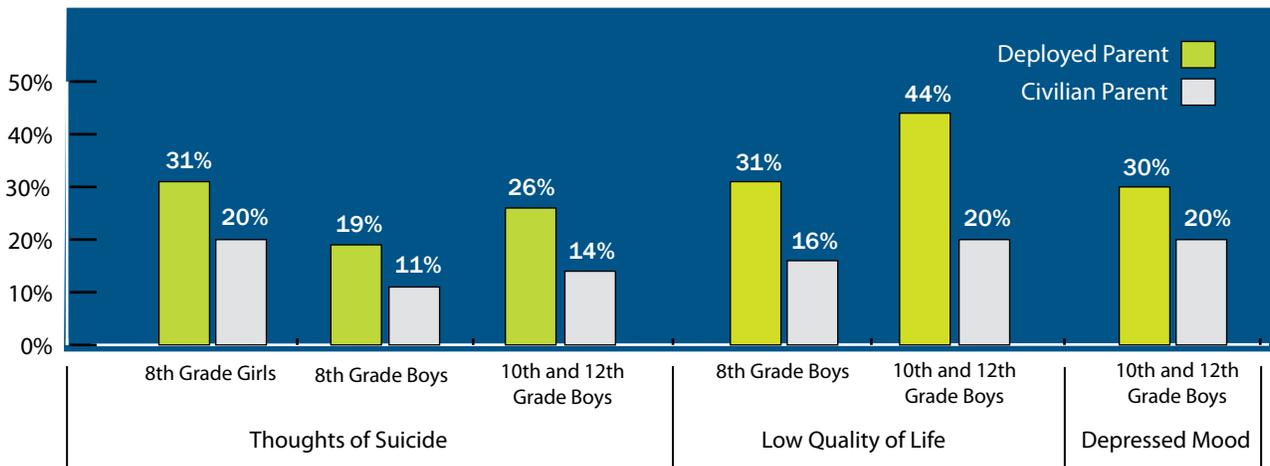




Parent Military Deployment Associated With Impaired Well-being Among Adolescents

A recent study of data from the Washington State 2008 Healthy Youth Survey found an association between parental deployment in military service¹ and youth well-being.² For adolescents with a deployed parent, boys were more likely than girls³ to experience impaired well-being. Eighth-grade girls with a deployed parent were more likely to report thoughts of suicide than their peers with civilian parents (31% vs. 20%). Boys in eighth grade with a deployed parent were more likely to report thoughts of suicide (19% vs. 11%) and low quality of life (31% vs. 16%). Boys in tenth and twelfth grades with a deployed parent were more likely to report thoughts of suicide (26% vs. 14%), low quality of life (44% vs. 20%), and depressed mood (30% vs. 20%). The authors suggest that boys experience higher rates of impaired well-being due to their response to reduced supervision, exposure to violent media, and the struggle to connect emotionally with their deployed parent who is the father, in most cases. Findings from this research will be useful to inform school-based, military, and public health professionals' work to support military families.

Well-being of Adolescent Respondents, 2008



Source:

Reed, S., Bell, J., & Edwards, T. (2011). Adolescent Well-Being in Washington State Military Families. *American Journal of Public Health*, 101(9), 1676-1682.

Notes:

- ¹ The study categorized deployment in military service as service with or without deployment to combat zone.
- ² Adolescent well-being was measured using three self-reported outcomes: thoughts of suicide, low quality of life, and depressed mood.
- ³ For female respondents in tenth and twelfth grades, no significant association existed between parental deployment and well-being outcomes.

Prepared by the Center for Health and Justice (CHJ) at TASC. CHJ works to build, enhance, and sustain strong and vibrant communities by promoting policies and practices that stop the cycle of drugs and crime. We conduct research and evaluations, and offer policy analysis, trainings, and technical assistance in the fields of health and justice. For more information, visit us online at www.centerforhealthandjustice.org.

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