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***Understanding the
Deployment
Experiences of
Guard and Reserve
Families***



Based on a Study published by:



RAND

NATIONAL DEFENSE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

February 2009

Reserve Component families differ in key ways from Active Component families

- Demographically different**
 - Older**
 - Higher percentage of females**
 - Longer in the assigned units**
- Geographically dispersed**
 - Live farther from installations**
 - Dispersed from other military families**
- Dual mission**
 - Guard has both state and Federal missions**

The Need to Help Guard and Reserve Families Stems from their Changing Role

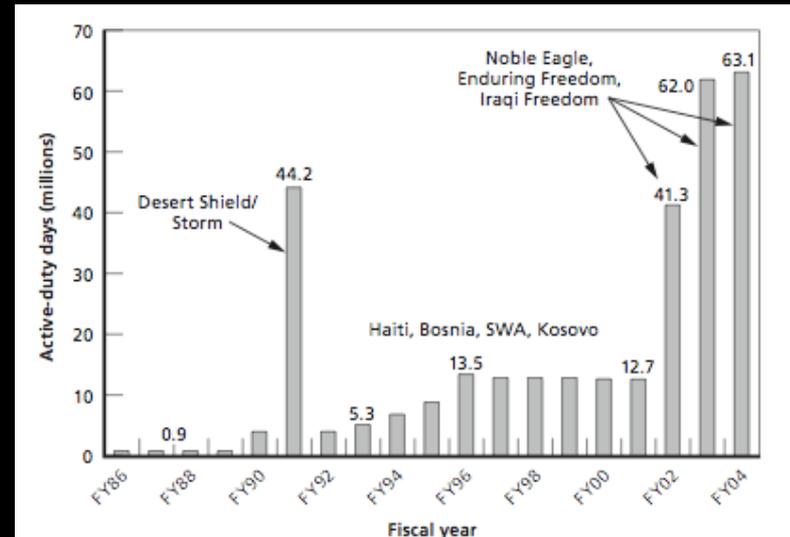
- Nation's reliance on Reserve Component (RC) has grown steadily

- As of May 10, 2011 more than 808,000 Guard and Reserve members have deployed to OEF and OIF

- The Guard and Reserve has shifted from strategic to an operational reserve

- State and Federal Missions

Such reliance puts immense strain on RC families



Source: RAND MG-757

Service	Regular	Reserve*
Army	49%	51%
Navy	83%	17%
Marine	83%	17%
Air Force	65%	35%
Coast Guard	81%	19%

*Based on authorized strengths for FY 2009



Activation and Deployment Personnel Practices: Some Current Initiatives

- **Timely notice of deployment encourages preparation**
 - Early Identification TRICARE (for up to 6 months before deployment)
 - TRICARE Reserve Select available with subsidized premiums
- **Establish predictable, limited, average-length mobilizations**
 - Army Guard/Reserve-Dwell Time goal is 1:5 ratio (currently 1:3.8)
 - AF, Navy, Marines have deployment rotation plans
 - Note that families focus on “boots away from home,” not “boots on ground”
- **Services are re-aligning units/forces to reduce the need for cross-leveling**
 - Focus is on adjusting “High-Demand, Low-Density” Units

Guard and Reserve Families

Some Current Initiatives

- **Yellow Ribbon Program provides:**
 - Support and info before, during & after deployment
 - Info is “phased” to deployment and available “on-demand”
 - Outreach & resources to Service members / families
 - Support networks (community-based)
 - Connection between military families
- **Community Capacity Building seeks to:**
 - Build Community-Based Collaboration
 - Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (i.e.; AZ Family Coalition, KY-TN ISFAC and many other States)
 - Defense State Liaison Office
 - Policy Academies
 - Mapping of support resources

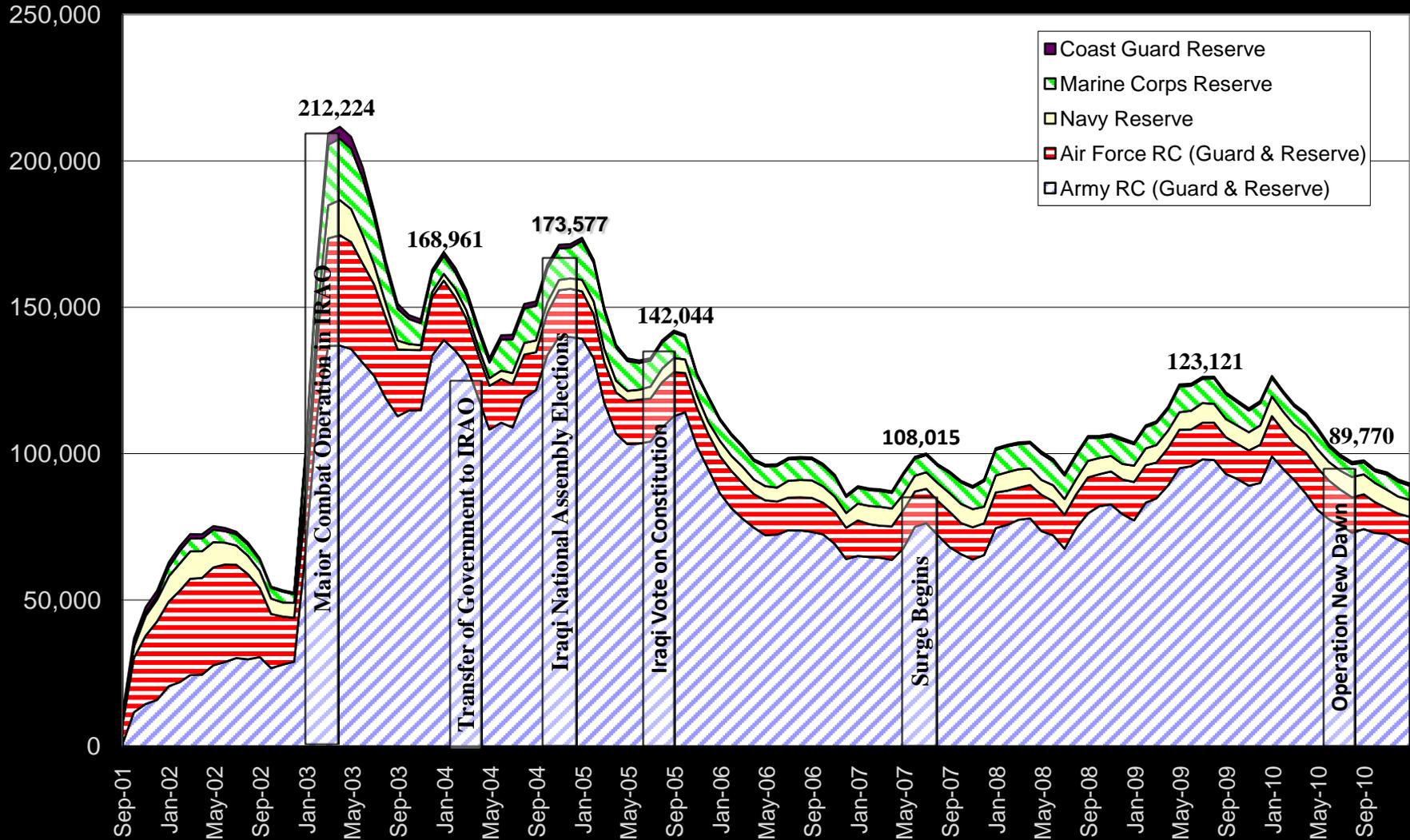
Guard and Reserve Families Some Current Initiatives (Continued)

- **Community Capacity Building (Continued):**
 - Improve awareness of, and use of, local community resources
 - Local & volunteer support programs have some limitations on capability & capacity (i.e.; compassion fatigue, reach, resources)
- **Increase the readiness of those families that are not-yet-activated**
 - Family Assistance Programs (the Services)
 - Family Readiness Groups (Units)
 - Readiness briefings using:
 - Using Joint Family Support Assistance Program
 - Military family Life Consultants
 - Personal Financial Counselors
 - Chaplains, Unit Legal & Medical Offices,

Back Up Data Slides

Reserve Component Members on Active Duty

(Mobilized in support of ONE/OEF/OIF-OND – through Nov, 2010)

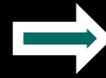


RAND Study interviewed 357 spouses & 296 service members

***(Army Reserve, Army National Guard,
Air Force Reserve, Marine Forces Reserve)***

Questions

- What were the deployment experiences of RC families?
- What is the impact of these deployment experiences on retention?
- What should the military do to support RC families?



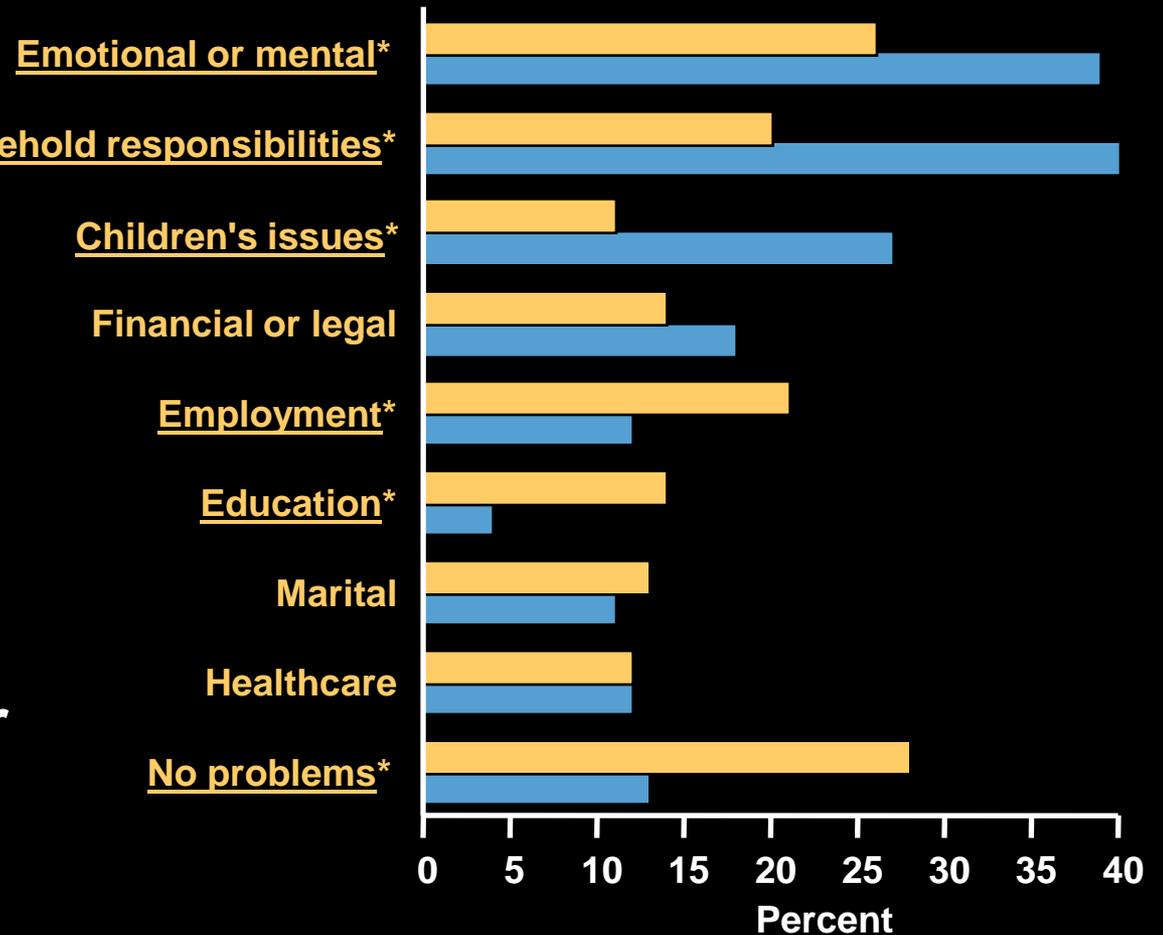
Answers

- Most ready for deployment and able to cope with it, most experienced problems as well as positives that were deployment-related; variations by groups
- Families' deployment experiences relate to their retention plans
- Focus on activation/deployment personnel practices, perceptions/expectations, and providing support/information

Most Mentioned Deployment-Related Problems

Note Differences between Member & Spouse

- 4 out of 5 cited problems
- Families mentioned various problems
- Problems range in their severity
- The Service member is more likely to cite no problems

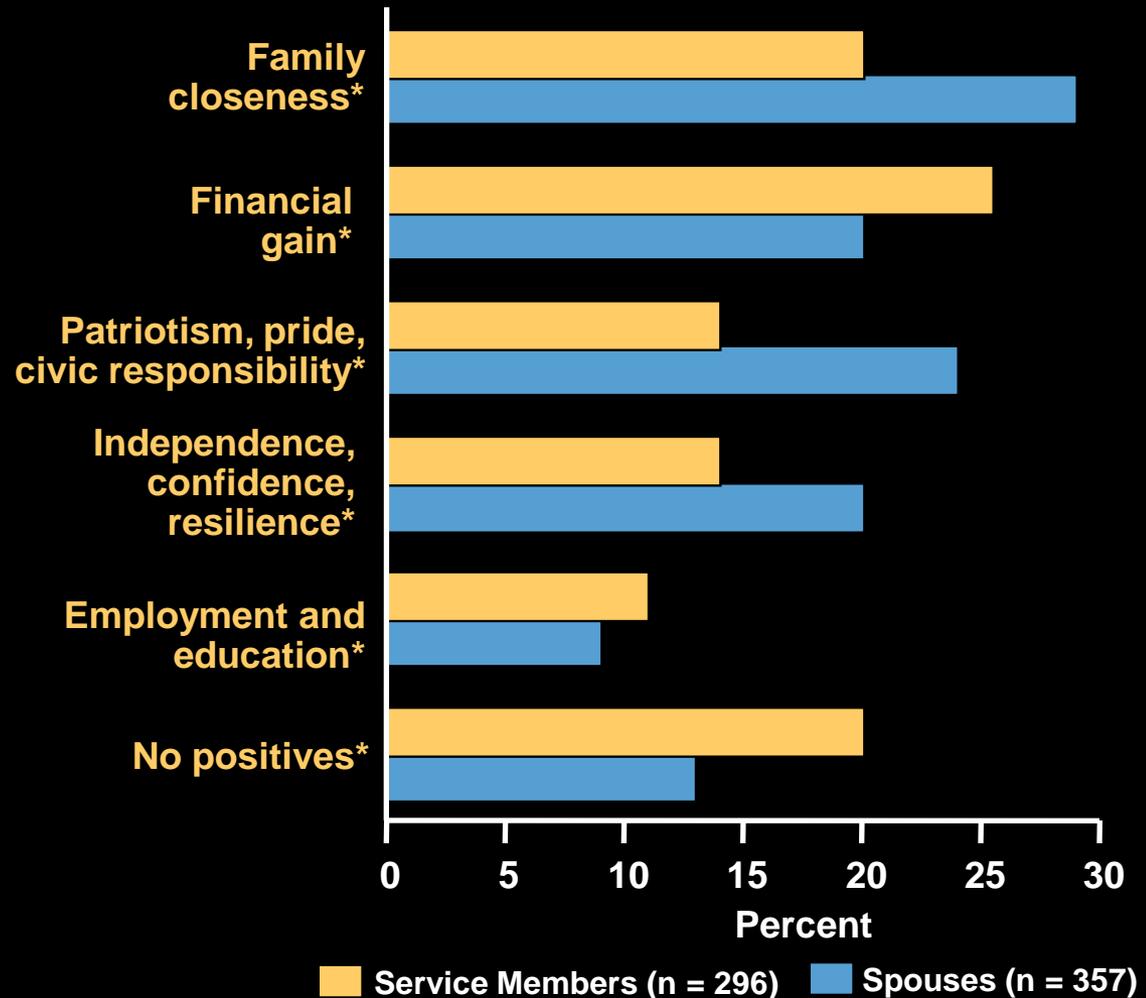


■ Service Members (n = 296) ■ Spouses (n = 357)

*Difference between Member and Spouse is Statistically significant at $p < 0.10$

Most Also Mentioned Positives from Deployment

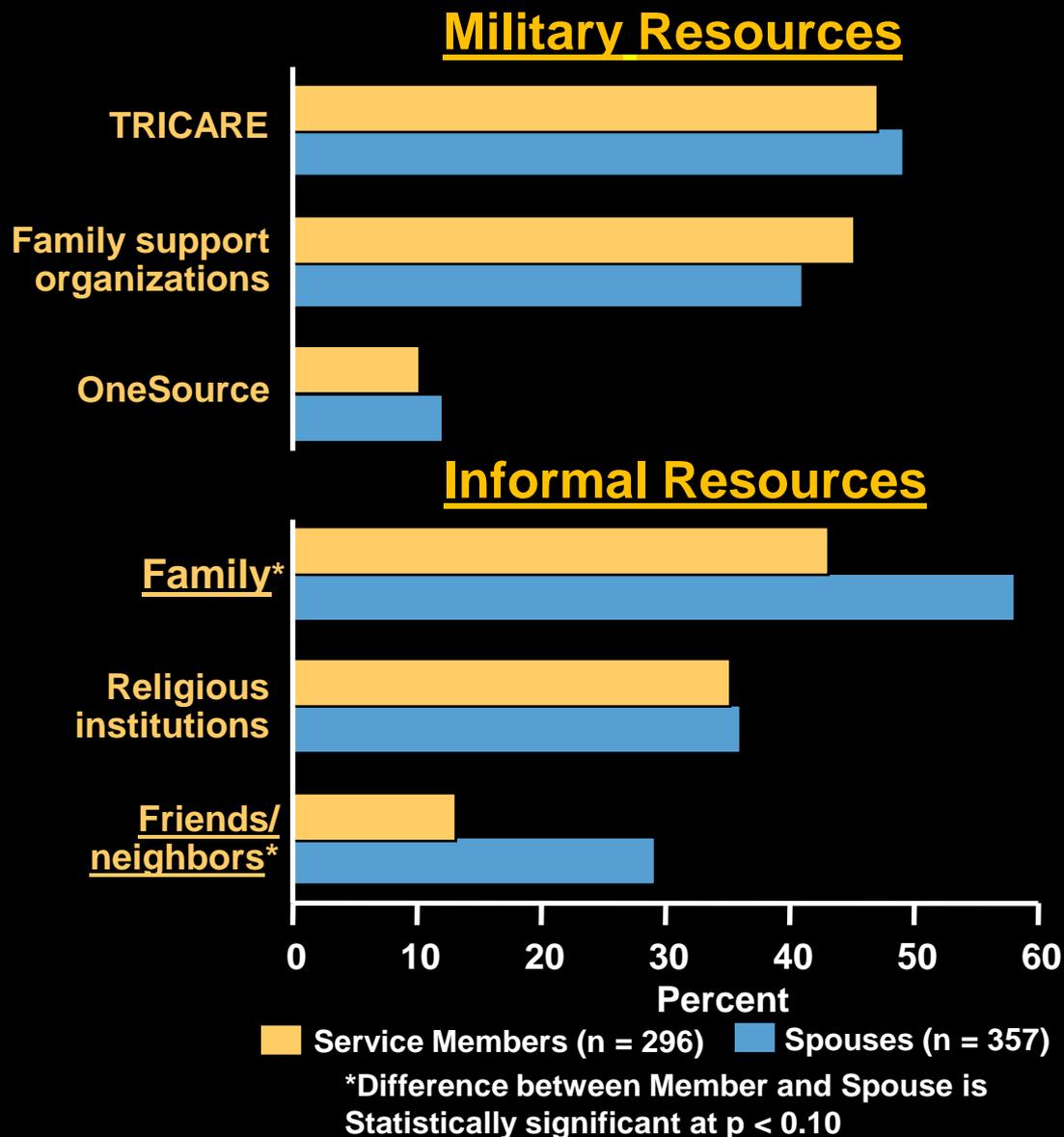
- 3 out of 4 reported positive aspects
- Again, there are differences across groups
- Service members more likely to cite no positives



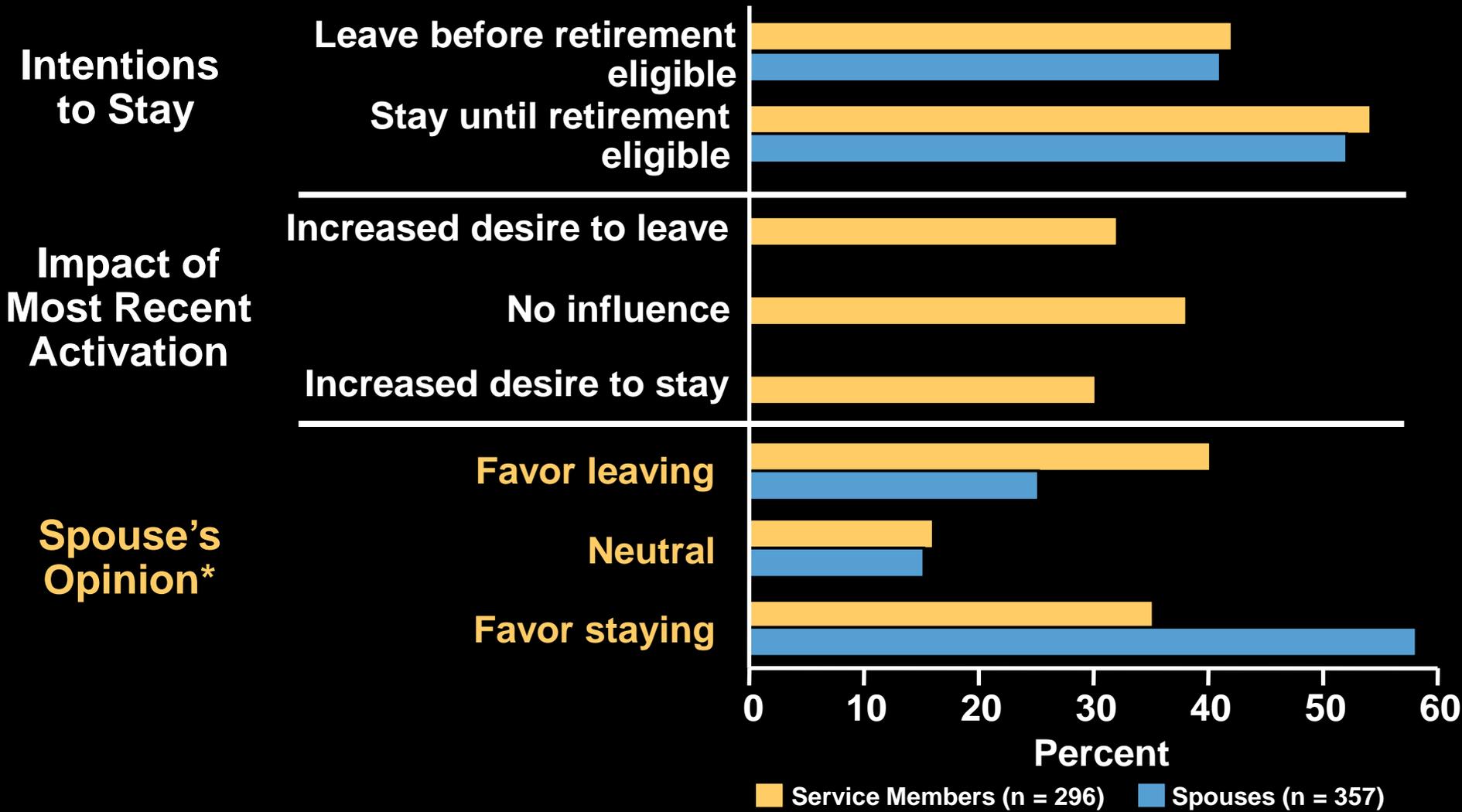
*Difference between Member and Spouse is Statistically significant at $p < 0.10$

Both Military and Informal Resources Are Used

- 9 out of 10 indicated their family did turn to a resource
- Family was the only support resource cited by a majority
- TRICARE and family support organizations were the most commonly reported military resources
- Some differences between spouses and service members



What Are Families' Retention Intentions?



*Difference between Member and Spouse is Statistically significant at $p < 0.10$