



FAMILY READINESS GROUP

REAL: Readiness Essentials for Army Leaders

AUSA Presentation
Heather Leiby, IMCOM G9



ENGAGING • EMPOWERING • CONNECTING

What is R.E.A.L.?



Foundations



Command Team



Family Readiness Liaison



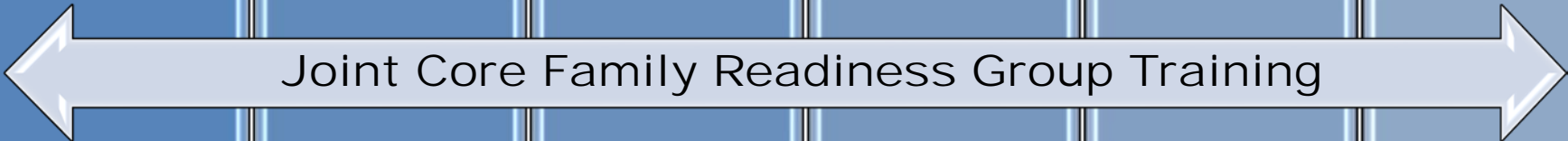
FRG Leader



Key Contact



Informal Funds Custodian



Joint Core Family Readiness Group Training

Why R.E.A.L.?

- Need Expressed
- Developed by the Field
- Mission Essential Activities
- Joint
- Discussion and Activity Based
- Core Training

BUILD

YOUR

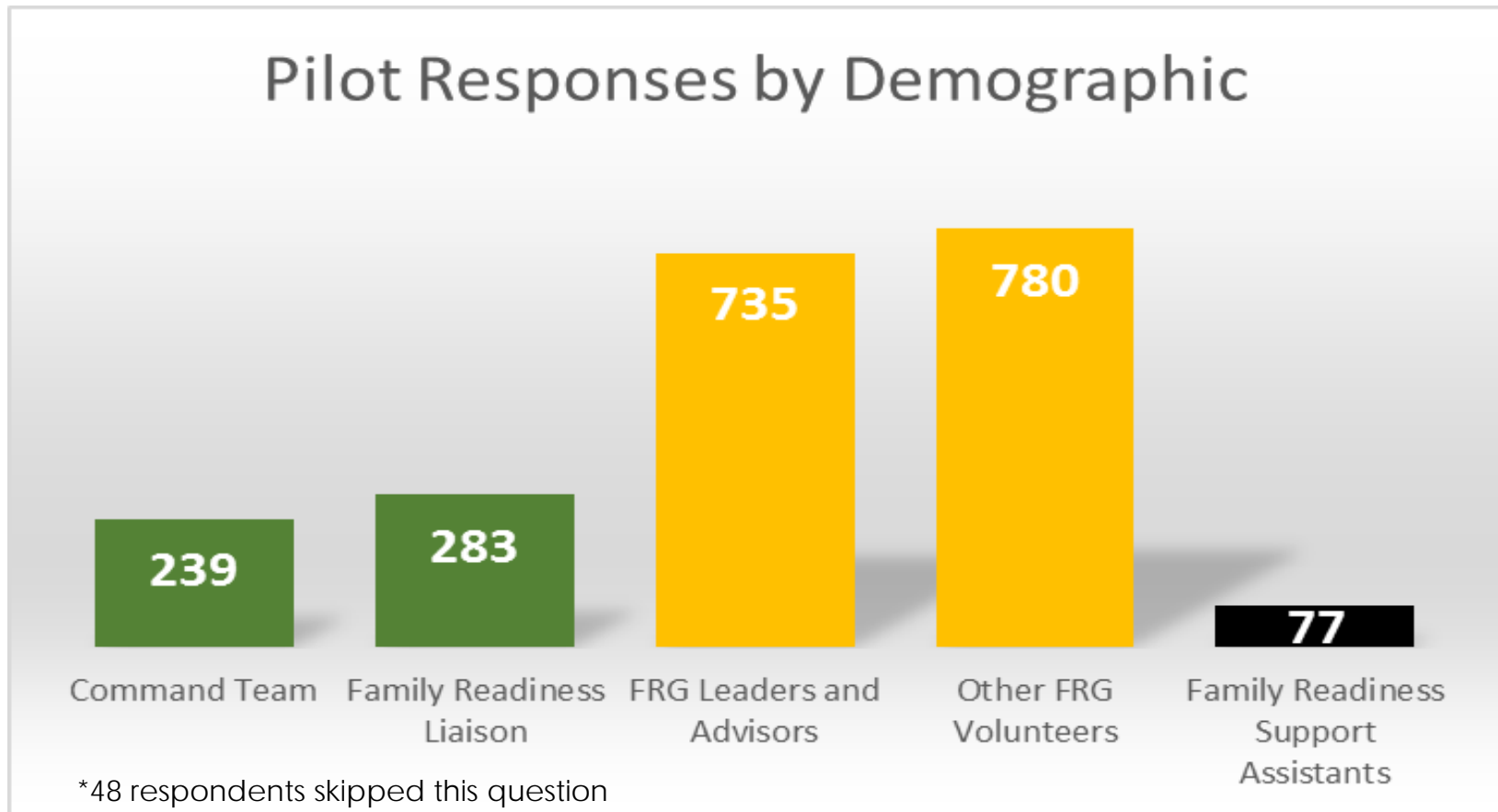
FRG

Time Line



R.E.A.L. Pilot

2152 Individuals participated in the 6 month Army-wide pilot



Quoted Participant Feedback

“Great training. The new setup and smart book make a huge difference. I learned more about FRG today than I did during the FRG leader training I took 6 months ago”.

“Exceptional material...allowed for good conversation/ discussion”.

“Best FRG training, it is important for a Commander to take more FRG training in their units”.

“The training provided the pertinent information for me to be successful”.

“Course should be incorporated in to Pre-Command Course. The information provided is beneficial and invaluable to a successful and well functioning FRG program. Consider making the course a required block of instruction for command teams”.

R.E.A.L. Rewrite Workgroup Results

“Training was redundant, went over info several times”.

- Compared all modules and removed redundancies already covered in Foundations
- Within each module, consolidated similar topics and streamlined slides

“I thinned down some of the slides that were not state specific and added two local resource slides”.

- Identified universal language and applied terminology across the components
- Adjusted modules to be taught across alternate platform

“Many of the participants were confused by the practical exercise, it made no sense to me either. I would change them and add different things. Phone training does not allow time to engage the smart book as intended”.

- Streamlined each activity, exercise and scenario
- Simplified and ensured all were relevant as well as component friendly

“It is hard to find things in the smart book – needs table of contents and some of the tab names could be changes ex: community changed to resources”.

- Corrected mistakes in the Smart Book
- Finalized version will have page numbers in Table of Contents
- Create printing guidelines for Smart Book

Training Material Examples

Soldier Readiness

+

Family Readiness

=

Unit Readiness



What is Family Readiness

Family Readiness is the state of being prepared to effectively navigate the challenges of daily living experienced in the unique context of military service. Ready individuals and families are **knowledgeable** about the potential challenges; **aware** of the supportive resources available to them; and **make use** of the skills and supports in managing such challenges.



Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 1342.22

FRG End State

- Self-reliant and resilient Soldiers and Families
- Command and volunteer (unified) point of contact for FRG members
- Network of communication between the Unit, Families and Command
- Mitigation of potential risks
- Enhanced Soldier and Family Readiness

**Soldier Readiness + Family Readiness =
Unit Readiness**

FRG Activities

MISSION ESSENTIAL

- Conduct FRG member meetings
- Staff and committee meetings
- Publication and distribution of FRG newsletters
- Maintenance of updated Family rosters and Family readiness information
- Establishment of FRG member telephone trees and e-mail distribution lists
- Scheduling educational briefings for FRG

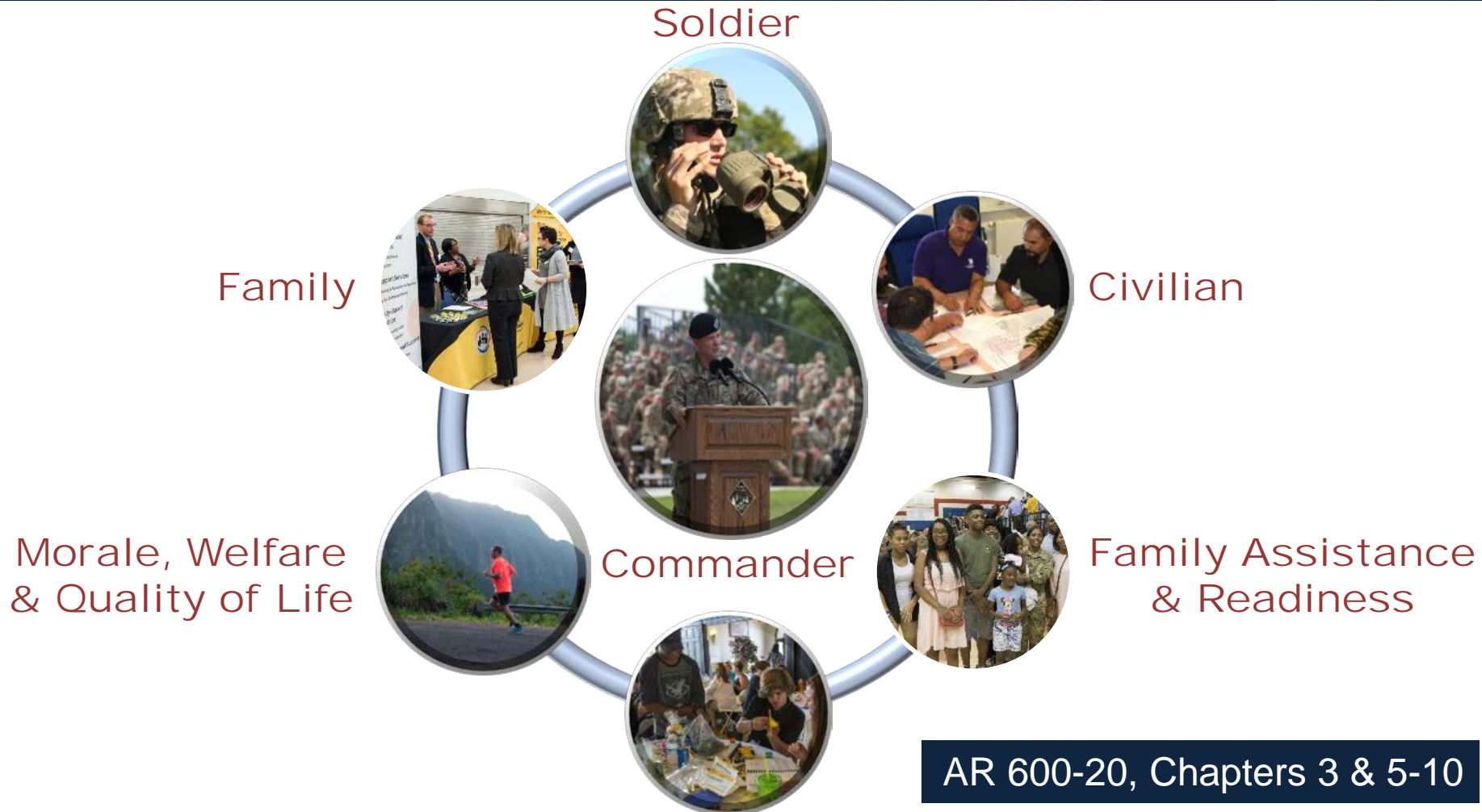
NON-MISSION ESSENTIAL

- Social events
- Fundraising



Army Regulation 608-1, Appendix J-2

Army Family Readiness System (The Big Picture)



AR 600-20, Chapters 3 & 5-10

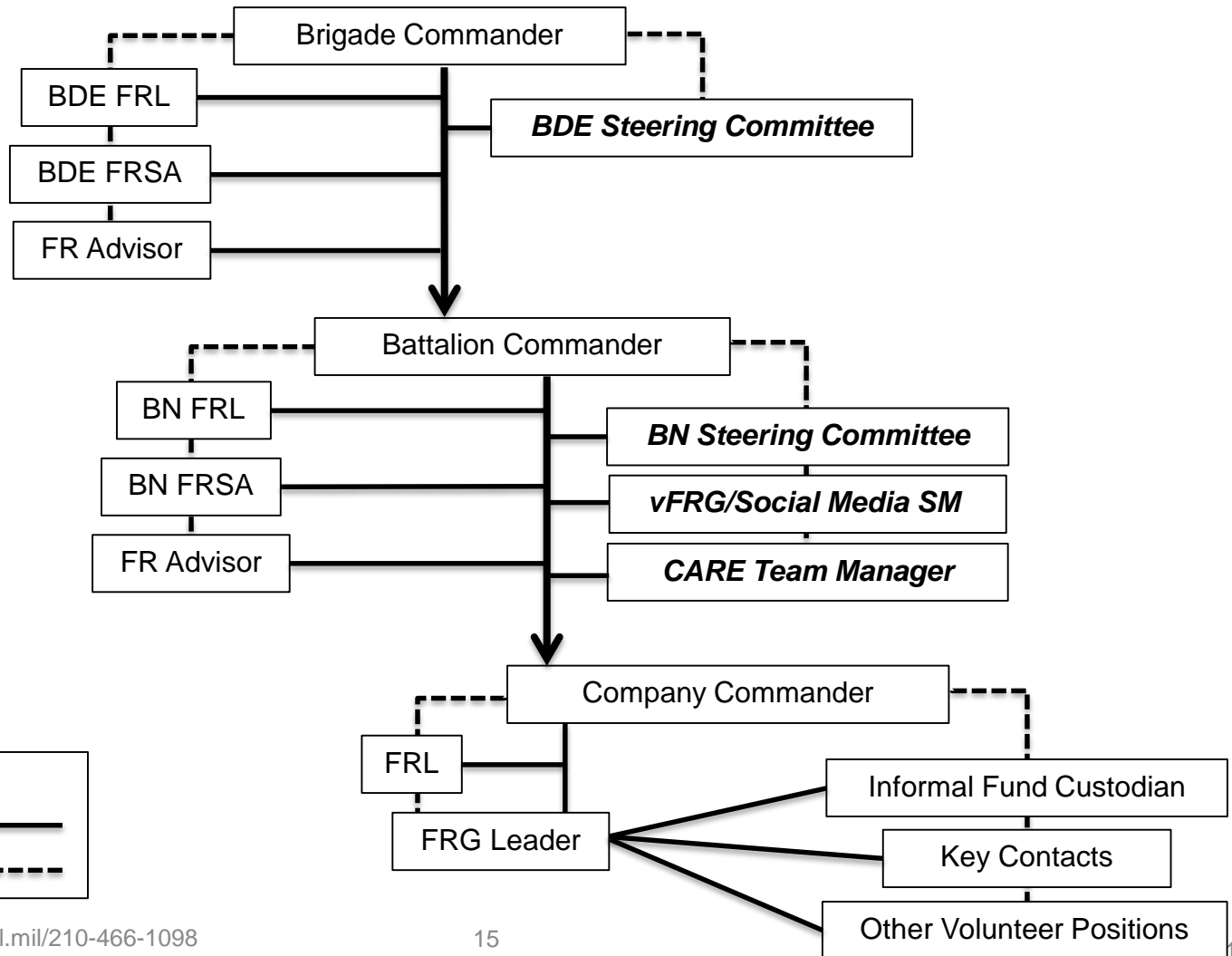
Soldier's Responsibilities

Soldiers bear primary responsibility for their Family and personal affairs readiness

At a minimum Soldiers:

- Must arrange for the care of their Family members.
- Will be informed of, support and participate in programs, services and activities designed to enhance the quality of life of themselves and their Families.

Family Readiness Team



Other Social Media Platforms



Social Media Cautions:

Publishing information on unit mission or deployments

Sharing PII

Posting command messages with unit specifics

FRG Volunteers



FRG Funding Streams

APF FUNDING	NAF FUNDING	FRG INFORMAL FUNDS (Limit \$10,000/year)	SUPPLEMENTAL MISSION FUNDS
Official Mail	Registered FRG Volunteer Expenses:	Holiday Parties	Control is component specific
Use of government facilities and equipment	Annual Volunteer Recognition Awards (GC approval)	Social Activities	Examples of Use:
Use of government owned or leased vehicles	Awards, Banquets, and Mementos, (GC approval)	FRG Parties or Outings	Supplemental Unit Send-off and Welcome Home Activities
Travel/Training Expenses		Volunteer Recognition	Food
Reimbursement of Incidental Expenses		Supplemental Unit Send-off	Reimbursement of statutory volunteer expenses if APFs are not available.
Child Care		Authorized Welcome Home activities	
Awards			

Family Readiness Plan

Family Readiness Plan (unit level):

Detailed schematic of the Command Team plan for engaging resources (Family Readiness Group volunteers), meetings, logistical and administrative support, special events, official communications, and social networking to enhance the success of the Unit Family Readiness Program. SOPs are often incorporated as part of the Unit Family Readiness Plan.

Encouraging Member Participation

- Command and Soldier advocacy for FRG participation
- Connect with all of your target demographics (enlisted, officer, single Soldiers, Families w/wo children, dual military Families)
- Encourage volunteer participation from all of your unit membership.
- Identify volunteer value to the unit, the command and the community (cohesion, partnership, resources)
- Conduct volunteer briefings to actively seek participation and recruit volunteers

End Example



R.E.A.L. Way Ahead

- Release final product with component-specific implementation instructions FY18
- Codify in policy for Army-wide implementation FY18
- Institutionalize standard training at key times for Soldiers and Volunteers
- HQ IMCOM finalize/release computer based FRG and AFTB training (April 2018)

Want More Information

Training dates and times available through your local ACS and Family Programs Offices

**The digital Smartbook can be accessed at:
<https://www.armyfrg.org>
select “tools” and “download center”**

R.E.A.L. Rewrite Workgroup (2015-2017)

- Kay Calton – NG State Family Program Director, Missouri
- Sandra Crocker – AC MD&SSO, USAG Hawaii
- Lara Clagett – AC MD&SSO Program Manager, USAG Bavaria
- Rhonda Collins – USAR Family Programs, Training Supervisor, CTR
- Charlotte Douglas – USAR Division Chief, Family Readiness
- Patricia Elliott – USAR Family Programs, Training Specialist, CTR
- Susan Gramkow – NG National Training Coordinator, CTR
- Nicole Heller – AC MD&SSO Program Specialist, Fort Benning, GA
- Sandra Henry – USAR Family Programs, Family Programs Director
- Tonya Imus – AC MD&SSO Program Manager, Fort Stewart, GA
- Michelle Kochosky – NG State Family Program Director, Oregon
- Heather Leiby – AC MD&SSO, HQ IMCOM G9 ACS
- Stephanie Mello – AC MD&SSO Program Manager, Fort Hood, TX
- Mary Nesbitt – NG State Family Program Director, Kansas
- MAJ Ken Ola – NGB Family Programs Officer
- Frankie Salas – AC MD&SSO, USAG Hawaii
- Shandra Sponsler – NG State Family Programs Director, Texas
- Mufutau Taiwo – USAR Family Programs, Deputy Director
- Shawn Williams – AC MD&SSO, Fort Gordon, GA

Who Provided Initial Feedback

Sent to Army Commands, Army Installations, National Guard and Reserve for review

- FORSCOM
- USAREC
- INSCOM
- MEDCOM
- PACOM
- USASMDC/ARSTRAT
- TX National Guard
- Mobilization, Deployment & SSG Program Managers:
 - West Point
 - Fort Jackson
 - Fort Carson
 - Fort Wainwright
 - Fort Sill
 - Rock Island Arsenal
 - USAG Vicenza
- 25th Infantry Division
- III Corps
- 8th Army
- 1 MED BDE
- 49th TRANS
- 36 EN
- II Corps HHS
- 1st CD DIV – 1BCT/2BCT
- Division West
- MCOE Headquarters
- 194th Armor BDE
- 198th Infantry BDE
- 199th Infantry BDE
- 316th CAV
- Cyber Protection BDE
- 15th Signal BDE
- 35th Signal BDE
- 3rd Infantry Division
- MEDDAC
- 188th Infantry BDE
- 92 EN
- 285 MP
- 3/160 SOAR
- 1/75 Ranger Regiment
- Savannah District Corps of Engineers
- 63rd Signal BN

QUESTIONS





Assessing Soldier and Family Needs

**Carra Sims, Tom Trail, Emily Chen, Laura
Miller, Beth Lachman, and Whitney Dudley
*October 2017***

There Is Need for Systematic Data on Soldier and Family Needs and Priorities

- **Army provides an array of quality-of-life support services**
- **But clarity and precision are needed to determine if:**
 - **Services are addressing *actual types of help needed* by soldiers and families**
 - **Soldiers and spouses who do not rely on Army resources for support are able to resolve their problems**
- **Other surveys provide useful information, but often have program-centric focus and are not comprehensive**

Army asked Arroyo Center to help identify Soldier needs

Arroyo Developed Unique, Comprehensive Survey

- **Assesses what no current survey does—highest priority needs of Soldiers and families**
- **RAND framework identifies most significant problems faced in the year, types of help needed to address the problems, and resources accessed to meet the need**



- **Evaluates adequacy of services and resources used on-post and off-post**
- **Survey results help “start a conversation”**

About the Survey

- **Sampling plan based on July 2014 Army personnel records**
- **Survey fielded to CONUS Active Duty Soldiers**
- **Survey administered Sept 2014 – Jan 2015**
- **CSA, VCSA, SMA encouraged participation**
- **Response rate 12% (7,000+)—sufficient for analyses**
- **Sample was weighted to represent the population**

Overview of Results

Problem areas



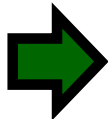
- Top prioritized problem areas: military practices/culture, work/life balance, Soldiers' own well-being
- 9% reported no problems

Types of help needed



- Top prioritized types of help needed to address problems: advice, activities, general info (rules, what's available), counseling, and emotional support
- 24% of those reporting problems reported no needs to help address them

Resources accessed



- Majority do access Army resources
- On average, needs were met adequately
- 85% identifying needs sought military or civilian resources
 - Average of 6.7 contacts
 - 11% had one or more unmet need (out of all Soldiers)

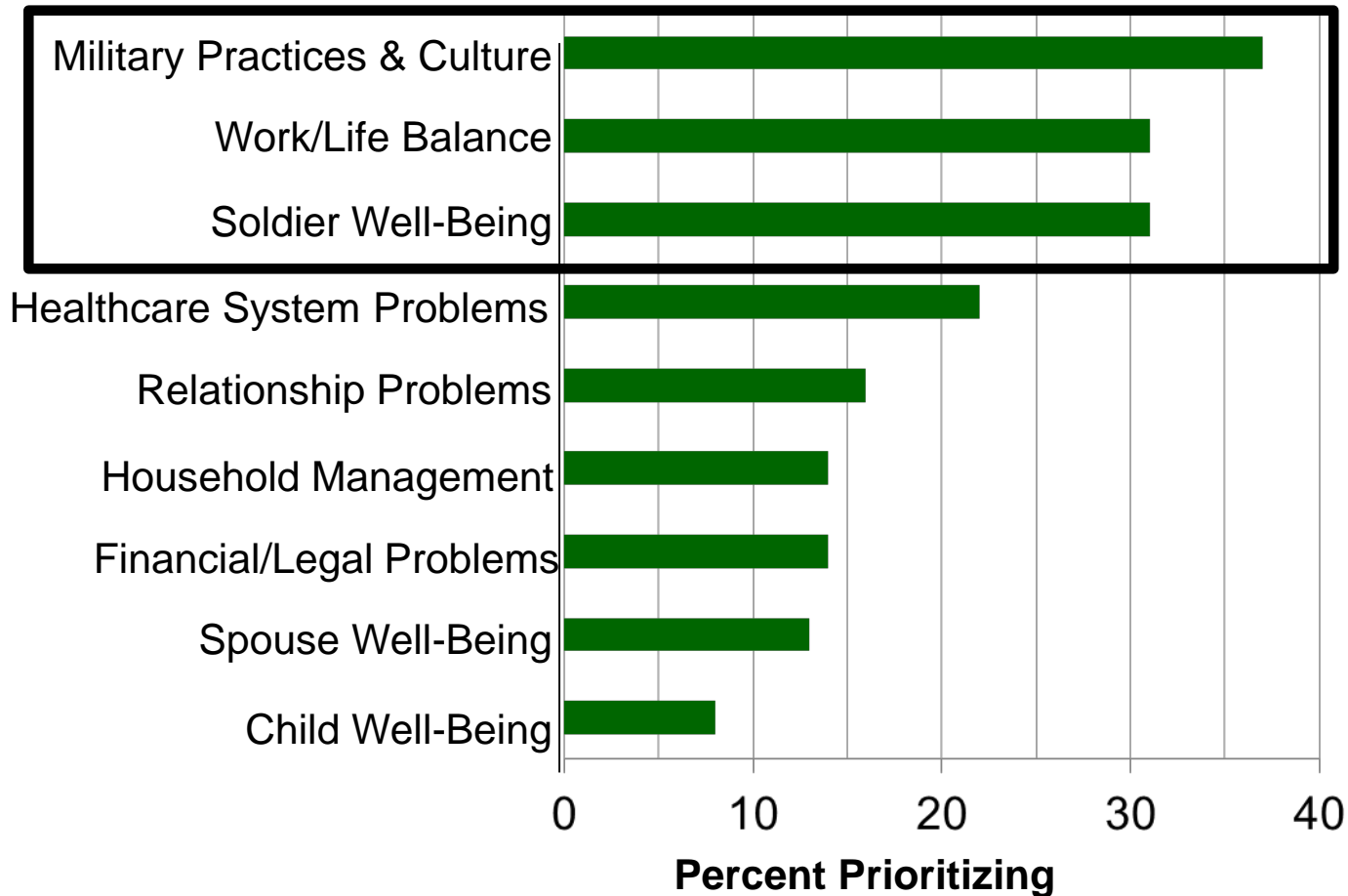
Today's Agenda

- **Top problem areas**
- **Top types of help needed in general and types of help linked with top problem areas**
- **Resources used and effectiveness**

We Asked About 83 Issues Organized in 9 Categories

Category	Example Issues
Military Practices & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor communication with coworkers or superiors • Lack of proper guidance or sponsorship
Work/Life Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding time for sleep/healthy diet /physical exercise • Long work hours/ inconvenient schedule
Soldier Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling stressed/ overwhelmed/ tired • Trouble sleeping
Healthcare System Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to health care • Managing dependents' health problems
Relationship Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems communicating/ expressing feelings • Arguments
Household Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management • Home repairs/ work orders/ car maintenance
Financial/Legal Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trouble paying debt or bills • Pay issues (access to pay, errors)
Spouse Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling stressed/ overwhelmed/ tired • Changes in mood
Child Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional/behavior problems at home • Childcare problems

Soldiers Prioritized Top Two Problem Areas in Past Year

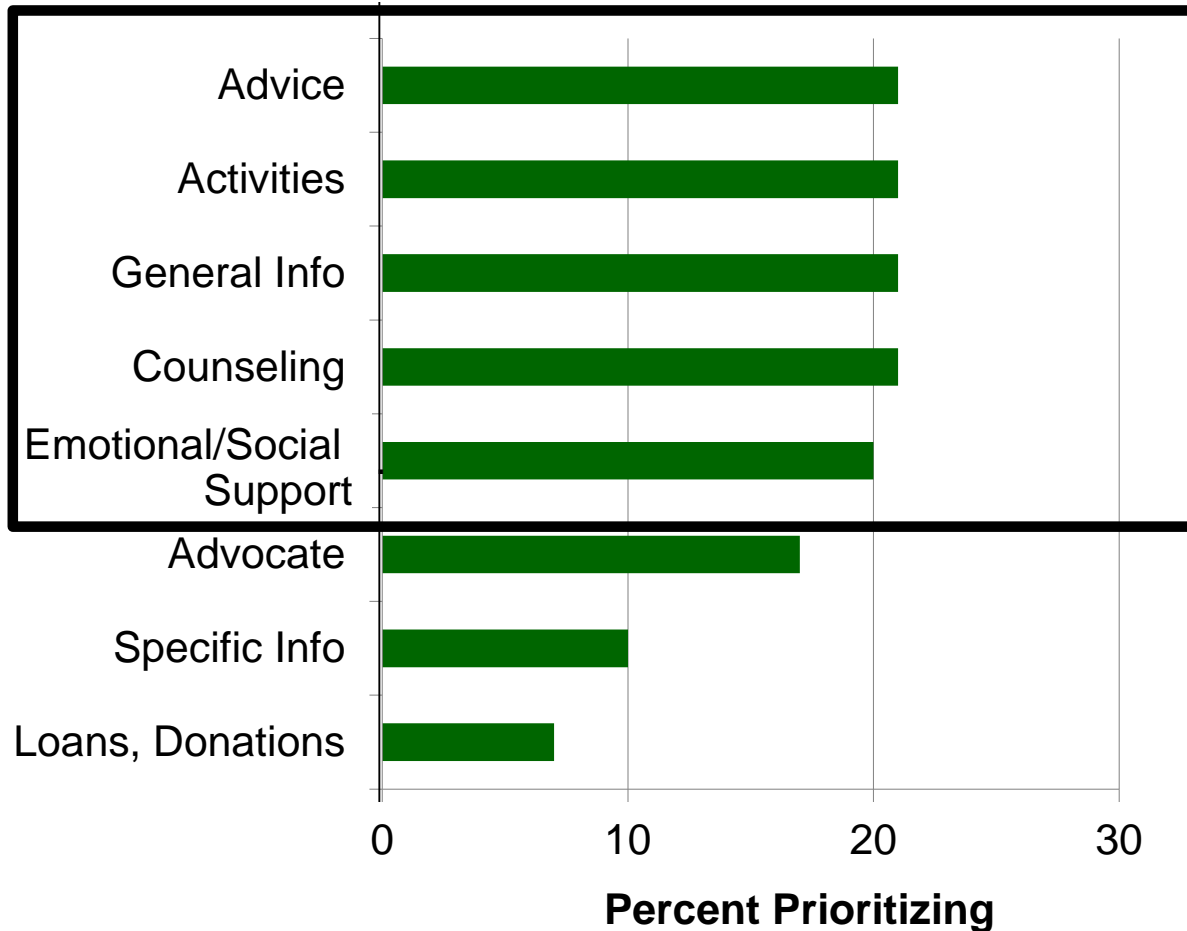


9% identified no problems in the past year

Today's Agenda

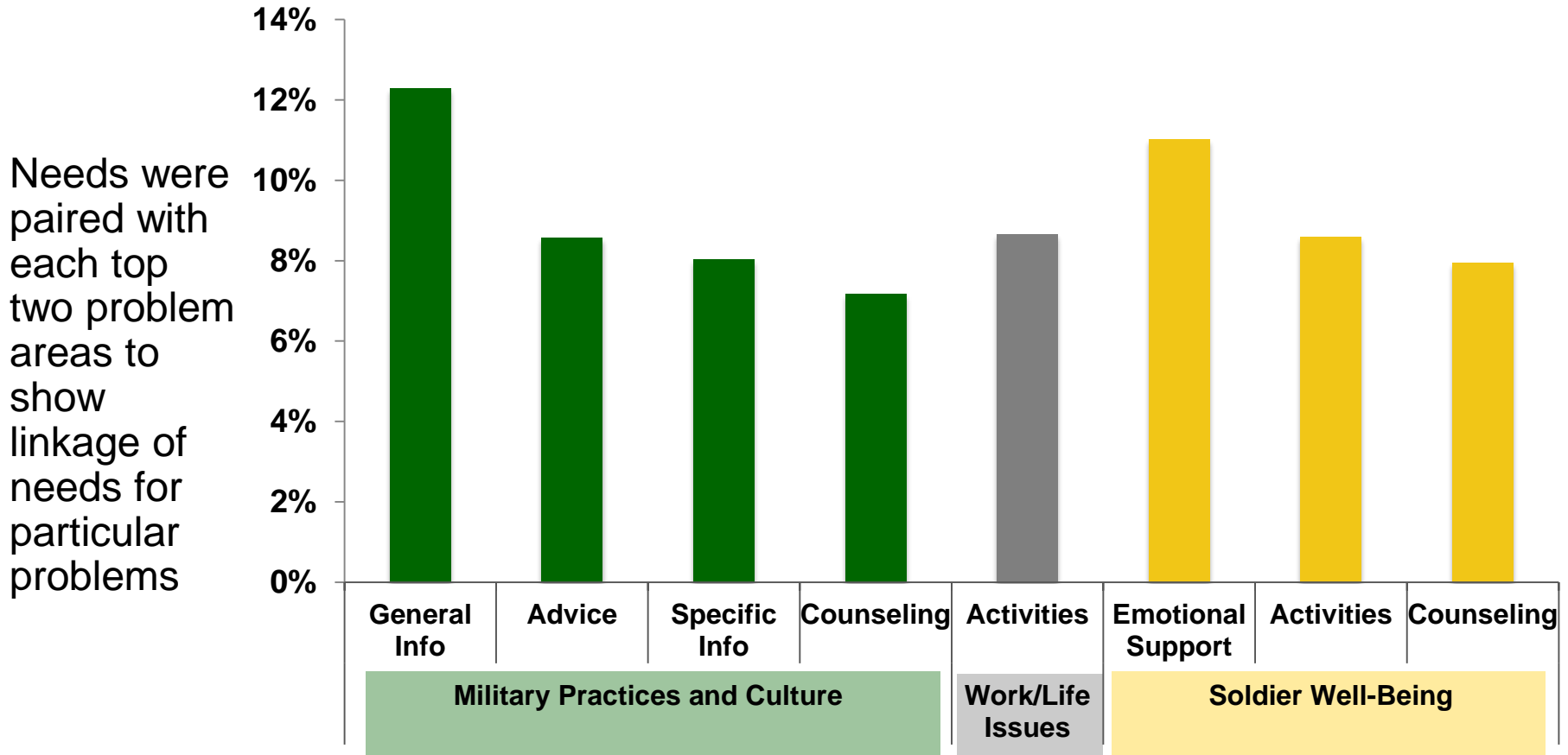
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Soldiers Prioritized Top Types of Help Needed to Address Past-Year Problems



24% of those with problems did not report needs to address them

Soldiers Report Varying Types of Help Needed for Their Top Problem Areas



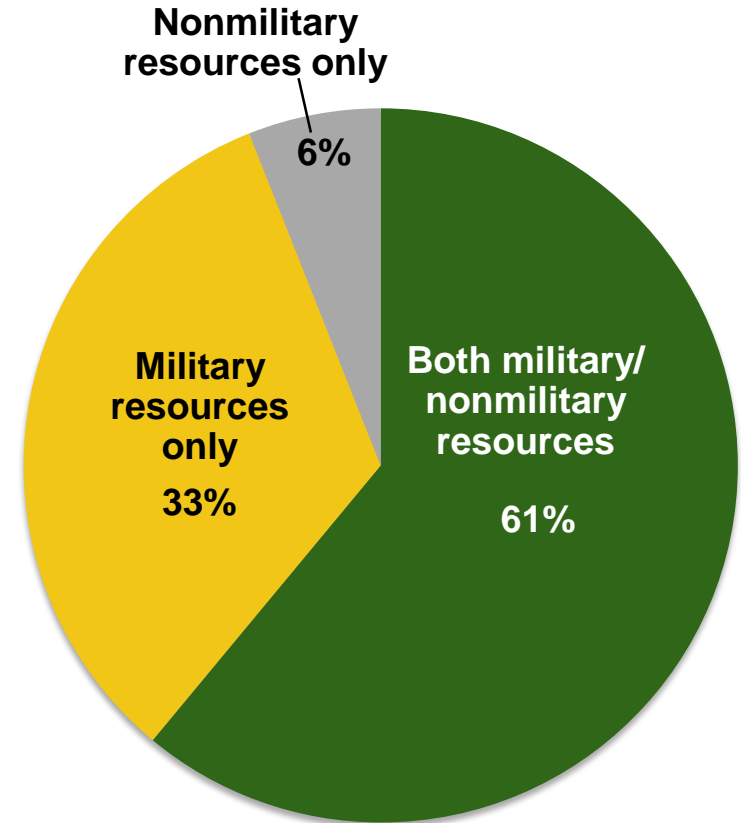
Soldiers frequently report needing advice and general info to address military practices and culture problem area

Today's Agenda

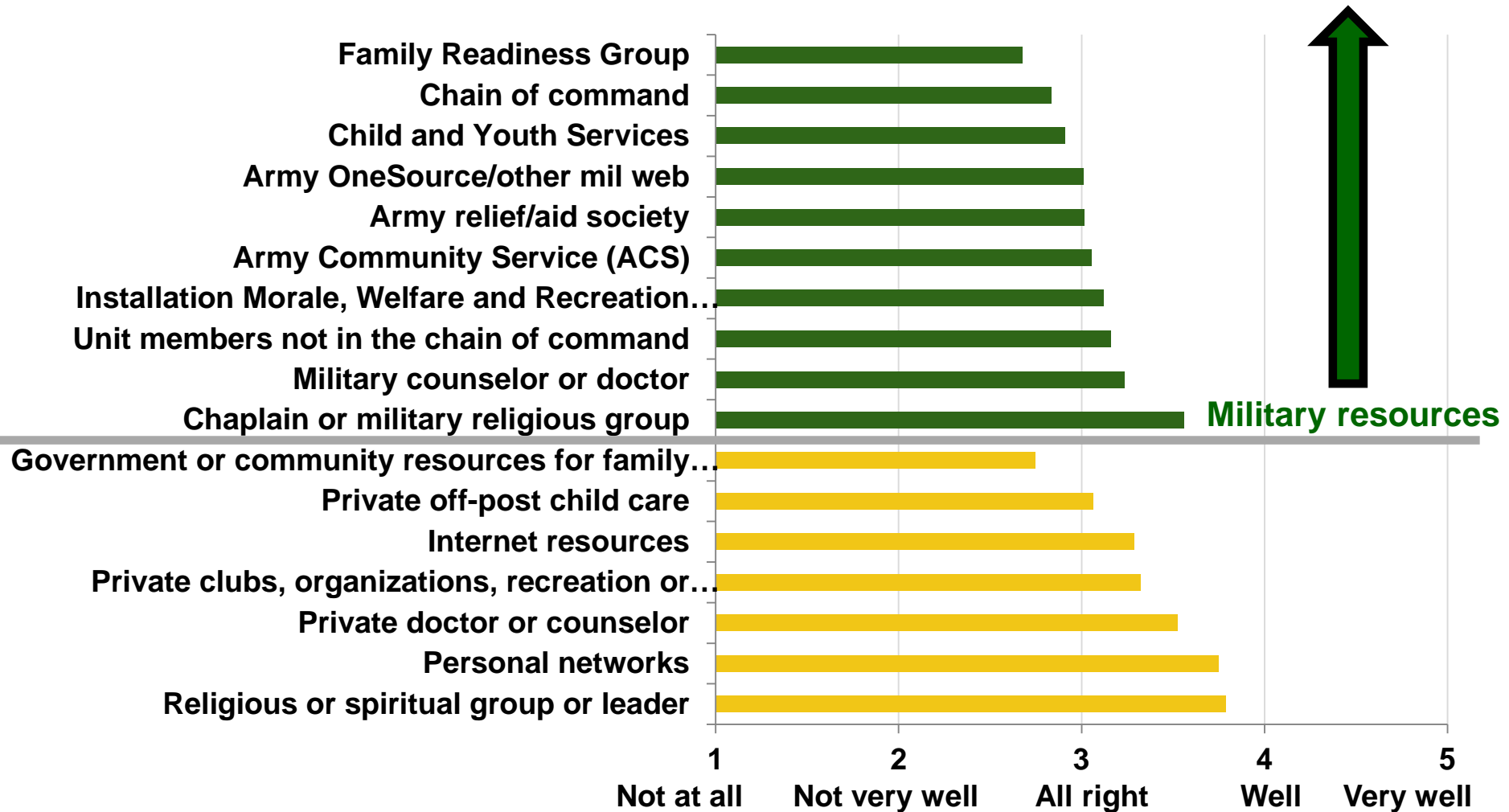
- **Top problem areas**
- **Top types of help needed in general and types of help linked with top problem areas**
- **Resources used and effectiveness**

Respondents Sought a Number of Resources, both Military and Non-Military

- Of those with problems for which they had a need, 85% sought resources
- Respondents reported reaching out to four military contacts and two nonmilitary contacts
- Of resource-seekers, 94% sought military resources
- Distance from post and post urbanicity **did not** predict seeking military-only resources or total resources



In General, Across Resources, the Average Response Is That Needs Were Adequately Met



11% of all soldiers reported at least one unmet need

More Common Challenges with Resources Accessed

- **Military counselor or medical doctor:** 26% reported long response time/long wait lists
- **Child Youth Services:** 21% reported long response time/long wait lists
- **Chain of command:** 19% said it might hurt their careers; 18% reported that chain of command was unwelcoming or unfriendly
- **Family Readiness Groups:** 18% reported difficulty in finding information for contacting them

Key Findings: Problems and Needs

- **Top problem areas: military practices/culture, work/life balance, and Soldier well-being**
 - Junior enlisted more likely than others to choose military practices and culture, financial/legal issues
- **Top types of help needed to address problems: advice or education, activities, general info, counseling, and emotional support**
 - Junior enlisted reported needing many things more than did Soldiers of other ranks
- **Write-ins of problems/needs fit into existing survey problem areas**
 - Themes of toxic and poor leadership, and health care system challenges

Findings: Resources Accessed and Barriers

- **Of people with problems and needs, 85% accessed resources—on average, they made 6.7 contacts with different resources**
 - **Of those who accessed resources, 94% made military contacts**
 - **Distance from post does not predict using military-only contacts or number of contacts overall**
- **In general, across resources used, needs were adequately met**
 - **But 11% of soldiers responding to the survey reported at least one unmet need**
- **Barriers to service:**
 - **~20% using CYS and military counselor or doctor reporting long waits**
 - **Users of CoC reported concerns about career effects**

How Does This Help with HQ Army Decisionmaking?

- **Military practices/culture is most frequent problem area**
 - **Write-ins speak to toxic and poor leadership**
- **Majority of those surveyed seek help from Army resources**
 - **Including activities for fitness, recreation, stress relief, etc.**
- **Advice is one of primary types of help needed overall**
- **The Army should:**
 - **Seek ways to make it easier for Soldiers to navigate system**
 - **Consider targeting reported service barriers for improvement**
 - **Consider partnering with civilian system to address health care demand**

We Are Also About to Field a Spouse Survey

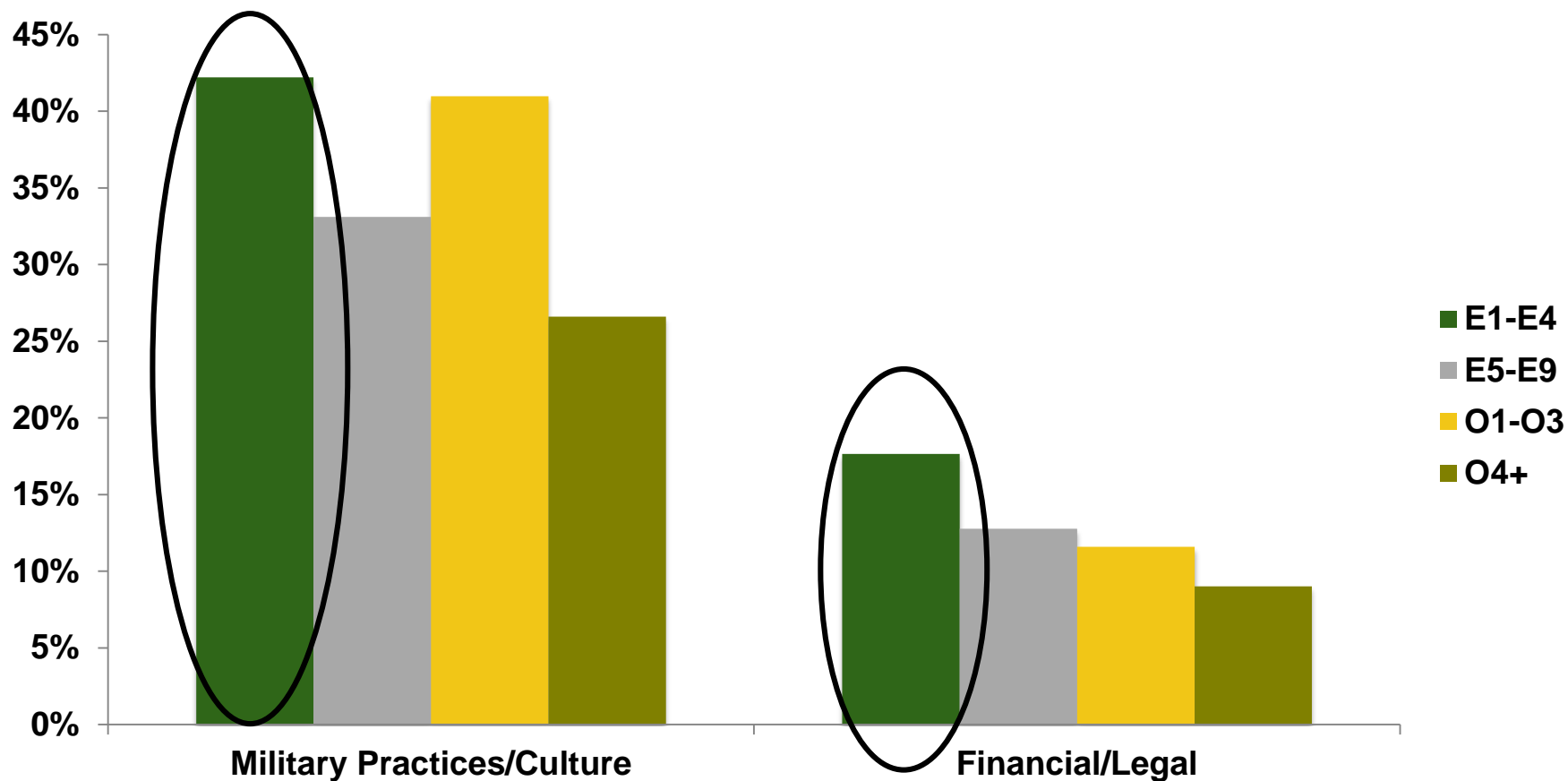
- **Survey to field this fall (planned: October—December)**
- **If you are selected to participate, you'll get a postcard in the mail**
 - **There will be incentives to participate (gift cards)**
- **Methodology**
 - **Sampling plan and content similar to Today's Soldier Survey, with focus on spouse needs and experiences**

Please spread the word!

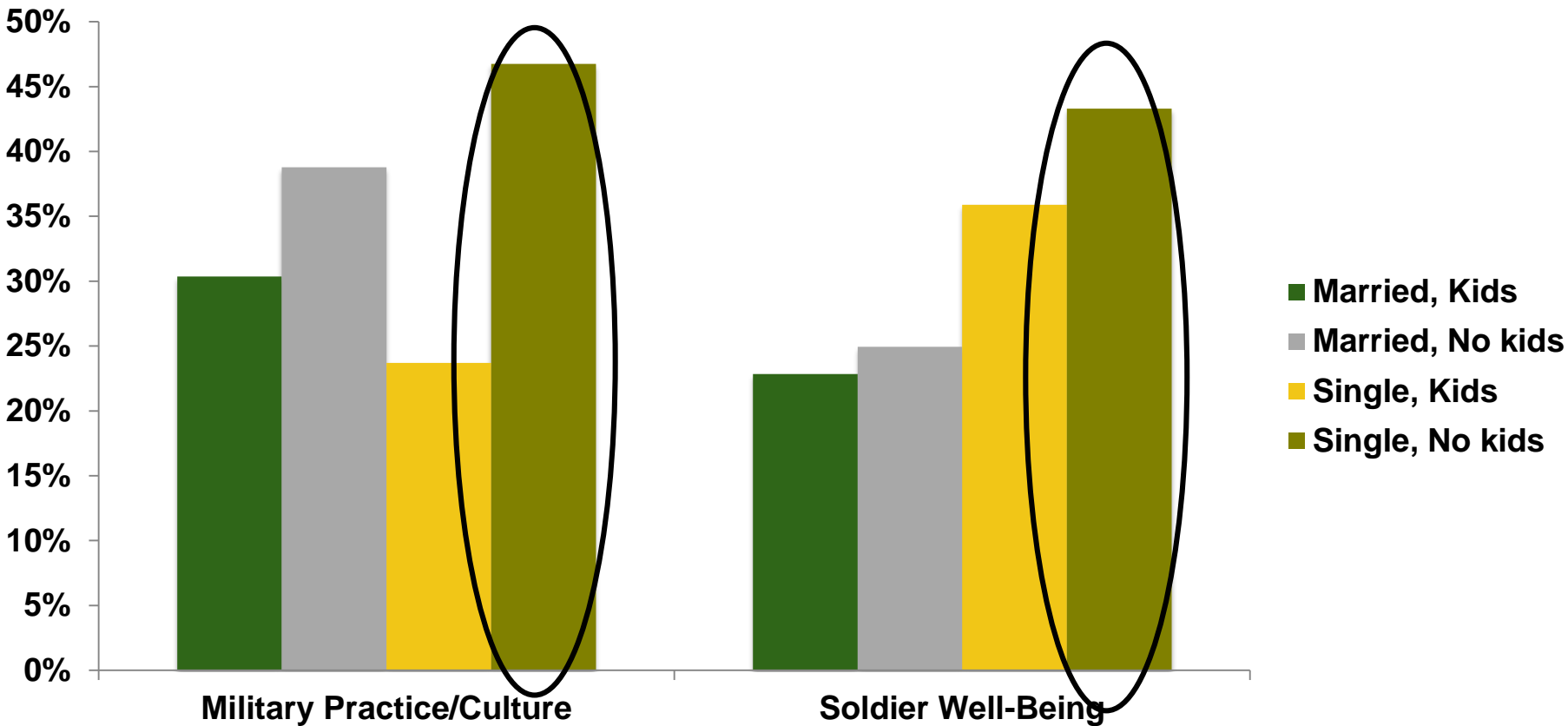


ARROYO CENTER

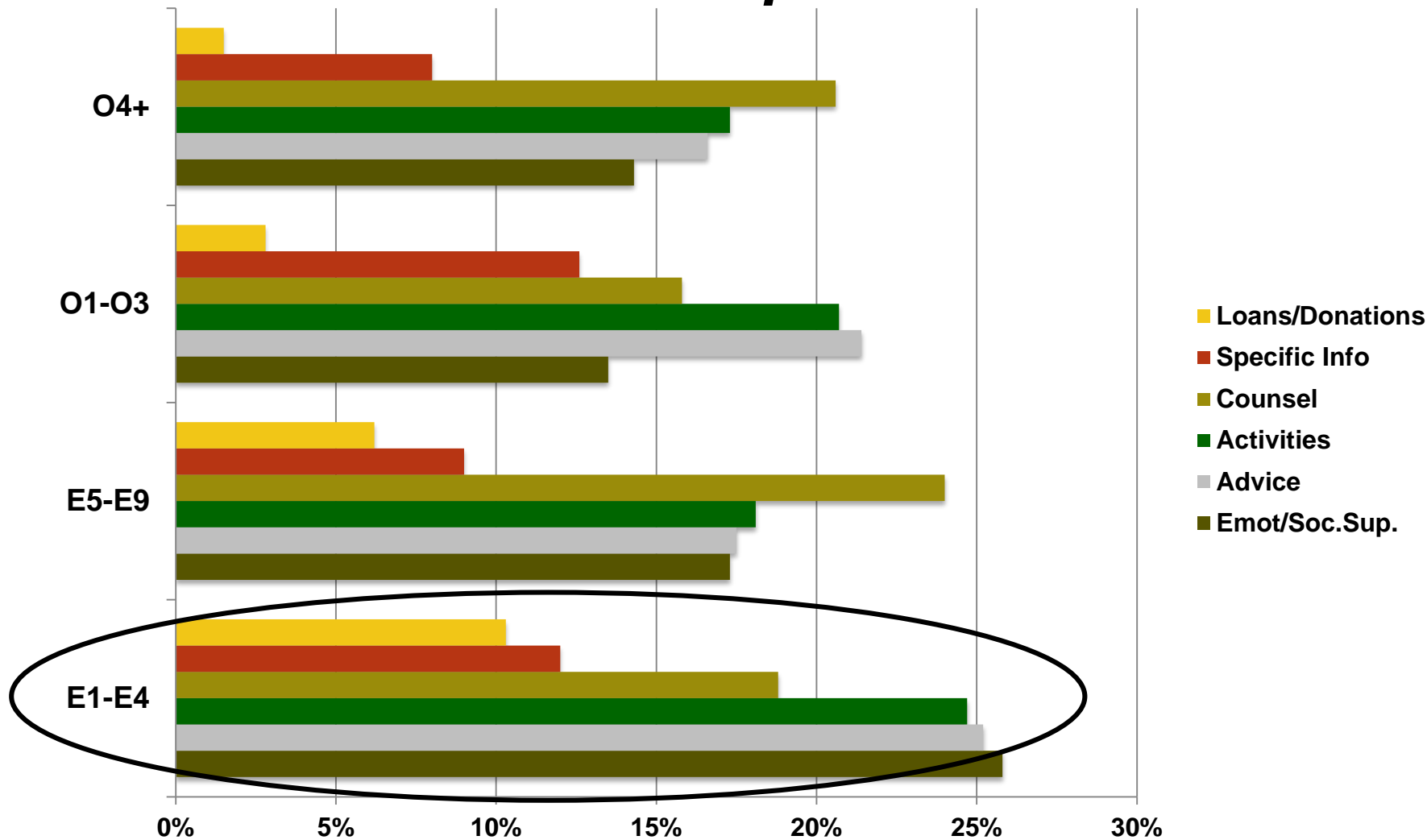
Rank Group Comparisons Demonstrate Different Challenges in Specific Areas, Including in Military Practice/Culture and Financial/Legal Area



Single Soldiers w/o Children More Likely to Report Top Problems in Military Practice/Culture, Own Well-Being



More Junior Enlisted Need Help, and More Types of Help



Resource Barriers: Challenges with Resources Accessed

Resources	Barriers Asked About					
	Hard to Find Info	Inconvenient Location/ Access	Might Hurt My Career	Not Welcoming/ Friendly	Long Wait List/ Response	Poor Reputation or Service
Army FRG	18%	7%	6%	11%	4%	14%
Chain of Command	5%	4%	19%	18%	11%	14%
Child and Youth Services	8%	9%	1%	10%	21%	12%
Army OneSource, post homepage	12%	7%	3%	2%	7%	7%
Relief or Aid Society	10%	6%	8%	1%	10%	4%
Army Community Services	12%	9%	3%	5%	9%	8%
Installation MWR	11%	14%	1%	4%	7%	7%
Unit members not in CoC	7%	4%	11%	9%	5%	5%
Military counselor or MD	8%	8%	10%	7%	26%	14%
Chaplain/military religious group membership	4%	9%	8%	2%	6%	6%

"Your Soldier, Your Army" by Vicki Cody

