was noted that the student sample nearly doubled in 2005 (n = 589) from the 2001 year low (n = 313); the students as a whole are consistently in the top 50th %ile when compared nationally despite the sample nearly doubling the number of students.

This is during this same time period when many of these children watched their parents deploy for a second or third combat tour into Iraq and/or Afghanistan.
Table 4.

Yearly TerraNova Percentiles for the Fifth Grade: 1998 – 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th># OF STUDENTS</th>
<th>READING %</th>
<th>LANGUAGE %</th>
<th>MATH %</th>
<th>SCIENCE %</th>
<th>SOCIAL STUDIES %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>52</td>
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<td>325</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>54</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2000</td>
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<td>62</td>
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<td>313</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>61</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
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<td>56</td>
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<td>53</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
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<td>56</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>57</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grade 6

In the subject of reading during the past nine years (1998-2006), Ft. Bragg sixth graders achieved from the 56th %ile to a high of the 67th %ile in 2002. During the same time period the range for language arts was 59th %ile to the 65th %ile, the highest being in 2000. Math ranged from a 56th %ile to a peak of the 64th %ile in 2003. Science had a range of the 56th to the 64th %ile, cresting in 2001. The Social Studies range for this time period was from the 48th %ile to the 67th %ile, topping out in 2002. Collectively, every year the sixth grade scored above the 60th %ile in each subject. The 56th %ile in the 1998
Science and Math results were the lowest percentile in the entire data set. Some noted observations include a 58% growth rate of students in 2004 ($n = 523$) from the year 2000 ($n = 292$); the students as a whole are consistently in the top 40th percentile when compared nationally despite the substantial sample increase. This is especially notable because during the last two years, during this same time period many of the parents of these children were on second or third combat tour into Iraq and/or Afghanistan.

Table 5.

*Yearly TerraNova Percentiles for the Sixth Grade: 1998 – 2006*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th># OF STUDENTS</th>
<th>READING %</th>
<th>LANGUAGE %</th>
<th>MATH %</th>
<th>SCIENCE %</th>
<th>SOCIAL STUDIES %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>308</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>64</td>
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<td>308</td>
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<td>67</td>
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<td>62</td>
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<td>67</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade 7

The seventh graders tend to have the second lowest collective scores among all the grades after the fifth graders. In reading during the past nine years (1998-2006), Ft. Bragg seventh graders achieved from the 56th %ile to a high of the 66th %ile in 2001. During this same time period the range for language arts was from the 58th %ile to the 68th %ile, with the highest score being in 2001. For Math the range was 54th %ile to a peak of the 63rd %ile in 2001. Science had a range of the 57th to the 64th %ile which came in 2001. The last subject listed on all the tables is Social Studies with a range of the 55th %ile to the 64th %ile, topping out in 2002. Collectively, the seventh scored hovered around the 60th %ile in each subject. The 54th %ile in the 1999 math results was the lowest percentile in the entire data set. Some noted observations include a 40% increase of students in 2003 (n = 434) from the previous year (n = 243); the students as a whole are consistently in the top 50th %ile when compared nationally despite the sample increase; and the last two years collectively were among the top 40th percentile. And this occurred during this same time period when children watched their parents deploy for a second or third combat tour into Iraq and/or Afghanistan.

Table 6.

*Yearly TerraNova Percentiles for the Seventh Grade: 1998 – 2006*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th># OF STUDENTS</th>
<th>READING %</th>
<th>LANGUAGE %</th>
<th>MATH %</th>
<th>SCIENCE %</th>
<th>SOCIAL STUDIES %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the subject of reading during the past nine years (1998-2006), Ft. Bragg eighth graders achieved from the 57th %ile to a high of the 67th %ile in 2006. During the same time period the range for language arts was 57th %ile to the 66th %ile, the highest coming in 1999. Math had a range from the 46th %ile to a peak of the 67th %ile in 2004. The Science range was from the 55th to a high of the 68th %ile during the 1999 testing year. The last subject is Social Studies with a range of the 56th %ile to the 64th %ile, topping out in 2004. Collectively, the eighth grade consistently scored well into the 40th percentile in each subject. The 56th %ile in the 1998 Math results was the lowest percentile in the entire data set. Some noted observations include a 57% increase of students in 2003 (n = 384) from the previous year (n = 220); the students as a whole are consistently in the top 60th %ile when compared nationally despite the sample increase; and the last two years collectively were are among the top 40th percentiles. During this same time period many of the parents of these children were on second or third combat tour into Iraq and/or Afghanistan.
### Yearly TerraNova Percentiles for the Eighth Grade: 1998 – 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th># OF STUDENTS</th>
<th>READING %</th>
<th>LANGUAGE %</th>
<th>MATH %</th>
<th>SCIENCE %</th>
<th>SOCIAL STUDIES %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>57</td>
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<td>231</td>
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<td>66</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
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<td>2001</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
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<td>67</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
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<td>59</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grade 9**

For the subject of reading during the past nine years (1998-2006), Ft. Bragg ninth graders achieved from the 63rd %ile to a high of the 71st %ile in 2002. During the same time period the range for language arts was 62nd %ile to the 70th %ile, the highest came in 2001. The Math range was 51st %ile to a peak of the 66th %ile in 2005. Science had a range of the 48th to the 67th %ile, cresting in year 2000. The final subject listed is Social Studies with a range of the 55th %ile to a high of the 66th %ile in 2002. Collectively, the
ninth grade scored well above the 60th %ile each year with the best years being 2004-2006. The 48th %ile in the 1999 Science results was the lowest percentile in the entire data set. Some noted observations include a more than doubling of the number of students in 2003 (n = 267) from the previous year (n = 119); the students as a whole are consistently near or above the 60th %ile when compared nationally despite the sample more than doubling; and the last three years are among the top 40th and 30th percentiles. This occurred during the same time period many of the parents of these children were on second or third combat tour into Iraq and/or Afghanistan.

Table 8.

*Yearly TerraNova Percentiles for the Ninth Grade: 1998 – 2006*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th># OF STUDENTS</th>
<th>READING %</th>
<th>LANGUAGE %</th>
<th>MATH %</th>
<th>SCIENCE %</th>
<th>SOCIAL STUDIES %</th>
</tr>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>136</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
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<td>71</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>65</td>
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<td>60</td>
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<td>248</td>
<td>68</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>66</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eight Year Accumulative Scores

For the subject of reading during the past eight testing years (less 2002) (1998-2006), accumulatively Ft. Bragg Schools achieved from the 58.6th %ile to a high of the 66.7th %ile in 2001. During the same time period the range for language arts was from a 57.4nd %ile to the 66th %ile, the highest came in 2001. The Math range was 57.6th %ile to a peak of the 63.6th %ile in 2001. Science had a range of the 56.7th to the 65.3th %ile, cresting in year 2001. The final subject listed is Social Studies with a range of the 56.5th %ile to a high of the 65th %ile in 2001. Collectively, the district grade scored well above the 60th %ile each year. A noted observation includes 68% increase in the number of students taking the exam in 2004 (n = 3,497) from the year 2000 and 2002 (n = 2,061); the students as a whole consistently scored above the 60th %ile when compared nationally despite the substantial sample increase; and the last three years are among the top 40th %ile collectively.

When comparing the four years prior to 9/11 (testing years 1998 – 2001) that averaged at the 61.2 %ile against the four years after 9/11 (testing years 2003 – 2006 with 2002 being the initial baseline year for the new test and not used in the averages), which averaged at the 62.3 %ile nationally actually showed a statistical improvement of 1.1 %ile (see Table 12). This is actually phenomenal when you consider how many of these children’s parents were thousands of miles away in a combat situation and the war was in the news nationally and internationally on a daily basis. This indicated exceptional character in these children, outstanding support systems within the DDESS and Fort Bragg Schools system, and an academically and emotionally sound school staff, teachers, and administrators.
It is important to keep in mind that during the post 9/11 testing years, 2002 was not used because the scores for that year established a new national baseline for the new test. Additionally, during this same time period many of the parents of these children were on second or third combat tours into Iraq and/or Afghanistan. As it was demonstrated in Chapter II, the stress on the soldiers in combat and the families at home tends to increase with additional combat tours.

Table 9.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEA</th>
<th># OF</th>
<th>READIN</th>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>MAT</th>
<th>SCIENCE</th>
<th>SOCIAL</th>
<th>YEARL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>STUDENT</td>
<td>G %</td>
<td>E ARTS %</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>STUDY</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>S %</td>
<td>ACCU M</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2215</td>
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<td>57.6</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>56.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>57.6</td>
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<td>61.0</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>62.3</td>
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<td>3431</td>
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<td>62.7</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10.

*District Pre and Post 9/11 Accumulative TerraNova Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TESTING</th>
<th>READIN</th>
<th>LANG</th>
<th>MAT</th>
<th>SCI</th>
<th>SOC</th>
<th>4-YEAR</th>
<th>%ILE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YEAR</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>ARTS</td>
<td>H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>STU</td>
<td>AVE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-2001</td>
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<td>62.4</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>62.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003-2006</td>
<td>63.5</td>
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<td>61.0</td>
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<td>62.3</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rate of growth per testing year in academic achievement did flatten out over the second four year period (testing years 2003 through 2006) as compared to the first four year testing period (1998 through 2001). The accumulative rate of academic growth demonstrated in the first three year period was a positive two-point-five (+2.5) (see Table 11) percentile points; and the accumulative rate of academic growth in the second three year period was a positive point seven (.23) percentile points (see Table 12.). When the testing year 2006 is added, the average growth rate for post 9/11 is .4 percentage points per year and the pattern is for improvement percentiles to rise despite the disruption of these students’ lives. The accumulative averages are into the 40th %ile even with multiple deployments, a higher family mobility rate and worldwide news coverage on a 24/7 basis. All the above-mentioned factors tend to lower test scores nationally.
### Table 11.

**District Growth Percentiles for Testing Years 1998 – 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>READIN</th>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>MAT</th>
<th>SCIENCE</th>
<th>SOCIAL</th>
<th>YEARLY</th>
<th>%ILE</th>
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<td>56.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>63.0</td>
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### Table 12.

**District Growth Percentiles for Testing Years 2003 – 2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>READIN</th>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>MAT</th>
<th>SCIENCE</th>
<th>SOCIAL</th>
<th>YEARLY</th>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>61.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>+1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Note. A new baseline was established in the testing year 2002 so that year could be scored against the 2001 scores.

In addition, based on the information presented above, there was a flattening of test score improvement from one four-year period to the next using their separate national normed baselines. This showed, though there was a slowing of academic growth, it still proceeded in spite of the deployed parent(s). There were other potential factors not taken into consideration such as learning the new test, teacher familiarization with the new exam and the mobility rate of the children. The fact that there was still growth tends to indicate a definite resiliency in the children and success of the interventions and support systems provided to these military children. It is also possible that because of specific interventions and curriculum changes put into place during the second four year period, it was difficult to assess the rationale for the lack of growth. Although the information for this analysis came from Fort Bragg, NC, there are other military installations around the country and there are many students in these schools who are not part of the DODEA system, but who still have parents deployed. These students may need more guidance and help than others in their respective systems because they are children of National Guardsmen or Reservists and do not reside near a military base, as well as children of
military parents who live off base in the local community. These children are often left to their own means to deal with the stresses of having a parent in combat and could lose out on the close community support system that the military often has when it comes to the families of deployed soldiers.

All Inclusive, All References

Further document analysis revealed that children do feel the stress of a deployment of a parent, especially if the deployment is to a dangerous area such as Afghanistan and/or Iraq. They often keep their feelings bottled up and can be eventually expressed in actions that are often not typical for that particular child. The remaining parent must be attuned to the child and watch for behavioral and/or emotional changes such as depression, sadness, sleep disturbances, inappropriate behavior up in school or a drop in their academic performance.

A key component for the remaining parent is to be stable, well-informed, and not to show each and every emotion on his/her sleeve. A child thrives on a stable routine and a stable adult parent/caregiver, this is particularly important during stressful times in their lives. A stable parent or adult is the linchpin that holds the child together. Most all communication nonverbal is so a child, any child will automatically pick up on even subtle changes in parental behavior such as nervousness, sadness, or unchecked anger. However difficult it may be at times, the remaining spouse or caregiver must be emotionally strong and stable for the child.

The most important thing a parent thing a parent can do is to establish an environment that is reassuring to the child. A child is able to handle most traumatic
events, if they believe they will be taken care of, no matter what else happens. They also relish being talked to truthfully. A parent can be candid and open to a child keeping in mind to present the information in an age appropriate manner. It is imperative that a parent not lie to the child or to promise things that are totally out of their control. It was noted in the research that this is also a good time to introduce spiritual aspects to a child because of the heightened attention to the issues of life and death.

Another critical item that surfaced during the research is for a parent not to allow the child to watch the evening newscasts. Every organization and source reviewed noted that this can be particularly harmful to the child because they do not understand what is being presented, how the news is constructed, or it may be contrary to what the deployed parents is sharing with the family. The news media has a limited amount of time and tend to focus only on the disaster-oriented items. This basically is violence, and the less violence a child sees (to include cartoons and general television shows), the less stressful it will be for the child. Children also tend to correlate any violence from the Middle East directly with the deployed parent, even though the parent may not be anywhere near the incident. (NASP, 2001) This dramatically raises the stress level in a child and could possibly impact everything they do from academics to socialization. The news also tends to focus on the political aspects of the war, which is normally negative towards the war and what their parent is doing. When they hear criticism of the war, normally in a political vein, the children often correlate that to criticism of their parent. This is, of course, is absolutely devastating to a child of any age. The remaining spouse cannot overreact to such news reporting or that anger or sadness that could be transmitted to their child.
When a child has a deployed parent, routine is so important because it gives them a sense of normalcy or control. A child needs to be involved in school activities during and after school. They need to become involved in a church group or the local youth center. The more they feel involved and part of the community, the fewer problems they tend to have with a deployment.

Such involvement creates reassurance and a feeling that the community genuinely cares about them and they truly belong. This equates to an intrinsic feeling that they are safe from the terrorists. This reassurance and safe feeling allows the child to emotionally relax and to experience eliminate much of the stress that can accumulate during such a time. When a child can go to school and feel a part of the school, then go home and feel a part of the community and that the remaining adults are caring and looking out for them, he/she is able to sustain a combat deployment of nearly any length.

Fort Bragg may be substantially different from the local school district in that most of the students and their families in the schools are in the same emotional position, thereby creating an environment of closeness. This closeness allows for a free exchange of information and the sharing of the many support systems offered by the post.

Conversely, those students with parents deployed who do not physically live on the post may not have classmates and peers who are able to share the same emotions experiences. But with so many classmates not in the same situation, there can be a sense of isolation, loneliness, and inadequacy when discussions in the classroom or on the playground move toward evening newscasts and the politics of this particular conflict. This has been highlighted in Maine and New Jersey by two public incidents. In Maine, several teachers have openly been critical of the war in Iraq in the classroom where
several children of National Guard and Army Reserve members were attending. The children would go home demoralized and confused as to why their teacher would publicly criticize their parents who were serving their county with statements such as, “The pending war in Iraq is unethical” and a comment the students took as direct criticism of their deployed parent, “Anybody who would fight that war is also unethical.” One can only image the social and emotional damage done to these children. Another example is the Tinton Falls Board of Education who voted to bar 24 military students from their school because their parents were in the Army instead of the Navy. These parents worked with the Navy at the Earle Naval Weapons Station. These kinds of actions often confuse, humiliate, and can cause substantial emotional and social damage to a child whose parent is deployed.

The Local Education Activity (LEA) for Fort Bragg, Cumberland County Schools, has been exceptional in aggressively procuring methodologies and interventions for these children and providing them to the school counselors and administrators. The LEA serves more than 17,000 military-connected students and was recognized by being given the LTG Pete Taylor Partnership of Excellence Award for school districts who have forged outstanding partnerships with the local military community. (Cumberland County Schools Website)

There are nine urban areas in the Continental United States with major military concentrations near them and they do experience the same types of situations. Along with Cumberland County Schools, the Lawton Public Schools, Groton Public Schools, and Lackland Public Schools have also been cited for excellence in addressing the needs of the military child by creating local plans and enacting special interventions.
Summary

The Fort Bragg Schools continue to score well into the top 40\textsuperscript{th} \%ile during both the pre 9/11 and post 9/11 time periods, but actually scored higher during the post 9/11 period against the nationally normed averages. The post 9/11 scores did indicate a slowing of the academic growth rate, yet a positive growth rate has continued.

The additional stressors identified for a military child (Guiding Question 1: What are the identifiably unique or significantly different stresses or issues that could affect a child who has a parent or parents deployed in combat that might not impact a nonmilitary child?) to include having a parent in combat do not seemed to have impacted the overall academic achievement of these military students according to the TerraNova test scores analyzed from the testing years 1998 – 2006 (Guiding Question 2: Are there significant differences in academic achievement levels between military students that took the TerraNova standardized tests during the four years prior to 9/11 and those students who took the tests the four years after 9/11?). This study did not attempt to identify why the scores were higher during the post 9/11 period because of the new test initiated and direct comparisons were not possible. However, a percentage analysis on a national scale all other test takers were possible.
CHAPTER V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Fort Bragg Schools have been in existence as an entity for well over fifty years serving the needs of the children of the 18th Airborne Corps, the 82nd Airborne Division, members of the Special Forces (Green Berets), the Joint Special Operations Center, the Special Warfare Center, logistics and support units and Pope Air force Base.

Approximately 43,000 military personnel of all branches live and work at Fort Bragg and their children are educated by Fort Bragg Schools. The school district educates only those students who actually live on Fort Bragg proper. With the activation of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC), Fort Bragg can expect approximately 20,000 more soldiers and family members. There are nine schools consisting of 4,305 students from Pre-Kindergarten through ninth grade. The number of students in the Fort Bragg Schools is also expected to grow substantially with the BRAC. See Table 5, in Chapter IV, for a breakdown of the schools.

Summary of the Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the impact(s) on a child of a military member who has a parent in combat. This initial study centered on ascertaining of there are any social/emotional impacts on a military child and using standardized (TerraNova) test scores, if there is any possible impact on the academic achievement of these children.
Summary of the Methodology

The methodology used to determine the impact on academic achievement was to take the TerraNova test data from the four years prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the four years after those attacks to discover if there any impact on these children. There cannot be a direct comparison of the two time periods because the testing year 2002 established a new national baseline for the TerraNova. However, how the student scores compared to the rest of the nation could be reviewed and analyzed for both time periods.

The methodology concerning this initial study on stressors on military children was to take information known about stresses on children and apply those with newer information published in journals and from short term analysis on child stress as they apply to military children. We then integrated these with the data from the standardized test and look for trends. The standardized test scores from 2003 to 2006 were operating from a different baseline from those test scores of 1998 to 2001 because a new test was developed and given nationwide in 2002.

Summary of the Findings

The question concerning what impact having a parent in combat is not clear. Given the new baseline scores on the TerraNova beginning in 2003, the students showed a 1.1 %ile increase in their performance when compared against the average scores nationwide. The four period prior to 9/11 showed the Fort Bragg students scoring at the 61.2 %ile average, while the same accumulative average for the four-year period post 9/11 period had the students scoring at a 62.3 percentile rate against the national average (see Table 12).
Using these same sets of scores, the average yearly growth rate in academic achievement for the three year period of 0.23 of a percentile (see Table 11) during the three years post 9/11 while the pre 9/11 average one year growth rate for the three-year period was 2.5 percentile (see Table 10). This shows a definite slowing of the rate of academic growth. The rationale, based on the information gathered could attribute this slowing to having a percentage of the test-taking students’ parents in a combat situation. Because the scores against the national average actually rose during the post 9/11 period, that rationale that having a parent in combat would impact test scores will not hold. This would strongly indicate that given the circumstances of the normal and special stressors on military children shown in Chapter II a definite resiliency of the students and the quality of the student support systems put in place by the Post community. The guiding question concerning the possibility of having a parent in combat would cause lower test scores was not substantiated by the national TerraNova test scores.

Table 12 clearly shows that the students scored accumulatively higher during the four year post 9/11 time frame than those in the pre 9/11 time frame. The 1.1 %ile increase against the national average very clearly demonstrates a focused student body and a very professional Fort Bragg Schools staff.

Conclusions

Guiding Question 1: Are their identifiably unique or significantly different stresses or issues that could affect a child who has a parent or parents deployed in combat that might not impact a nonmilitary child?
Military children who have a parent in combat have definite stressors those children whose parents are not in the military and are not in a combat situation.

1. The child has with him/her the constant knowledge that their parent is or could be in physical danger. Some students have a knot in their stomach that will not leave until their parent comes home.

2. The child has the extra stress of the news media constantly having the war as a leading story, and it is usually negative. In addition, the news media is used by political parties to constantly present their view of the war and the people involved. They may not understand all the negative political comments or the rationale for the comments. All they know is that their parent is deployed and “somebody” does not want to help them or likes what their parent is doing. This constant negative bombardment can significantly take its toll on a fragile child’s self-esteem, thereby impacting his/her social and academic life. The news media is a twenty-four hour a day, seven day-a-week function of this culture and there is no break in this area for the children except not to watch and not to listen to adults discuss the war.

3. These children must deal with the death of a parent or the death of a friend’s parent. (The only event that is worse psychologically on a child is a divorce because a divorce seemingly never ends for the child and they may feel responsible for the break-up.) The media coverage, again is constant, and a child must deal with the fact there is no more “Dad” or “Mom” and that they have one less adult to make them feel safe and secure or who they can turn to for help or assurance. A child may also have to witness the funeral and burial of the parent.
4. The child must also deal with the mobility issue. Some of the remaining parents move back “home” during the time a spouse deploys. This means that the child must change schools, change friends and leave the environment in which they have felt safe and secure. They begin all over again in a new location being the “new kid” in a new academic and social environment in which they must adjust. Then, twelve months later when the deployed parent returns, go back to the original location and readjust. Some families have experienced this two or three times in a four-year period (Gabriel, 2004; Petrovic, 2002).

5. The deployment issue is a definite stressor because a family sometimes has only a few days notice, often only hours of the parent is assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division or to Special Operations, and must prepare mentally, emotionally and financially for the spouse going overseas into a combat area. Children thrive on routine and this has the potential to disrupt the family life, the academic life and the emotional stability of the child.

Guiding Question 2: Are there significant differences in academic achievement level between military students that took the TerraNova standardized test during the four years prior to 9/11 and those students who took the tests four years after 9/11?

The raw statistical data taken from the standardized national TerraNova test suggests that the events of 9/11 had no measurable impact on the academic achievement of the military children on Fort Bragg, NC. The data in Table 12 clearly shows that there is actually a 1.1 %ile rise in scores balanced against the national averages of both time periods. The raw data also shows a marked drop in the rate of academic growth during the same time periods. It should be noted that the overall test scores are still higher as a
percentage against the national percentiles. The pre 9/11 showed a three-year average growth rate of 2.5 and the post 9/11 growth rate is only .23 of a percentile; however, when the testing year 2006 is included, it rises to .4 of a percentile.

The rationale for the overall increase in test scores balanced against the national average and the flattening of the growth rate is unclear. If the overall averages were also lower or flattening out like the growth rate it would be logical that the parents being in combat would legitimately have an impact. However, with the test scores being higher, the results do not appear to be congruent nor do they correlate with the combat scenario.

The military school system (DoDEA) seems to have provided sufficient and effective interventions to promote academic achievement and social/emotional development among the children of military members in combat. This is further demonstrated when the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a second set of norm-referenced standardized tests are analyzed.

There has yet to be a serious academic study on the impact on a child who has a parent in combat. This direction was selected because of the new nature of terrorist warfare, their ability to use new technologies to bring destruction to America’s front door, the likelihood that this kind of warfare will continue in the foreseeable future and the fact that the news media is able to literally bring combat situations live into these children’s homes. I personally rue the first day that a child sees his/her parent killed on national television along with much of the nation. The animal conservationist and wildlife advocate, Steve Irwin, who was killed by a stingray in 2006, and the entire episode was filmed. In the case of his wife and children, Terri Irwin, Steve’s wife, will have 100% discretion concerning when and how to expose this film to the public and her
children. The children and spouses of a military member who dies in combat will have no such choice or opportunity. They will be hit with these realities with no time to prepare at the same time millions of other viewers see the event. What if it were your child? I firmly believe that this initial study will be a starting point for future in-depth studies concerning combat’s impact on children and as a consequence the creation of new and effective interventions to allow the children to adapt to these circumstances and events.

**Recommendations for Practice**

The results of this study should be disseminated to both professional organizations in the educational field and to school administrators and teachers who work with children of military parent(s) who are deployed for the purpose of building dialogue toward actively promoting successful deployment activities and interventions for this population of students. School districts who have a substantial number of military children and teacher training institutions should give serious consideration to the development of curriculum concerning the issue of parental deployment. Deployment training for teachers and counselors needs to be considered a priority in staff development. Counselors can be particularly effective should the schools or the district note a significant rise in disciplinary actions or a notable drop in academic performance.

Federal and local school districts should work closely with the local military hospitals, private hospitals and private mental or behavioral practices to ascertain if there is a rise in clientele or requests for services from military family members. This should apply to the local school districts (LEA) near to military Bases/Posts given the substantial number of military children who attend those schools.
Recommendations for Future Research

This study should be replicated on a larger population, such as a mix of military installations across the country and overseas as well as the school districts (LEA) near concentrations of military installations. The study could be replicated using the population of school districts with a significant number of parents of military children who are deployed to compare results of successful deployment education situations. Teachers who lack deployment training seem to be forming professional opinions/theories from their own past experiences with deployment/separation, from the experiences of other teachers who have had experience with deployment/separation situations, and from the news media, which does not suggest any type of actual research or standards as a base of knowledge. Educational issues may not be as effectively addressed without some type of deployment/separation training developed from deployment/separation research.

Recommendations for Policy

Military family students have a unique lifestyle that includes frequent adjustment and adaptation to national and international cultures and family separations. The most effective education for all of our children, regardless of their lifestyle, should be our goal. Deployment/separation causes some classroom disruption as has been described in this study; however, we as educators and parents need to consider our role in providing an atmosphere of reassurance, safety and security for all involved “with an attitude of acceptance and confidence in the knowledge of our profession” (Petcovic, 1996, p. 32).
1. Follow-on research should be conducted directly with the students in a methodical manner to capture their true feelings and to understand the unique stressors they experience.

2. Follow-on research should be conducted simultaneously monitoring their academic achievement and this should be correlated with their unique stressors.

3. Research should on going to monitor the impacts of a prolonged conflict on children as they mature. The goal would be to discover any long term issues that may arise later on in adolescence or into high school and college. This could be correlated with Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD) issues in adults and interventions and treatments discovered to negate any negative impacts.

4. The data should be disaggregated and analyzed to see any impacts on minority children and if there are different or the same.

5. Research should be conducted on the transition and integration from the fourth grade elementary School to the fifth grade Intermediate School. The TerraNova percentiles dropped every single year when comparing a fourth grade class to the next year’s fifth grade class. The data used did not include the 2001 fourth and 2002 fifth grade classes. All calculations were using the appropriate baseline data (see Appendix D).

6. An area that came as a surprise was the nearly unanimous recommendation from child advocate organizations and specialists was to eliminate or severely restrict the watching to television news by these children. The rationale ranged from the excessive violence to nothing positive was shown to the mainstream media being openly politically biased. Whatever the rationale, each group stated the same: Keep these children away from the mainstream news media. I believe this an area that
must be researched in a particularly unbiased manner so accurate results can be assessed and recommendations made. Possibly, given the violence, have the evening news began at 10 PM, after most children are in bed.

7. The federal school system (DODEA) and the Local Education Agencies (LEA) near military installations should maintain excellent relationships with the military and civilian psychiatric care facilities to detect an increase of the number of child stress/psychiatric care cases of military children. A dramatic increase in the number of children being sent to civilian care clinics because the military facilities are overloaded and those students from the local LEA seeking such care as a result of having a parent in combat. I personally believe that the longer these major conflicts persist, a greater demand we can expect for psychologists and psychiatrists to assist military children and family members alike. From personal experience, there are some of these children that wake up with a knot in their stomach, carry it all day and got to bed with this same knot symbolizing an almost 24/7 concern for the safety for the deployed parent.
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Appendix A

TerraNova Scores for Fort Bragg Schools from 1998 – 2006
TerraNova Scores for Fort Bragg Schools from 1998 – 2006

The TerraNova 2nd Edition is the latest version of the standardized test which is published by CTB/McGraw-Hill. The 2002 test year was the first administration of the tests new items which had been normed to a very inclusive national sample of students. Therefore results cannot be validly compared to the standardized test results prior to 2002, which serves as the baseline for comparison with results from future test administrations.


TerraNova is a standardized test published by the CTB Corporation. It is administered to DoDEA students in grades 3 – 11.

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<th>Math</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Social Studies</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>66 %ile</td>
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</table>

All TerraNova scores are reported in percentiles – not percentages. A percentile is a measure of comparison that ranks one score against the scores of all other test takers. For example, a 75 percentile scores means that 75 percent of all other test takers nationally scored below and 25 percent above that score. The national average is always 50%ile.

District data represents the district configuration at the time of testing.

North Carolina School System - Fort Bragg 1999

TerraNova is a standardized test published by the CTB Corporation. It is administered to DoDEA students in grades 3 – 11.

YEAR GRADE NUMBER READING LANGUAGE MATH SCIENCE SOCIAL OF ARTS STUDIES

STUDENTS
All TerraNova scores are reported in percentiles – not percentages. A percentile is a measure of comparison that ranks one score against the scores of all other test takers. For example, a 75 percentile score means that 75 percent of all other test takers nationally scored below and 25 percent above that score. The national average is always 50%ile.

District data represents the district configuration at the time of testing.

North Carolina School System - Fort Bragg 2000

TerraNova is a standardized test published by the CTB Corporation. It is administered to DoDEA students in grades 3 – 11.

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District data represents the district configuration at the time of testing.

North Carolina School System - Fort Bragg 2001
Area: DDESS

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North Carolina School System - Fort Bragg 2002

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North Carolina School System - Fort Bragg 2003

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**North Carolina School System - Fort Bragg 2004**

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North Carolina School System - Fort Bragg 2005

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North Carolina School System - Fort Bragg 2006

<table>
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Appendix B

TerraNova Scores by Grade
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Appendix C

TerraNova Scores for 2001 – 2002 for Fourth to Fifth Grade
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Appendix D

### Fourth to Fifth Grade: 1998 – 1999

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Appendix E

TerraNova Scores for Fort Bragg Schools for 2005
North Carolina - Ft Bragg: 2005 Terra Nova Results

- DoDEA Area: DDESS
- About TerraNova

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The TerraNova 2nd Edition is the latest version of the standardized test which is published by CTB/McGraw-Hill. The 2002 test year was the first administration of the test's new items which had been normed to a very inclusive national sample of students. Therefore results cannot be validly compared to the standardized test results prior to 2002, which serves as the baseline for comparison with results from future test administrations.
All TerraNova scores are reported in percentiles - not percentages. A percentile is a measure of comparison that ranks one score against the scores of all other test takers. For example, a 75 percentile score means that 75 percent of all other test takers nationally scored below and 25 percent scored above that score. The national average is always the 50th percentile.

District data represents the district configuration at the time of testing.
Appendix F

TerraNova Scores for Ft. Bragg Schools for 2006
North Carolina - Ft Bragg: 2006 Terra Nova Results

- DoDEA Area: DDESS
- About TerraNova

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<td>2006</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>70 %ile</td>
<td>60 %ile</td>
<td>62 %ile</td>
<td>60 %ile</td>
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</table>

The TerraNova 2nd Edition is the latest version of the standardized test which is published by CTB/McGraw-Hill. The 2002 test year was the first administration of the test's new items which had been normed to a very inclusive national sample of students. Therefore results cannot be validly compared to the standardized test results prior to 2002, which serves as the baseline for comparison with results from future test administrations.
All TerraNova scores are reported in percentiles - not percentages. A percentile is a measure of comparison that ranks one score against the scores of all other test takers. For example, a 75 percentile score means that 75 percent of all other test takers nationally scored below and 25 percent scored above that score. The national average is always the 50th percentile.

District data represents the district configuration at the time of testing.
Appendix G

ARMY PROFILE FOR PY 2005
Click on the link below for 2005 Army Profile data

http://www.armyg1.army.mil/hr/docs/demographics/FY05%20Army%20Profile.pdf
Appendix H

Additional Military Terms
4. **Accompanied tour**: A tour of duty on which dependents (spouses or children) are allowed to accompany the service member, as opposed to an unaccompanied tour on which dependents are not allowed (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

5. **Battalion**: A unit composed of a headquarters and two or more companies or batteries; anywhere from 300 to 1,000 soldiers (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

6. **Brigade**: A unit usually smaller than a division, to which are attached groups or battalions and smaller units tailored to meet anticipated requirements. They are less administrative and more operational than a division (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

36. **Case study**: A careful, in-depth study of a situation usually using qualitative research methods; in quantitative research, an application of treatment followed by observation and measurement (Krathwohl, 1998).

37. **Chain of Command**: The succession of commanding officers, from a superior to a subordinate, through which the command of a military force is exercised (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

38. **Corps**: A functional branch of an army; an operational unit usually consisting of two or three divisions, normally commanded by a lieutenant-general (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

39. **Division**: A major administrative and tactical unit in which is combined the necessary arms and services required for sustained combat (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).
40. Displace: To leave one position and take another.


42. Field Grade: A classification of officers ranking above a captain and below a brigadier general.

43. Flag Officer: A term applied to an officer holding the rank of general, lieutenant general, major general, or brigadier general in the U.S. Army, Air Force, or Marine Corps, or an Admiral, vice admiral, rear admiral, or commodore in the U.S. Navy or Coast Guard.

44. General Officer: An officer of the rank of brigadier general or above in the U.S. Army or Air Force.

45. Headquarters (HQ): The executive or administrative elements of a command unit.

46. Installation: A grouping of facilities, located in the same vicinity, which support particular functions. Installations may be the elements of a base (Shafritz, Shafritz, & Robertson, 1989).

47. Logistics: The art and science of moving military forces and keeping them supplied.


49. Mobility: A quality or capability of military forces which permits them to move from place to place while retaining the ability to fulfill their primary mission.

50. MFO: Acronym for Multinational Force and Observers, a deployment rotation utilized for peacekeeping missions (Cunningham, 2002).

51. Officer: A person holding a commission or warrant in one of the armed
forces signifying his or her position of command or authority.

52. *Post:* (a) An assigned place of duty or (b) a military installation, usually an army base.

21. *Rank:* One’s place in a hierarchical ordering of positions.

53. *Service:* The armed forces of a nation in general.

54. *Service obligation:* An obligation to perform military service for a period of time, incurred by law or by some voluntary undertaking such as training, the acceptance of a promotion, a change of station, or by express agreement.
Appendix I

Fort Bragg Samples and Schools
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOLS</th>
<th>GRADE LEVEL SERVED</th>
<th>NUMBER OF STUDENTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>ALBRITTON JHS</td>
<td>7 - 9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOWLEY ES</td>
<td>PRE-KINDERGARTEN - 4</td>
<td>471</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUTNER IS</td>
<td>PRE-KINDERGARTEN - 4</td>
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<td>DEVERS ES</td>
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<tr>
<td>DISTRICT TOTALS</td>
<td>PRE-KINDERGARTEN - 9</td>
<td>4,305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are seven Elementary Schools, one Intermediate School and one Junior High School.

(Data as of April 1, 2005, DoDEA Enrollment Information)

All of the above listed schools can be contacted by mail using the following address:

The Name of School  
P.O. Box 70089  
Fort Bragg, North Carolina
Appendix J

One Solution for Transient Military Children
One solution to the high mobility of military children (from Chapter II)

Items to be placed in the electronic portfolio (CD) include documentation of academic and extracurricular performance. The portfolio will include: (a) Resume, (b) Report cards, (c) Honor roll awards, (d) Letters of recommendation, (e) Work samples and projects, (f) Newspaper clippings, (g) Lists of textbooks and ancillary materials, (h) Service learning documentation and volunteer experiences, (i) Course descriptions and class syllabi, (j) Grading scales, (k) Special program explanations, and (l) Participation in athletics and clubs.

Additionally, the Military Child Education Coalition has compiled both sending:
(a) Health records, including immunization records, (b) Birth certificate, (c) Social security, and (d) receiving school checklists. Their checklists add: (a) School profile; (b) Attendance and tardy records; (c) Report card; (d) Current schedule; (d) Withdrawal grades; (e) Class rank; (f) Cumulative record; (g) Testing Information-Standardized test scores, end of course test scores, competency test scores; (h) IEP/504/Gifted records; (i) JROTC Records; (j) Guardianship/custody papers; (k) Fees owed; (l) Alternative school records; (m) Writing samples; (n) At-risk or action plans for classroom modifications Accelerated reader points; abd (o) Proof of residency/military orders

Discipline records may be included, if a child has been in serious trouble. Dr. Paris Jones, associate superintendent of curriculum and instruction for Cumberland County (NC) Schools states that “several laws have been passed since the Columbine
tragedy that discipline records follow students to other schools if they transfer, and
certainly if they are adjudicated or the student has a criminal record” (Washington, 1E).

In May 2000, the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) briefed the twenty-
seven Secondary Education Transition Study (SETS) senior leaders (commanders,
superintendents, and school board chairpersons) on the preliminary findings of the United
States Army’s Secondary Education Transition Study. Ten major patterns emerged from
the SETS data. Working together, with the endorsement of the Chief of Staff of the
Army, the SETS senior leaders developed the ten issues into an Army-wide Action Plan.
“The intent was to effectively use the salient patterns, lessons learned, and the shared
promising practices discovered through the United States Army’s SETS to increase the
likelihood of predictability for the military-connected high school student. SETS is about
mobile children, it is not just about the Army; therefore, the results and ideas gleaned
have the potential to help all mobile students regardless of the occupation or service
affiliation of their parents.”

An outgrowth of the ten-issue action plan was a proposal from Dr. William
Harrison of the Cumberland County (NC) Schools to” negotiate a memorandum of
agreement between the nine communities that would allow us to look for solutions to the
pressing issues like grade and credit transfers, and implement those solutions among
ourselves.”

This concept, known as the Memorandum of Agreement, and its Guiding
Principles operationalize much of what was put forth in the research-based action plans.
The SETS school systems and installation partners have agreed to look for opportunities,
procedures, and means to ease the challenges inherent in school transition. This policy
and procedures, curriculum and graduation requirements, and extracurricular participation links would be formally developed. Formal and informal articulation of courses, credits, and reciprocal avenues to fulfill graduation requirements is to be given highest priority.

The SETS designed a supporting document, Best and Promising Practices, to facilitate the mutual development of reciprocal practices, conduits for information between systems about requirements, and to accelerate the exchange of emerging opportunities. Its main purpose is to provide a framework for possible courses of action. The best and promising practices, as related to the development of electronic portfolios to expedite student transfers are outlined below.

1. Improve the Timely Transfer of Records.
2. Develop and disseminate a checklist of necessary registration information and withdrawal processes.
3. Develop administrative procedures that address transfer of school records for students entering and leaving the system.
4. Develop a withdrawal procedure for high school students related to installation out-processing.
5. Provide the names of primary and alternate school personnel (include phone number, e-mail address, position, etc.) for additional information pertaining to the transfer of records.
6. Develop a comprehensive information campaign to inform parents of transfer of records procedures.
7. Post information contained on withdrawal documents on district Web sites.

Suggested administrative procedures for Transferring Records:

1. A general withdrawal form can be generated at the campus most times during the school year without prior notification. This is usually sufficient for enrollment in another school. The school official (principal, assistant principal, or counselor) should sign the form documenting those areas not cleared, if any.

2. In addition to the general withdrawal form, parents may request that they be provided records to hand carry with them. This request requires a 48 hour prior notice to ensure processing time and is available prior to June 15 and after August 1 of each school year from elementary and middle/junior high schools.

   Because they are open all summer, the process is available at all times at the high schools. If requested, the following items should be provided to students or parents, as appropriate:

   1. Copy of report cards, or current grades in classes, if available.

   2. Copy of withdrawal document form, which includes the immunization record, completed course grades (9 week grades), identification of enrollment in special programs.

   3. Copy of any other records requested by parents, including any special program supporting documentation (at no cost).

   At times, special circumstances of a family may not allow for the 48-hour notification preferred. If this occurs, campuses need to respond with sensitivity and should make efforts to respond to the request.
1. Develop Systems to Ease Student Transition during the First Two Weeks of Enrollment

2. Share ideas for creating intentionally inviting school environments that are attuned to the needs of mobile military-connected students/families.

3. Establishing an institutionalized welcome program at each high school site.

Examples are: (a) Student and parent conference with counselor, (b) Activities to ease into new school, (c) School tour, (d) Introduction to teachers, coaches, club sponsors Assignment of cafeteria/lunch partner, (e) Escort to bus, (f) Presentation of orientation packet, (g) Welcome brochure, (h) Map of school, (i) Student handbook, (j) Student organizer/planner, (k) Organization/club information, (l) School spirit items, (m) Pass to next dance/activity, and (n) Develop "virtual orientation" (school and installation Web sites).

Each school and military installation should consider having the following information on their web site: (a) calendar, (b) transition checklist, (c) school registration form and registration packet, (d) school counselor and school newsletter, (e) area specific items, (f) zoning areas, (g) student handbook, (h) school area map, (i) link to MCEC web site, (j) School Liaison Officer e-mail address and the services provided, (k) Family Support Center/Army Community services available, (l) Army Family Team Building Information, and (m) School Profile (test results, demographics, history of the school).

The school profile should include: (a) Sample portfolio including content for student work; (b) Sponsorship; (c) Encourage counselors and/or transition specialists to participate in the MCEC Transition Counselor Institute; (d) Conduct welcome events for
new students/families; (e) Dance honoring new students/families; (f) Reception by principal and counselors; (g) Pizza party; (h) Feature new student names on media retrieval, opening exercises, school newsletter, etc.; (i) Principal activities; (j) Send welcome postcard to student and family; (k) Provide name to PTA president; (l) Tea/Coke party with the principal; and (m) Present certificate of welcome.

For example, during the first two weeks of the regular school year there are potentially hundreds of "new" students/families. In August of 2001, Lawton (OK) Public Schools mail a card to the home of every enrolled student. This card requests that students/families new to the Lawton-Fort Sill community return the card to the student's assigned school. This card provides the name and address of new to the community students/families to the principal. Hopefully, this prevents the student from being lost in a "sea" of incoming seventh graders or sophomores.

The school could also promote practices which foster access to extracurricular programs such as the following:

1. Exchange information about the governing agencies requirements for extracurricular participation.

2. Encourage school system athletic and fine arts directors to network with each other on a consistent basis.

Suggestions for implementation of transition processes that encourage student participation:

1. Coaches, sponsors, and/or advisors are available to counsel incoming students year-round.
2. A student interest inventory is offered through phone, fax, Internet, or mail to determine academic and non-academic interests to personalize information distribution on arrival and facilitate introductions to sponsors and coaches.

3. Spring and fall orientations are conducted that include information regarding co-curricular and extracurricular activities.

4. Incoming students are interviewed by counselors to determine interests and guide them to matching activities.

5. School web pages include schedules, try-out time lines, activities, and contact information.

The school district may consider the following:

1. After meeting state requirements, schools offer open membership on a continuous basis.

2. School officer elections occur in the fall.

3. Prospective students auditioned via videotape for cheerleading

Spring induction is observed for Honor Societies (i.e., NHS, Art, Foreign Language).

4. Sports offerings are numerous enough to accommodate a year-round calendar.

5. Cheerleading squads may be chosen mid-year as well as at the end of the year.

The school could also establish procedures to lessen the adverse impact of moves from the end of Junior Year, as well as before and during the Senior Year. The school systems and installation partners should consider measures to mitigate the adverse impact of senior moves, such as:
1. Early resolution of class rank of arriving students to facilitate fair competition for honors.

2. Conversion of grade point average (GPA) between losing and gaining school grading systems for the purpose of establishing class rank, competing for class honors, graduation certificates, applying for secondary education opportunities, etc.

3. Priority counseling to resolve graduation requirements and assist students/parents in accomplishing actions to obtain reciprocity for course credits, graduation certifications, senior year course selections, etc.

4. Providing post secondary education counseling to identify college/vocational-technical education opportunities and sources of potential financial assistance.

5. Priority placement into courses/classes essential for completion of graduation requirements.

6. Early identification and priority access to those extracurricular activities that will afford the transitioning student a greater opportunity for acceptance into post secondary education institution.

7. Encouraging parents to participate in early counseling sessions designed to facilitate a smooth and successful transition, as well as a productive senior year that provides the senior student the opportunity to fulfill their secondary/post secondary educational goals.

8. Encouraging parent participation in “College Night” activities and other available forums intended to provide students with information upon which to base post-secondary education decisions.
9. Recognizing that those transition issues associated with the critical first
two weeks of enrollment (See MOA) are of the greatest significance to transitioning
seniors.

10. Conduct surveys of recently transitioned senior students and parents to
gain feedback useful for improving senior transition actions/processes.

The school could also vary the forms of communication in school calendars and
schedules:

1. Collaborate and post current/accurate calendars and school year events in
a manner that is easy for parents to access.

2. Share calendar and school year information.

3. Define, explain, and illustrate and type(s) of high school schedule(s) in
place at each high school.

4. Exchange ideas and strategies for “transition labs” or their systems for
academic support specifically designed to ease the adverse impact of mid-year moves.

Note. It is important for serving schools and installations to meet regularly to work on
issues related to calendars and schedules and to clarify and comprehensively define the
implications for each year.

5. For purposes of this document, the terms “calendar” and “schedules” are
defined in scope by means of this comprehensive list of what those terms mean relative to
school and installation documents. These include, but are not limited to: (a) Opening and
closing dates, (b) Beginning of semester dates, (c) Grading periods, (d) Major
Department of the Army and installation/community events, (e) Graduation dates, (h)
Holiday and vacation schedules, (i) Extracurricular dates and tryout dates, (j)
Assessments (e.g., PSAT/SAT I&II/ACT, state-mandated tests, mandatory-pass graduation examinations, (k) Enrollment dates, (l) Summer school dates, (m) Extended learning and intersession programs, and (n) identify variations in schedules that it would be helpful to share with partners. For example, seven-period schedules, block schedules and AB schedules vary from district to district. Many systems also have a version of block scheduling at the middle schools:

1. Systems and campuses will develop each type of schedule used.
2. Systems and campuses will describe the processes available for transition support into and out of the schedule systems in place at each campus.
3. Consider developing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the schedules with the family in transition as a primary audience.
4. Discuss and agree upon means by which basic information will be shared, from hard copy to a Web Page for a welcome packet.
5. Compose a general timeline and process for sharing and annually updating this information among the nine installations.
6. Create and Implement Professional Development Systems Pertaining to Installation Academic Interface.
7. Exchanging the processes and products associated with the development and support of joint installation and school system professional development communities.
8. Share strategies, resources, and effectiveness indicators.
9. Provide joint “Understanding the Military Family” workshops by the
installation and schools. The Garrison/Base commander may speak to school staffs that have a significant population of military students about how the military life and culture impact the students.

10. Offer staff development courses that include instructional strategies for meeting the needs of a diverse student population.

11. Installation and School System tours. Provide teachers from the post/base and the school system outside the gate an opportunity to tour the installation and the post/base schools, providing them a glimpse of a day in the life of the parents and their military students. These visits will facilitate the articulation of curriculum issues, expectations, and requirements for each school system.

12. Handbooks. Development a handbook for teachers to use as a reference, outlining the roles of the military units. Publications will be developed for the installation with the school curriculum expectations and requirements for each grade level.

13. Middle School Tours. Students from post middle schools will tour the high school in the adjacent county to provide a glimpse of a day in the life of a high school student.

14. Middle School/High School Night. Twice each year, in October and May for example, each of the high schools in the area should visit the middle schools on the installation. Principals, counselors, and coaches are available to talk with rising ninth and tenth graders about provide opportunities, expectations, and the requirements for each high school.

15. Documents for the Army Education Summit held in July 2000 will be made available to school system personnel. These documents outline the ten major
transition issues and provide a context for teachers to understand the Army Secondary Education Transition Study.

16. School districts present Parent Information Sessions, specifically including installation families in advertising the sessions. The sessions will feature various educational topics, e.g., Attention Deficit-Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), counseling groups in the schools, etc. The annual Military parent Academy, a weekend seminar designed to offer parenting support, will be advertised to military parents who live off the post/base as well as those who reside on the installation.

17. Institutionalize opportunities for parent and adopt-a-school units to be invited to visit and participate in the local schools.

18. Encourage mentor and tutor programs like Partners in Education Programs (PIE).

19. Facilitate the use of websites between schools.

20. Designate a staff member in each school to serve as liaison and coordinate with their counterpart at the installation. This individual will help to ensure school staffs have any available information regarding transition issues.

21. School systems should consider sending counselors and/or professional campus-level academic advisors to MCEC’s Transition Counselor Institutes in order to have a designated transition specialist in place at each high school that serves military students.

22. Continue strong, child centered partnerships between the installation and supporting schools. Participate in a coordinated effort between the SETS partners to design the critical components for creating, implementing, and monitoring the viability
and robustness of the mutual effort and progress on the agreement (see the MOA).

Examples of such partnerships: (a) Establishment of a military child committee, (b) Consist of members of both agencies, (c) Meet regularly, (d) Establish a “Local Action Plan,” and (e) Establish additional collaborative activities such as: Mentor/internship programs, Voluntary advisory council, Parent-teacher organizations, Chapel youth programs, Family counseling programs, Family action agencies, Join ministerial alliance, Speakers’ bureau, Pool of installation presenters for school classrooms, Joint organization student leadership projects, Leadership retreats for elementary or secondary students, Soldier mentoring activities, Encourage military parent involvement in school activities, . Provide clear information on the eligibility requirements for in-state tuition.

In addition, the school could do the following:

1. Consider establishment of ex-officio school board member or military advisor to the school board.

2. Consider establishment of installation liaison to school board.

3. Exchange ideas with other school systems for coordination of effort and discussion of new challenges and opportunities. Examples: Additional Lawton-Fort Sill Projects are: APLAS (Army Partnership with Lawton Area Schools). Units develop partnership with elementary schools and provide mentors for junior high school students. Military installation co-facilitates summer leadership project for 100 high school students. Military parents are encouraged to attend conferences and functions. Wings of Eagles provides Lawton-Fort Sill sixth grade students a weekend (Friday-Sunday) retreat at Fort Sill to enhance the young people’s self-confidence, leadership skills, and self-esteem.
4. Provide Information Concerning Graduation Requirements: Consider adopting the following practices that articulate the scope and conditions for reciprocity of graduation requirements:

(a) Permit the course as a substitute for state or Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) requirements. As long as state or DoDEA requirements are met, local requirements will be adjusted to support the student’s transition.

(b) A local waiver policy to include a standard application form, a systematic review process, and flexible guidelines for approval. The waiver process will document how graduation requirements were met.

(c) School officials will issue course credits to a student who transitions near the end of a semester, as long as the student has passing grades.

(d) In the event that a transitioning senior does not qualify for a diploma in the receiving school system, but can qualify in the sending school system, course and test credits will be transferred back to the sending school for issuance of the diploma.

(e) Adopt a standardized matrix that depicts in a graphic representation the partner school systems’ graduation requirements. School officials will update the matrix content annually and whenever a major revision occurs.

(f) Inform school partners, parents, and students about required state exit level/end-of-course testing and passing scores to improve probability of appropriate, timely placement in courses and programs. This information will be disseminated through system/installation web sites and print media.
Note: The signatory partners will determine the process and responsible agents who will be required to maintain the “graduation requirements matrix” and distribute all updates. Adopt a policy of program continuity for a student enrolled in top tier diploma programs, such as a college/university preparatory program of study, and/or rigorous academic programs such as Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate(IB). A student with satisfactory grades will not be required to re-qualify for these programs.

It would also be important to provide specialized services for mobile students when applying to and finding funding for post secondary study:

1. Share information with SETS partners on methods that have worked in informing parents and students of the best methods for college and vocational/technical applications and the mobile student.

2. Ensure that every junior and/or senior student (and their parents) receives information about the college and vocational/technical application process, financial aid, available scholarships and grants for pursuing postsecondary education. Counselors and/or teachers provide models of completed applications, financial aid documents, scholarship and grant forms, and letters of recommendation. Include the military liaison in the distribution process.

3. Provide all 11th and 12th grade students and their parents with printed information about what they will need for post secondary educational pursuits and success. The document/handbook includes checklists, timelines, suspense dates, Web sites, telephone numbers, and names of contact personnel at various local and state colleges/universities and technical schools. The document/handbook is updated annually.
with the assistance from counselors, other school personnel, and college/university/technical school contacts. This document/handbook will be included in the welcome/orientation packet that all transfer students would receive upon arrival at their new school. In addition, multiple copies of the document/handbook will be provided to the military liaison for distribution from that office.

4. Conduct a district-wide college night and individual college nights as available to provide information and assistance for students and/parents with college or vocational-technical applications and financial aid packets. Information about available scholarships and grants should also be provided. College and vocational/technical admissions professionals should conduct the activities if possible. Ensure that the military liaison is included on the mailing lists of all scholarship, grant, and financial award grantees. The military liaison can schedule and replicate this program possibly at their Youth Activities Center on the installation.

5. Hold career education/information seminars for transitioning students. Invite representatives from any local colleges/universities/vocational-technical schools, civic groups, and various companies that provide local scholarships or financial assistance to interested students. Organizations like Kiwanis Clubs, IBM, Coca-Cola, etc. all are able to provide information and assistance. Keep the military liaison informed of the dates of those seminars so that individual could also schedule similar seminars at the installation.

6. Work with the MCEC to inform colleges and universities of the unique needs of military students to local college/university admissions personnel. The local installations could provide the addresses. The following items could be requested:
1. Request that MCEC or like organizations send copies of all documents that describe and detail the unique needs of military students to local college/university admissions personnel.

2. Provide the name of the military liaison to the local college/university. Create a local Task Force and/or Standing Committee that includes representation from military schools, public schools, the military liaison, local universities, and vocational-technical schools to develop solutions to identified needs and to address issues affecting transitioning students.

3. Train counselors and teacher on how to best assist a mobile student on preparing college and vocational-technical applications. It is important to ensure that all high school counselors and the military liaison are provided with information and training from a transition counselor who can provide videos, booklets, or other publications that can be distributed at local schools on the installation counselors will in turn serve as resources/trainers for the teachers.

4. Provide assistance on completing college applications, choosing a career, pursuing financial aid and completing financial aid packets, writing resumes and theses for college entrance requirements, and securing letters of recommendation from former and current teachers and administrators. Training software could possibly be installed on one or more installation computers at the youth activities center.

5. Partnership with local colleges, universities, and vocational-technical colleges/centers to conduct orientation classes for local seniors. Create a mentoring program that matches successful college freshmen with local seniors to assist with
college application and financial aid process. Hold several program sessions on the military installation.

6. Use resources of the installation Education Center to provide information and assistance to parents and students, especially about careers and opportunities to finance post-secondary education through military service. Provide information about various funding sources, scholarships and grants that are available for special populations such as single parent families, military dependents, and the large amount of money targets only for minority groups.

Summary

An electronic portfolio will not be necessarily a panacea for the very mobile student in our society, or every type of mobile group of individuals that have children to be educated. It is however, a legitimate tool for the transfer of important information from one primary or secondary institution to another with the least amount of harm to the student. As we progress technologically and begin to trust electronic systems in the academic community as a legitimate method of important “paper” transfer such as major financial institutions now do, we will be able exchange important data in a timely manner and make the proper decisions for each student individually with all of the correct information.

The electronic portion is the easiest of the equation. The most difficult is establishing a system of course equity for transfer students so they will not always to fight for what they have earned in another location. Standardized tests such as the SAT, SAT II, and the ACT will become the main equalizers for transient students of all types.
Another method of equalization would be to develop, at the national level, subject-specific examinations for secondary schools that would allow a receiving school district a legitimate opportunity to evaluate a transfer student’s work for proper placement. Granted, this is not a politically correct method of analyzing a student’s work, especially given the University of California’s new policy of essentially downgrading the SAT/SATII/ACT weight for entrance evaluation requirements in lieu of grades given at a local school. However, the subjectivity of local grading systems could set up as many students for failure at a major university as it would allow for others to succeed. This could be a viable tradeoff for many students with a test-taking anxiety.

An enhancement to this initial work in the Department of Defense Schools will be to finalize a legitimate prototype portfolio between the DOD schools and the nine installations surrounding major post or bases in the United States. There are several groups vying for this project, and they are not proactive in cooperating concerning the effort. This will remain to be seen whether these groups can give up a part of their “rice bowl” for the good of those students whose parents are defending our country across the globe. We at Fort Bragg schools are putting together our version of the electronic portfolio and work with other systems to finalize a product that will truly benefit the student.
Appendix K

Quote from David M. Rodriguez
"Teachers play an important role in assisting the sons and daughters of soldiers deployed in support of the Global War on Terror. Today, the nation and the Army are in a global struggle. It is a struggle for the freedom of millions of people and also for a better future for many people in the world. While our deployed soldiers fight in this struggle, they depend even more than normal on teachers, to teach and guide their children to love principled lives and help develop the values that make our country what it is today.

I think it is important to know that teachers’ efforts are part of the solution to filling the void in the life of a student who has a deployed parent. I’d encourage all teachers to help the students to understand the sacrifice their parents make on behalf of the nation and the world. This sacrifice is really something special and I am honored to serve around so many heroes. Thank all you teachers also for all that you do every day for the students, their families and our future; you are heroes too.”