

National Organization of Mothers Of Twins Clubs, Inc.	SUBJECT: RESEARCHER: DATE:	SUPPORT ISSUES OF MULTIPLE BIRTH FAMILIES IN THE MILITARY National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc. May 2009-May 2010
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PURPOSE: The purpose of this survey is to identify the special needs of military parents of multiples (POM); to examine how local clubs support and connect with military POMs; to determine what additional support would be beneficial.

METHOD: A survey consisting of 41 questions was distributed in a National Mailing and issued through SurveyMonkey.com. The survey was to be completed by multiple birth parents that are currently serving or have served in the military.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. One hundred twenty-nine surveys consisting of 41 questions were entered with 89.8 percent having twins, 5.5 percent had triplets, 1.6 percent had quadruplets, and 3.1 percent had more than one set of multiples.
2. The majority of the respondents (55.9%) were between the ages of 26-35, 31.5 per cent were between 36-45 years old, 10.2 per cent were between 18 – 25 and 1.2 per cent were over 55 years old.
3. Seventeen per cent of the respondents were in the military while 88% were the respondents' spouse/partner and one was his/her child.
4. Nineteen per cent of the respondents or their spouse/partner are presently retired from the military.
5. Twenty seven percent of the respondents or a family member was in the Army, 24% were in the Air Force. 28% in the Navy, 18.4% were Marines, 1.6 were Members of the Coast Guard while 11.2 % were in the National Guard/Reserves.

RESULTS

1. When asked how often they relocate 1.6% answered six to eleven months, while 5.6% replied 12- 24 months, 39.7% relocate every 2 to 3 years, 30.2% every 3 to 4 years, 4% over 5 years and 19% have never relocated.
2. When questioned about they type of support they got during a relocation 35% indicated hey received no support, while 11% said they had no children when they relocated, 42% received moving help, 3% received childcare assistance and 3% got financial support.
3. The majority of the respondents (79%) report maintaining ties with past locations; 75% keep in touch by telephone, 89.7% by email, 81.4% through social networking sites, 50% through regular mail and 35.1% through visits. Four per cent indicated they did not maintain contacts.
4. Changing schools and making new friends was a major concern of 36% of relocating parents, this was followed closely by concern about adjustment and feelings of security by 20%, while 11% were concerned about childcare and 13% worried about family support.
5. Thirty-four percent of those questioned had never been deployed, while 53.5% had been deployed one or two times, 4.4% three or four times and 7.9% five or more times.
6. The time between deployments ranged from 36% at 0-3 months, 38.2% from 4-7 months, and 16.9% from 8-11 months.
7. The two major sources of support were reported as families at 79.2% and friends at 76%, these were followed by military at 35.4%, multiples clubs at 22.9% and organizations such as church /schools were 20.1%.
8. Types of support the respondents reported include emotional 50.6%, child care 36.1%, food (food stamps, vouchers, food pantries) 31.3% financial 9.6% and 8.4% formal group support.
9. When asked if they felt military families have different concerns from civilian families 94.7% replied yes, while .9% replied no and 4.4% were unsure.
10. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents are currently members of local mothers/parents of twins clubs, 6.2% were members in the past and 25.7% have never belonged to a twin club.

11. The number of military families in local clubs covers a wide range with 66.6% unsure if there were any members from military families, 8.4% had 1, 3.6% had 2, 4.8% had 3 and 16.9% had 5 or more.
12. It was revealed that 81.8% of local clubs never addressed military issues, 9.1% addressed issues once or twice a year and 9.1% once every few years.
13. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents felt a support group for military families would be beneficial, while 8.0% didn't feel it was necessary and 23.9% were unsure; 58.4% felt it would be helpful to have a support group meet at the military installation while 41.6% didn't think it was necessary.
14. Many respondents (65.5%) felt a virtual pom group would be beneficial to them, 5.3% said no to this while 29.25 were unsure. Most respondents belong to one of these groups: 87.3 to Facebook, 30% to MySpace, 45.5% to Yahoo Groups, 11.8% Twitter, 10% LinkedIn, 5% to Big Tent.
15. More than half (68%) reported that they received no special support from local clubs as a military family, while 2% received overseas coupons, 2% received support through the club's yahoo club, 4% received prayers, 6% received same support as non-military families and 8% received care packages during deployment.

CONCLUSION

Parenting in today's complex world is a challenge for anyone; but, those who are serving in the military face many unique obstacles in their day to day lives. Many (57.8%) feel that their local club isn't aware of or doesn't understand their need for additional support. The majority (94.7%) of the respondents feel that the concerns of a military family are different than those of a civilian family.

1. More than half (68.1%) feel a support group for parents of multiples of military families would be beneficial and 58.4% feel it would be helpful if the meetings were held at a military installation.
2. The current study revealed the needs of military parents of multiples and the order of their importance.

Place in order of importance your needs as a military parent of multiples. (1 being most important, 8 being least important)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Emotional support/counseling	32.4% (33)	16.7% (17)	21.6% (22)	11.8% (12)	3.9% (4)	6.9% (7)	4.9% (5)	2.0% (2)
Financial help/assistance	15.0% (15)	9.0% (9)	8.0% (8)	10.0% (10)	10.0% (10)	8.0% (8)	18.0% (18)	22.0% (22)
Child care assistance for work hours	27.0% (27)	14% (14)	13.0% (13)	9% (9)	10% (10)	6% (6)	9% (9)	12% (12)
Time for yourself	30.8% (32)	29.8% (31)	18.3% (19)	7.7% (8)	3.8% (4)	2.9% (3)	1.9% (2)	4.8% (5)
Spending time with other mothers/ parents of multiples	21.4% (22)	7.8% (8)	29.1% (30)	12.6% (13)	15.5% (16)	6.8% (7)	3.9% (4)	2.9% (3)
Transportation assistance for you and/or your children	8.1% (8)	6.1% (6)	5.1% (5)	11.1% (11)	7.1% (7)	18.2% (18)	14.1% (14)	30.3% (30)
Medical care assistance	13.3% (13)	4.1% (4)	7.1% (7)	7.1% (7)	12.2% (12)	8.2% (8)	11.2% (11)	36.7% (36)
Communicating with deployed family member(s)	37.6% (38)	13.9% (14)	8.9% (9)	9.9% (10)	6.9% (7)	5.0% (5)	5.0% (5)	12.9% (13)

4. Respondents reported that the things their military branch does BEST to support their families during deployment include support groups, child care, and social events and monthly socials. Additional support is received through frequent emails, telephone calls and video conferences. The families of those deployed also receive supplemental pay and every effort is made to bring them home for major events such as the birth of a child or the funeral of an immediate family member. However, it was noted that these services were made available to all parents and no distinction was made between families with or without multiples.

5. Respondents suggested numerous things that NOMOTC could do for military families with multiples. The most frequent request was for emotional support. It was felt this could be accomplished in several ways; including cope groups, big sister programs, online groups, and email or phone support. Other requests included more information in doctor's offices, multiple friendly business directories, establishment of groups on bases overseas. One mother expressed frustration over scholarship programs, most of which require 5 years membership to apply which leaves her twins ineligible as they never stay anywhere that long.

6. Many respondents were very pleased that they are finally being recognized as a group with special circumstances. Several were so excited about the possibility of a support group to meet their needs that they volunteered to help organize something. This survey has definitely raised some important questions and given NOMOTC another direction to look in.