

CALIBER

2004 – 2005 U.S. COAST GUARD CHILDCARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Caliber Associates is pleased to submit this final report detailing the comprehensive childcare needs assessment recently undertaken for the U.S. Coast Guard's Office of Work-Life from October 2004 through April 2005 among Coast Guard active duty members. Through the development and administration of a Web-based survey, the conduct of site visits to 10 locations, and completion of benchmarking analyses, Caliber examined childcare utilization among Coast Guard service members; identified issues and challenges members face with respect to childcare; and assessed the impact that childcare issues and challenges have on quality of life, job performance and productivity, mission readiness, morale and retention. Collectively, the results were used to develop recommendations to assist the Coast Guard Office of Work-Life in formulating strategic plans and initiatives to better meet members' childcare needs and to provide enhanced childcare-related services to its' members and families.

1. SCOPE OF WORK

As the new millennium advances, Coast Guard personnel and their families face unique challenges with respect to accessing affordable, high-quality childcare services. To strengthen and enhance childcare services for its members and families, and to more comprehensively address the issues surrounding the availability, accessibility and affordability of quality childcare, the Coast Guard Office of Work-Life contracted with Caliber Associates to conduct a comprehensive assessment, the objectives of which included:

- Identification of childcare challenges facing members and their families
- Determination of the efficacy of Coast Guard programs and policies to address childcare concerns
- Formulation of recommendations for the Coast Guard, so that the childcare needs of its active duty and family members may be better supported.

In order to meet these objectives, the childcare needs assessment utilized the following methodologies:

- Development and administration of a Web-based survey of approximately 15,000 active duty members, including those with and without children
- Conduct of site visits to eight Integrated Service Commands (ISC), a Personnel Service Center (PSC Topeka), and the largest operational field command (Activities New York) to identify childcare issues and discuss perceived effects on job performance, productivity, mission readiness, and retention

- Conduct of benchmarking analyses to compare childcare services provided by Coast Guard to those offered by the Department of Defense's (DoD) military Services, and to obtain and compare local childcare costs for children ages 0-6 across 23 locations.

The specific methodologies utilized during the needs assessment—i.e., the survey, the site visits and the benchmarking analyses—are detailed below.

1.1 Web-based Survey

Caliber employed cutting-edge survey methodology, combining rigorous research and state-of-the-art technology, to design a Web-based survey that was administered to a census of approximately 7,500 members with children ages 0-6, and a random sample of 7,500 other Coast Guard active duty members. The survey included 35 questions addressing issues such as:

- Active duty member and spouse demographics
- Childcare utilization
- Preferences for childcare and factors influencing childcare decisions
- Satisfaction with childcare arrangements
- Impact of childcare on job performance, quality of life, and intentions to remain in the Coast Guard.

The survey was launched on December 7, 2004 to a pre-selected sample of 15,000 active duty Coast Guard members. The link sent to survey recipients included a letter from Rear Admiral Kenneth T. Venuto, Assistant Commandant for Human Resources, describing and endorsing the study. A reminder notice was sent to non-respondents via e-mail two weeks after the initial invitation, and a second reminder was sent via email alert two weeks later. In an effort to ensure that potential respondents at sea had ample opportunity to complete the survey, the survey remained live through January 14, 2005. Exhibit 1 summarizes the number of surveys sent, successfully delivered and completed by the selected sample.

EXHIBIT 1				
COAST GUARD CHILDCARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESPONSES				
Members	Surveys Sent	Surveys Delivered*	Surveys Completed	Percent Completed (Delivered/Completed)
Total	14,694	12,881	7,474	58.0
On Land	11,846	10,384**	6,254	60.2**
(Potentially) At Sea	2,848	2,497**	1,220	48.9**
With Young Children	7,371	6,461**	3,879	60.0**
Without Young Children	7,323	6,419**	3,595	56.0**

Note: The overall response rate target of 50 percent was exceeded. Additionally, the response rate of members (potentially) at sea approaches 50 percent. A disparity was noted between the response counts of members potentially at sea (afloat) (48.9%) and members on land (non-afloat) (60.2%). This was likely due to routine connectivity problems found on ships at sea. To accommodate members possibly experiencing connectivity problems at sea, the survey field period was extended to January 14, 2005. Additionally, a third email reminder was sent (January 3, 2005), to afloat units with the recommendation that at-sea members complete their surveys once they had access to a land-line Internet connection.

*14,694 members were solicited for the survey with 12 percent (1,813) undeliverable emails.

**The percentage of undeliverable email is assumed to be equal across demographics. This assumption has been applied where noted.

1.2 Site Visits

Caliber supplemented the information collected via the Web-based survey by conducting site visits to 10 Coast Guard locations. The purpose of the site visits was to gather additional information from parents, Work-Life staff, and leadership to help enrich and elaborate upon survey findings. Exhibit 2 identifies the sites included in the needs assessment, and summarizes participation across locations.

EXHIBIT 2				
FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPATION				
Site	Stakeholder Group			Total
	Parents	Leadership	Work-Life Staff	
ISC Alameda	22	11	3	36
ISC Portsmouth,	17	6	3	26
USCG HQ Washington, DC	14	2	7	23
ISC Seattle	8	8	2	18
ISC New Orleans	24	3	6	33
PSC Topeka	17	2	1	20
ISC Cleveland	9	9	2	20
ISC Miami	33	6	2	41
ISC Boston	19	9	4	32
ACT New York	15	11	3	29
TOTAL	178	67	33	278

1.3 Benchmarking Analyses

Benchmarking analyses were conducted to identify childcare standards of performance, obtain local childcare market rates, and compare childcare costs in locations where large numbers of Coast Guard members reside. The first step in the benchmarking process was the identification of cities/areas where larger numbers of Coast Guard members with young children reside, using department count rosters from the Coast Guard's human resources office. Credible sources, such as Childcare Aware and the National Association of Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), were then utilized to determine the average costs of childcare for infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children in both family- and center-based settings. This information was used to compare how much Coast Guard members pay for childcare in both military and civilian sectors, relative to the average cost of civilian childcare in each of 23 geographic locations.

2. RESULTS

The results obtained from the Web-based survey, the site visits and the benchmarking analyses were summarized and aggregated to inform the following:

- Childcare challenges
- Satisfaction with current childcare arrangements
- Resources used to obtain information about childcare
- Mechanisms available to support childcare needs
- Impacts of childcare.

The results obtained across methodologies were remarkably consistent, and are highlighted in subsequent sections of this Summary.

2.1 Childcare Challenges

The results of the quantitative information collected via survey as well as the qualitative information collected during focus group sessions shed light on the major childcare challenges confronting Coast Guard active duty members. With few exceptions, the primary challenges faced by service members with respect to childcare are related to the affordability, availability, and/or accessibility of quality childcare options.

According to comments received from stakeholders participating in focus groups, as well as results obtained from parents completing surveys, parents rarely find themselves in a position

where all three factors converge in which they are able to find childcare that is accessible (e.g., in close proximity to home or work), affordable and available (e.g., no waiting list for enrollment; open during the hours/times care is needed). Over two-thirds of parents responding to the survey indicated difficulties finding affordable care (71%) as well as high quality care (68%). The data collected during the benchmarking study support the challenges parents expressed with respect to finding affordable care. For parents not using military-sponsored facilities, the cost of care may be prohibitive—particularly in high cost-of-living areas. Parents in focus groups and responding to the survey are consistent with the finding that nearly half have been challenged to find care that fits their work schedules.

The degree to which parents are impacted by these three factors varies considerably from individual to individual and/or family to family, and some parents may be more adversely affected by the interplay of these factors than others. Those who seem to be particularly challenged to find high quality care that is accessible, affordable and available include:

- Single parents
- Dual-military parents
- Female active duty members
- Parents in high cost-of-living areas
- Parents with younger children¹
- Parents in operational units and/or those who work extended (12- and 24-hour) duty hours
- Parents from among the lower ranks—particularly junior enlisted
- Parents who have recently relocated to a new duty station, particularly if that duty station is geographically isolated or remote.

For parents who meet more than one of the above characteristics, the childcare challenges can be even more daunting. These individuals, more so than others, must often make compromises or sacrifices on at least one of these dimensions in order to find care for their child(ren).

¹ Discrepancies emerged during the examination of the affordability and availability of childcare for children of different ages, as indicated by surveys, focus group participants, and benchmarking analyses. Focus group participants largely expressed concerns regarding finding high quality, affordable care for infants, which according to the benchmarking study is the most expensive type of care. In contrast, higher percentages of parents completing surveys reported difficulty finding affordable care for preschoolers (41% versus 30% for infants), as well as high quality care for preschoolers (38% versus 29% for infants).

2.2 Satisfaction with Current Childcare Arrangements

Parents completing surveys and those participating in focus groups both reported high levels of satisfaction with their current childcare arrangements. While parents in both groups expressed dissatisfaction with at least some aspects of their childcare—most notably cost and hours of operation, as indicated above—the data collected during the needs assessment underscore that parents are generally happy with the care they have for their children. Three-quarters of parents completing surveys were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their current arrangements (regardless of the type of setting). Similarly, parents participating in focus groups were mostly positive in expressing their level of satisfaction with their childcare providers and many said that if they were not, they would make a change. Few parents—in either the survey or focus group sample—had to change their childcare arrangements within the last year.

2.3 Resources Used to Obtain Information About Childcare

Overwhelmingly, parents participating in the childcare needs assessment—either through survey completion or in focus group settings—indicated that their primary source of childcare information is “word of mouth.” Parents mainly rely upon friends, neighbors and coworkers to inform them of local childcare options. Very few parents participating in focus groups reported using the Coast Guard Office of Work-Life for childcare assistance and information, and only 20% of parents completing surveys did so. Other resources more commonly used by parents included the Internet and phonebook.

2.4 Impacts of Childcare

The information collected via focus groups and surveys underscore some of the potential impacts that childcare issues and challenges have on active duty members’ quality of life, job performance and productivity, mission achievement, readiness, morale and intentions to remain in the Coast Guard. Together, the information collected through the surveys and site visits indicates that childcare may negatively affect the following:

- **Job performance and productivity.** Performance and productivity may be impacted when parents are distracted, stressed or worried about their children during duty hours; when they have to leave early, arrive late or miss work entirely due to childcare issues; and when they have to bring their children to work.
- **Morale.** Parents expressed concerns about the negative impacts on morale associated with frequent and/or repeated absences from work due to childcare issues. Some of their primary anxieties were related to resentment created by others having to fill in for them and the potentially detrimental effects on their careers.

In spite of the potential negative impacts that childcare issues may have, most parents indicated their desire to remain in the Coast Guard and were appreciative of the support the Coast Guard provides. Participants generally felt that leaders were flexible, supportive and responsive to their needs regarding childcare and reported that it was their intention to remain in the Coast Guard at least beyond their present obligations, if not until retirement.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Using the information collected via the three methodologies employed during the childcare needs assessment—i.e., the survey, the site visits and the benchmarking study—Caliber developed strategies and recommendations to assist the Office of Work-Life in formulating strategic plans and initiatives to better meet members’ childcare needs and to provide enhanced childcare-related services to Coast Guard members and families. The specific strategies and recommendations proposed are identified in Exhibit 3.

EXHIBIT 3	
GOALS, STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS RESULTING FROM THE COAST GUARD CHILDCARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT	
<u>Goals:</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the access, availability, and affordability of high quality childcare for Coast Guard active duty members with children 0 to 6 years. 2. Augment the Coast Guard’s childcare services to better meet service members’ needs.
Strategies	Recommendations
Develop mechanisms to offset the high cost of quality childcare	Subsidize out-of-pocket childcare costs as a function of service members’ family income, age of child(ren) and geographic location
	Convert NAF positions in Coast Guard child development centers (CDCs) to GS billets
Develop and/or strengthen strategic partnerships	Strengthen partnerships with DoD-controlled childcare systems
	Develop partnerships with local childcare entities
	Engage national childcare organizations in active alliances
Enhance the Coast Guard’s childcare-related support mechanisms	Provide enhanced support through the Office of Work-Life
	Expand the Coast Guard’s childcare capacity through new CDC(s) and/or the family childcare program (FCC).

The strategies and recommendations presented here will, if implemented, assist the Coast Guard in improving the access, availability and affordability of quality childcare for Coast Guard active duty members with children ages 0 to 6, and will help augment the childcare services provided so that members’ needs are more effectively met. In considering these recommendations, however, the Coast Guard should determine to what extent they are willing to invest in childcare to remediate the identified challenges. As [some of] these recommendations require substantial investment of resources, the Coast Guard should use the results of this study

to help determine their level of commitment to childcare, and to make decisions about the most efficient use of childcare funds.

4. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The needs assessment recently completed by Caliber Associates for the U.S. Coast Guard's Office of Work-Life represents an important "first step" in the Coast Guard's mission to better meet the childcare needs of its members, and to provide better childcare-related supports and services. Using the results obtained during the course of the needs assessment as a baseline, Coast Guard leadership should develop a childcare action plan to help prioritize next steps. Important decisions must be considered and made about the Coast Guard's future investment in childcare, and resulting utilization of childcare funding and resources. First and foremost, the Coast Guard needs to consider how far they are willing to go to internally "fix" the childcare problems and invest in supporting the childcare needs of active duty members, or whether they should seek to develop partnerships (e.g., contracts) that make childcare an external, out-sourced function.

I. INTRODUCTION

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Caliber Associates is pleased to submit this final report detailing the comprehensive childcare needs assessment recently undertaken for the Coast Guard Office of Work-Life. The needs assessment, conducted October 2004 through April 2005 among Coast Guard active duty members, examined childcare utilization; identified specific childcare-related issues and challenges faced by members; and assessed the impact of childcare concerns on quality of life, job performance and productivity, mission, morale and retention. The findings obtained through the development and administration of a Web-based survey, and the conduct of site visits to 10 Coast Guard locations across the continental United States, highlight the availability, accessibility and quality of childcare services and resources existing for service members and their families.

This report details the methodology employed throughout the completion of the childcare needs assessment, provides a summary and discussion of findings and results, and offers recommendations to assist the Office of Work-Life in their efforts to more effectively meet the childcare needs of Coast Guard service members, and to provide enhanced childcare-related services and resources for members and families.

1. BACKGROUND AND UNDERSTANDING

The United States Coast Guard is the nation's premier maritime agency, as well as its oldest. A military, multi-mission, maritime service, the Coast Guard has protected the American public's most basic needs – safety and security, environment and economy – continuously for over 211 years. Its history is rich and complex because the Coast Guard grew from an amalgamation of five Federal agencies: the Revenue Cutter Service, the Lighthouse Service, the Steamboat Inspection Service, the Bureau of Navigation and the Lifesaving Service. In addition to providing critical support to the Department of the Navy during wartime, the Coast Guard is the only branch of the Armed Services to have been housed in three different Cabinet departments, the Treasury Department, the Department of Transportation, and now, the Department of Homeland Security.

The Coast Guard's military structure, law enforcement authority, and humanitarian function make it unique within the Federal government and enable it to support broad national operating goals, which include maritime safety, the protection of natural resources, maritime mobility, maritime security, and national defense. The Coast Guard's motto, "Semper Paratus" or "Always Ready," succinctly captures the service's far-reaching and comprehensive mission and illustrates the Coast Guard's dedication to meeting emergent threats to America's safety, security, environment and economy.

Worldwide military operations and an increased focus on homeland security interests have heightened the Coast Guard operations tempo and placed greater demands on resources throughout the service. How the Coast Guard advances its mission within the context of increased security concerns and fiscal austerity is best reflected in the watchwords of the Commandant's Direction – Readiness, People, Stewardship. As Admiral Collins noted in his 2004 State of the Coast Guard Address, “progress in readiness and stewardship depends on people, our... most important strategic theme. (Collins, 2004)” Just as changes in our country's security landscape drive improvements in Coast Guard operations, so too is the service committed to ensuring that it actively adapts to meet the continuing professional and personal needs of those men and women who serve.

1.1 Team Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Family

During the past ten years, the Coast Guard's membership has evolved as well as its mission. In 1994, then Commandant ADM Robert Kramek approved recommendations that integrated the reserves into the operations missions and administrative processes of the regular Coast Guard, effectively eliminating the differences between the two service components. “Team Coast Guard” subsequently refers to all those who serve the Coast Guard – from active duty officers and enlisted members to auxiliaries, reservists and civilians. Many also refer to the “Coast Guard Family,” which encompasses Team Coast Guard, their spouses and dependents, and the retiree community. As of July, 2004, there were approximately 39,000 active duty members of the Coast Guard, 8,000 selected reservists as well as 6,000 full-time, permanent civilian members.

Demographically, during the period of 1993 to 2003, the Coast Guard had the highest average percentage of non-Hispanic whites (83.1%) and the lowest percentage of black service members (6.3%), compared to the other branches of the armed services (DEOMI, 2003). In addition, the percent of women in the Coast Guard rose from 7.8 percent in 1993 to 10.7 percent in 2003 (DMDC, 2003). The percentage of women increased across all services from 11.7 percent to 14.9 percent with the Air Force having the highest average percentage for the period (16.7%) and the Marine Corps having the lowest percentage (5.4%).

The most recent data available (September, 2003) shows that 80.6 percent of active duty Coast Guard members are enlisted while 19.4 percent belong to the officer corps. This ratio is slightly lower compared to the other branches of the military which have a combined percentage of active duty enlisted members of 84 percent compared to 16.0 percent for officers. Of the women serving in the Coast Guard, 77 percent are enlisted while 23 percent are officers. Younger service members continue to make up the largest percentage of the active duty workforce with 40.4 percent of members being aged 25 or younger, compared to those 26 to 30

(19%), 31 to 35 (14.1%), 36 to 40 (12.9%) and 41 or older (13.6%). In addition, more than half (55%) of active duty Coast Guard service members are married which is comparable to the other service branches (Mancini & Archambault, MFRC 2000).

However, the demographic changes that have occurred across the armed forces go much deeper than many census statistics suggest. Military “quality of life” (QoL) research points to a number of factors influencing the changing demographics of the armed forces, including increased numbers of single parent service members, increasing numbers of junior enlisted, married members with children and higher numbers of joint-service marriages (Healthy Parenting Initiative (HPI)). For example, the percentage of military spouses in the general labor market climbed from 30 percent in 1970 to more than 60 percent by 1988. By the early 1990s, roughly half of all military members had one or more children *below* school age (RAND, 1992). In addition to changes in family structure, role expectations for husbands, wives, mothers and fathers have evolved more than the past few decades and have a significant impact on how service members balance work and family. Increasingly, all branches of the military have grown to appreciate the extent to which quality of life issues contribute to military retention and readiness. Current general statistics related to military family structure that influence quality of life include (MFRC, 2005):

- More than 1.2 million children under the age of 18
- Approximately 244,000 children under the age of 3
- 53 percent of the active duty workforce is married
- Two-thirds (63%) of young, enlisted military spouses are employed or seeking employment
- Six percent of military members are single parents
- Six percent of military members are in dual-military marriages.

Initiatives undertaken by the Coast Guard to support the professional and personal needs of its service members have yielded some significant, positive results. For example, in 2004, the Coast Guard achieved pay parity with the Department of Defense (DoD), including aggressive application of sea pay compensation (Collins, 2004). In addition, the service invested more than \$16 million in personal protection equipment during the previous three years and increased the educational opportunities for members, tripling the annual tuition assistance cap since 2000. These enhancements contributed to the Coast Guard achieving in 2004 its second-highest enlisted retention rate since 1958 (87.6%) and retention of Junior Officers beyond their initial obligation of 94.5% (Collins, 2004). As this report will detail, understanding the needs, capacity

and resources related to childcare for service members is a natural extension of the Coast Guard's commitment to and ongoing support for both "Team Coast Guard" and the "Coast Guard Family."

1.2 The Coast Guard and Childcare

One of the most significant examples of how the military has actively pursued policy and operational changes to address quality of life issues is in the provision of childcare. Early childcare services (i.e., early 1980's) in military communities were informal, at best – drop-in hourly care for volunteer workers and military spouses attending social activities on the installation. Usually, the "nurseries" were housed in the least desirable facilities on post and little, if any, financial support was provided by the installation. Similar to the civilian private sector, military childcare providers were underpaid and received few benefits, resulting in high turnover rates, especially in overseas (OCONUS) areas in which the annual turnover rate rose as high as 300 percent (MFRC, 2005). During the 1980's a series of reports and congressional hearings revealed that military childcare was seriously deficient in many respects, including unsafe and unsuitable facilities, reports of child abuse, lack of adequate standards or inspections and untrained and under-compensated staff resulting in high turnover rates. A 1989 GAO report noted that across all services, nearly 25,000 children were on waiting lists for center care. This did not take into account the families at nearly 250 installations who would have been interested in care had it been available at all (GAO/HRD-89-3).

As a result, Congress enacted the Military Childcare Act of 1989 (MCCA), which mandated improvements in military childcare. The goal of the MCCA was to improve the quality, availability, and affordability of military childcare and included provisions to address the creation of new childcare staff positions, training and compensation of child development center employees, employment of training and curriculum specialists, the establishment of inspection procedures, child abuse prevention and safety measures and setting parent fees based on family income. In the 1996 Defense Authorization Act, Congress codified the MCCA (Section 568) and added language requiring that all military childcare programs meet accreditation standards. By 2003, 99 percent of the DoD child development centers had been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a nationally recognized leader in early childhood care and education. Largely as a result of these efforts, military childcare is now seen as a model or "gold standard" for childcare services nationwide. Currently, initiatives are underway in many states to replicate the military model at the local and statewide level. These hard-won improvements in childcare serve not only to enhance the quality of care for children served within the system but are critical to maintaining a high-quality and motivated workforce within the military. Prior to enactment of the MCCA, a report of the House Armed Services Committee summarized this issue quite succinctly:

[C]hild care is an important readiness and retention issue for military families: readiness because single parents and dual service couples must have access to affordable and quality childcare if they are to perform their jobs...:retention because family dissatisfaction with military life – and particularly the inability of many spouses to establish careers or obtain suitable employment – is a primary reason trained military personnel leave the service (H.R. Rep. No. 101-121 cited in NWLC, 2000).

By 2002, military child development services were being provided at more than 300 locations worldwide through 800 child development centers and more than 9,000 family childcare homes. With these services, DoD estimated that it was meeting 58 percent of military family childcare needs and established a goal to meet 65 percent of these needs by 2003 (MFRC website, 2005). As demand continues to outstrip supply and the need for high quality childcare remains a high priority among military families, all branches of the Armed Services are exploring ways to enhance capacity and capability while utilizing available resources as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The Coast Guard, like the military Services, has actively pursued efforts to strengthen and enhance childcare services for its members. The Coast Guard's Child Development Services Manual (COMDTINST M1754.15) sets forth the policy, standards and procedures for establishing and administering Coast Guard Child Development Services delivery systems. Modeled on and comparable to the DoD Child Development Programs Instruction 6060.2, the Coast Guard CDS Manual outlines the policies covering Child Development Centers (CDCs), Family Childcare providers (FCCs), and Coast Guard Work-Life staff and repeatedly acknowledges that the "current need for child development services far exceeds the availability of quality, affordable military and civilian child development centers (1-1C)." Subsequently, the Instruction includes narrative detailing other available resources and devotes significant attention to outlining standards to ensure a high level of services. Most notable among these standards is the requirement that all Child Development Centers attain accreditation from NAEYC. In addition, the Coast Guard has established training and credentialing requirements for staff that research has shown to optimize program quality and minimize staff turnover.

The Coast Guard Child Development Services Program, designed to assist military and civilian personnel in balancing the competing demands of family life and the accomplishment of the Coast Guard mission, provides childcare services through:

- Child development centers (CDCs)
- Family childcare (FCC) providers
- Work-life family resource specialists

- DoD child development centers
- Federal childcare centers in GSA controlled spaces.

An examination of the Coast Guard's childcare, specifically the availability, accessibility and quality of services suggests that the service is making significant strides towards meeting this important quality of life need.

Currently there are nine Coast Guard Child Development Centers providing care to children aged six weeks through five years old. In 2003, these centers had the capacity to serve approximately 795 children per day. As of July 31, 2003, there were 506 children enrolled in full-time care and 191 children enrolled part-time (USCG White Paper, 2003). The Coast Guard has received requests in recent years from its installations to build new Child Development Centers. For example, ISC Seattle conducted a childcare needs survey that identified nearly 90 children who would seek enrollment in a new facility. However, a subsequent feasibility study determined that construction of a new full-service, onsite childcare center would not be cost-effective.

The Family Childcare (FCC) program is administered through the Integrated Support Commands. There are 17 Family Resource Specialists and one FCC Coordinator responsible for managing each local program. In addition, the Family Resource Specialist is responsible for providing Coast Guard members with information and referral to local licensed childcare resources. In 2003, there were 32 FCC providers caring for 126 children in nine Coast Guard duty locations. In May, 2003, the Coast Guard and the DoD entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) allowing Coast Guard active duty personnel to use DoD Child Development Centers, providing members access to high quality, low cost childcare facilities located near many Coast Guard units throughout the country. Lastly, Coast Guard personnel are entitled to utilize child development centers administered by the General Services Administration (GSA) located in 110 Federal office buildings across the country (and Puerto Rico).

In addition to ensuring that members have access to quality childcare, the Coast Guard is invested in addressing the affordability of available childcare. All Coast Guard Child Development Centers offer sliding scale tuition rates dependent on the family's total income. Section 1793(a) of Title 10, United States Code requires DoD to prescribe uniform fee regulations for Military Child Development Centers. The Coast Guard uses the DoD fee structure which, in 2003, ranged from \$42 per week per child to \$122. Average tuition across the Coast Guard was \$95.00 per week. For comparison purposes, non-military based childcare tuition in many metropolitan areas of the U.S. can reach up to \$250.00 per week for infant care (USCG White Paper, 2003) and in 2002, the average DoD weekly fee was \$79.00.

During FY05, the Coast Guard paid \$200,360 in child development center subsidies, \$2,678,221 in salaries and \$131,109 in insurance. An analysis of the Coast Guard and DoD childcare subsidies concluded that the Coast Guard subsidizes approximately \$4,581 per child per year compared to \$3,927 within the DoD (USCG White Paper, 2003). A 1999 study by the GAO (GAO/HEHS-00-7) found that DoD childcare costs 7% more per child than civilian center costs, largely because of higher staff wages, center accreditation and significantly higher numbers of infants and toddlers in military centers (48%) versus civilian centers (15%). Based on this analysis, the GAO concluded that the military provides quality, affordable childcare at cost comparable to civilian centers.

In 2003, Coast Guard CDC staffs were comprised of both NAF and GS employees. NAF employee salaries account for the highest expense in CDC budgets that are paid by parent fees. Subsequently, if the Coast Guard converted the additional NAF positions to GS billets, the service could further subsidize the cost of childcare. The Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2004 includes language supporting the ongoing relationship between the Coast Guard and DoD to allow members of both services mutual access to childcare services where available and with reimbursement (HR 2443). In terms of Coast Guard members obtaining affordable, civilian childcare, the Coast Guard does not currently have any agreements with national childcare chains to secure discounted rates for its members or civilian employees. An initiative is currently in development, however, that would allow subsidized tuition at designated GSA centers comparable to current military fee ranges. Lastly, DoD, in collaboration with the National Association of Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) launched Operation Military Childcare in February 2005 to provide financial subsidies for childcare for activated Reserve and National Guard troops and deployed, active duty service members whose families are unable to access childcare on military installations. Such efforts highlight the importance of thinking “outside the box” in order to make the most effective and efficient use of limited resources to meet the needs of the nation’s military families.

Scope of Current Project

To further strengthen and enhance childcare services for its members and families, and to more comprehensively address the availability, accessibility and affordability of high-quality of childcare services and resources available to the Coast Guard Family, the Coast Guard Office of Work-Life contracted with Caliber Associates to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the childcare needs of its active duty members. Through the development and administration of a Web-based survey, as well as the conduct of site visits to 10 locations, Caliber examined childcare utilization among Coast Guard service members; identified issues and challenges members face with respect to childcare; and assessed the impact that childcare issues and challenges have on quality of life, job performance and productivity, mission readiness, morale

and retention. Collectively, the results obtained from the administration of the survey and the conduct of the site visits were used to develop recommendations to assist the Coast Guard Office of Work-Life in formulating strategic plans and initiatives to better meet members' childcare needs and to provide enhanced childcare-related services to its' members and families.

2. OUTLINE OF REPORT

This report is presented in five chapters, including this Introduction. The remaining four chapters of the report include:

- **Chapter II: Methodology.** This chapter details the methodology employed during the conduct of the childcare needs assessment, including the development and administration of the 2004-2005 Coast Guard Childcare Needs Assessment survey, the conduct of site visits to 10 Coast Guard installations, and the benchmarking study and analysis undertaken during the course of the project.
- **Chapter III: Results.** This chapter highlights the results obtained from the survey, the findings obtained from the focus groups held with parents, leadership and Work-Life staff during the 10 site visits, and the results obtained from the benchmarking component of the study. Findings obtained across the three data collection components used during the course of the assessment are summarized and integrated in the last section of the chapter.
- **Chapter IV: Recommendations.** Using the findings obtained from the childcare needs assessments, this chapter presents recommendations for improving the availability of childcare, improving the monitoring of childcare resources and resolving documented gaps in the availability and/or affordability of childcare.
- **Chapter V: Discussion and Conclusion.** This chapter outlines lessons learned from the assessment, presents any limitations and/or caveats, outlines directions for future study, and offers concluding comments.

Additional resources, including site visit summaries and tools used during the childcare needs assessment, are provided in the appendices.

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II. METHODOLOGY

II. METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology utilized during the course of the comprehensive childcare needs assessment undertaken for the U.S. Coast Guard late Fall 2004 through Spring 2005. Over the past two decades, Caliber Associates has conducted a variety of needs assessments for the military services in various areas including child care. Our experience indicates that information collected during these assessments provides valuable input for planners and policymakers to determine program needs, whether program strategies should be changed, and under what circumstances an agency should support new program initiatives. In addition, needs assessments are most useful when carried out in a systematic manner that includes effective and efficient methods for gathering information, analyzing data, and reporting results.

As the new millennium advances, Coast Guard personnel and their families face unique challenges including accessing affordable, quality childcare services. The primary purposes of the current needs assessment were to:

- Identify childcare challenges facing members and their families
- Determine the efficacy of Coast Guard programs and policies to address childcare concerns
- Make recommendations so that the Coast Guard can better support the childcare needs of its' active duty and family members.

In order to meet these objectives, the childcare needs assessment utilized the following methodology:

- The development and administration of a Web-based survey of approximately 15,000 active duty members, including those with and without children
- The conduct of site visits to eight Integrated Support Commands (ISC), a Personnel Service Center (PSC Topeka), and the largest operational field command (Activities New York) to identify childcare issues and discuss perceived effects on job performance, productivity, mission readiness, and retention
- The conduct of benchmarking analyses to compare childcare services provided by Coast Guard to those offered by the Department of Defense's (DoD) military services, and to obtain and compare local childcare costs for children ages 0-6 across 23 locations.

Results obtained during the needs assessment are expected to assist Coast Guard Headquarters in the development of a strategic plan and initiatives to better meet members' childcare needs, and to provide enhanced child care-related services to service members and their families. In

addition, results are expected to improve Work-Life sponsored individual and family support programs around child care. The following sections describe the aforementioned needs assessment methodology in further detail.

1. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Caliber's cutting-edge survey methodology combined rigorous research with state-of-the-art technology to reduce the cost of data collection, and to improve the efficiency of data collection and analysis. In support of the childcare needs assessment, the Caliber team designed a Web-based survey that was administered to approximately 15,000 active duty Coast Guard personnel including a census of approximately 7,500 members with children ages 0-6 and a random sample of 7,500 other Coast Guard active duty members.

The survey developed by Caliber included 35 questions addressing issues such as active duty member and spouse demographics; current childcare usage; preferences for childcare and factors influencing childcare decisions; satisfaction with current childcare arrangements; and the impact of childcare on job performance, quality of life, and intentions to remain in the Coast Guard. (Refer to Appendix A for a hard copy of the electronic survey administered to Coast Guard active duty members.) Caliber launched the Web survey on December 7, 2004. Approximately 15,000 active duty Coast Guard members with virtually universal Internet access were selected for participation—including a pre-selected sample of parents with children under age 6, and a randomly selected sample of other active duty members. The link sent to survey recipients included a letter from Rear Admiral Kenneth T. Venuto, Assistant Commandant for Human Resources, describing and endorsing the study (see Appendix B). A reminder notice was sent to non-respondents via e-mail two weeks after the invitation, and a second reminder was sent via email alert two weeks later. In an effort to ensure that potential respondents at sea had ample opportunity to complete the survey, the survey remained live an additional two weeks—through January 14, 2005.

Caliber's Web-based survey was a self-administered questionnaire that provided efficient methods for collecting and analyzing survey data. Specific advantages of utilizing Web survey methodology for the purposes of the Coast Guard childcare needs assessment included:

- A faster and more robust response rate
- Dynamic error checking capability
- The ability to make complex skip pattern questions within the body of the survey easier to follow
- The inclusion of pop-up instructions for selected questions

- The use of drop-down boxes to facilitate item completion
- The provision of online technical assistance.

In addition, Caliber’s methodology addressed many challenges commonly associated with Web-based surveys. Refer to Exhibit II-1 for a summary of frequently-held concerns regarding Web-based surveys and Caliber’s method(s) of addressing these issues to overcome potential limitations.

EXHIBIT II-1	
COMMON CONCERNS REGARDING WEB SURVEYS AND CALIBER’S RESPONSES	
Common Concerns	Caliber’s Response(s)
Lower response rates when compared to mailed surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Caliber collected data from a known population with virtually universal Internet access. ■ A pre-selected sample of active duty members was identified for survey receipt and were notified in advance of the survey intent and administration. ■ Parents with children under age 6—those most proximal to the issues under study—were targeted. ■ Respondents received the survey at their designated duty station email addresses.
Unwillingness of respondents to complete the survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Caliber used a personalized e-mail cover letter from a high-ranking Coast Guard official to endorse and support the survey process. ■ Non-respondents received bi-weekly e-mail reminders. ■ Respondents were able to return multiple times to the survey (if desired) prior to submitting their responses. ■ The survey, on average, took less than 20 minutes to complete.
Varying levels of personal computer proficiency among users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Caliber constructed a user-friendly Web survey to increase the likelihood that members would respond accurately to the survey request. ■ Technical assistance was provided both on-line and via telephone for the duration of the survey administration period.
User anxieties about privacy and data security issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Caliber ensured privacy and data security via password protection and the encryption of data.
Questionnaires may not look the same in different browsers and on different monitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Caliber utilized relatively simple formats, plain graphics design, and a survey design featuring questions that were easy to understand.

2. SITE VISIT METHODOLOGY

As part of the needs assessment, Caliber supplemented the information collected via the Web-based survey by conducting site visits to 10 Coast Guard locations. The purpose of the site visits was to gather additional information from parents, Work-Life staff, and leadership to help enrich and elaborate upon survey findings. During the site visits, these three stakeholder groups addressed the following key issues:

- Childcare challenges and concerns
- Perceived effects of childcare on quality of life, performance, productivity, mission readiness, and retention
- Recommendations to improve childcare

Exhibit II-2 depicts the site visit schedule followed during the course of the assessment.

EXHIBIT II-2 SITE VISIT SCHEDULE	
Site	Date
Integrated Support Command Alameda, CA	December 1-2, 2004
Integrated Support Command Portsmouth, VA	December 14-15, 2004
U S Coast Guard Headquarters Washington, DC	January, 12-13, 2005
Integrated Support Command Seattle, WA	January, 19-20, 2005
Integrated Support Command New Orleans, LA	January 25-26, 2005
Personnel Service Center Topeka, KS ¹	January 25-26, 2005
Integrated Support Command Cleveland, OH	January 27-28, 2005
Integrated Support Command Miami, FL	January 31-February 1, 2005
Integrated Support Command Boston, MA	February 2-3, 2005
Activities New York New York, NY ²	March 22-23, 2005

¹ part of ISC St. Louis, MO

² part of ISC Boston, MA

At each of the above-mentioned sites, Caliber worked with local Coast Guard points of contact (POCs) to coordinate the visits. During the visits, two Caliber staff members facilitated 1.5-hour focus groups and/or structured interviews with the following groups of stakeholders:

- Parents
 - Enlisted members (and/or spouses)
 - Officers (and/or spouses)

- Leadership
 - NCOs
 - Commissioned Officers

- Work-Life Staff
 - Supervisor
 - Family Resource Specialists and others

During parent focus groups, enlisted members and officers discussed childcare challenges, utilization, and concerns in a facilitated forum. Central to the issues discussed with parents was the need to improve access to affordable, quality childcare services. Similarly, leadership focus groups candidly discussed the impact of childcare issues on job performance and productivity, morale, mission achievement and retention. Among these issues was the need to create an environment in which the Coast Guard may achieve organizational excellence and continue to provide valued services to personnel. During their interviews, Work Life staff discussed program operations including strengths and weaknesses, and resources provided to meet the childcare needs of clientele. Among the issues discussed with these stakeholders was the need for resources to improve Work-Life sponsored individual and family support programs including child care, child development centers, and family child care. Refer to Appendix C for copies of all instrumentation and materials used during the conduct of the site visits.

Other site visit activities included tours of Child Development Centers (if located at or near the site), and in-briefs or out-briefs with command staff (upon request).

3. BENCHMARKING METHODOLOGY

Benchmarking analyses were conducted to identify childcare standards of performance, obtain local childcare market rates, and compare childcare costs in locations where large numbers of Coast Guard members reside. This information will enable the Coast Guard to more effectively target problem areas and provide potential solutions to help achieve better levels of service with respect to child care. Benchmarking studies, like that conducted during the course of this assessment, expose organizations to innovations and breakthroughs, and potentially have a powerful affect on influencing organizational change.

The first step in the benchmarking process was the identification of cities/areas where larger numbers of Coast Guard members with young children reside, using department count rosters from the Coast Guard's human resources office. Based on the population residence figures, locations selected for inclusion in the benchmarking analysis are summarized in Exhibit II-3.

EXHIBIT II-3		
SITES INCLUDED IN BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS		
Alexandria, VA	Elizabeth City, NC	Oklahoma Cty, OK
Arlington, VA	Honolulu, HI	Petaluma, CA
Alameda, CA	Juneau, AK	Portsmouth, VA
Baltimore, MD	Los Angeles, CA	Seattle, WA
Boston, MA	Miami, FL	Topeka, KS
Cape May, NJ	Mobile, AL	Washington, DC
Chesapeake, VA	New London, CT	Yorktown, VA
Cleveland, OH	New Orleans, LA	

After determining where the members with young children reside, credible sources such as Childcare Aware and the National Association of Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) were utilized to determine the average costs of childcare in each of these locations. Once a local resource and referral office was identified and contacted, data was obtained for fulltime civilian childcare market rates for infant, toddler, and preschool care. In addition, these rates were obtained for both family-based care and center-based care, where available. This information was used to compare how much Coast Guard members are paying for childcare in both military and civilian sectors, relative to the average cost of civilian childcare in each of 23 geographic locations.

III. RESULTS

III. RESULTS

This chapter summarizes the results obtained during the comprehensive childcare needs assessment conducted by Caliber Associates for the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Work-Life. The needs assessment consisted of three separate components:

- Development and administration of a Web-based survey to approximately 15,000 active duty members—a census of those with children ages 6 and younger, and a random sample of other Coast Guard service members
- Conduct of site visit to 10 Coast Guard locations within the continental United States to complete focus groups with the following stakeholders:
 - Active duty members (both Enlisted and Officer) and/or spouses who are parents of children aged 0 to 6
 - Coast Guard leadership, including Non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and members of the Officer corps
 - Work-Life staff members and Supervisors
- Completion of benchmarking analyses to compare the Coast Guard’s service delivery around childcare to those of the military Services within the Department of Defense (DoD), and to evaluate the cost of civilian-based childcare in 23 locations across the U.S. in which larger numbers of Coast Guard members and families reside.

Results obtained during the execution of each of these components will be presented in subsequent sections of this chapter. The final section of the chapter provides a summary and integration of results obtained across the survey, site visit and benchmarking data collection processes.

1. SURVEY RESULTS

To capture baseline data on the childcare utilization, needs and challenges, impact on quality of life, morale, mission and retention of Coast Guard active duty members, Caliber developed and administered a 35-item Web-based survey to a sample of 15,000 Service members. The results of the survey are presented and discussed below. First, the sample of Coast Guard members receiving the survey is described, followed by a summary of response rates obtained for the administration. Then, the responses obtained (by question) are provided. Depending upon the question, responses are broken out according to specific demographic characteristics of survey respondents.

1.1 Coast Guard Sample and Response Rates

The Coast Guard Childcare Survey a Web-based survey administered to identify local childcare needs and challenges of Active duty Coast Guard members, and to assess the impact of

childcare issues on mission accomplishment and intention to remain on active duty status. The Coast Guard sample was comprised of a census of all Active Duty members having a child (or children) age six and younger stratified random sample of remaining active duty members. Names and email addresses for selected active duty members were provided to Caliber by the Coast Guard.

The survey sample of “non-parents” was drawn from: a census of E2 service members, and a random sample of the remaining paygrades of which 50 percent comprised Coast Guard service members E3-E6 and 50 percent comprised E7-E9 and Officer ranks. It is important to note that both sample subgroups may be comprised of parents with children older than 6 years in age.

The entire survey sample used for this assessment effort consisted of 14,693 total cases broken out as follows:

- 7,369 active duty members with children ages 0 – 6
- 197 active duty members from the E2 rank group
- 7,127 active duty members with no children 0 – 6
 - 3,563 (50%) E3 to E6
 - 3,564 (50%) E7-E9 and Officer ranks.

Members selected to receive surveys were notified by email with a direct link to the survey (<http://cg.survey.caliber.com>), a password login, and a direct link to a letter of survey authenticity from the Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard. To compensate for a 10 percent anticipated “undeliverable” rate (resulting from incorrect personnel records, changes in personnel status, etc.), additional email addresses for 2,000 service members were included in the sample’s two subgroups. The survey field period was 07 December 2004-14 January 2005, with two reminder emails distributed during the survey field period. Exhibit III-1 shows the timeline and responses for survey respondents during the field period.

EXHIBIT III-1				
COAST GUARD CHILDCARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESPONSE				
CCNA RESPONSES AS OF 01/06/2004 14:30				
Members	Invitations Sent	Invitations Delivered*	Surveys Completed	Percent Completed (Delivered/Completed)
Total	14,694	12,881	7,474	58.0
On Land	11,846	10,384**	6,254	60.2**
(Potentially) At Sea	2,848	2,497**	1,220	48.9**
With Young Children	7,371	6,461**	3,879	60.0**
Without Young Children	7,323	6,419**	3,595	56.0**

Note: The overall response rate target of 50 percent was exceeded. Additionally, the response rate of members (potentially) at sea approaches 50 percent. A disparity was noted between the response counts of members potentially at sea (afloat) (48.9%) and members on land (non-afloat) (60.2%). This was likely due to routine connectivity problems found on ships at sea. To accommodate members possibly experiencing connectivity problems at sea, the survey field period was extended to January 14, 2005. Additionally, a third email reminder was sent (January 3, 2005), to afloat units with the recommendation that at-sea members complete their surveys once they had access to a land-line Internet connection.

*14,694 members were solicited for the survey with 12 percent (1,813) undeliverable emails.

**The percentage of undeliverable email is assumed to be equal across demographics. This assumption has been applied where noted.

Once the Web-based survey was closed out (i.e., taken off-line), survey data were exported into a .csv file and imported into SPSS 13.0 to undergo final data cleaning routines and response rate calculations. A protocol was designed to address skip pattern errors and errors in response categories (out-of-range responses).

Once the data was cleaned, appropriate statistical measures were run on responses to individual survey question. Responses are presented in subsequent sections of this report, within the following domains.

- Demographic characteristics of survey respondents
- Duty station and commute
- Profile of active duty members planning to have or adopt children
- Childcare and deployment
- Childcare issues and Coast Guard jobs
- Childcare preferences and needs
- Sources of childcare information
- Demographics of dependent and childcare utilization
- Career intentions.

Responses to questions within each of these domains will be presented in turn.

1.2 Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents

The demographic profile of active duty Coast Guard members responding to the survey is shown in this section of the report for respondents that are not parents of a child (or children) 6 years or younger, parents of a child (or children) 0 – 6, and the total sample. As shown in Exhibits III-2 and III-3, the typical respondent was primarily male (89%) and approximately 33 years in age.

EXHIBIT III-2						
Q1. GENDER						
	Active Duty-Other N=3416		Active Duty-Parent N=4573		All Respondents N=7992	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	2962	86.7	4161	91.0	7123	89.2
Female	454	13.3	412	9.0	866	10.8

EXHIBIT III-3						
Q2. AGE						
	Active Duty-Other N=3421		Active Duty-Parent N=4579		All Respondents N=8000	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Mean	33.99		32.50		33.13	
Standard Deviation	8.871		6.004		7.404	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
18-25 yrs	838	24.5	626	13.7	1464	18.3
26-33 yrs	825	24.1	1972	43.1	2797	35.0
34-41 yrs	875	25.6	1631	35.6	2506	31.3
42-49 yrs	803	23.5	339	7.4	1142	14.3
50 or more yrs	80	2.3	11	0.2	91	1.1

Exhibit III-4 presents data on the number of dependents children age 6 or younger of active duty Coast guard members completing the survey. Almost 56 percent of respondents have a single child 0-6 and 92 percent indicated that they have either one or two children in this age range.

EXHIBIT III-4						
Q15. HOW MANY DEPENDENT CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE?						
	Active Duty-Not Parent of Child(ren) Under 6 N=3430		Active Duty-Parent of Child(ren) Under 6 N=4592		All Respondents N=8022	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No children	3430	100.0			3430	42.8
One child			2556	55.9	2566	32.0
Two children			1665	36.3	1665	20.8
Three children			315	6.9	315	3.9
Four or more children			46	1.0	46	0.6

Exhibit III-5 presents the education levels achieved by Coast Guard personnel responding to the survey. As shown in the Exhibit, almost 80 percent of respondents had at least some college. Parents with children ages 0 to 6 were less likely than other active duty members to have obtained a college degree.

EXHIBIT III-5						
Q4. YOUR EDUCATION						
	Active Duty-Other N=3434		Active Duty-Parent N=4586		All Respondents N=8010	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than high school	6	0.2	4	0.1	10	0.1
High school/GED	681	19.9	1007	22.0	1688	21.1
Some college but no degree	1395	40.7	2122	46.3	3517	43.9
College degree	993	29.0	960	20.9	1953	24.4
Graduate degree	349	10.2	493	10.8	842	10.5

As reported by survey respondents in Exhibit III-6, the majority of Active duty members are White/Caucasian (81.2%), followed by Hispanic (8.4%), Black or African American (5.1%) and Other (4.5%). As respondents could select more than one category for race/ethnicity, responses do not necessarily sum to 100 percent.

EXHIBIT III-6						
Q5. RACE/ETHNICITY (MARK ALL THAT APPLY.)						
	Active Duty-Other N=3434		Active Duty-Parent N=4586		All Respondents N=8010	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	120	3.5	192	4.2	312	3.9
Asian	109	3.2	117	2.5	226	2.8
Black or African American	169	4.9	242	5.3	411	5.1
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	248	7.2	427	9.3	675	8.4
<i>Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano</i>	80	32.7	173	40.6	253	37.7
<i>Puerto Rican</i>	105	42.9	170	39.9	275	41.
<i>Cuban</i>	16	6.5	26	6.1	42	6.2
<i>Other Hispanic/Spanish</i>	63	25.7	90	21.1	153	22.8
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	37	1.1	60	1.3	97	1.2
White	2797	81.5	3721	81.0	6518	81.2
Other	168	4.9	191	4.2	359	4.5

Marital Status and Spouse Demographics

In the Exhibit III-7 through III-10 below, data are presented for marital status, the military status of spouses of Active duty respondents, and the employment and educational status of spouses. Of the 535 total spouses married to another military member (6.7%), more than 87 percent are Coast Guard service members (dual-military Coast Guard.) Almost three-fourths of all Active duty members are married to a civilian, including 87 percent of those with at least one child under 6. More than half of all spouses who are not a parent of a child(ren) six and younger, work full time; almost half of all spouses who are a parent of a child(ren) 0 – 6 years old are not currently working outside of the home for pay. The educational status of spouses is nearly equivalent across the subgroups.

EXHIBIT III-7						
Q3. MARITAL STATUS						
	Active Duty-Other N=3430		Active Duty-Parent N=4592		All Respondents N=8022	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not Married	1382	40.3	257	5.6	1639	20.4
Married to a civilian	1843	53.7	4005	87.2	5848	72.9
Married to another (dual) military member	205	6.0	330	7.2	535	6.7

EXHIBIT III-8						
Q6. SPOUSE'S STATUS IN THE MILITARY						
	Active Duty-Other N=207		Active Duty-Parent N=329		All Respondents N=536	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Coast Guard	183	88.4	284	86.3	467	87.1
Army	6	2.9	5	1.5	11	2.1
Air Force	2	1.0	5	1.5	7	1.3
Marine Corps	1	0.5	3	0.9	4	0.7
Navy	8	3.9	16	4.9	24	4.5
Other	7	3.4	16	4.9	23	4.3

EXHIBIT III-9						
Q7. SPOUSE'S EMPLOYMENT STATUS						
	Active Duty-Other N=2040		Active Duty-Parent N=4325		All Respondents N=6365	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Spouse does not work outside of the home for pay	446	21.9	2008	46.4	2454	38.6
Spouse works part time	414	20.3	780	18.0	1194	18.8
Spouse works full time	1059	51.9	1240	28.7	2299	36.1
Spouse is a student	121	5.9	297	6.9	418	6.6

EXHIBIT III-10						
Q8. SPOUSE'S EDUCATION						
	Active Duty-Other N=2041		Active Duty-Parent N=4326		All Respondents N=6367	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than high school	26	1.3	59	1.4	85	1.3
High school/GED	407	19.9	912	21.1	1319	20.7
Some college but no degree	655	32.1	1570	36.3	2225	34.9
College degree	751	36.8	1407	32.5	2158	33.9
Graduate degree	202	9.9	378	8.7	580	9.1

Exhibits III-11 and III-12 depict the income and paygrade of all survey respondents. Almost 40 percent of all respondents have annual family incomes in the highest category (\$70,000+) as compared to other respondents. However, 57 percent of parents were among the lower enlisted paygrades, compared to only 40 percent of those without young children.

EXHIBIT III-11						
Q14. TOTAL FAMILY INCOME						
	Active Duty-Other N=3405		Active Duty-Parent N=4563		All Respondents N=7968	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
\$23,000 or less	223	6.5	183	4.0	406	5.1
\$23,001-\$34,000	553	16.2	864	18.9	1417	17.8
\$34,001-\$44,000	506	14.9	891	19.5	1397	17.5
\$44,001-\$55,000	522	15.3	793	17.4	1315	16.5
\$55,001-\$69,999	599	17.6	795	17.4	1394	17.5
\$70,000 or more	1002	29.4	1037	22.7	2039	25.6

EXHIBIT III-12						
Q32. PAY GRADE						
	Active Duty-Other N=3277		Active Duty-Parent N=4128		All Respondents N=7405	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
E2-E3	119	3.6	72	1.7	191	2.6
E4-E6	1177	35.9	2300	55.7	3477	47.0
E7-E9	677	20.7	595	14.4	1272	17.2
W1-W5	299	9.1	158	3.8	457	6.2
O1-O4	807	24.6	842	20.4	1649	22.3
O5 and above	198	6.0	161	3.9	359	4.8

1.3 Duty Station and Work Commute

In this section, information regarding survey respondents commutes is reported. The primary mode of commuting to duty stations, usually 16 – 30 minutes, is by personal vehicle. Commutes are also shown for ATUs in major metropolitan areas.

EXHIBIT III-13						
Q11. HOW MANY MINUTES FROM YOUR DUTY STATION DO YOU LIVE?						
	Active Duty-Other N=3353		Active Duty-Parent N=4525		All Respondents N=7878	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
On base	135	4.0	236	5.2	371	4.7
0-5 minutes	259	7.7	367	8.1	626	7.9
6-15 minutes	769	22.9	931	20.6	1700	21.6
16-30 minutes	1055	31.5	1330	29.4	2385	30.3
31-60 minutes	814	24.3	1246	27.5	2060	26.1
More than 60 minutes	321	9.6	415	9.2	736	9.3

EXHIBIT III-14						
Q11. COMMUTES TO DUTY STATIONS OF LONGER THAN 30 MIN DURATION: MAJOR METROPOLITAN ATUS						
	Active Duty-Other N=3353		Active Duty-Parent N=4525		All Respondents N=7878	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
First District-Boston	90	36.6	70	35.2	160	35.9
Fifth District-Portsmouth	55	30.9	62	37.3	117	34.0
Seventh District-Miami	96	36.7	109	42.2	205	39.4
Eighth District-New Orleans	109	33.9	97	40.8	206	36.8
Ninth District-Cleveland	35	18.4	53	30.8	88	24.3
Eleventh District-Alameda	65	35.5	61	42.1	126	38.5
Thirteenth District-Los Angeles	33	23.9	28	28.8	61	26.0
20 ATU	83	28.7	106	46.5	189	36.5
Headquarters	137	71.7	70	80.4	207	74.5

Note: Parents of children under age 6 who have a stay-at-home spouse were removed from this analysis.

EXHIBIT III-15						
Q12. HOW DO YOU COMMUTE TO WORK? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY.)						
	Active Duty-Other N=3420		Active Duty-Parent N=4589		All Respondents N=8009	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Personal vehicle	2976	87.0	4093	89.2	7069	88.3
Car/van pool	335	9.8	461	10.0	796	9.9
Public transportation	281	8.2	295	6.4	576	7.2
Bicycle	257	7.5	348	7.6	605	7.6
Walk	225	6.6	268	5.8	493	6.2
Other	72	2.1	64	1.4	136	1.7

1.4 Active Duty Members Planning to Have or Adopt Children

Active duty Coast Guard members who are not currently a parent of a child 0 – 6 were asked whether they are planning to have or adopt child(ren) in the next five years. Data presented below shows that nearly one-third of survey respondents have such plans. The demographic profiles of prospective parents are presented in Exhibit III-16.

EXHIBIT III-16		
Q16. ARE YOU PLANNING TO HAVE OR ADOPT CHILD(REN) IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?		
	Active Duty-Other N=3413	
	N	%
No	2481	72.7
Yes	932	27.3

EXHIBIT III-17		
Q16A. DEMOGRAPHICS OF ACTIVE DUTY WHO ARE PLANNING TO HAVE OR ADOPT CHILD(REN) IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.		
	Active Duty-Other N=932	
Marital status		
Not married	396	42.5
Married to a civilian	434	46.6
Married to another (dual) military member	102	10.9
Total family income		
\$23,000 or less	75	8.1
\$23,001-\$34,000	180	19.4
\$34,001-\$44,000	169	18.2
\$44,001-\$55,000	138	14.9
\$55,001-\$69,999	146	15.7
\$70,000 or more	220	23.7
Age		
Mean	28.98	
Standard deviation	6.260	
Age		
18-25 yrs	326	35.0
26-33 yrs	401	43.1
34-41 yrs	162	17.4
42-49 yrs	39	4.2
50 or more yrs	3	0.3
Pay Grade		
	N	%
E2-E3	55	6.1
E4-E6	425	47.2
E7-E9	83	9.2
W1-W5	14	1.6
O1-O4	309	34.3
O5 and above	15	1.7

1.5 Childcare and Deployment

This section displays responses to survey items concerning changes in childcare needs and arrangements as a consequence of deployments. Responses are shown for Active Duty Parents of Child(ren) Six and Under, Active Duty without an At-Home Parent, and Female Service Members Only. Results indicate that one-third of parents with children 0 – 6 report that childcare needs change when deployed. One-quarter of parents report having a family care plan that specifies childcare upon deployment.

EXHIBIT III-18								
Q23. DO YOUR CHILDCARE NEEDS CHANGE WHEN YOU ARE DEPLOYED?								
	All Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4454		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2519		Afloat N=688		Non=Afloat N=3766	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No	2992	67.2	1455	57.8	462	67.2	462	67.2
Yes	1462	32.8	1064	42.2	226	32.8	226	32.8

EXHIBIT III-19								
Q24. DO YOU HAVE A FAMILY CARE PLAN THAT SPECIFIES CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS IN CASE YOU ARE DEPLOYED?								
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4457		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2523		Afloat N=684		Total N=3773	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No	3267	73.3	1777	70.4	495	72.4	2772	73.5
Yes	1190	26.7	746	29.6	189	27.6	1001	26.5

1.6 Childcare Issues and Coast Guard Jobs

In this section, parental responses to survey items concerning childcare needs and their effects on Coast Guard job-related performance are presented. Responses are shown for Active Duty Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6, active duty members who do not have stay-at-home parent, and female service members only. As illustrated in Exhibit III-20 through III-23, female respondents' jobs seem to be the most adversely affected by childcare challenges.

EXHIBIT III-20				
Q26A. INDICATE THE NUMBER OF DAYS YOU HAVE MISSED WORK DUE TO CHILDCARE NEEDS IN THE PAST YEAR.				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4154		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2367	
	N	%	N	%
None	2137	51.4	991	41.9
1-3 days	1316	31.7	858	36.2
4-6 days	441	10.6	319	13.5
7-9 days	130	3.1	97	4.1
10 or more days	130	3.1	102	4.3

EXHIBIT III-21				
Q26B. INDICATE THE NUMBER OF DAYS YOU HAVE ARRIVED LATE TO WORK DUE TO CHILDCARE NEEDS IN THE PAST YEAR.				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4095		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2327	
	N	%	N	%
None	1974	48.2	925	39.8
1-3 days	1187	29.0	722	31.0
4-6 days	514	12.6	354	15.2
7-9 days	185	4.5	136	5.8
10 or more days	235	5.7	190	8.2

EXHIBIT III-22				
Q26C. INDICATE THE NUMBER OF DAYS YOU LEFT WORK EARLY DUE TO CHILDCARE NEEDS IN THE PAST YEAR.				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4287		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2415	
	N	%	N	%
None	1354	31.6	577	23.9
1-3 days	1426	33.3	851	35.2
4-6 days	807	18.8	514	21.3
7-9 days	346	8.1	229	9.5
10 or more days	354	8.3	244	10.1

EXHIBIT III-23				
Q30A-I. CHILDCARE NEEDS IN PAST YEAR HAVING HAD A JOB IMPACT.... (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=1948		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=1377	
	N	%	N	%
Sometimes bring child to work	511	26.2	387	28.1
Worry about childcare while at work	829	42.6	633	46.0
Supervisors state job performance is affected	154	7.9	123	8.9
Others have had to cover for me	599	30.7	452	32.8
Worry others may feel I do not do my share	507	26.0	378	27.5
Worry about effects on my career opportunities	649	33.3	507	36.8
Considering leaving military due to childcare situation	483	24.8	371	26.9
Other impacts	351	18.0	205	14.9
	N=4296		N=2436	
Total impacts	1948	45.3	1377	56.5
No impacts on job	2348	54.7	1059	43.5

1.7 Childcare Preferences and Needs

Exhibits III-24 through III-31 identify the childcare needs and preferences of parents with children between 0 and 6 years, as well as challenges they have faced with respect to finding childcare.

EXHIBIT III-24				
Q20. I PREFER MY CHILDCARE TO BE CLOSE TO....				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4478		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2538	
	N	%	N	%
My home	3107	69.4	1622	63.9
My work place	672	15.0	533	21.0
No preference	699	15.6	383	15.1

EXHIBIT III-25								
Q22. I PREFER MY CHILDCARE TO BE....								
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4420		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2510		Afloat N=672		Non-Afloat N=3748	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Center-based	1260	28.5	953	38.0	174	25.9	1086	29.0
Home-based	1825	41.3	767	30.6	281	41.8	1544	41.2
No preference	1335	30.2	790	31.5	217	32.3	1118	29.8

EXHIBIT III-26				
Q27. DO YOU HAVE A NEED FOR CHILDCARE OUTSIDE OF REGULAR/TRADITIONAL HOURS (0600-1800)?				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4486		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2538	
	N	%	N	%
No	3301	73.6	1691	66.6
Yes	1185	26.4	847	33.4

EXHIBIT III-27				
Q28A-E. MY NEED FOR NONTRADITIONAL CHILDCARE HOURS (OUTSIDE OF (0600-1800) IS... (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=1170		Parents Without At- Home Parent N=836	
	N	%	N	%
Evenings	929	79.4	650	77.8
Nights	606	51.8	429	51.3
Weekend days	636	54.4	453	54.2
Weekend nights	202	17.3	408	48.8
Other	150	119.6	157	18.8

EXHIBIT III-28				
Q51A-E. IN THE PAST YEAR I HAVE HAD TROUBLE FINDING AFFORDABLE... (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=1952		Parents Without At- Home Parent N=1322	
	N	%	N	%
Infant care (Birth-11 mos.)	591	30.3	384	29.0
Pretoddler care (12-23 mos.)	556	28.5	339	25.6
Toddler care (24-35 mos.)	538	27.6	335	25.3
Preschooler care (3-4 yrs.)	793	40.6	549	41.5
School-age care (5-6 yrs.)	458	23.5	318	24.1

EXHIBIT III-29				
Q52A-E. IN THE PAST YEAR I HAVE HAD TROUBLE FINDING HIGH QUALITY... (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=1753		Parents Without At- Home Parent N=1192	
	N	%	N	%
Infant care (Birth-11 mos.)	501	28.6	324	27.2
Pretoddler care (12-23 mos.)	479	27.3	303	25.4
Toddler care (24-35 mos.)	492	28.1	307	25.8
Preschooler care (3-4 yrs.)	665	37.9	462	38.8
School-age care (5-6 yrs.)	421	24.0	296	24.8

EXHIBIT III-30				
Q25. IN THE PAST YEAR, HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU HAD TO CHANGE YOUR CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS				
<i>(Does not include emergency or back-up care)?</i>				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4456		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2524	
	N	%	N	%
I have not had to make a change	2748	61.7	1225	48.5
1-2 times	991	22.2	755	29.9
3-4 times	366	8.2	282	11.2
More than 4 times	351	7.9	262	10.4

EXHIBIT III-31				
Q29A-L CHILDCARE NEEDS IN PAST YEAR HAVING HAD AN EFFECT ON YOUR.... (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=3053		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2063	
	N	%	N	%
Finding care that fits work schedule	1410	46.2	1081	52.4
Finding care when off duty to sleep	297	9.7	212	10.3
Finding affordable care	2161	70.8	1471	71.3
Finding high quality care	2075	68.0	1442	69.9
Finding back up care when current care fails	1589	52.0	1177	57.1
Finding care for a sick child	1132	37.1	930	45.1
Finding care for child with special needs	144	4.7	83	4.0
Finding care in convenient location	1257	41.2	880	42.7
Finding care when school is closed	1115	36.5	895	43.4
Finding transportation to and from childcare	253	8.3	181	8.8
Other	224	7.3	129	6.3
	N=4394		N=2508	
Total effects	3053	69.5	2063	82.3
No effects on me	1341	30.5	445	17.7

1.8 Sources of Childcare Information

Survey respondents were asked how they find out about childcare. As shown by the three subgroups of Coast Guard parents, by far the strongest source of information is word-of-mouth, accounting for about 80 percent of all sources. The next important sources of childcare information include Phonebook (39.9%) and Internet (35.6%). Note: As responses were Mark All That Apply, responses do not necessarily sum to 100 percent.

EXHIBIT III-32				
Q31A-I HOW I FIND OUT INFORMATION ABOUT CHILDCARE....				
(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4046		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2410	
	N	%	N	%
Coast Guard Work-Life Office	788	19.5	463	19.2
Family Resource Specialist	303	7.5	185	7.7
Family Resource and Referral Service	364	9.0	236	9.8
Ombudsmen	247	6.1	135	5.6
Newspaper	868	21.5	563	23.4
Phonebook	1157	28.6	792	32.9
Internet	1038	25.7	694	28.8
Word-of-mouth	3127	77.3	1957	81.2
Other	440	10.9	214	8.9

1.9 Demographics of Dependents and Childcare Utilization

This section presents demographic information about children ages 0 – 6. It follows with childcare utilization and cost information.

Age(s) of Dependents

EXHIBIT III-33				
Q101. HOW OLD ARE YOUR CHILDREN?				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4573		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2586	
	N	%	N	%
How old is your youngest child?				
Birth-11 mos.	925	20.2	423	16.4
12-23 mos.	968	21.2	505	19.5
24-35 mos.	772	16.9	423	16.4
3-4 yrs.	1170	25.6	746	28.8
5-6 yrs.	738	16.1	489	18.9
Does this child have special needs?	N=4531		N=2561	
No	4253	93.9	2378	92.9
Yes	278	6.1	183	7.1
How old is your second youngest child?				
Birth-11 mos.	29	1.5	13	1.4
12-23 mos.	112	5.6	57	6.2
24-35 mos.	284	14.2	98	10.6
3-4 yrs.	696	34.8	308	33.4
5-6 yrs.	878	43.9	445	48.3
Does this child have special needs?	N=1967		N=903	
No	1825	92.8	832	92.1
Yes	142	7.2	71	7.9

EXHIBIT III-33 (CONT.)				
Q101. HOW OLD ARE YOUR CHILDREN?				
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 N=4573		Parents Without At-Home Parent N=2586	
How old is third youngest child?	N	%	N	%
Birth-11 mos.	6	1.7	4	3.0
12-23 mos.	8	2.3	3	2.3
24-35 mos.	8	2.3	4	3.0
3-4 yrs.	76	22.1	29	21.8
5-6 yrs.	246	71.5	93	69.9
Does this child have special needs?	N=334		N=129	
No	311	93.1	119	92.2
Yes	23	6.9	10	7.8
How old is your fourth youngest child?	N	%	N	%
Birth-11 mos.	1	2.2	1	6.7
12-23 mos.	2	4.3	2	13.3
24-35 mos.	0	0.0	0	0.0
3-4 yrs.	6	13.0	3	20.0
5-6 yrs.	37	80.4	9	60.0
Does this child have special needs?	N=46		N=15	
No	41	89.1	11	73.3
Yes	5	10.9	4	26.7

Childcare Arrangements

EXHIBIT III-34			
Q102. HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THE FOLLOWING CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)			
	All Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6		Total
	N	%	N
Military Child Development Center (CDC)	314	6.9	4575
Military Child Development Home (CDH) Provider	58	1.3	4575
Spouse/partner	2711	59.3	4575
Civilian childcare center	1019	22.3	4575
Civilian licensed provider	352	7.7	4575
Relative, friend or neighbor	883	19.3	4575
Caregiver in home	91	2.0	4575

Number of Hours of Care

EXHIBIT-35			
Q103. HOW MANY HOURS DO YOU USE THE FOLLOWING ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)			
	All Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6		Total
	N	Avg Hrs/Wk	N
Military Child Development Center (CDC)	314	33.0	4575
Military Child Development Home (CDH) Provider	58	30.1	4575
Spouse/partner	2711	53.2	4575
Civilian childcare center	1019	31.7	4575
Civilian licensed provider	352	29.8	4575
Relative, friend or neighbor	883	20.1	4575
Caregiver in home	91	27.0	4575

Childcare Costs Per Week

EXHIBIT III-36			
Q103. HOW MUCH DO YOU PAY PER WEEK FOR CHILDCARE FOR YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)			
	All Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6		Total
	N	Avg Cost Category*	N
Military Child Development Center (CDC)	314	3.4	4575
Military Child Development Home (CDH) Provider	58	3.2	4575
Spouse/partner	2711	1.2	4575
Civilian childcare center	1019	3.7	4575
Civilian licensed provider	352	3.5	4575
Relative, friend or neighbor	883	2.0	4575
Caregiver in home	91	3.3	4575
* 1=\$0 per wk 2=\$1-\$50 per wk 3=\$51-\$100 per wk 4=\$101-\$150 per wk 5=Over \$150 per wk			

Satisfaction with Childcare

EXHIBIT III-37					
Q104. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)					
	Parents of Child(ren) 0 – 6 (Percent Satisfaction)				
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Military Child Development Center (CDC)	33.1	41.6	15.1	8.8	1.3
Military Child Development Home (CDH) Provider	34.5	34.5	12.1	15.5	3.4
Spouse/partner	75.4	10.4	11.4	1.4	1.4
Civilian childcare center	31.6	46.9	17.8	3.3	0.4
Civilian licensed provider	36.1	46.8	14.6	1.7	0.8
Relative, friend or neighbor	48.2	30.8	17.1	2.6	1.4
Caregiver in home	49.5	34.1	13.2	2.2	1.1

1.10 Career Intentions for All Survey Respondents

This section presents data on how inclined Coast Guard active duty members are to remain on active status in the Coast Guard. Responses shown in Exhibit III-38 express the importance and value of family programs on intent to remain in the Coast Guard. The strength of this association is exhibited in the table not only for respondents with a child(ren) 0 – 6, but for all respondents. Coast Guard members are generally inclined to be positive in their career intentions and outlook, with 50 percent of Active duty reporting an intent to stay in the Coast Guard until retirement.

EXHIBIT III-38						
Q34A. I STAY IN THE COAST GUARD BECAUSE OF THE SUPPORT SYSTEMS IT PROVIDES FOR ME AND FAMILY.						
	Active Duty-Other N=3352		Active Duty-Parent N=4281		All Respondents N=7633	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly agree	372	11.1	769	18.0	1141	14.9
Agree	1239	37.0	1497	35.0	2736	35.8
Neutral	1068	31.9	1173	27.4	2241	29.4
Disagree	455	13.6	579	13.5	1034	13.5
Strongly disagree	218	6.5	263	6.1	481	6.3

EXHIBIT III-39						
Q34B. MY FUTURE PLANS INCLUDE LEAVING THE COAST GUARD AT THE END OF MY PRESENT OBLIGATION.						
	Active Duty-Other N=3344		Active Duty-Parent N=4271		All Respondents N=7615	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly agree	431	12.9	385	9.0	816	10.7
Agree	351	10.5	337	7.9	688	9.0
Neutral	852	25.5	1001	23.4	1853	24.3
Disagree	987	29.5	1277	29.9	2264	29.7
Strongly disagree	723	21.6	1271	29.8	1994	26.2

EXHIBIT III-40						
EQ34C. MY FUTURE PLANS INCLUDE STAYING BEYOND MY PRESENT OBLIGATION BUT NOT NECESSARILY UNTIL RETIREMENT.						
	Active Duty-Other N=3313		Active Duty-Parent N=4233		All Respondents N=7546	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly agree	64	1.9	115	2.7	179	2.4
Agree	172	5.2	177	4.2	349	4.6
Neutral	897	27.1	1031	24.4	1928	25.5
Disagree	1092	33.0	1445	34.1	2537	33.6
Strongly disagree	1088	32.8	1465	34.6	2553	33.8

EXHIBIT III-41						
Q34D. MY FUTURE PLANS INCLUDE A CAREER WITH AND RETIREMENT FROM THE COAST GUARD.						
	Active Duty-Other N=3370		Active Duty-Parent N=4333		All Respondents N=7703	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly agree	1650	49.0	2188	50.5	3838	49.8
Agree	768	22.8	1111	25.6	1879	24.4
Neutral	549	16.3	649	15.0	1198	15.6
Disagree	152	4.5	161	3.7	313	4.1
Strongly disagree	251	7.4	224	5.2	475	6.2

1.11 Results Obtained from Female Coast Guard Parents

Demographic Characteristics of Female Parents and Single Female Parents

The demographic profile of active duty Coast Guard members responding to the survey is shown in this section of the report for the 412 female respondents who are parents of a child (or children) ages six or younger. Female respondents represented 9% of the total parent sample

(see Exhibit III-42), of which a subset includes single parents (2% of total parents; 22% of female parents). As shown in Exhibit III-43, the average age of female respondents was approximately 30 years, or about two years younger than the total sample of 4,573 active duty parents.

EXHIBIT III-42						
Q1. GENDER						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4573		Female Parent N=412		Single Female Parent N=92	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	4161	91.0				
Female	412	9.0	412	100.0	92	100.0

EXHIBIT III-43						
Q2. AGE						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4579		Female Parent N=411		Single Female Parent N=91	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Mean	32.50		30.32		29.36	
Standard Deviation	6.004		6.251		7.273	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
18-25 yrs	626	13.7	99	24.1	30	33.0
26-33 yrs	1972	43.1	179	43.6	38	41.8
34-41 yrs	1631	35.6	119	29.0	18	19.8
42-49 yrs	339	7.4	12	2.9	3	3.3
50 or more yrs	11	0.2	2	0.5	2	2.2

Exhibit III-44 presents data on the number of dependent children ages 6 or younger for Coast guard members completing the survey. Female parents and single female parents in particular, were much more likely to have one child (65 % and 78%, respectively) than the total parent sample (56%).

EXHIBIT III-44						
Q15. HOW MANY DEPENDENT CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE?						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4582		Female Parent N=412		Single Female Parent N=92	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No children						
One child	2556	55.9	269	65.3	72	78.3
Two children	1665	36.3	124	30.1	16	17.4
Three children	315	6.9	17	4.1	3	3.3
Four or more children	46	1.0	2	0.5	1	1.1
Average number of children	2.53		2.40		2.27	

Exhibit III-45 presents the education levels achieved by Coast Guard personnel responding to the survey. As can be seen from the exhibit, female parents and single female parents have very comparable educational levels to the total Coast Guard parent sample with one exception: Single female parents were less likely to have completed a college degree (16%) than either female parents (21%) or all parents (21%).

EXHIBIT III-45						
Q4. YOUR EDUCATION						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4586		Female Parent N=412		Single Female Parent N=92	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than high school	4	0.1	1	0.2	1	1.1
High school/GED	1007	22.0	77	18.7	20	21.7
Some college but no degree	2122	46.3	215	52.2	53	57.6
College degree	960	20.9	87	21.1	15	16.3
Graduate degree	493	10.8	32	7.8	3	3.3

Exhibit III-46 shows that the majority of parent respondents reported their race/ethnicity as White/Caucasian (70% or more of all groups). Hispanic, and Black or African American represented the next largest racial/ethnic groups. Proportionately, female parents and single female parents were more likely to report Hispanic or Black/African American than all parents. As respondents could select more than one category for race/ethnicity, responses do not necessarily sum to 100 percent.

EXHIBIT III-46						
Q5. RACE/ETHNICITY (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4586		Female Parent N=412		Single Female Parent N=92	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	192	4.2	14	3.4	4	4.3
Asian	117	2.5	17	4.1	2	2.2
Black or African American	242	5.3	45	10.9	12	13.0
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	427	9.3	38	9.2	11	12.0
<i>Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>40.6</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>47.4</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>54.5</i>
<i>Puerto Rican</i>	<i>170</i>	<i>39.9</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>31.6</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>36.4</i>
<i>Cuban</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>6.1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>5.3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>9.1</i>
<i>Other Hispanic/Spanish</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>21.1</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>18.4</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0.0</i>
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	60	1.3	17	4.1	4	4.3
White	3721	81.0	308	74.8	66	71.7
Other	191	4.2	16	3.9	6	6.5

Marital Status and Spouse Demographics

In Exhibits III-47 through III-49, data are presented for marital status, the military status of spouses of active duty respondents, and the employment status of spouses. A notable finding in marital status is that 87 percent of all active duty parents are married to a civilian, compared to only 39 percent for female parents. Moreover, female parents are four times more likely to be unmarried than the total parent sample, and greater than five times more likely to be married to another military member (dual-status), primarily a Coast Guard member. As a result, 81 percent of male spouses of a female Coast Guard parent are working full-time (i.e., military service).

EXHIBIT III-47						
Q3. MARITAL STATUS						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4592		Female Parent N=412		Single Female Parent N=92	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not Married	257	5.6	92	22.3	92	100.0
Married to a civilian	4005	87.2	161	39.1		
Married to another (dual) military member	330	7.2	159	38.6		

EXHIBIT III-48						
Q6. SPOUSE'S STATUS IN THE MILITARY						
	Active Duty-Parent N=329		Female Parent N=159		Single Female Parent N=N/A	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Coast Guard	284	86.3	140	88.1		
Army	5	1.5	4	2.5		
Air Force	5	1.5	3	1.9		
Marine Corps	3	0.9	2	1.3		
Navy	16	4.9	9	5.7		
Other	16	4.9	1	0.6		

EXHIBIT III-49						
Q7. SPOUSE'S EMPLOYMENT STATUS						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4325		Female Parent N=320		Single Female Parent N=N/A	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Spouse does not work outside of the home for pay	2008	46.4	24	7.5		
Spouse works part time	780	18.0	17	5.3		
Spouse works full time	1240	28.7	258	80.6		
Spouse is a student	297	6.9	21	6.6		

Exhibits III-50 and III-51 depict the income and paygrade of all parent survey respondents. In total family income, female parents appear comparable to the total parent sample, (as noted 81% of their spouses are working full time.) Almost 60 percent of single female parents however, have total “family” incomes of \$34,000 or less. In paygrade, over 90 percent of female single parents are below E7, with 87 percent of these parents having paygrades between E4-E6.

EXHIBIT III-50						
Q14. TOTAL FAMILY INCOME						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4563		Female Parent N=409		Single Female Parent N=91	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
\$23,000 or less	183	4.0	13	3.2	9	9.9
\$23,001-\$34,000	864	18.9	81	19.8	45	49.5
\$34,001-\$44,000	891	19.5	53	13.0	16	17.6
\$44,001-\$55,000	793	17.4	61	14.9	12	13.2
\$55,001-\$69,999	795	17.4	73	17.8	4	4.4
\$70,000 or more	1037	22.7	128	31.3	5	5.5

EXHIBIT III-51						
Q32. PAY GRADE						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4128		Female Parent N=369		Single Female Parent N=77	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
E2-E3	72	1.7	11	3.0	3	3.9
E4-E6	2300	55.7	248	67.2	67	87.0
E7-E9	595	14.4	31	8.4	2	2.6
W1-W5	158	3.8	7	1.9	0	0.0
O1-O4	842	20.4	64	17.3	5	6.5
O5 and above	161	3.9	8	2.2	0	0.0

Childcare Issues for Female Parents and Single Female Parents During Deployments

This section displays responses from parent groups to survey items concerning changes in childcare needs as a consequence of deployments. Exhibit III-52 and III-53 show female parents and especially single female parents report significant changes in both childcare needs and childcare arrangements at times of deployments. For female parents afloat, childcare needs (though not childcare arrangements) are also changed.

EXHIBIT III-52										
Q23. DO YOUR CHILDCARE NEEDS CHANGE WHEN YOU ARE DEPLOYED?										
	Active Duty-Parent N=4454		Female Parent N=400		Single Female Parent N=88		Female Parent Afloat N=20		Female Parent Non-Afloat N=379	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No	2992	67.2	179	44.8	23	26.1	7	35.0	171	45.1
Yes	1462	32.8	221	55.3	65	73.9	13	65.0	208	54.9

EXHIBIT III-53										
Q24. DO YOU HAVE A FAMILY CARE PLAN THAT SPECIFIES CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS IN CASE YOU ARE DEPLOYED?										
	Active Duty-Parent N=4457		Female Parent N=404		Single Female Parent N=88		Female Parent Afloat N=20		Female Parent Non-Afloat N=383	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No	3267	73.3	214	53.0	49	55.7	11	55.0	202	52.7
Yes	1190	26.7	190	47.0	39	44.3	9	45.0	181	47.3

Child Care Issues and Coast Guard Jobs

In this section, parental responses to survey items concerning child care needs and their effects on Coast Guard job-related performance are presented. For single female parents, almost 17 percent experienced at least 10 missed work days in the past year compared to 3 percent of all Coast Guard parents. As can be seen in Exhibit III-54 through III-57, female respondents' jobs seem to be the most adversely affected by child care challenges.

EXHIBIT III-54						
Q26A. INDICATE THE NUMBER OF DAYS YOU HAVE MISSED WORK DUE TO CHILDCARE NEEDS IN THE PAST YEAR.						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4154		Female Parent N=391		Single Female Parent N=85	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	2137	51.4	93	23.8	14	16.5
1-3 days	1316	31.7	153	39.1	27	31.8
4-6 days	441	10.6	75	19.2	18	21.2
7-9 days	130	3.1	35	9.0	12	14.1
10 or more days	130	3.1	35	9.0	14	16.5

EXHIBIT III-55						
Q26B. INDICATE THE NUMBER OF DAYS YOU HAVE ARRIVED LATE TO WORK DUE TO CHILDCARE NEEDS IN THE PAST YEAR.						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4095		Female Parent N=367		Single Female Parent N=79	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	1974	48.2	122	33.2	16	20.3
1-3 days	1187	29.0	104	28.3	27	34.2
4-6 days	514	12.6	63	17.2	13	16.5
7-9 days	185	4.5	25	6.8	7	8.9
10 or more days	235	5.7	53	14.4	16	20.3

EXHIBIT III-56						
Q26C. INDICATE THE NUMBER OF DAYS YOU LEFT WORK EARLY DUE TO CHILDCARE NEEDS IN THE PAST YEAR.						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4287		Female Parent N=384		Single Female Parent N=81	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	1354	31.6	71	18.5	9	11.1
1-3 days	1426	33.3	136	35.4	23	28.4
4-6 days	807	18.8	100	26.0	23	28.4
7-9 days	346	8.1	33	8.6	11	13.6
10 or more days	354	8.3	44	11.5	15	18.5

EXHIBIT III-57						
Q30A-I. CHILDCARE NEEDS IN PAST YEAR HAVING HAD A JOB IMPACT....						
(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)						
	Active Duty-Parent N=1948		Female Parent N=304		Single Female Parent N=79	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sometimes bring child to work	511	26.2	116	38.2	36	45.6
Worry about child care while at work	829	42.6	140	46.1	35	44.3
Supervisors state job performance is affected	154	7.9	39	12.8	11	13.9
Others have had to cover for me	599	30.7	116	38.2	31	39.2
Worry others may feel I do not do my share	507	26.0	117	38.5	40	50.6
Worry about effects on my career opportunities	649	33.3	153	50.3	49	62.0
Considering leaving military due to child care situation	483	24.8	142	46.7	42	53.2
Other impacts	351	18.0	59	19.4	10	12.7
	N=4296		N=393		N=87	
Total impacts	1948	45.3	304	77.4	79	90.8
No impacts on job	2348	54.7	89	22.6	8	9.2

Childcare Preferences and Needs for Female Parents and Single Female Parents

Exhibits III-58 through III-65 identify the childcare needs and preferences of parents with children between 0 and 6 years, as well as challenges they have faced with respect to finding childcare. Female parents are much more likely to have preferences for child care that is located close to their work place, and consistent with all parents, prefer their child care to be center-based. Additionally, female parents are about twice as likely to report the need for childcare hours that extend beyond traditional hours.

EXHIBIT III-58						
Q20. I PREFER MY CHILDCARE TO BE CLOSE TO....						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4478		Female Parent N=406		Single Female Parent N=89	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
My home	3107	69.4	177	43.6	29	32.6
My work place	672	15.0	173	42.6	48	53.9
No preference	699	15.6	56	13.8	12	13.5

EXHIBIT III-59										
Q22. I PREFER MY CHILDCARE TO BE....										
	Active Duty-Parent N=4420		Female Parent N=403		Single Female Parent N=88		Female Parent Afloat N=20		Female Parent Non-Afloat N=382	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Center-based	1260	28.5	222	55.1	43	48.9	9	45.0	213	55.8
Home-based	1825	41.3	88	21.8	20	22.7	7	35.0	81	21.2
No preference	1335	30.2	93	23.1	25	28.4	4	20.0	88	23.0

EXHIBIT III-60						
Q27. DO YOU HAVE A NEED FOR CHILDCARE OUTSIDE OF REGULAR/TRADITIONAL HOURS (0600-1800)?						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4486		Female Parent N=405		Single Female Parent N=88	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No	3301	73.6	195	48.1	32	36.4
Yes	1185	26.4	210	51.9	56	63.6

EXHIBIT III-61						
Q28A-E. MY NEED FOR NONTRADITIONAL CHILDCARE HOURS (OUTSIDE OF (0600-1800) IS... (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)						
	Active Duty-Parent N=1170		Female Parent N=209		Single Female Parent N=56	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Evenings	929	79.4	165	78.9	46	82.1
Nights	606	51.8	124	59.3	37	66.1
Weekend days	636	54.4	147	70.3	46	82.1
Weekend nights	202	17.3	128	61.2	41	73.2
Other	150	12.8	60	28.7	21	37.5

Exhibits III-62 and III-63 indicate the challenges of finding affordable and high quality childcare for children whose ages range from birth to 6 years. Finding quality and affordable care were primary issues across all parent groups spanning all five children age groups. The top two challenges for each parent group was finding quality and affordable preschool care (i.e., care for 3-4 year old child) and infant care (birth to 11 months). Taken together, infant and preschool childcare comprised between 67-71 percent of the childcare challenges reported by all parent groups across all age categories for children.

EXHIBIT III-62						
Q51A-E. IN THE PAST YEAR I HAVE HAD TROUBLE FINDING AFFORDABLE... (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)						
	Active Duty-Parent N=1952		Female Parent N=256		Single Female Parent N=67	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Infant care (Birth-11 mos.)	591	30.3	117	45.7	19	28.4
Pretoddler care (12-23 mos.)	556	28.5	67	26.2	11	16.4
Toddler care (24-35 mos.)	538	27.6	70	27.3	16	23.9
Preschooler care (3-4 yrs.)	793	40.6	82	32.0	25	37.3
School-age care (5-6 yrs.)	458	23.5	53	20.7	18	26.9

EXHIBIT III-63						
Q52A-E. IN THE PAST YEAR I HAVE HAD TROUBLE FINDING HIGH QUALITY...						
(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)						
	Active Duty-Parent N=1753		Female Parent N=232		Single Female Parent N=58	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Infant care (Birth-11 mos.)	501	28.6	98	42.2	18	31.0
Pretoddler care (12-23 mos.)	479	27.3	62	26.7	9	15.5
Toddler care (24-35 mos.)	492	28.1	65	28.0	12	20.7
Preschooler care (3-4 yrs.)	665	37.9	66	28.4	21	36.2
School-age care (5-6 yrs.)	421	24.0	49	21.1	16	27.6

Exhibits III-64 and III-65 present the impact of childcare needs on the daily life of parents. Exhibit III-64 presents the frequency of childcare arrangements changed in the past 12 months.

Female parents and single female parents reported at least twice as many changes in their child care arrangements than did active duty parents overall. At least 60 percent of each female parent group had to change arrangements at least once in the past year, compared to 38 percent for the total parent group. Exhibit III-65 reveals the specific effects on parent life resulting from child care needs. Most notable for female parents and for single female parents were the impacts of (1) finding care that fits their work schedule, (2) finding back up care when current care fails, and (3) finding care for a sick child. Looking at the combined (total) effects on parental life, 30 percent of all active duty parents reported that childcare having had no effect, compared to 7 percent for female parents and 1 percent for single female parents.

EXHIBIT III-64						
Q25. IN THE PAST YEAR, HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU HAD TO CHANGE YOUR CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS						
(DOES NOT INCLUDE EMERGENCY OR BACK-UP CARE)?						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4456		Female Parent N=405		Single Female Parent N=88	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
I have not had to make a change	2748	61.7	162	40.0	22	25.0
1-2 times	991	22.2	157	38.8	38	43.2
3-4 times	366	8.2	65	16.0	20	22.7
More than 4 times	351	7.9	21	5.2	8	9.1

EXHIBIT III-65						
Q29A-L CHILDCARE NEEDS IN PAST YEAR HAVING HAD AN AFFECT ON YOUR.... (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)						
	Active Duty-Parent N=3053		Female Parent N=376		Single Female Parent N=87	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Finding care that fits work schedule	1410	46.2	242	64.4	63	72.4
Finding care when off duty to sleep	297	9.7	48	12.8	16	18.4
Finding affordable care	2161	70.8	277	73.7	72	82.8
Finding high quality care	2075	68.0	271	72.1	66	75.9
Finding back up care when current care fails	1589	52.0	249	66.2	73	83.9
Finding care for a sick child	1132	37.1	226	60.1	59	67.8
Finding care for child with special needs	144	4.7	17	4.5	7	8.0
Finding care in convenient location	1257	41.2	191	50.8	47	54.0
Finding care when school is closed	1115	36.5	187	49.7	51	58.6
Finding transportation to and from child care	253	8.3	45	12.0	13	14.9
Other	224	7.3	36	9.6	6	6.9
	N=4394		N=404		N=88	
Total effects	3053	69.5	376	93.1	87	98.9
No effect on me	1341	30.5	28	6.9	1	1.1

Survey respondents were asked how they find out about childcare. As shown in Exhibit III-66, by far the strongest source of information is word-of-mouth, accounting for about 80 percent of all sources. The next important sources of childcare information include Phonebook and Internet. Note: As responses were Mark All That Apply, responses do not necessarily sum to 100 percent.

EXHIBIT III-66						
Q31A-I HOW I FIND OUT INFORMATION ABOUT CHILDCARE.... (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4046		Female Parent N=396		Single Female Parent N=87	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Coast Guard Work-Life Office	788	19.5	92	3.2	27	31.0
Family Resource Specialist	303	7.5	39	9.8	10	11.5
Family Resource and Referral Service	364	9.0	64	16.2	9	10.3
Ombudsmen	247	6.1	12	3.0	1	1.1
Newspaper	868	21.5	76	19.2	23	26.4
Phonebook	1157	28.6	158	39.9	38	43.7
Internet	1038	25.7	141	35.6	33	37.9
Word-of-mouth	3127	77.3	340	85.9	77	88.5
Other	440	10.9	48	12.1	5	5.7

Child Care Utilization for Female Parents and Single Female Parents

This section presents demographic information about children ages 0 – 6. It follows with childcare utilization and cost information.

Age(s) of Dependents

EXHIBIT III-67						
Q101. HOW OLD ARE YOUR CHILDREN?						
	Active Duty- Parent N=4573		Female Parent N=411		Single Female Parent N=91	
How old is your youngest child?	N	%	N	%	N	%
Birth-11 mos.	925	20.2	102	24.8	17	18.7
12-23 mos.	968	21.2	87	21.2	12	13.2
24-35 mos.	772	16.9	72	17.5	16	17.6
3-4 yrs.	1170	25.6	97	23.6	28	30.8
5-6 yrs.	738	16.1	53	12.9	18	19.8
Does this child have special needs?	N=4531		N=407		N=89	
No	4253	93.9	374	91.9	84	94.4
Yes	278	6.1	33	8.1	5	5.6
How old is your second youngest child?	N=1999		N=140		N=18	
Birth-11 mos.	29	1.5	5	3.6	1	5.6
12-23 mos.	112	5.6	11	7.9	0	0.0
24-35 mos.	284	14.2	19	13.6	3	16.7
3-4 yrs.	696	34.8	41	29.3	4	22.2
5-6 yrs.	878	43.9	64	45.7	10	55.6
Does this child have special needs?	N=1967		N=136		N=18	
No	1825	92.8	123	90.4	14	77.8
Yes	142	7.2	13	9.6	4	22.2
How old is third youngest child?	N	%	N	%	N	%
Birth-11 mos.	6	1.7	2	11.1	0	0.0
12-23 mos.	8	2.3	1	5.6	1	50.0
24-35 mos.	8	2.3	1	5.6	0	0.0
3-4 yrs.	76	22.1	4	22.2	0	0.0
5-6 yrs.	246	71.5	10	55.6	1	50.0
Does this child have special needs?	N=334		N=17		N=4	
No	311	93.1	15	88.2	3	75.0
Yes	23	6.9	2	11.8	1	25.0
How old is your fourth youngest child?	N=46		N=2		N=1	
Birth-11 mos.	1	2.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
12-23 mos.	2	4.3	1	50.0	1	100.0
24-35 mos.	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
3-4 yrs.	6	13.0	1	50.0	0	0.0
5-6 yrs.	37	80.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Does this child have special needs?	N=46		N=2		N=1	
No	41	89.1	1	50.0	1	100.0
Yes	5	10.9	1	50.0	0	0.0

Child Care Arrangements

EXHIBIT III-68						
Q102. HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THE FOLLOWING CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4575		Female Parent N=411		Single Female Parent N=91	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Military Child Development Center (CDC)	314	6.9	87	21.2	15	16.4
Military Child Development Home (CDH) Provider	58	1.3	15	3.6	5	5.5
Spouse/partner	2711	59.3	61	14.8	4	4.4
Civilian child care center	1019	22.3	153	37.2	32	35.2
Civilian licensed provider	352	7.7	56	13.6	12	13.2
Relative, friend or neighbor	883	19.3	103	25.1	44	48.4
Caregiver in home	91	2.0	21	5.1	4	4.4

Number of Hours of Care

EXHIBIT-69						
Q103. HOW MANY HOURS DO YOU USE THE FOLLOWING ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4575		Female Parent N=412		Single Female Parent N=86	
	N	Avg Hr/Wk	N	Avg Hr/Wk	N	Avg Hr/Wk
Military Child Development Center	314	33.0	87	39.1	15	39.7
Military Child Development Home (CDH) Provider	58	30.1	15	38.9	5	43.0
Spouse/partner	2711	53.2	59	39.4	4	40.5
Civilian child care center	1019	31.7	151	37.9	31	36.1
Civilian licensed provider	352	29.8	56	40.1	12	40.1
Relative, friend or neighbor	883	20.1	97	31.6	42	37.8
Caregiver in home	91	2.0	19	38.7	2	10.0

Child Care Costs Per Week

EXHIBIT III-70						
Q104. HOW MUCH DO YOU PAY PER WEEK FOR CHILDCARE FOR YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD?						
(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4575		Female Parent N=412		Single Female Parent N=92	
	N	Avg Cost Category*	N	Avg Cost Category*	N	Avg Cost Category*
Military Child Development Center (CDC)	314	3.4	88	3.7	15	3.7
Military Child Development Home (CDH) Provider	58	3.2	15	3.5	5	3.6
Spouse/partner	2711	1.2	61	1.2	4	2.0
Civilian child care center	1019	3.7	152	4.0	31	3.9
Civilian licensed provider	352	3.5	57	3.6	13	3.8
Relative, friend or neighbor	883	2.0	103	2.6	44	2.8
Caregiver in home	91	3.3	20	3.7	3	1.7
* 1=\$0 per wk 2=\$1-\$50 per wk 3=\$51-\$100 per wk 4=\$101-\$150 per wk 5=Over \$150 per wk						

Satisfaction with Child Care

Exhibits III-71 – III-72 show the satisfaction of parents to current childcare arrangements by parent group. The highest satisfaction ratings are evident for care by spouse or partner, followed by care provided by relative, friend or neighbor, or caregiver in the home.

EXHIBIT III-71					
Q105. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD?					
(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)					
	Active Duty Parent N=4575 (Percent Satisfaction)				
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Military Child Development Center	33.1	41.6	15.1	8.8	1.3
Military Child Development Home (CDH) Provider	34.1	34.5	12.1	15.5	3.4
Spouse/partner	75.4	10.4	11.4	1.4	1.4
Civilian child care center	31.6	46.9	17.8	3.3	0.4
Civilian licensed provider	36.1	46.8	14.6	1.7	0.8
Relative, friend or neighbor	48.2	30.8	17.1	2.6	1.4
Caregiver in home	49.5	34.1	13.2	2.2	1.1

EXHIBIT III-72					
Q105. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD?					
(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)					
	Female Parent N=412 (Percent Satisfaction)				
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Military Child Development Center	33.0	34.1	20.5	10.2	2.3
Military Child Development Home (CDH) Provider	40.0	40.0	0.0	20.0	0.0
Spouse/partner	77.0	13.1	9.8	0.0	0.0
Civilian child care center	31.6	44.7	19.7	3.3	0.7
Civilian licensed provider	38.6	43.9	15.8	1.8	0.0
Relative, friend or neighbor	50.5	28.2	16.5	4.9	0.0
Caregiver in home	50.0	30.0	10.0	10.0	0.0

EXHIBIT III-73					
Q105. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR YOUNGEST CHILD?					
(MARK ALL THAT APPLY)					
	Single Female Parent N=87 (Percent Satisfaction)				
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Military Child Development Center	20.0	26.7	33.3	6.7	13.3
Military Child Development Home (CDH) Provider	20.0	80.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Spouse/partner	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Civilian child care center	41.9	29.0	25.8	3.2	0.0
Civilian licensed provider	46.2	23.1	30.8	0.0	0.0
Relative, friend or neighbor	40.9	36.4	18.2	4.5	0.0
Caregiver in home	0.0	66.7	33.3	0.0	0.0

Career Intentions for Female Parents and Single Female Parents

This section presents data on how inclined Coast Guard active duty members are to remain on active status in the Coast Guard. Responses shown in Exhibit III-74 express the importance and value of family programs on intent to remain in the Coast Guard. As shown in Exhibit III-74, active duty parents place a high value on Coast Guard support systems for family, and point to these systems as positively influencing their career intentions. By a two-fold margin over all active duty parents, female parents express strong agreement to the statement

that they remain active duty service members because of the support systems provided by the Coast Guard. By a nearly three-fold margin over all active duty members, single female parents agree with this statement as well. At the same time, a sizeable proportion of single family parents expressed a higher likelihood to leave the Coast Guard at the end of their present obligation than do other female parents or all active duty parents (Exhibit III-75).

EXHIBIT III-74						
Q34A. I STAY IN THE COAST GUARD BECAUSE OF THE SUPPORT SYSTEMS IT PROVIDES FOR ME AND FAMILY.						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4281		Female Parent N=374		Single Female Parent N=82	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly agree	372	11.1	97	25.9	24	29.3
Agree	1239	37.0	124	33.2	28	34.1
Neutral	1068	31.9	82	21.9	16	19.5
Disagree	455	13.6	50	13.4	6	7.3
Strongly disagree	218	6.5	21	5.6	8	9.8

EXHIBIT III-75						
Q34B. MY FUTURE PLANS INCLUDE LEAVING THE COAST GUARD AT THE END OF MY PRESENT OBLIGATION.						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4271		Female Parent N=377		Single Female Parent N=82	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly agree	385	9.0	56	14.9	14	17.1
Agree	337	7.9	37	9.8	8	9.8
Neutral	1001	23.4	103	27.3	28	34.1
Disagree	1277	29.9	100	26.5	16	19.5
Strongly disagree	1271	29.8	81	21.5	16	19.5

EXHIBIT III-76						
Q34C. MY FUTURE PLANS INCLUDE STAYING BEYOND MY PRESENT OBLIGATION BUT NOT NECESSARILY UNTIL RETIREMENT.						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4233		Female Parent N=372		Single Female Parent N=80	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly agree	115	2.7	6	1.6	2	2.5
Agree	177	4.2	26	7.0	2	2.5
Neutral	1031	24.4	105	28.2	32	40.0
Disagree	1445	34.1	123	33.1	22	27.5
Strongly disagree	1465	34.6	112	30.1	22	27.5

EXHIBIT III-77						
Q34D. MY FUTURE PLANS INCLUDE A CAREER WITH AND RETIREMENT FROM THE COAST GUARD.						
	Active Duty-Parent N=4333		Female Parent N=379		Single Female Parent N=84	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly agree	2188	50.5	157	41.4	30	35.7
Agree	1111	25.6	75	19.8	13	15.5
Neutral	649	15.0	77	20.3	22	26.2
Disagree	161	3.7	31	8.2	10	11.9
Strongly disagree	224	5.2	39	10.3	9	10.7

2. SITE VISIT RESULTS

In addition to the quantitative information collected via survey, Caliber Associates conducted site visits to 10 locations to collect qualitative information as part of the childcare needs assessment completed for the U.S. Coast Guard. The qualitative data collected from parents, leadership, and Work-Life staff at the different sites were used to enhance and supplement the results obtained via survey. The primary themes and responses identified across sites are summarized in subsequent sections of this report. Unless otherwise indicated, responses presented here were aggregated across locations and stakeholder groups.

In subsequent sections, the focus group sample will first be described, followed by presentation of results obtained across the following domains:

- Childcare challenges
- Satisfaction with childcare
- Sources of childcare information
- Impacts of childcare.

Results obtained across each of these domains will be described in turn. Refer to Appendix D for a copy of the Site Visit Summaries compiled subsequent to each visit.

2.1 Focus Group Sample Description

Across the 10 locations, 55 focus groups and/or interviews were completed with a total of 278 participants, including parents (enlisted and officer active duty members and/or their spouses), leadership, and Work-Life staff and supervisors. Exhibit III-78 summarizes focus group participation across all sites.

EXHIBIT III-78				
FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPATION				
Site	Stakeholder Group			Total
	Parents	Leadership	Work-Life Staff	
ISC Alameda	22	11	3	36
ISC Portsmouth,	17	6	3	26
USCG HQ Washington, DC	14	2	7	23
ISC Seattle	8	8	2	18
ISC New Orleans	24	3	6	33
PSC Topeka	17	2	1	20
ISC Cleveland	9	9	2	20
ISC Miami	33	6	2	41
ISC Boston	19	9	4	32
ACT New York	15	11	3	29
TOTAL	178	67	33	278

As shown in Exhibit III-78, Caliber staff members interviewed 178 parents—both enlisted members and officers and/or their spouses—in focus group settings across the 10 sites. Parents participating in each focus group session were asked to complete a short questionnaire that included questions addressing key demographics (e.g., marital status, race/ethnicity, self and spouse employment, number of dependents). Exhibit III-79 summarizes responses obtained from the 156 parents electing to complete the Parent Checklist.

EXHIBIT III-79		
PARENT FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS (N=156)		
Age		Mean age 32.1 years
Gender	Male	40%
	Female	60%
Marital Status	Not Married	17%
	Married to a civilian	48%
	Married to another military member	35%
Race/Ethnicity	American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%
	Asian	3%
	Black or African American	12%
	Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin	10%
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%
	White	80%
	Other	2%
Pay Grade	E2-E3	6%
	E4-E6	53%
	E7-E9	8%
	W1-W5	4%
	O1-O4	17%
	O5 and above	1%

EXHIBIT III-79 (CONT.) PARENT FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS (N=156)		
Number of Children	One	56%
	Two	26%
	Three	4%
	Four or more	0%

The Parent Checklist questionnaire was incorporated into the focus group methodology to ascertain whether parents participating in focus groups were demographically similar to those completing surveys—an important factor in summarizing and aggregating findings obtained via both methodologies.

2.2 Childcare Challenges

All stakeholders—parents, leadership and Work-Life staff—were asked to describe the primary challenges associated with childcare in their respective locations. Generally speaking, the biggest challenges encountered were related to the following:

- Affordability of quality childcare
- Availability of quality childcare
- Accessibility of quality childcare.

To some degree, it seems that most Coast Guard parents have difficulties related to at least one of these often overlapping factors. Focus group participants articulated a number of specific challenges Coast Guard families face with respect to childcare—both within these domains, as well as within others. The most commonly cited challenges are summarized in Exhibit III-80.

EXHIBIT III-80 PRIMARY CHILDCARE CHALLENGES	
Accessibility	<p>Some of the key issues around accessibility of quality care identified by stakeholders included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Finding care in close proximity to home or workplace ■ Finding care during the times/hours when it is needed, including early dropoff and late pickup times ■ Transportation and commuting challenges, particularly in large metropolitan areas (e.g., length of commute to childcare setting and/or duty station) ■ Finding care in geographically remote locations ■ Insufficient parking/difficulties accessing childcare center during pickup and dropoff

EXHIBIT III-80 (CONT.) PRIMARY CHILDCARE CHALLENGES	
Affordability	<p>Affordability of quality care seems to be most problematic for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Parents needing infant care ■ Parents with multiple children ■ Parents living in high-cost areas ■ Parents from among the lower ranks—particularly junior enlisted ■ Single parents ■ Parents of children with special needs ■ Parents not using Coast Guard-sponsored facilities and lack of subsidy for “on the economy” care
Availability	<p>Focus group participants indicated that finding available, high quality care is often challenging due to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lengthy wait lists and wait list preferences in child development centers ■ Insufficient number of family childcare providers (i.e., Coast Guard sponsored) ■ Lack of non-traditional hours care and back-up, emergency care ■ Insufficient “slots” for infant care ■ Lack of high quality childcare options in small and/or remote locations
Relocation	<p>Parents are particularly challenged to find childcare upon relocation to a new duty station. Some of the key factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Obtaining reliable, up-to-date information about local childcare options, particularly long distance prior to PCS ■ Facing placement on long waiting lists (and usually only upon receipt of orders) ■ Coping with competing demands (e.g., new job, new house, new schools, new childcare setting, etc.)
Non-traditional hours and back-up, emergency care	<p>Finding care outside of the typical workday poses particular challenges for Coast Guard parents—especially if they are utilizing non-military care settings. Times during which care is needed, but often unavailable include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ During 12- and 24-hour shifts ■ During 2nd and 3rd shifts ■ During weekends ■ When children are mildly ill ■ During inclement weather, such as hurricanes ■ During security emergencies ■ During holidays ■ During TDY and training

2.3 Satisfaction with Childcare

Parents participating in focus groups were asked how satisfied they were overall with the care they currently had for their children. For the most part, parents indicated high levels of satisfaction with their current childcare arrangements, regardless of whether they were in a center- or home-based setting. Few parents reported the need to change childcare settings in the last year, and most of those that did make a change were relocating. Some of the factors parents expressed the highest levels of satisfaction with included:

- Curricula and activities (in military and civilian facilities, as well as in center-and home-based settings)

- Student-to-teacher ratios
- Quality and credentials of their providers (e.g., nurturing, loving, informed, etc.)
- Safety and security of the environment in which children are cared for
- Convenient locations close to either home or work
- Diverse cultural atmospheres and social interactions their children experience in their care settings.

On the other hand, parents expressed less satisfaction with a number of characteristics of their current childcare arrangements as well. Factors with which parents were least satisfied—including cost, hours of operation, quality and location—are similar to the challenges described above in Section 2.2. These and other factors with which parents were most dissatisfied are summarized in Exhibit III-81.

EXHIBIT III-81 FACTORS LEAST SATISFYING TO PARENTS REGARDING THEIR CURRENT CHILDCARE ARRANGEMENTS	
Hours of operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Childcare hours of operation do not coincide with work hours (e.g., emergency duty and watch standing duty) and there is little/no overnight or weekend care ■ Early drop off and late pickup is not typically available, a fact that is particularly problematic when coupled with lengthy commutes ■ Holiday or seasonal break schedules often force parents to take leave or pay additional fees to put children in alternative care settings
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of subsidies to offset the high cost of care—especially in high-cost areas ■ High cost of care is particularly challenging for junior enlisted and single parents ■ Late fees and inflexible rate/fee policies ■ Requirement to pay for care during holidays and vacations
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quality of available care may not be sufficient in rural or remote duty locations ■ Poor communication with caregivers due to language barriers ■ Inconsistent policies and lack of standardization across Coast Guard CDCs ■ Qualifications and lack of experience of some childcare providers
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Childcare far from work and/or home makes it difficult to get to work or childcare facility on time ■ Some CDCs are located in vulnerable positions (e.g., close to front gate or water)

Not surprisingly, there was considerable overlap in factors that parents are most and least satisfied with. For example, depending upon their individual circumstances, parents may be either happy or unhappy with the location or quality of their particular childcare arrangements. Across the board, however, parents were most vocal about hours of operation and cost. The high cost of care (and lack of subsidies to offset childcare costs for parents who were not in Coast Guard or other military settings), as well as challenges around finding care during non-traditional hours were the most common complaints cited by parents during the site visits.

2.4 Sources of Childcare Information

During the focus groups, parents were asked to indicate the resources they use to find information about childcare. Overwhelmingly, parents expressed reliance upon word-of-mouth (e.g., friends, neighbors, coworkers) to find out about childcare options. Other sources commonly used included Internet childcare resources; telephone books; bulletin boards in housing or other common areas; and pediatricians.

When asked specifically if they used the Work-Life Office as a childcare resource, parents almost unanimously said, “no.” In fact, many parents did not know that the Work-Life Office was “in the childcare business.” One of the biggest concerns of parents was the lack of reliable resource and referral specialists to adequately address requests for quality affordable childcare options—particularly prior to or immediately upon relocation to new duty stations.

Work-Life staff voiced similar frustrations. Family Resource Specialists (FRSs), those Work-Life staff members tasked with childcare assistance, frequently indicated that the vast majority of their time is spent on providing assistance to families with exceptional needs, leaving little time to devote to childcare service and support. Across the board, FRSs and other Work-Life staff indicated the need for additional manpower, perhaps even a childcare resource specialist, to liaison between parents and local childcare facilities—especially to provide additional childcare support for parents during relocation—a sentiment seconded by those participating in leadership focus groups as well.

2.5 Impacts of Childcare

During their respective focus groups, parents, Coast Guard leadership and Work-Life staff were asked to discuss the potential impact(s) that childcare issues have on the following:

- Quality of life
- Job performance and productivity
- Mission achievement
- Readiness
- Morale
- Retention.

There was strong consensus across stakeholders that childcare is an important work-life issue, with potentially strong [negative] impacts on the above factors—particularly quality of life, job

performance and productivity, and morale. Specifically, focus group participants indicated concern about:

- Job performance and productivity when parents:
 - Are distracted, stressed or worried about childcare during duty
 - Have to request leave, leave early, or arrive late to care for children
 - Bring their children to work

- Unit morale when:
 - Parents leave early or arrive late, or repeatedly need others to stand in for them
 - Non-married, non-parental members are routinely called upon to “pick up the slack” which may lead to resentment and/or hostility
 - There is a perceived (or real) negative impact on parents’ careers, such as decreased chance for promotion, difficulty making qualifications, less flexibility to accept certain billets due to childcare challenges

Stakeholders—parents, leaders and Work-Life staff—were less inclined to report potential negative impacts on mission and readiness resulting from childcare issues, due to the fact that “the job always gets done,” and “someone is always available to fill in,” and the philosophy that “mission comes first” and “coasties take care of coasties.”

Leaders reported and others agreed that the Coast Guard and its leadership frequently take important steps to accommodate parents facing childcare crises. Many leaders are flexible and responsive to the needs of parents, as evidenced by liberal leave policies (e.g., when children are sick); allowing members to work flex schedules or use “RAS tokens” to telecommute; changing shifts or jobs to better accommodate childcare; and allowing parents to bring children to work when no other option is available. Not surprisingly, some leaders are more flexible and accommodating than others, however. Leaders who are parents themselves were frequently viewed as the most understanding and flexible, while those of the “Old Guard” were viewed as less so.

Parents, leaders and Work-Life staff agreed that there are a number of things that the Coast Guard could and should do to better support the childcare needs and concerns of active duty parents. Some of the key strategies suggested by stakeholders are summarized in Exhibit III-82.

EXHIBIT III-82
POTENTIAL STRATEGIES TO BETTER SUPPORT MEMBERS’
CHILDCARE NEEDS

1. Provide financial assistance (i.e., subsidies) to offset the high cost of childcare
2. Expand use of flex schedules and telecommuting alternatives to better accommodate the needs of parents
3. Extend maternity leave beyond the 6- to 8-week period allowed at the present time and allow paternity leave
4. Build more child development centers to better meet the needs of a larger number of Coast Guard members
5. Establish and advertise partnerships with area DoD and civilian childcare facilities
6. Provide better/enhanced childcare support for members relocating to new duty stations
7. Develop and enforce parent-sensitive duty assignment processes that take childcare needs into consideration
8. Reinstate/rebuild the Coast Guard’s family childcare program

Across the board, stakeholders felt that childcare is an important retention issue and that if some changes (such as those identified above) are not made, attrition may become problematic. Participants unequivocally felt that support from leadership and “the Coast Guard” positively impacts morale and, in turn, retention: parents are more likely to stay in the Coast Guard if they—and their families—feel adequately supported. Those who perceive a lack of options or feel inadequately supported may elect to leave the Coast Guard due to unresolved childcare issues or the desire to have/have more children. Those most at risk to attrite include:

- **Females.** It was generally felt that females more frequently experience pressure to choose between their child(ren) and their Coast Guard careers.
- **Single parents.** Those without a spouse to share child rearing and childcare responsibilities often have difficulty balancing duty/job assignments with family care obligations.
- **Dual military.** Families in which both parents are in the Coast Guard or other military Service often find themselves unable to juggle the demands of both careers; one or both may elect to separate to achieve better family balance.
- **Parents in operational units.** Members who are in operational units may choose to leave the Coast Guard rather than experience extended deployments or separations from family.
- **Junior enlisted members.** Members who are relatively new to the Coast Guard may not feel as invested and committed to the Service, and will therefore opt out early on rather than face the family hardships that potentially lie ahead.

Members who are characterized by one or more of the above are particularly at risk to attrite due to childcare challenges, and perceived pressures to choose between their children/families and their Coast Guard careers.

Despite the challenges, most parents participating in focus groups indicated their desire and intention to remain in the Coast Guard—at least beyond their present obligation, if not until retirement.

3. BENCHMARKING RESULTS

This section presents results obtained from the benchmarking component of the childcare needs assessment, undertaken to identify childcare standards of performance in organizations similar to the Coast Guard, and to obtain and compare childcare costs in 23 locations where large numbers of Coast Guard members reside. Utilizing the methodology described in Chapter II, these analyses compared childcare performance standards in the Department of Defense (DoD) to those in the Coast Guard to determine where the Coast Guard stands in relation to the other Services. Additionally, childcare center- and home-based cost data was collected and compared across the 23 identified Coast Guard locations. The results presented in this section of the report will be used to assist Coast Guard policymakers in creating policies that may serve to increase access to affordable childcare options.

The DoD has established the largest system of employer-sponsored childcare in the country (Zellman and Gates, 2002). Exhibit III-83 illustrates the military's capacity to deliver daily childcare services to 176,893 children ranging in age from six weeks to 12 years. The DoD provides childcare via 451 Child Development Centers (CDCs), supports a network of 8,344 Family Childcare (FCC) homes, and offers a variety of programs for children in 344 School-Age Centers (SAC). While the DoD childcare system is the nation's largest, currently serving over 175,000 children, it still falls short of projected need; projected need for childcare slots is estimated at approximately 269,000.

EXHIBIT III-83						
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DoD) CHILDCARE CAPACITY						
Military Branch	Number of Children¹	Childcare Slots	Slots Needed	Number of CDCs	Number of FCCs	Number of SACs
Army	469,069	67,720	15,953	151	2,901	133
Navy	316,194	45,960	6,726	124	3,180	87
Air Force	105,359	50,090	12,662	148	1,801	95
Marines	331,209	13,123	2,418	28	462	29
TOTAL	1,221,831	176,893	37,759	451	8,344	344

Source: Military Family Resource Center.

¹ Source: DMDC Military Family File (September 2003)

In addition to expansive capacity, the DoD has received high marks for delivering *quality* childcare in an economic climate of increasing demand for military services and declining resources for activities not viewed as mission critical (Zellman and Gates, 2002). The military childcare system has employed a number of standards to support the delivery of high-quality

childcare including CDC State licensing and accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). An accreditation process is available for FCC homes through the National Association of Family Childcare (NAFCC) and for SACs through the National After-school Association (NAA). As a consequence of these mechanisms, the DoD operates a childcare system that provides high-quality childcare to the large numbers of children they serve (RAND Corporation, 2002; Campbell et al, 2000; U.S. General Accounting Office, 1999).

Furthermore, the DoD provides access to *affordable* childcare for military children, youth and families. While the maintenance and operation of DoD-owned CDCs is costly, military-operated centers are relatively inexpensive for members and families—particularly in high cost of living locations. The DoD has worked to contain the out-of-pocket costs associated with CDCs through the operation of larger centers, thereby reducing per-child costs, and by limiting the child-to-staff ratio requirements. The cost of providing care in DoD-licensed FCC homes is substantially lower than the costs associated center-based care, particularly for the youngest children. In light of this, the DoD has significantly “ramped up” this program over the last decade to meet the rising demand for care in an environment of steady or diminishing resources.

By comparison, the Coast Guard offers a relatively small number of childcare slots in a limited number of CDCs. Figures summarized in Exhibit III-84 illustrate that the Coast Guard has developed the capacity to serve about 790 children in 9 CDCs and currently provides childcare to about 657 children. Additionally, there are approximately 32 FCC providers caring for approximately 126 children. The Coast Guard, at the present time, has no SAC programs.

EXHIBIT III-84 COAST GUARD CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER CAPACITY AND ENROLLMENT		
Location	Capacity	Enrollment
Air Station Cape Cod, MA	104	95
CG Academy, New London, CT	104	96
TRACEN Cape May, NJ	112	73
Coast Guard HQ, DC	60	58
TRACEN Petaluma, CA	61	53
CG Island Alameda, CA	83	78
Kodiak, AK	124	67
San Juan, PR	50	45
Air Station Borinquen, PR	92	92
TOTAL	790	657

Source: U.S. Coast Guard 2005.

While these analyses reveal differences between the Coast Guard and their DoD counterparts, the large scale of the military childcare system may prohibit a direct comparison, and observed childcare operational differences between organizations warrant further discussion. Exhibit III-85 presents the total number of active duty Coast Guard members, the number with dependent children, and the total number of children by pay grade. As can be seen from the Exhibit, 16,986 (43%) have 32,551 children; when compared to the total number of Coast Guard-sponsored childcare slots (921), the Coast Guard has the capacity to serve 2.8 percent of its children. The DoD on the other hand has the capacity to serve approximately 14 percent of its 1.2 million children.

EXHIBIT III-85			
COAST GUARD ACTIVE DUTY MEMBER BY PAY GRADE AND CHILDREN			
Pay Grade	Members	Members w/Children	Total # of Children
E-1	265	14	24
E-2	1,071	51	62
E-3	4,920	622	784
E-4	8,141	1,734	2,478
E-5	6,700	2,793	4,824
E-6	6,143	4,070	8,170
E-7	3,114	2,443	5,244
E-8	656	494	1,080
E-9	308	213	423
Total Enlisted	31,318	12,434	23,089
O-1	754	119	204
O-2	927	275	526
O-3	2,143	1,145	2,174
O-4	1,212	909	2,008
O-5	755	616	1,491
O-6	356	267	589
O-7	15	10	20
O-8	17	8	15
O-9	4	1	1
Total Officer	6,183	3,350	7,028
W-2	787	642	1,361
W-3	402	329	685
W-4	316	213	388
Total Warrant	1,505	1,184	2,434
GRAND TOTAL	39,006	16,968	32,551

Source: Military Family Resource Center "Number Of Children Report" Active Duty Family File (September 2004)

Other analyses conducted during the benchmarking phase of study indicate similarities among Coast Guard and DoD childcare policies—particularly pertaining to tuition paid by families utilizing service-sponsored CDCs. Exhibit III-86 depicts DoD CDC fee policy as of

July 2004, also utilized by the Coast Guard. Fees are based on Total Family Income (TFI) and include minimum basic allowance for housing. The policy applies to children who regularly attend CDC and SAC programs.

EXHIBIT III-86			
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER FEE POLICY			
(JULY 2004)			
Category	Family Income	Weekly Fee Per Child	High Cost Range (optional)
I	\$0 - 28,000	\$43 – 59	\$48 - 62
II	\$28,001 - 34,000	\$53 – 70	\$58 - 76
III	\$34,001 - 44,000	\$64 – 84	\$70 - 89
IV	\$44,001 - 55,000	\$77 – 95	\$83 – 102
V	\$55,001 – 70,000	\$92 – 111	\$95 - 116
VI	\$70,001 +	\$107 – 126	\$108 - 129

Source: Department of Defense 2004.

Two major changes to the fee policy went into effect for 2003. First, the income ranges for Categories I and II were adjusted to reflect the impact of inflation on the most vulnerable families. Second, the method to calculate TFI for dual-military couples that reside off the installation was changed to be equitable with those couples who live on the installation. Thus, the BAH II for the junior member of the military couple who lives off the installation is not included in the TFI calculation.

In addition, DoD commanders set their installation fees within these ranges and have the authority to offer a 20 percent fee discount for each additional child from the same family. Commanders may also grant hardship waivers for families in unique financial circumstances. In 2003, the average DoD weekly fee was \$81. This fee includes up to 10 hours of care per day and United States Department of Agriculture approved meals (breakfast, lunch and two snacks).

As previously mentioned, the Coast Guard and DoD have entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) allowing Coast Guard active duty personnel to use DoD CDCs. This agreement has created opportunities for Coast Guard members to access high quality, low cost childcare facilities located near many units throughout the country. Additionally, the GSA oversees 110 CDCs in Federal office buildings across 31 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Coast Guard personnel are entitled to utilize these centers, however, tuition rates in GSA controlled facilities are significantly higher than military rates. CG-111 is working with GSA to implement a pilot program that would allow subsidized tuition at designated GSA centers comparable to current military fee ranges.

Still other analyses undertaken during the course of the benchmarking component of the childcare needs assessment indicate that there is wide variance in the cost of civilian childcare across locations, types of care, and ages of children. Unlike Coast Guard policy, which bases CDC parent fees on total family income, civilian childcare centers typically charge different rates for children in different age groups—with infant care typically being the most expensive. Exhibit III-87 depicts weekly rates for full-time civilian childcare in the 23 Coast Guard locations selected for inclusion in the benchmarking assessment, based on population of Coast Guard residing in that locale.

EXHIBIT III-87							
WEEKLY RATES FOR FULL-TIME CIVILIAN CHILDCARE							
IN COAST GUARD CITIES							
ISC/HSC	Location	Active Duty with children <6 yrs.	Type	Infant (0-1)	Toddler (1-2)	Pre-K (3-4)	School Age (5+)
ISC Alameda	Alameda, CA	431	Center	285	188	188	175
			Home	175	155	155	150
	Petaluma, CA	114	Center	285	188	188	175
			Home	175	155	155	150
ISC Boston	Boston, MA	669	Center	305	240	190	58
			Home	170	145	145	58
	New London, CT	103	Center	175	175	114	75
			Home	136	136	114	75
ISC Cleveland	Cleveland, OH	551	Center	154	136	125	108
			Home	114	110	105	95
ISC Honolulu	Honolulu, HI	189	Center	120	120	117	117
			Home	120	120	117	117
ISC Ketchikan	Juneau, AK	333	Center	177	169	154	136
			Home	152	145	133	127
ISC Miami	Miami, FL	841	Center	112	98	92	90
			Home	100	93	90	85
ISC New Orleans	Mobile, AL	89	Center	94	94	82	80
			Home	77	77	77	73
	New Orleans, LA	762	Center	90	85	85	68
			Home	75	75	75	68
ISC Portsmouth	Chesapeake, VA	7	Center	105	97	84	76
			Home	105	97	84	76
	Elizabeth City, NC	20	Center	105	97	84	76
			Home	105	97	84	76
	Portsmouth, VA	637	Center	105	97	84	76
			Home	105	97	84	76
	Yorktown, VA	158	Center	105	97	84	76
			Home	105	97	84	76
ISC San Pedro	Los Angeles, CA	384	Center	285	188	188	175
			Home	175	155	155	150
ISC Seattle	Seattle, WA	Forthcoming	Center	242	201	164	98
			Home	176	160	146	107

EXHIBIT III-87 (CONT.)								
WEEKLY RATES FOR FULL-TIME CIVILIAN CHILD CARE								
IN COAST GUARD CITIES								
ISC St. Louis	Oklahoma City, OK	4	Center	154	132	104	80	
			Home	108	97	82	65	
	Topeka, KS	43	Center	151	128	106	102	
			Home	102	92	92	85	
HSC Washington, DC	Alexandria, VA	37	Center	160	150	150	130	
			Home	160	150	150	130	
	Arlington, VA	4	Center	180	170	160	140	
			Home	180	170	160	144	
	Baltimore, MD	17	Center	190	120	120	110	
			Home	135	110	110	100	
	Cape May, NJ	111	Center	138	126	121	109	
			Home	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Washington, DC	277	Center	208	199	169	160	
			Home	143	132	113	129	
Average Cost Per Week					103	92	83	74

Sources: Child Care Aware and NACCRRA Note: Alexandria/Arlington, VA (rates reflect Tier 2 rates “Providers have more than basic training”); Alameda, CA (rates are statewide); Baltimore, MD (rates are the state average); Boston, MA (rates are an average of a range, school-age rates are both center and home-based care, averaged across after-school, holiday, and summer rates); Cape May, NJ (rates reflect averages of 4 centers within 5 miles of the training center); Chesapeake, VA and Elizabeth City, NC (combine home and center rates); Headquarters, DC (rates reflect Gold status “accreditation”); Honolulu, HI (pools center rates and preschool rates, no FCC rates given); Mobile, AL (includes Huntsville rates); New London, CT (rates include Waterford and Groton within 2-4 miles from ISC); New Orleans, LA (school age rates are an average of the 5 yr old and before/after school rates); Portsmouth, VA (combines home and center rates); and Topeka, KS (rates averaged across city).

These analyses reveal that childcare costs vary substantially across locations. The childcare costs observed are influenced by:

- Cost of living—higher care costs were observed in areas with higher costs of living
- Type of care—center-based care is usually more expensive than family-based care
- Age of child—care costs are inversely related to the age of the child and are typically higher for younger children, especially infants.

Additionally, these analyses indicated that, in full-day civilian childcare settings:

- The average weekly cost of infant care was \$171 for center-based care and \$126 for family-based care across sites
- The average weekly cost of toddler care was \$143 for center-based care and \$116 for family-based care across sites
- The average weekly cost of preschool care was \$128 for center-based care and \$109 for family-based care across sites.

The cost of Coast Guard-sponsored childcare costs falls below the range of costs observed for civilian care.

4. SUMMARY AND INTEGRATION

This, the final section of the Results chapter, focuses on summarizing and integrating information gathered through the three methodological components included in the Coast Guard childcare needs assessment—the survey, the site visits and the benchmarking study. Following a brief comparison of the survey and site visit samples, results informing the following—utilizing information obtained across the three components—will be presented in subsequent sections:

- Childcare challenges
- Satisfaction with current childcare arrangements
- Resources used to obtain information about childcare
- Mechanisms available to support childcare needs
- Impacts of childcare.

As will be seen in the following sections, the results obtained from the survey are consistent with those obtained during the site visits. Any discrepancies will be duly indicated.

4.1 Comparison of Survey and Focus Group Samples

To ensure that parents who completed surveys were comparable to those participating in focus groups, demographic information collected via both methodologies was compared. Exhibit III-88 provides a brief profile of the major demographic characteristics of survey respondents and focus group participants.

EXHIBIT III-88			
COMPARISON OF PARENTS RESPONDING TO SURVEYS AND PARTICIPATING IN FOCUS GROUPS			
Demographic Characteristic		Survey	Focus Group
Age	Mean age in years	32.5	32.1
Gender	Male	91%	40%
	Female	9%	60%
Marital Status	Not Married	6%	17%
	Married to a civilian	87%	48%
	Married to another military member	7%	35%

EXHIBIT III-88 (CONT.)			
COMPARISON OF PARENTS RESPONDING TO SURVEYS AND PARTICIPATING IN FOCUS GROUPS			
Demographic Characteristic		Survey	Focus Group
Race/Ethnicity	American Indian or Alaskan Native	4%	1%
	Asian	3%	3%
	Black or African American	5%	12%
	Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin	9%	10%
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%	1%
	White	81%	80%
	Other	4%	2%
Pay Grade	E2-E3	2%	6%
	E4-E6	56%	53%
	E7-E9	14%	8%
	W1-W5	4%	4%
	O1-O4	20%	17%
	O5 and above	4%	1%
Number of Children ¹	One	56%	56%
	Two	36%	26%
	Three	7%	4%
	Four or more	1%	0%

¹ Not all parents participating in focus groups currently have children 0 – 6 residing in their homes; so the percentages do not sum to 100.

As can be seen from the Exhibit, the sample of parents completing the survey was comparable to those parents participating in focus groups. There were, however, two ways in which the samples differed significantly: survey respondents were much more likely to be male (91% versus 40%), and more likely to be married to a civilian (87% versus 48%). With respect to gender, the survey results are more representative of the Coast Guard population. According to recent statistics, approximately 10 percent of active duty members currently serving are female. With respect to marital status, both samples—not surprising given the topic of the assessment—indicate an over-representation of married members. More than half of the total Coast Guard population (55%) is married, while the percentage of married individuals included in the needs assessment samples are 94 and 83 percent, respectively, for the survey respondents and focus group participants. Neither of these differences, however, significantly impact the interpretation and integration of the data collected via the survey and the focus groups.

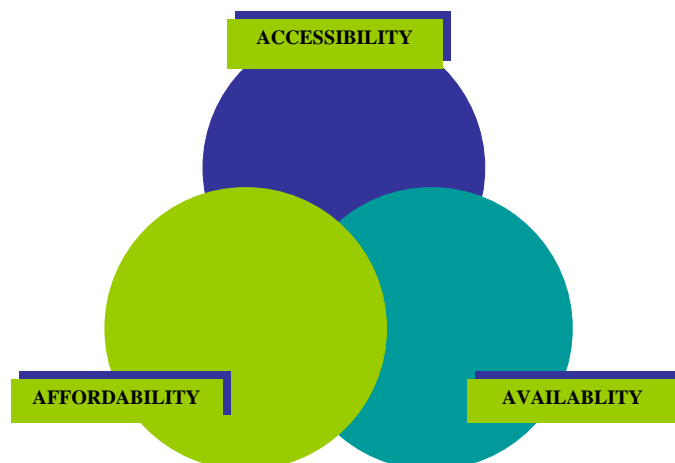
4.2 Childcare Challenges

The results of the quantitative information collected via survey as well as the qualitative information collected during focus group sessions shed light on the major childcare challenges confronting Coast Guard active duty members. The primary challenges faced by service members with respect to childcare are related to the affordability, availability, and/or

accessibility of quality childcare options. Exhibit III-89 graphically depicts these factors and demonstrates the often-overlapping nature of these variables.

EXHIBIT III-89

ACCESSIBILITY, AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF QUALITY CHILDCARE



According to comments received from stakeholders participating in focus groups, as well as results obtained from parents completing surveys, parents rarely find themselves in the “sweet spot” (i.e., the place where all three factors converge) in which they are able to find childcare that is accessible (e.g., in close proximity to home or work), affordable and available (e.g., no waiting list for enrollment; open during the hours/times care is needed). For example, parents participating in focus groups frequently commented on the difficulty of finding affordable, high quality care for their young children; over two-thirds of parents responding to the survey indicated similar difficulties finding affordable care (71%) as well as high quality care (68%). The data collected during the benchmarking study support the challenges parents expressed with respect to finding affordable care. For parents not using military-sponsored facilities, the cost of care may be prohibitive—particularly in high cost-of-living areas. Additionally, parents participating in the focus groups also expressed concern about the hours of operation of their childcare facilities, and survey results are consistent with this finding: 46 percent of parents completing surveys have been challenged to find care that fits their work schedules.

The degree to which parents are impacted by these three factors varies considerably from individual to individual and/or family to family, and some parents may be more adversely affected by the interplay of these factors than others. Those who seem to be particularly challenged to find high quality care that is accessible, affordable and available include:

-
- Single parents
 - Dual-military parents
 - Females
 - Parents in high cost-of-living areas
 - Parents with younger children¹
 - Parents in operational units and/or those who work extended (12- and 24-hour) duty hours
 - Parents from among the lower ranks—particularly junior enlisted
 - Parents who have recently relocated to a new duty station, particularly if that duty station is geographically isolated or remote.

For parents who meet more than one of the above characteristics, the childcare challenges are even more daunting. These individuals, more so than others, must often make compromises or sacrifices on at least one of these dimensions in order to place their child(ren) in appropriate care settings.

4.3 Satisfaction with Current Childcare Arrangements

Parents completing surveys and those participating in focus groups both reported high levels of satisfaction with their current childcare arrangements. While parents in both groups expressed dissatisfaction with at least some aspects of their childcare—most notably cost and hours of operation, as indicated above—the data collected during the needs assessment underscore that parents are generally satisfied with the care they have for their children. Three-quarters of parents completing surveys were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their current arrangements (regardless of the type of setting). Similarly, parents participating in focus groups were mostly positive in expressing their level of satisfaction with their childcare providers and many said that if they were not, they would make a change. Few parents—in either the survey or focus group sample—had to change their childcare arrangements within the last year.

¹ Discrepancies emerged during the examination of the affordability and availability of childcare for children of different ages, as indicated by surveys, focus group participants, and benchmarking analyses. Focus group participants largely expressed concerns regarding finding high quality, affordable care for infants, which according to the benchmarking study is the most expensive type of care. In contrast, higher percentages of parents completing surveys reported difficulty finding affordable care for preschoolers (41% versus 30% for infants), as well as high quality care for preschoolers (38% versus 29% for infants).

4.4 Resources Used to Obtain Information About Childcare

Overwhelmingly, parents participating in the childcare needs assessment—either through survey completion or in focus group settings—indicated that their primary source of childcare information is “word of mouth.” Parents mainly rely upon friends, neighbors and coworkers to inform them of local childcare options. Very few parents participating in focus groups reported using the Coast Guard Office of Work-Life for childcare assistance and information, and only 20 percent of parents completing surveys did so. Other resources more commonly used by parents were the Internet and phonebook.

4.5 Impacts of Childcare

The information collected via focus groups and surveys underscore some of the potential impacts that childcare issues and challenges have on active duty members’ quality of life, job performance and productivity, mission achievement, readiness, morale and intentions to remain in the Coast Guard. Together, the information collected through the surveys and site visits indicates that childcare may negatively affect the following:

- Job performance and productivity:
 - Parents, leaders and Work-Life staff pointed out that performance and productivity may be adversely impacted when parents are distracted, stressed or worried about their children during duty hours; when they have to leave early, arrive late or miss work entirely due to childcare issues; and when they have to bring their children to work.
 - According to the survey, due to childcare needs in the past year, 49 percent of parents missed at least one day of work; 52 percent arrived late on at least one day; and 69 percent left work early. Additionally, one-quarter of these parents sometimes brought their children work, and almost half worry about their children while on duty.
- Morale:
 - Parents participating in focus groups expressed concerns about the negative impacts on morale associated with frequent and/or repeated absences from work due to childcare issues. Some of their primary anxieties were related to resentment created by others having to fill in for them and the potentially detrimental effects on their careers.
 - Parents completing surveys expressed similar concerns: over one-third of survey respondents indicated that others have had to cover for them and that they worry that others may feel that they “don’t do their share.” A similar number expressed worry about the effects on their career opportunities.

In spite of the potential negative impacts that childcare issues may have, most parents indicated their desire to remain in the Coast Guard and were appreciative of the support the Coast Guard provides. Focus group participants generally felt that many leaders were flexible, supportive and responsive to their needs regarding childcare and reported that it was their intention to remain in the Coast Guard at least beyond their present obligations, if not until retirement. Parents completing surveys indicated similar sentiments:

- 53 percent indicated that they stay in the Coast Guard because of the support it provides for them and their families
- 76 percent reported that their plans include a career with and retirement from the Coast Guard
- Only 17 percent reported plans to leave at the end of their present obligation.

Chapter IV presents recommendations and potential solutions to address the findings and issues discussed in this chapter.

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IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the recommendations formulated during the comprehensive childcare needs assessment conducted by Caliber Associates for the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Work-Life. Through the compilation and aggregation of information obtained from the development and administration of a Web-based survey, the conduct of site visits and the completion of a benchmarking study and analysis, three overarching strategies—each consisting of a series of recommendations—were conceived and are presented here. The primary goals associated with the development of the proposed strategies and recommendations include: (a) improve the access, availability and affordability of high quality childcare for Coast Guard active duty members with children ages 0 to 6 years; and (b) augment the childcare services provided by the Coast Guard to better meet service members’ needs. The specific strategies and recommendations formulated to assist the Coast Guard in meeting these objectives include:

- Develop mechanisms to offset the high cost of quality childcare:
 - Subsidize parents’ out-of-pocket childcare costs
 - Convert NAF positions in Coast Guard child development centers to GS billets
- Develop and/or strengthen strategic childcare partnerships:
 - Department of Defense
 - Local childcare entities
 - National childcare programs
- Enhance the Coast Guard’s childcare-related support mechanisms:
 - Provide better childcare support through the Office of Work-Life
 - Expand the Coast Guard’s capacity to serve its children through construction of additional child development centers and the expansion of its family childcare program.

These strategies and recommendations will be described in detail in subsequent sections of this Chapter. It should be noted, however, that the recommendations presented here are not stand-alone suggestions and may have combined and/or overlapping effects in accomplishing the stated objectives. Although each one offers potential solution(s) for identified challenges, or may effect positive changes within a certain domain, together they offer broad-based remediation for the array of issues identified during the assessment. For example, strengthening partnerships with the DoD childcare system will enable larger numbers of Coast Guard members to access the DoD services available in their local communities. Not only will this increase access to quality childcare, but out-of-pocket costs paid by service members previously using care “on the economy” will be reduced.

1. DEVELOP MECHANISMS TO OFFSET THE HIGH COST OF QUALITY CHILDCARE

The information obtained during the childcare needs assessment—collected via survey, focus groups and benchmarking—indicated that the high cost of care was among the most formidable challenges Coast Guard parents face with respect to childcare. Parents completing surveys and stakeholders interviewed during site visits expressed concern about the expense, and resulting financial burden on families, associated with quality childcare costs. According to needs assessment constituent groups, and validated by the benchmarking process, the high cost of care is particularly prohibitive for young (e.g., junior enlisted) parents; parents with infants or multiple children; parents living in high cost-of-living locales; and those using civilian, center-based childcare.

In light of these findings, two recommendations were formulated to help lower the cost of childcare—one targeting parents as direct beneficiaries, one a cost-containment mechanism that would free up additional funds in Coast Guard-sponsored childcare programs that could in turn be used to provide further assistance to parents. The two recommendations include:

- Subsidization of parents' out-of-pocket costs
- Conversion of NAF positions in Coast Guard CDCs to GS billets.

Each of these will be described in turn.

1.1 Subsidization of Parents' Out-of-Pocket Childcare Costs

The first recommendation formulated to assist in decreasing the burden associated with the high cost of childcare is the provision of subsidies for parents to help offset their out-of-pocket expenses. In accordance with authority provided under Title 10, Subtitle A, Part II, Chapter 8, Subchapter II, Section 1798 subsidy rates could be paid directly to licensed, qualified childcare providers. These subsidies would ideally be based on several key factors:

- Total family income
- Age of child(ren) being served
- Geographic area of residence.

Families with lower incomes, those with younger children (who are typically in higher-cost settings) and those living in high cost-of-living communities would qualify for greater subsidy subsidization than others. Families using Coast Guard child development programs, or those in

DoD-sponsored facilities would be ineligible to receive additional subsidies, since the cost of care in these settings is already discounted.

1.2 Conversion of NAF Positions in Coast Guard CDCs to GS Billets

The second recommendation formulated to address the high cost of quality childcare is the conversion of a number of Coast Guard CDC staff positions currently funded using non-appropriated (NAF) funds to billets to help standard staffing across sites. At the present time, staffing configurations in Coast Guard CDCs are comprised of employees paid out of both NAF and GS funding streams. NAF employees' salaries, paid by parent fees, account for the highest expense in CDC budgets. Some of the NAF positions have already been converted to GS billets (which are paid using appropriated funds); if the Coast Guard was able to convert additional positions, the freed-up funds could in turn be used to provide further subsidies.

Implementation of this strategy would provide added benefits to parents and would allow for greater standardization in administration policies (i.e., staffing configurations) across Coast Guard child development programs. CDC staffing plans comprised of mostly GS billets introduces greater uniformity and consistency in facility operations Coast Guard-wide—a concern frequently voiced by parents and Work-Life staff members during focus group discussions.

2. DEVELOP AND/OR STRENGTHEN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

The second strategy proposed to (a) help improve parents' access to, availability of, and affordability of quality childcare, and (b) augment the childcare services provided by the Coast Guard is to develop and/or strengthen alliances with strategic childcare partners, including public-private ventures. Potential partners with whom linkages should be further cultivated include:

- Department of Defense
- Civilian childcare providers and organizations (e.g., childcare resource and referral agencies) in local Coast Guard communities
- National programs of strong repute, such as the National Association of Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) and Childcare Aware.

Taken together, formal alliances with partners such as those listed above would assist the Coast Guard, and its Work-Life Office, in their endeavors to provide up-to-date and reliable local childcare information, and would provide parents with greater access to high quality childcare programs. Several of the military services have recently developed partnerships with

NACCRRRA to better support dispersed or isolated members, as well as provide additional support in metropolitan areas where DoD-provided services are already at capacity.

2.1 Partnering with the Department of Defense

With respect to DoD, the Coast Guard and the Department entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in 2003 that entitles Coast Guard active duty personnel the use of DoD-sponsored CDCs on a space-available basis. Through the MOA, Coast Guard members have access to DoD's high quality, low cost facilities collocated with Coast Guard operations, and in fact, some Coast Guard parents have been able to capitalize on the opportunities afforded by the agreement. Although the MOA outlines a spirit of partnership between DoD and the Coast Guard, the implementation has been inconsistent at best—particularly with respect to wait lists and priority status given to Coast Guard personnel. In some cases, Coast Guard active duty members are accorded the same [top] priority status on wait lists as members of the other military services. In other cases, however, they are prioritized in the same category as DoD civilians, making it almost impossible for them to ever enroll their child(ren) into DoD CDCs because of the extent to which demand (i.e., the number on the wait list) exceeds capacity. Further clarification and definition regarding this issue is warranted; Coast Guard members should have clear expectations about the extent to which the DoD's CDCs are viable childcare options for them.

In addition to CDCs, the DoD has a large, comprehensive network of family childcare providers (FCCs) that, like their CDC counterparts, provide top-notch childcare service at reasonable cost. Based on the information collected during the needs assessment—primarily in discussions with parents—Coast Guard service members seem largely unaware of the vast potential of the FCC system operated by DoD. The Coast Guard should more effectively tap into the opportunities inherent in DoD's FCC network (and communicate it to its personnel) to make this high-quality childcare option more accessible and available to active duty members.

2.2 Partnering with Local Childcare Entities

One of the chief complaints heard from parents during focus group discussions was the lack of information and resources that the Coast Guard (i.e., Office of Work-Life) was able to provide about local childcare options. In response to this deficit, parents are forced to rely upon word-of-mouth and their own investigations to find and secure childcare that meets their needs. Focus group participants—parents, leaders and Work-Life staff alike—often commented that there should be a “list of Coast Guard approved providers” or a number of civilian providers “on retainer” to make the childcare quest easier for parents—particularly for those PCSing. Although the compilation and maintenance of an exhaustive roster of local, civilian childcare

providers is beyond what can realistically be expected, Work-Life staff members could establish formal or informal agreements with select civilian providers and local or regional resource and referral entities to at least give parents a place to start when seeking childcare. For example, the Coast Guard and identified local partners could work together to develop:

- Childcare information, resource and referral strategies and mechanisms
- Networks of providers who offer non-traditional hours care
- Mutual agreement on fees charged to Coast Guard families using select facilities.

Each of the above-listed strategies would serve to improve the access, availability and affordability of childcare for Coast Guard's active duty members.

2.3 Partnering with National Programs

Given the far-flung presence of the Coast Guard across the United States, including its presence in geographically remote and isolated areas, it is inconceivable that partnerships with local civilian providers could be effectively brokered in all locations. Furthermore, even keeping up-to-date information on local childcare options poses significant challenges. To provide Coast Guard members nationwide with access to reliable childcare information, the Coast Guard should explore partnerships with national childcare information specialists—such as NACCRRRA and Childcare Aware—to provide parents (even those in rural areas) with a baseline of childcare options available in their local communities. Military services within the Department of Defense, including Army, Air Force and Navy, have recently established such partnerships with NACCRRRA to provide childcare resource and referral (CCR&R) services to active duty members, as well as members of the Guard and Reserve components. These services will be particularly beneficial for service members stationed in geographically remote locations.

It should be noted that the formation of strategic alliances, such as those identified here, may require varying levels of formal support from Headquarters. In some cases, the partnerships may be best cultivated and established at the highest (i.e., HQ) levels. In other cases, local entities (e.g., Installation Support Commands [ISCs], Personnel Support Commands [PSCs] and/or local Activities [ACT]) may require assistance in reaching out to potential partners. In these cases, standardized tools developed by Headquarters (such as Memorandums of Agreement to use as templates) will provide useful resources for local entities to use to more effectively broker agreements and partnerships in their communities.

3. ENHANCE THE COAST GUARD'S CHILDCARE-RELATED SUPPORT MECHANISMS

As stated in preceding sections and throughout this report, provision of adequate support of Coast Guard members' childcare needs and challenges is a critical work-life issue and factors into the maintenance and retention of a satisfied, productive and mission-ready service. Although the majority of members participating in the needs assessment were mostly satisfied with the level of support provided by the Coast Guard (as evidenced in part by the number planning to remain in the service until retirement and other indicators), they offered a number of suggestions for improvement. Key strategies by which the Coast Guard can enhance their childcare-related support services include:

- Providing better support through the Office of Work-Life
- Expanding the capacity of Coast Guard-sponsored child development programs through:
 - Construction of new child development center(s)
 - Expansion of the family childcare program.

Each of these recommendations will be elaborated upon in subsequent sections.

3.1 Provide Better Support Through the Office of Work-life

Despite the fact that personnel participating in the needs assessment—survey respondents as well as focus group participants—were mostly complimentary about the level of support provided by the “Coast Guard,” they were less complimentary about (and in some cases, unaware of) the childcare services and resources available through the Work-Life Office. Of particular concern was the insufficient information and resources available through the Office regarding local childcare options—a deficit most strongly felt during times of transition and relocation. Similarly, Work-Life staff lamented their inability to be more effective in responding to members' childcare requests and needs—efforts stymied largely by competing demands and lack of manpower. In light of these findings, two recommendations were formulated to address the shortfalls identified:

- Add manpower to core Work-Life staffs in the form of a Childcare Resource Specialist
- Establish and implement childcare information communication and dissemination plans.

First, in order to more effectively meet members' childcare-related needs, the addition of a Childcare Resource Specialist (CCRS) to the core Work-Life staff has been proposed. At the present time, Family Resource Specialists (FRSs) are assigned the job of ministering to Coast Guard members' childcare needs and requests. Given their focus on meeting the needs of exceptional family members, they have little time or resources to devote to childcare. FRSs are overworked and stretched quite thin, and would be unable to shoulder the additional responsibilities arising from the implementation of the recommendations put forth in this report. The CCRSs could supplement Work-Life staff by taking on, among other things, the following duties:

- Responding to direct childcare requests of Coast Guard members
- Communicating and disseminating childcare information
- Serving as liaison with local childcare partners
- Administering the childcare subsidy program
- Overseeing the Coast Guard's CDCs and family childcare program (where applicable).

In this capacity, the creation of a CCRS position would help ensure that the goals and objectives outlined here—i.e., to enhance the services and support provided by Work-Life around childcare—are met more effectively.

Second, with respect to the communication and dissemination of childcare information, better processes must be developed and implemented to “get the word out” more effectively to Coast Guard parents about (a) childcare options available in local communities; and (b) childcare support services and resources available through the Office of Work-Life. Establishment of partnerships (as described above) will facilitate this process, as will the advent of the CCRS position, but there are other, more immediate measures, that can be taken as well:

- Within the Work-Life office, FRSs and Relocation Specialists should work together to better meet the childcare needs of relocating parents:
 - Provide childcare information in relocation packets
 - Attend welcome briefings to provide additional childcare information and resources
 - Develop and/or strengthen sponsorship programs so that transitioning parents have a direct, personal point-of-contact to use as a resource for childcare information.

- Establish links to local and/or national childcare information resources on Work-Life Office websites
- Ensure that childcare information and materials distributed to parents is up-to-date and reliable. Parents were often more frustrated by misinformation sometimes provided (e.g., identified centers no longer in business) than by the lack of any information at all.

Together, these measures will increase the likelihood that baseline, localized childcare information is available for parents—particularly parents relocating to new duty stations—and that the information provided is timely, accurate and reliable.

3.2 Expand the Coast Guard’s Childcare Capacity

Together, the results of the childcare needs assessment collected via survey, focus group, and benchmarking underscore the importance of childcare on quality of life, morale, and job performance and productivity. Coast Guard-sponsored childcare—particularly CDCs—was considered by needs assessment constituents to be especially important in effecting positive outcomes for members, including not only improved morale, but also fostering a sense of family support and in turn providing an incentive for members to remain in service.

Childcare operated under the aegis of the Coast Guard has a number of clear advantages over other, civilian-based care:

- The care is subsidized and is therefore [usually] more affordable for parents
- The mandates outlined in the Coast Guard’s Child Development Services Manual (COMDTINST M1754.15) ensure that high quality of care is provided in all service-sponsored settings
- Coast Guard childcare and providers may be more responsive to, and understanding of, the OPTEMPO requirements and resulting childcare needs
- Coast Guard childcare, located on or near work duty stations, is convenient for parents.

The Coast Guard’s Child Development Program is comprised of both CDCs, as well as FCCs. At the present time, there are nine Coast Guard Child Development Centers providing care to children aged six weeks through five years old, with the capacity to serve approximately 795 children per day. At the end of July 2003, 506 children were enrolled in full-time care in Coast Guard CDCs, while 191 children were enrolled part-time. The FCC program, administered through ISCs, operates approximately 30 FCC homes in which providers care for about 120 children, across nine Coast Guard duty locations.

The demand for Coast Guard care, however, outstrips the service's ability to provide it. Almost all Coast Guard CDCs hold waiting lists, and according to parents, leadership and Work-Life staff, the amount of time parents must wait before care becomes available for their child(ren) can easily exceed 6 or more months. Additionally, when compared to the DoD childcare system and its capacity to provide care for the young children of service members, the Coast Guard lags well behind. While the DoD is able to provide care for approximately 14 percent of its 1.2 million children, the Coast Guard has the capacity to serve slightly less than 3 percent (2.8%) of its 32,000 dependent children.

In light of these findings, the final recommendations provided through the childcare needs assessment entail expanding the Coast Guard's capacity to serve larger numbers of its youngest children. Specifically, we propose that the Coast Guard:

- Construct additional child development center(s)
- Expand its family childcare program

Each of these recommendations will be discussed in turn.

Construction of Child Development Centers

The childcare needs assessment indicated that, in the opinion of parents and others, the number one way that the Coast Guard can better support its' members childcare needs is to build additional CDCs, or in some cases, expand the capacity of existing CDCs. While they were forthcoming with other suggestions and were thinking "outside of the box" to generate alternative strategies, parents and leaders alike suggested that Coast Guard CDCs provided the most direct childcare benefit to parents, and in turn, to the Coast Guard. Although the cost of construction—particularly of brand new facilities—is prohibitive, these costs must be measured against the potential gains, such as improved morale and retention.

Using the results of the needs assessment as a starting point, and recognizing the limited applicability of new CDCs as a remedial strategy, the Coast Guard should assess the feasibility of new CDCs in particular location(s). Some of the factors to consider when assessing the feasibility of specific sites include:

- **The number of Coast Guard members residing in a geographic area.** Areas where the largest numbers of Coast Guard personnel reside should be given top consideration.
- **The cost of quality civilian-based care.** Geographic regions where families are currently forced to pay disproportionately high fees for quality care for their young

children, and could most benefit financially from the provision of Coast Guard-sponsored care, would be locations to consider for placement of new CDCs.

- **Current access to and availability of quality childcare.** Locations where access to high quality childcare is limited or constrained by factors such as transportation and commuting challenges, geographic proximity of duty stations to available childcare services, and relatively few “slots” available in surrounding environs, would be ideal locations to consider when making decisions about construction of new CDCs.
- **Coast Guard OPTEMPO.** In locations where OPTEMPO is high, parents may be hard-pressed to balance the demands of their jobs with the needs of their families. The availability of CDCs in these areas may help minimize stress and reduce burdens and challenges associated with childcare by making it more convenient, accessible and affordable.

Using these (and other) criteria as a guide, Coast Guard decision and policy makers must carefully consider the pros and cons associated with CDC construction. The results of the needs assessment reveal, however, that there are some seemingly “natural candidates” for CDC construction, such as Activities New York. When measured against the criteria outlined above for the locations visited during the site visits, ACT NY would go to the “front of the line” when decisions about new CDCs were being considered. There may be other locations primed for construction of new CDCs, but formal feasibility assessments would be needed before specific recommendations could be made.

Expansion of Family Childcare Program

Like the construction of new CDCs, the expansion of Coast Guard’s FCC program is a way for the service to augment its’ capacity to serve the youngest members of the Coast Guard family. Over the last decade, the DoD has diligently worked to expand their FCC programs in order to provide additional, high quality care alternatives to military members, particularly in areas where shortages of quality care settings exist, such as in remote or geographically isolated areas, or areas where the population demands are too great to be met by center-based care. The Coast Guard should work to do the same.

While the current study did not examine all aspects of the Coast Guard FCC program, the information we did gather suggests that, at the present time is, at best, “wounded” if not “broken.” The Coast Guard currently sponsors around 30 FCC homes; recent changes in policy and legislation, however, have left the program in a state of flux. Some “old” providers (i.e., those who have been providing in-home, Guard-sponsored care) have left/are leaving the system and relatively few, if any, “new” providers are stepping in to breach the shortfall. The primary challenge for current and potential FCC providers seems to be the latest requirements for background checks. During the site visits, Caliber staff members spoke with some FCC

providers, as well as a number of Coast Guard spouses who were/had been interested in becoming licensed FCCs. These spouses, along with leaders and Work-Life staff participating in focus group discussions, were concerned that the stringency and invasiveness now associated with background checks are discouraging members' spouses from pursuing (or continuing) to provide care. This has resulted in a high degree of concern, especially in remote locations where Coast Guard personnel are dependent upon the FCC system for high quality, affordable care. The organizational structure of the Coast Guard, including its wide geographic dispersion, necessitate the rigorous level of scrutiny required by the new background procedures. Few FCC providers have direct, immediate oversight from FRSs within their respective ISCs, and consequently, strict measures are needed to ensure that individuals providing care are qualified to do so. To recruit new providers, as well as to retain current providers, an aggressive, proactive marketing and promotion campaign is needed, as is support for new/current providers throughout the clearance process.

An additional (but related) challenge associated with the Coast Guard FCC program is manpower. As described above, FRSs have little time to devote to childcare services. They, consequently, may have difficulty meeting their responsibilities related to the oversight of current FCC homes, much less play an active role in the recruitment and certification of new providers. The background check requirements have, in fact, taxed an already over-burdened system, and some FRSs indicated relief that they have fewer FCC providers to “worry about.” This attitude, while understandable, stands in the way of providing expanded childcare service to Coast Guard members. Unless some of these challenges and issues are addressed, the FCC program will become completely defunct, and Coast Guard members will lose access to this important childcare alternative.

Together, the issues surrounding expansion of Coast Guard's childcare capacity—either through the construction of additional CDCs or enhancing the FCC program—point to an important question for Headquarters and policy makers to consider: *To what degree does the Coast Guard want to provide direct childcare services to its members and families, or alternatively, should outsourcing and other partnerships be more strongly considered?* At the present time, the Coast Guard seems to be operating on the fringes—providing some childcare-related supports and services, but not investing or engaging fully. The recommendations presented here will, if implemented, no doubt address the challenges and issues brought to light during the childcare needs assessment. Some of them, however, (such as the advent of the CCRS, building new CDCs, expanding FCC) will require significant investment of resources to bring about. First and foremost, the Coast Guard needs to consider how far they are willing to go to internally “fix” the childcare problems and invest in supporting the childcare needs of active duty members, or whether they should seek to develop partnerships (e.g., contracts) that make childcare an external, out-sourced function.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This report summarizes the results obtained during the comprehensive childcare needs assessment undertaken by Caliber Associates October 2004 through April 2005 for the U.S. Coast Guard's Office of Work-Life. This chapter briefly summarizes the study, including the strategies and recommendations generated from its findings; presents potential limitations or caveats associated with the results and recommendations; identifies areas for future study; and offers concluding comments.

1. STUDY SUMMARY

The 2004-2005 U.S. Coast Guard Childcare needs assessment was designed to examine childcare utilization among active duty members; to identify issues and challenges members face with respect to childcare; and to assess the impact that childcare issues and challenges have on quality of life, job performance and productivity, mission readiness, morale, and retention. Information collected from the administration of a Web-based survey to approximately 15,000 active duty members; from focus group discussions held with parents, Coast Guard leadership and Work-Life staff members during site visits to 10 locations; and from a benchmarking study and analysis were compiled and aggregated to meet study objectives.

Results obtained during assessment indicated that slightly more than one-half of Coast Guard active duty members are either single parents or have spouses who work full- or part-time, requiring at least some non-parental care for children between the ages of 0 and 6. Of those using non-parental care—whether it be in military or civilian settings, or in home- or center-based care—most were satisfied with the care their young children received.

Coast Guard members completing surveys and/or participating in focus groups, however, evidenced considerable challenges with respect to childcare. The most common (i.e., frequently cited) challenges included:

- Accessibility of quality childcare (e.g., finding care in close proximity to home or finding care in geographically remote locations)
- Affordability of quality childcare, particularly for parents of younger or multiple children; those residing in high cost-of-living locales; single parents; and those from among the lower rank groups
- Availability of quality care, as evidenced by lengthy wait lists in military and civilian child development centers, and the shortage of infant care “slots.”

Challenges were particularly problematic for parents seeking non-traditional hours care (e.g., during 2nd or 3rd shifts, for extended durations to cover parents' 12- or 24-hour shifts, or during weekends) and for those relocating to new duty stations.

For the most part, parents relied upon word-of-mouth to find out about childcare options and resources, and were dependent upon friends, neighbors and coworkers to help them deal with childcare challenges. They were [mostly] appreciative of the support extended by Coast Guard leadership and generally felt that leaders were flexible and responsive to their childcare needs. There was less satisfaction with the support provided by the Office of Work-Life, however. Parents and leaders alike were frustrated by the lack of reliable resource and referral specialists to adequately address childcare requests—a sentiment also shared by Work-Life staff—and across the board, there was a call for the provision of up-to-date childcare information to assist parents in finding quality care, especially during times of transition or relocation.

There was strong consensus across needs assessment contributors—i.e., survey respondents and focus group participants—that childcare is an important work-life issue, with potentially strong impacts on quality of life, job performance and productivity, and morale. Although childcare was also viewed as an important retention issue, most parents completing surveys and/or participating in focus groups expressed their desire and intention to remain in the Coast Guard at least beyond their present obligation, if not until retirement.

Using the information collected via the three methodologies employed during the childcare needs assessment—the survey, the site visits and the benchmarking study—Caliber developed strategies and recommendations to assist the Office of Work-Life in formulating strategic plans and initiatives to better meet members’ childcare needs and to provide enhanced childcare-related services to Coast Guard members and families. The specific strategies and recommendations proposed are identified in Exhibit V-1.

EXHIBIT V-1	
GOALS, STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS RESULTING FROM THE COAST GUARD CHILDCARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT	
Goals:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the access, availability, and affordability of high quality childcare for Coast Guard active duty members with children 0 to 6 years. 2. Augment the Coast Guard’s childcare services to better meet service members’ needs.
Strategies	Recommendations
Develop mechanisms to offset the high cost of quality childcare	Subsidize out-of-pocket childcare costs as a function of service members’ family income, age of child(ren) and geographic location
	Convert NAF positions in Coast Guard child development centers (CDCs) to GS billets
Develop and/or strengthen strategic partnerships	Strengthen partnerships with DoD-controlled childcare systems
	Develop partnerships with local childcare entities
	Engage national childcare organizations in active alliances

EXHIBIT V-1 (CONT.)	
GOALS, STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS RESULTING FROM THE COAST GUARD CHILDCARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT	
Enhance the Coast Guard’s childcare-related support mechanisms	Provide better support through the Office of Work-Life Expand the Coast Guard’s childcare capacity through new CDC(s) and/or the family childcare program (FCC).

The strategies and recommendations presented here will, if implemented, assist the Coast Guard in improving the access, availability and affordability of quality childcare for Coast Guard active duty members with children ages 0 to 6, and will help augment the childcare services provided so that members’ needs are more effectively met. In considering these recommendations, however, the Coast Guard should determine to what extent they are willing to invest in childcare to remediate the identified challenges. As [some of] these recommendations require substantial investment of resources, the Coast Guard should use the results of this study to help determine their level of commitment to childcare, and to make decisions about the most efficient use of childcare funds.

2. POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS

While Caliber has attempted to complete a comprehensive assessment of the childcare needs of Coast Guard active duty members, there are limitations and caveats associated with the findings and/or their interpretations that should be noted.

First, most of the information collected during the course of the needs assessment was provided on a self-report, voluntary basis, including the completion of the Web-based survey, as well as participation in focus group discussions. No incentives for complying with requests for information were given, nor were members electing not to respond penalized for non-participation. Given the self-selection mechanisms at work throughout the information gathering process, we can not say with absolute certainty that the viewpoints provided are accurate and reflective of the entire Coast Guard population. We can, however, be reassured that, demographically speaking, needs assessment contributors were similar to the rest of the Coast Guard, thereby lending confidence in, and credibility to, results obtained. This confidence is further substantiated by the impressive return rate of completed surveys, as well as the consistency of findings achieved through the survey and site visit methodologies .

Similarly, site visits were conducted at only 10 Coast Guard installations/locations, all in metropolitan areas, and all in the continental United States (CONUS). The possibility must be raised that we did not accurately capture the perspectives of Coast Guard members residing OCONUS (outside of the continental U.S.), or those residing in geographically remote or

isolated areas. Several reassurances regarding the validity and representativeness of the results obtained can be offered, however:

- The scope of the survey was not limited to major metropolitan areas and/or to CONUS locations. Members residing in other locales (i.e., rural or isolated areas; OCONUS locations) had the same opportunities to provide input into the needs assessment through survey completion as did other Coast Guard personnel.
- The results of the needs assessment, for the most part, were not analyzed according to the geographic location of either survey respondents or focus group participants. Results obtained were “broad brush” and meant to inform childcare needs and policies Coast Guard-wide.
- Many Coast Guard members completing surveys or participating in focus group discussions had previously been stationed in OCONUS or geographically remote locations. These members were often able to lend viewpoints gleaned from prior experiences to the information gathering efforts undertaken during the needs assessment.

Finally, because the focus of this study was on the childcare needs and challenges of active duty members with children ages 0 to 6, the results do not speak to the needs and issues of personnel with older children, or to those of Coast Guard civilian personnel.

3. DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

During the course of the needs assessment, several issues of seeming importance to the Coast Guard and/or its members “cropped up,” but were beyond the scope of the current study. These issues, identified here as directions for future study, are summarized in Exhibit V-2.

EXHIBIT V-2	
DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY	
Direction	Objective(s)
Development of strategic plan for service coordination and partnerships	<p>The development of strategic partnerships and linkages with other organizations potentially provides “bang for the buck” in terms of enhancing the childcare support services and resources provided by the Coast Guard, as well as for increasing the availability, accessibility and affordability of quality care options. In order to maximize the effectiveness of the alliances, however, the Coast Guard must be planful and thoughtful in the development and execution of partnership agreements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The development of a “top down” plan and approach, in which goals and priorities are established at higher levels, followed by Headquarters-assisted execution and implementation at lower, local levels, will help ensure that the entire Coast Guard—regardless of location and/or grass roots efforts of individuals—benefits. ■ The conduct of a “pilot program” within one ISC, for example, would provide tools and processes required for the successful execution of public-private partnerships, as well as inform best practices and lessons learned that could be effectively leveraged in a Coast Guard-wide rollout.

EXHIBIT V-2 (CONT.)	
DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY	
Direction	Objective(s)
Comprehensive study of the needs and challenges of female Coast Guard active duty members	A needs assessment, or quality of life survey, should be developed and administered to female members serving in the Coast Guard to further identify and clarify their issues and challenges—both within their jobs and within their families—and the impact of these on quality of life, morale, satisfaction with the Coast Guard and intentions to remain.
School age childcare needs assessment	Similar to the childcare needs assessment undertaken under the present contract, a needs assessment addressing the challenges and issues associated with care for school age children should be carried out. Although it was beyond the scope of this study, parents with older children often voiced concerns about the availability, accessibility and affordability of school age care, and were hungry for information and resources to assist with their challenges.
Feasibility assessments for the construction of new CDCs	Formal feasibility assessments evaluating the need for new CDCs should be undertaken in locations where the largest needs seem to be. The results of this study may be used as a starting point or baseline to determine candidate locations.

4. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The needs assessment recently completed by Caliber Associates for the U.S. Coast Guard’s Office of Work-Life represents an important “first step” in the Coast Guard’s mission to better meet the childcare needs of its members, and to provide better childcare-related supports and services. The execution of a contract to objectively and comprehensively examine the factors contributing to childcare challenges, and current gaps in the Coast Guard’s capacity to address the issues, underscores Headquarters’ concern about, and intended support of, the childcare needs of parents serving in the Coast Guard. Using the results obtained during the course of the needs assessment as a baseline, Coast Guard leadership should develop a childcare action plan to help prioritize next steps. Important decisions must be considered and made about the Coast Guard’s future investment in childcare, and resulting utilization of childcare funding and resources. The crux of the issue is whether priority and associated resources should be given to strengthen the Coast Guard’s internal support and provision of childcare, or whether childcare is a function that should be externalized and/or outsourced.

Together, the issues surrounding expansion of Coast Guard’s childcare capacity—either through the construction of additional CDCs or enhancing the FCC program—point to an important question for Headquarters and policy makers to consider: *To what degree does the Coast Guard want to provide direct childcare services to its members and families, or alternatively, should outsourcing and other partnerships be more strongly considered?* At the present time, the Coast Guard seems to be operating on the fringes—providing some childcare-related supports and services, but not investing or engaging fully. The recommendations presented here will, if implemented, no doubt address the challenges and issues brought to light during the childcare needs assessment. Some of them, however, (such as the advent of the

CCRS, building new CDCs, expanding FCC) will require significant investment of resources to bring about. First and foremost, the Coast Guard needs to consider how far they are willing to go to internally “fix” the childcare problems and invest in supporting the childcare needs of active duty members, or whether they should seek to develop partnerships (e.g., contracts) that make childcare an external, out-sourced function.

**APPENDIX A:
2004-2005 U.S. COAST GUARD CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

**2004-2005 CHILD CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT
U.S. COAST GUARD**

DRAFT

(Page 1) Background Information

1. Are you:
 - Male
 - Female

2. How old are you?
_____ years [validate between 17 & 70]

3. What is your current MARITAL STATUS?
 - Not married
 - Married to a Civilian
 - Married to another Military member

4. What is the highest level of EDUCATION you have completed?
 - Less than high school
 - High school graduate/GED
 - Some college but no degree
 - College degree
 - Graduate degree

5. What is your RACE? (*Check all that apply.*)
 - American Indian or Alaska Native (Eskimo, Aleut)
 - Asian (e.g., Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin or ancestry
 - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (e.g., Samoan, Guamanian, Chamorro)
 - White
 - Other

(Page 2) Background Information (Spouse) [Only present this page if member is married (from Q5)]

6. My spouse is in the: [Only ask if spouse in military (from Q5)]

- Coast Guard
- Army
- Air Force
- Marine Corps
- Navy
- Other _____

7. What is your SPOUSE'S EMPLOYMENT STATUS? (*Check all that apply.*)

- Spouse does not work outside of the home for pay
- Spouse works part time
- Spouse works full time
- Spouse is a student

8. What is the highest level of EDUCATION your spouse has completed?

- Less than high school
- High school graduate/GED
- Some college but no degree
- College degree
- Graduate degree

(Page 3) Background Information

9. What is your HOME ZIP CODE?

____ [validate 5 digits]

10. What is your ZIP CODE at your DUTY STATION?

____ [validate 5 digits]

11. How many minutes from your duty station do you live?

Drop-down options:

On base

0 – 5 minutes

5 – 15 minutes

15 – 30 minutes

30 – 60 minutes

more than 60 minutes

12. How do you commute to work? (*Check all that apply.*)

Personal vehicle

Car/Vanpool

Public Transportation (bus, train, ferry, etc.)

Bicycle

Walk

Other: _____

(Page 4) Background Information

13. You indicated you are of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin or ancestry. Of the following options, please indicate which describe you. (*Check all that apply.*)
- Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
 - Puerto Rican
 - Cuban
 - Other Hispanic/Spanish
14. What is your TOTAL FAMILY INCOME range, including your housing allowance?
- \$23,000 or less
 - \$23,001-\$34,000
 - \$34,001-\$44,000
 - \$44,001-\$55,000
 - \$55,001-\$69,999
 - More than \$70,000
15. How many DEPENDENT CHILDREN do you have that are 6 years old or younger (that live with you for at least 3 months out of the year)?
- None ← [If none, continue to Q16. Otherwise skip to Q101]
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4 or more

(Page 5) Background Information [Only present this page if member has no young children (from Q15)]

16. Are you planning to have or adopt child(ren) in the next 5 years? [Afterwards, skip to Q32 (page 30)]

- No
- Yes

(Page 11a) Child Care Information (X Child) [Only present child care information if user has young children. Loop over questions 101-105 for each child: “X” = Youngest, Second Youngest, Third Youngest, or Fourth Youngest]

101. How old is your X child?

Dropdown options:

Birth to 11 mos.

12 to 23 mos.

24 to 35 mos.

3 to 4 years

5 to 6 years

101a. Does your X child have special needs?

- No
- Yes

102. What child care arrangement(s) do you have for your X child? (*Check all that apply.*)

- Military child development center (CDC)
- Military child development home provider (CDH)
- Spouse/partner
- Civilian child care center
- Civilian licensed provider
- Relative, friend or neighbor
- Caregiver in your home
- No supervised care [mutually exclusive w/other options; validate if selected]

(Page 11b) Child Care Information (X Child) [Only present this page if member uses supervised care for this child (from Q102)]

103. How many **hours per week** do you use this arrangement for your X child? [Only display the options chosen in Q102. Validate: Total can't exceed 168 hours.]

	Hours per wk
Military child development center (CDC)	
Military child development home provider (CDH)	
Spouse/partner	
Civilian child care center	
Civilian licensed provider	
Relative, friend or neighbor	
Caregiver in your home	

104. How much do you pay per week for child care for your X child? [Only display the options chosen in Q102.]

	Dollars
Military child development center (CDC)	Dropdown Options: \$0.00 \$1.00-50.00 \$51.00-100.00 \$101.00-150.00 Over \$150
Military child development home provider (CDH)	
Spouse/partner	
Civilian child care center	
Civilian licensed provider	
Relative, friend or neighbor	
Caregiver in your home	

105. Overall, how satisfied are you with your current child care arrangement(s) for your X child?
 [Only display the options chosen in Q102.]

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Military child development center (CDC)					
Military child development home provider (CDH)					
Spouse/partner					
Civilian child care center					
Civilian licensed provider					
Relative, friend or neighbor					
Caregiver in your home					

[This is the end of the per-child loop]

(Page 20) Child Care Information

20. I prefer my child care to be close to

- my home.
- my work place.
- no preference

21. Each day, how much time do you spend transporting your child(ren) to and from child care?

- 0 – 5 minutes
- 5 – 15 minutes
- 15 – 30 minutes
- 30 – 60 minutes
- more than 60 minutes

22. I prefer my child care to be

- center-based.
- home-based.
- no preference

(Page 21) Child Care Information

23. Do your child care needs change when you are deployed?
- No
 - Yes
24. Do you have a family care plan that specifies child care arrangements in case you are deployed?
- No
 - Yes
25. In the past year, how many times have you had to change your child care arrangements? (This does not include emergency or back-up care situations.)
- I have not had to make a change
 - 1-2 times
 - 3-4 times
 - More than 4 times
26. Please indicate the number of days you have missed work, arrived late, or left early because of your child care needs in the past year.

	None	1–3 days	4–6 days	7–9 days	10 or more days
a. Missed work completely	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Arrived late to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Left work early	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. Do you have a need for child care outside of regular/traditional hours (e.g., 0600-1800)?
- No ← [Skip to 29]
 - Yes ← [Continue to 28]

(Page 22) Child Care Information

28. When do you have a need for child care outside of regular/traditional hours (e.g., 0600-1800)? [Only display if member has need (from Q27)]

- Evenings
- Nights
- Weekend days
- Weekend nights
- Other _____

29. Which of the following child care issues has had an effect on you over the past year? (*Check all that apply.*)

- Finding child care that fits my work schedule.
- Finding child care when I am off duty so that I can sleep.
- Finding affordable care.
- Finding high quality care.
- Finding back up child care when current arrangements fail me.
- Finding care for a sick child.
- Finding care for my child with special needs.
- Finding care in a convenient location close to home or work.
- Finding care when school is closed (vacation, holidays, summers, weather, etc.).
- Finding transportation to and/or from child care.
- Other _____
- No effect

(Page 23) Child Care Information

29a. Over the past year, I have had trouble finding affordable: *(Check all that apply.)* [Only display if member has had trouble finding affordable care (from Q29)]

- Infant care (birth-11 months)
- Pretoddler care (12 – 23 months)
- Toddler care (23-35 months)
- Preschooler care (3-4 years)
- School age child care (5-6years)

29b. Over the past year, I have had trouble finding high quality care: *(Check all that apply.)* [Only display if member has had trouble finding quality care (from Q29)]

- Infant care (birth-11 months)
- Pretoddler care (12 – 23 months)
- Toddler care (23-35 months)
- Preschooler care (3-4 years)
- School age child care (5-6years)

30. In what ways do your child care needs impact your job? *(Check all that apply.)*

- Sometimes I must bring my child to work with me
- I worry about child care while at work
- My supervisor has told me that my current child care situation is interfering with my job performance
- Others have had to step in and cover for me at work because of my child care situation
- I worry that others may feel I do not do my share at work
- I worry that my child care situation will affect my opportunities in the military
- I am considering getting out of the military because of my child care situation
- Other _____
- No Impact

31. How do you find information about child care? *(Check all that apply.)*

- Coast Guard Work Life Office
- Family Resource Specialist
- Military Resource and Referral Service
- Ombudsmen
- Newspaper
- Phonebook
- Internet
- Word of mouth (e.g., friends, neighbors, relatives, co-workers)
- Other _____

(Page 30) Job Information [For all respondents]

32. What is your pay grade?
[Pull down list of options]

33. What is your OPFAC code (from block 21 of your LES)?

34. How do you feel about your job in the Coast Guard?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. I stay in the Coast Guard because of the support systems it provides for me and my family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. My future plans include leaving the Coast Guard.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. My future plans include a career with and retirement from the Coast Guard.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

35. Please provide any additional information that was not captured in the survey.

APPENDIX B:
LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION



ASSISTANT COMMANDANT FOR HUMAN RESOURCES
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20593-0001

NOV 15 2004

Dear Coast Guard Member,

You have been randomly selected to participate in a survey to assess the child care needs of active duty members of the Coast Guard and the extent to which those needs are being met, or not met, by current support services.

Through a contract awarded to Caliber Associates, Inc., the Coast Guard is formally analyzing the child needs of our active duty service members. The goal of this needs assessment is to determine the availability and affordability of child care services to active duty members of the Coast Guard.

Caliber is using an internet based survey, along with some focus group meetings, to collect and analyze data on the child care needs of our service members. I encourage you to actively participate in this study. The results of this needs assessment will help direct Coast Guard policy and resources for serving the child care needs of our active duty members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth T. Venuto". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

KENNETH T. VENUTO
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard

**APPENDIX C:
SITE VISIT MATERIALS**

GUIDANCE FOR SITE VISIT COORDINATION

Coast Guard Child Care Needs Assessment

Guidance for Site Visit Coordination

1. BACKGROUND

In support of the Coast Guard, Office of Work-Life, Caliber Associates is conducting a comprehensive *Child Care Needs Assessment*. The primary purpose of the study is to assess the need for child care and make recommendations to create an environment in which the Coast Guard will achieve organizational excellence and continue to provide valued services to personnel. Today, Coast Guard personnel and their families face unique challenges including accessing affordable, quality child care services. Results of the *Child Care Needs Assessment* will be used to inform strategic planning efforts to respond to these challenges and improve Work-Life sponsored individual and family support programs including child care, child development centers, and family child care. The specific objectives of this important initiative are to:

- Identify child care needs facing Coast Guard personnel and their families
- Determine the efficacy of current programs and policies to address these needs
- Make recommendations to better support active duty and family members

2. OVERVIEW OF APPROACH

As part of the *Child Care Needs Assessment*, a web-based survey is being administered involving the participation of more than 15,000 Coast Guard personnel. In addition, site visits are being conducted in the following locations: Boston, MA; Portsmouth, VA; Washington, DC; Miami, FL; New Orleans, LA; St. Louis, MO; Cleveland, OH; Alameda, CA; and Seattle, WA. Major activities to be undertaken during each of the site visits include:

- Data collection via focus groups and/or interviews
- Tour of Coast Guard CDC (if there is one at/near location)

To collect requisite data during the site visits, Caliber will need to meet with the following groups of stakeholders:

- Work-Life staff members, to include Supervisor and other staff members (e.g., Family Resource Specialists. Exact list TBD—as appropriate).
- Parents:
 - Enlisted members (and/or spouses)
 - Officers (and/or spouses)
- Leadership:
 - NCOs
 - Commissioned Officers

Interviews/focus groups conducted with Work-Life staff will focus on program operations (including strengths and weaknesses), child care needs and challenges of clientele, etc; parent focus groups will include discussion of child care utilization, needs and challenges; and leadership focus groups/interviews will focus on the impact of child care on mission and job performance.

POINT-OF-CONTACT (POC) RESPONSIBILITIES

As a Point-of-Contact (POC), your assistance is requested to help with the coordination of the site visit activities. The POC or assigned personnel will be primarily responsible for the completion of the following tasks:

(1) Obtaining Facilities for Conduct of Focus Groups/Interviews

Each POC will be responsible for identifying and reserving locations suitable for the conduct of focus groups. Criteria to consider when selecting potential sites (both on- and off-base) include the following:

- Sites should be conveniently accessible for personnel and families
- Sites should be locations in which members and spouses feel comfortable
- Sites should have adequate facilities to comfortably seat 10-15 people
- Sites must have an electrical outlet.

Facilities may either be on base (e.g., Child Development Center, conference rooms, unit day rooms, chapels, etc.) or off base (e.g., schools, libraries, community/recreation centers, churches, etc.). Interviews may be held in interviewees' office space, if appropriate.

(2) Coordinating Schedules for Site Visits

Each POC will be responsible for scheduling focus groups and interviews across a three-day time period. POCs must schedule interviews with Work-Life leadership and staff including family resource specialists.

Separate focus groups should be arranged for the following groups:

- Enlisted members (and/or spouses) who are parents of child(ren) under 6 years of age
- Officers (and/or spouses) who are parents of child(ren) under 6 years of age

If necessary, more than one of each of the above may be arranged to accommodate family schedules. For example, for each stakeholder group, one session may be held during working hours (to accommodate active duty members or spouses who do not work traditional 8-5 hours), while another may be held during evening hours (e.g., 1800-2000) to accommodate working parents.

Separate interviews and/or focus groups should also be arranged with the following:

- NCOs
- Commissioned Officers

For these groups, focus group sessions OR individual interviews may be scheduled (as appropriate or preferred).

(3) Recruiting Focus Group Participants

In addition to obtaining the facilities and scheduling the site visit activities, POCs are responsible for recruiting participants for each of the focus groups. To the extent possible, a representative sample of active duty members and spouses should be recruited for participation in the parent focus groups—not just those that use the CDC. Every effort should be made to include members/spouses who are not currently involved in Work-Life sponsored programs. For best results, you may consider working through the chain of command of larger units to identify potential participants.

To ensure that about 10 participants are present for each of the focus groups, it may be necessary to over-recruit (i.e., recruit 12-15 participants to accommodate for no-shows):

(4) Tour of CDC

If there is a Coast Guard Child Development Center (CDC) at (or near) the site visit location, site visit schedules should include a 2-hour block of time to tour the facility.

(5) Providing Logistical Coordination and Support

Identified POCs will coordinate all aspects of the site visit with designated Caliber staff members and Work-Life representatives. This will include, for example, providing Caliber representatives with lodging recommendations and directions to the focus group and meeting locations.

3. CALIBER ASSOCIATES POCS

The following Caliber staff members may be contacted directly with any questions or concerns regarding the project requirements:

Dr. Melissa Zwahr
Caliber Associates
10530 Rosehaven Street, Suite 400
Fairfax, VA 22030
Phone: 703-219-4423
Fax: 703-219-3777
Email: mzwahr@caliber.com

Mr. Richard Lewis
Caliber Associates
10530 Rosehaven Street, Suite 400
Fairfax, VA 22030
Phone: 703-219-4410
Fax: 703-219-3777
Email: rlewis@caliber.com

SITE VISIT IN-BRIEF

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASSESSMENT**
Coast Guard Office of Work-Life

SITE VISIT IN-BRIEF

December 2004 – February 2005



CALIBER

Table of Contents

- Project Overview
- Methodology
- Survey Timeline
- Site Visit Schedule
- Next Steps

Project Overview

- Conduct comprehensive child care needs assessment of Coast Guard active duty members
- Assess child care utilization, issues and challenges and the impact of child care on morale and retention

Methodology

- **Develop and administer a web-based survey to approximately 15,000 active duty members, including those with and without children**
- **Conduct site visits to 10 locations and collect qualitative data on needs and issues of service providers and service members**

Survey Timeline

- Survey launched week of 6 Dec 04
- “Live” for 6 weeks
- Non-respondents received email reminders
- Overall response rate: 60%

Site Visit Schedule

- Alameda, CA Dec 2004
- Portsmouth, VA Dec 2004
- Washington, DC Jan 2005
- Seattle, WA Jan 2005
- New Orleans, LA Jan 2005
- St. Louis, MO Jan 2005
- Miami, FL Jan 2005
- Cleveland, OH Jan 2005
- Boston, MA Feb 2005
- New York, NY Feb 2005

Next Steps

- Data collection will continue through mid February
- Final report(s) will be provided to Headquarters 31 Mar 05
- Results will be used to assist the Coast Guard in developing strategic plans and initiatives to:
 - Better meet members’ child care needs
 - Provide enhanced child care-related services to members and families

Caliber Contact Information

Questions about the project may be directed to:

Dr. Barbara Rudin
Caliber Associates
10530 Rosehaven Street Ste 400
Fairfax, VA 22030
phone: 703-279-6276
email: brudin@caliber.com

Dr. Melissa Zwahr
Caliber Associates
10530 Rosehaven Street Ste 400
Fairfax, VA 22030
phone: 703-219-4423
email: mzwahr@caliber.com

Mr. Richard Lewis
Caliber Associates
10530 Rosehaven Street Ste 400
Fairfax, VA 22030
phone: 703-219-4410
email: rlewis@caliber.com

WORK-LIFE STAFF PROTOCOL

COAST GUARD CHILD CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Work-Life Staff Focus Group/Interview Protocol

Date: _____ **Location:** _____

Moderator: _____ **Recorder:** _____

Interviewee Information:

Name	Role/Position	Tenure

INTRODUCTION

Hello, my/our name is [name(s)] with Caliber Associates, a research firm located in Virginia that is working with the Coast Guard, Office of Work-Life to conduct a comprehensive *Child Care Needs Assessment*. The primary purpose of the study is to assess the need for child care among Coast Guard members, and to make recommendations to create an environment in which the Coast Guard may achieve organizational excellence and continue to provide valued services to personnel.

The overall objective of the *Child Care Needs Assessment* is to support the well-being of active duty and family members. As part of the study, a web-based survey is being administered to more than 15,000 Coast Guard personnel. In addition, site visits are being conducted at the following locations: Boston, MA; Portsmouth, VA; Washington, DC; Miami, FL; New Orleans, LA; St. Louis, MO; Cleveland, OH; Alameda, CA; and Seattle, WA. The purpose of the site visits is to gather additional information from parents, Work-Life staff members and commanders to enrich and enhance the survey findings.

Results of the *Child Care Needs Assessment* will be used to inform strategic planning efforts to improve Work-Life sponsored individual and family support programs including child care, child development centers, and family child care.

Do you have any questions before we begin? Our session today will last approximately 1.5 hours. During this time, we will be asking you a series of questions. Please feel free to speak openly. There are no right or wrong answers, so even if you feel differently from others, that is okay. Your name will not be associated with anything you say here today—responses to your questions will be kept in the strictest confidence.

1. In your opinion, what are the main child care challenges/issues faced by Service members and their families?

Probes: Accessibility
 Affordability
 Quality
 Meeting preferences

2. In your opinion, do child care challenges/issues faced by Service members and their families impact:

Their quality of life?

The Coast Guard mission?

Retention?

3. What are the major child care activities/services provided by the Work-Life office here in [location]? What Service member/parent needs are they designed to meet?

4. What are the target population(s) for the child care activities/services (i.e., whom do you serve)?

4a. How do you reach your populations (i.e., how do your patrons find out about your services)?

4b. Are there segments of the population you are unable to reach who could benefit from the services you provide?

4c. Are there barriers/challenges associated with accessing your programs/services?

5. In your opinion, are the child care services/resources provided by the Work-Life office at [location] to support Service members/families needs:

Adequate? (e.g., exist in sufficient amount, enough to meet needs)

Accessible? (e.g., easily obtained, appropriate hours of operation)

Well-marketed? (methods used?)

Staffed appropriately?

Coordinated?

6. What are the key strengths of the child care services provided by the Work-Life office at [location]?

7. What are ways that the Work-Life office could expand upon current efforts to support families' child care needs?
 - 7a. What additional resources do you/would you need to expand?

8. Do you have any other child care concerns, comments, or questions that were not captured during this interview that you would like to discuss?

COMMANDER PROTOCOL

COAST GUARD CHILD CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Commander/CMC Focus Group/Interview Protocol

Date:

Location:

Moderator:

Recorder

Interviewee Information:

Name	Position and Rank

INTRODUCTION

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1. In your opinion, what are the main child care challenges/issues faced by Service members and their families?

Probes: Accessibility
 Affordability
 Quality
 Meeting preferences

2. What services/resources does the Coast Guard provide to help Service members and families deal with child care-related challenges and issues?
 - 2a. How adequate/effective are the support services provided by the Coast Guard in dealing with/meeting the child care needs of Service members and families?

 - 2b. What are ways that the Coast Guard could/should expand upon current efforts to support families' child care needs?

3. Describe efforts you, as a commander, have had to make to accommodate individuals with child care issues/challenges.

4. In your experience, how do child care challenges/issues faced by Service members and their families impact their quality of life?
 - 4a. How do child care challenges/issues faced by Service members and their families impact the Coast Guard mission (e.g., job productivity and performance)?

 - 4b. How do child care challenges/issues faced by Service members and their families impact retention?

5. Do you have any other child care concerns, comments, or questions that were not captured during this interview that you would like to discuss?

PARENT PROTOCOL

COAST GUARD CHILD CARE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Parent Focus Group Protocol

Date:

Location:

Moderator:

Recorder

No. of Participants:

Name	Role/Position	Tenure

INTRODUCTION

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Do you have any questions before we begin? Our session today will last approximately 1.5 hours. During this time, we will be asking you a series of questions. Please feel free to

speak openly. There are no right or wrong answers, so even if you feel differently from others, that is okay. Your name will not be associated with anything you say here today—responses to your questions will be kept in the strictest confidence.

Before we begin with introductions and questions, we have a short checklist for you to complete.

[Distribute checklist—do not collect until end]

Let's begin with introductions. Tell us your name, how long you've been in/associated with the Coast Guard, and the number/ages of your children.

On the checklist you completed earlier, we asked you a series of questions about your current child care arrangements. Considering your answers:

1. What challenges or difficulties have you had in finding care for your child/ren)? That is, what are your biggest child care challenges?

Probes: Care for children of certain ages (e.g., infants)
Certain types of care (e.g., CDC, military)
Affordability
Quality

2. Have you had to make changes in your child care arrangements in the last year? If so, why?

3. Does the type of care you currently use match your child care preferences, or have you had to “make do” or make some sacrifices in your child care arrangements?

Probes: Military vs. civilian
Center vs. home-based
Close to home vs. close to work

4. Overall, how satisfied are you with your child care arrangements?

4a. What are the things about your current child care arrangements that you really like?

4b. What are the things about your current child care arrangements that you are less happy with?

5. Have there been times when you have needed child care and haven’t been able to find it? (i.e., need for care outside of traditional hours)

Probe: Need for care due to mission requirements and/or deployment

6. What resources do you use to obtain child care information?

7. How have your child care concerns/issues impacted your/your spouse’s job performance or productivity?

Probe: Impact on Coast Guard mission

8. How supportive/concerned is the Coast Guard about your child care needs?

Probes: Work-life office?
Commanders?

8a. What [additional] child care support could/should the Coast Guard provide?

9. Have your child care concerns had an impact on intentions/ decisions regarding staying in the Coast Guard?

10. Do you have any other child care concerns, comments, or questions that were not captured during this interview that you would like to discuss?

PARENT CHECKLIST

**Coast Guard Child Care Needs Assessment
Parent Focus Group Participant Checklist**

Date:

Location:

1. Are you:
 - Male
 - Female

2. How old are you?
_____ years

3. What is your current MARITAL STATUS?
 - Not married
 - Married to a Civilian
 - Married to another Military member → My spouse is in:
 - Coast Guard
 - Army
 - Air Force
 - Marine Corps
 - Navy
 - Other _____

4. What is YOUR EMPLOYMENT STATUS? (Mark all that apply)
 - I am in the Coast Guard → My pay grade: _____
 - I work full time in a job other than the Coast Guard
 - I work part time
 - I do not work outside of the home for pay
 - I am a student

5. What is your SPOUSE'S EMPLOYMENT STATUS? (Mark all that apply)
 - Not married
 - My spouse is in the Coast Guard → My spouse's pay grade: _____
 - Spouse works full time in a job other than the Coast Guard
 - Spouse works part time
 - Spouse does not work outside of the home for pay
 - Spouse is a student

-
6. What is the highest level of EDUCATION you and your spouse (if applicable) have completed?
- | | You | Spouse |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Less than high school | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| High school graduate/GED | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Some college but no degree | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| College degree | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Graduate degree | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
7. What is your TOTAL FAMILY INCOME range, including your housing allowance?
- \$23,000 or less
 - \$23,001-\$34,000
 - \$34,001-\$44,000
 - \$44,001-\$55,000
 - \$55,001-\$69,999
 - More than \$70,000
8. What is your RACE? (*Mark all that apply.*)
- American Indian or Alaska Native (Eskimo, Aleut)
 - Asian (e.g., Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic, Latino or Spanish
 - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (e.g., Samoan, Guamanian, Chamorro)
 - White
 - Other
9. How many DEPENDENT CHILDREN do you have that are 6 years old or younger (that live with you for at least 3 months out of the year)?
- 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4 or more

Questions 10 – 14	Answer the questions below for each of your children under the age of 6.																																																																											
	Youngest Child	Second youngest child	Third youngest child	Fourth youngest child																																																																								
10. How old is this child?	<input type="checkbox"/> Birth to 11 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 12 to 23 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 24 to 35 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 3 to 4 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 6 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Birth to 11 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 12 to 23 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 24 to 35 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 3 to 4 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 6 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Birth to 11 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 12 to 23 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 24 to 35 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 3 to 4 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 6 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Birth to 11 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 12 to 23 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 24 to 35 mos. <input type="checkbox"/> 3 to 4 years <input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 6 years																																																																								
11. What child care arrangement(s) do you have for this child? <i>(Choose all that apply)</i> 12. How many hours per week do you use this arrangement?	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Military Child Development Center _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Military Child Development Center _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Military Child Development Home _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Military Child Development Home _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/Partner _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/Partner _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Civilian Child Care Center _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Civilian Child Care Center _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Civilian Licensed Provider _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Civilian Licensed Provider _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Relative, friend or neighbor _____</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Relative, 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**APPENDIX D:
SITE VISIT SUMMARIES**

ISC ALAMEDA, CA

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASESMENT
Coast Guard Office of Work-Life**

SITE VISIT SUMMARY

Integrated Support Command
Alameda, CA

December 2-3, 2004



CALIBER

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- Project Overview
- Methodology
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- Site Visit Schedule
- Summary of Findings
- Next Steps
- Caliber Contact Information

Project Overview

- Conduct comprehensive child care needs assessment of Coast Guard active duty members
- Assess child care utilization, issues and challenges and the impact of child care on morale and retention

Methodology

- Develop and administer a web-based survey to approximately 15,000 active duty members, including those with and without children
- Conduct site visits to 9 locations and collect qualitative data on needs and issues of service providers and active duty members

Survey Administration

- Survey launched week of 6 Dec 04
- “Live” for 2 weeks
- Non-respondents receive(d) email reminders
- Overall response rate: TBD

Site Visit Schedule

- Alameda, CA Dec 2004
- Portsmouth, VA Dec 2004
- Washington, DC Jan 2005
- Seattle, WA Jan 2005
- New Orleans, LA Jan 2005
- St. Louis, MO Jan 2005
- Miami, FL Jan/Feb 2005
- Cleveland, OH Jan/Feb 2005
- Boston, MA Feb 2005

Summary of Findings

- During the ISC Alameda site visit, a total of **36** stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Parents (N=22)
 - Leadership (N=11)
 - Work-Life Staff (N=3)
 - Work-Life Supervisor
 - Family Resource Specialist
 - Child Development Center Director

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ISC Alameda included:
 - Non-traditional hours care (e.g., 24- or 12-hour shifts)
 - Cost of care
 - For infants
 - On the economy
 - Availability of quality care
 - Lengthy wait lists at CDC (usually 4-6 months)
 - Care is difficult to find immediately upon arrival
 - Particular shortage of care for infants
 - Finding care is especially challenging in remote locations
 - Care for mildly ill children
 - Care when CDC is closed (e.g., for training)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- Overall, parents were using child care that meets their preferences and were generally satisfied with their current arrangements, including:
 - Quality of activities/instruction
 - Safety and security
 - Convenience of location
- But, in addition to challenges previously presented, parents expressed less satisfaction with:
 - CDC directorship and administration
 - Lack of adherence to policies and procedures
 - Poor record keeping
 - Unprofessional treatment of staff
 - Proximity of CDC to gate and/or water

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- The Work-Life Office is an important source of child care information for stakeholders; other sources included:
 - Word of mouth
 - Bananas
- Stakeholders commended the Work-Life Office for:
 - Excellent leadership
 - Caring and dedicated staff
- Some problems within the Work-Life Office were also identified:
 - Some positions are understaffed/not staffed
 - Due to work load, some staff are not as responsive as they should be
 - There appears to be a lack of standardization across the Coast Guard with respect to instructions/regulations regarding the Work-Life office (e.g., staffing billets)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- Child care was viewed by all stakeholders as a critical work-life issue with the following potential impacts on job productivity and/or performance:
 - Being distracted at work due to worry about child/child care
 - Leaving work/taking leave when child is sick
 - Changing shifts/jobs to better accommodate child care
 - Bringing child to work when no child care is available
 - Taking leave when CDC is closed
 - Negatively impacting morale—both for those who are facing child care challenges, as well as for those who have to “pick up the slack”
 - Leaving the Coast Guard

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- Despite the potentially negative impact that child care has on their jobs, parents generally felt supported by their leadership (i.e., supervisors, commanders):
 - Most leaders are sufficiently flexible and responsive to needs of members (e.g., allow time off/leave for sick child, allow telecommuting or flex schedules)
 - Some leaders are better than others, however
- Leaders also expressed the importance of being flexible (when possible) to better support members, maintain morale and minimize attrition

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- Stakeholders also viewed child care as an important retention issue:
 - Most members indicated that they planned to remain in the Coast Guard despite the challenges
 - Some members, however, indicated that they would be leaving at the end of their obligation. This was more true for:
 - Single parents
 - Dual military
 - Those in operational units
 - Junior enlisted who were any of the above

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- In sum:
 - There are some difficult (but not unusual) child care-related challenges at ISC Alameda
 - Despite the challenges, parents are mostly happy with the care they have found and are appreciative of the support and responsiveness the leadership has shown with respect to child care issues
 - Child care has a potentially negative impact on morale as well as job performance, but overall, most parents are satisfied with their Coast Guard jobs and expressed no intention of leaving

Next Steps

- Data collection will continue through early February
- Final report(s) will be provided to Headquarters 22 Mar 05
- Results will be used to assist the Coast Guard in developing strategic plans and initiatives to:
 - Better meet members' child care needs
 - Provide enhanced child care-related services to active duty members and families

Caliber Contact Information

- Questions or comments about the information provided in this report should be directed to:

– **Dr. Melissa Zwahr**

or

Mr. Richard Lewis

Caliber Associates

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ISC PORTSMOUTH, VA

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASESMENT
Coast Guard Office of Work-Life**

SITE VISIT SUMMARY

Integrated Support Command
Portsmouth, VA

December 14-15, 2004



CALIBER

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- Project Overview
- Methodology
- Survey Timeline
- Site Visit Schedule
- Summary of Findings
- Next Steps
- Caliber Contact Information

Project Overview

- Conduct comprehensive child care needs assessment of Coast Guard active duty members
- Assess child care utilization, issues and challenges and the impact of child care on morale and retention

Methodology

- Develop and administer a web-based survey to approximately 15,000 active duty members, including those with and without children
- Conduct site visits to 9 locations and collect qualitative data on needs and issues of service providers and active duty members

Survey Administration

- Survey launched week of 6 Dec 04
- “Live” for 2 weeks
- Non-respondents receive(d) email reminders
- Overall response rate: TBD

Site Visit Schedule

- Alameda, CA Dec 2004
- Portsmouth, VA Dec 2004
- Washington, DC Jan 2005
- Seattle, WA Jan 2005
- New Orleans, LA Jan 2005
- St. Louis, MO Jan 2005
- Miami, FL Jan/Feb 2005
- Cleveland, OH Jan/Feb 2005
- Boston, MA Feb 2005

Summary of Findings

- During the ISC Portsmouth site visit, a total of **26** stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Parents (N=17)
 - Leadership (N=6)
 - Work-Life Staff (N=3)
 - Work-Life Supervisor
 - Family Resource Specialists

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ISC Portsmouth included:
 - Non-traditional hours care (e.g., 24- or 12-hour shifts)
 - 24/7 child care for operational units, junior enlisted, single parents, and dual military families
 - Deployment, Holidays, Hurricanes, and Watch Standing Duty
 - Cost of care (e.g., on the economy)
 - Affordability among enlisted and single parent families
 - Newborn/infant care
 - Availability of quality care
 - Lengthy wait lists at DoD/Navy CDCs
 - No current CG sponsored family child care providers
 - Infant care, zero to six, and school-aged child care

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- Overall, parents were using child care that meets their preferences and were generally satisfied with their current arrangements, including:
 - Quality of care including activities and instruction
 - Safety and security
 - Food and nutrition etc.
- But, in addition to challenges previously presented, parents expressed less satisfaction with:
 - Child care options (e.g., lack of CDC and home-based providers)
 - Child care subsidies
 - Child care location and convenience (e.g., commuting concerns)
 - Before/After care availability and costs

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- The Work-Life Office is an important source of child care information for stakeholders; other sources included:
 - Navy child care resources and referrals
 - Spouse networking (word of mouth and electronic bulletin boards)
 - VA child care website and other internet resources
- Stakeholders commended the Work-Life Office for:
 - Dedicated and experienced staff
 - Providing a comprehensive listing of child care providers
 - Meeting the needs of parents with special needs children
 - Assisting parents and children in “desperate” situations
- Some problems within the Work-Life include:
 - Accessibility to staff (e.g., too understaffed to network with spouses)
 - Specific resources and referrals to quality, affordable child care options
 - Partnerships/connections with DoD/Navy child care providers

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- Child care was viewed by all stakeholders as a critical work-life issue with the following potential impacts on job productivity and/or performance:
 - Arriving late/Leaving early/Requesting leave (e.g., to care for children with minor illness)
 - Bringing child to work when no child care is available
 - Changing shifts/jobs/careers to better accommodate child care (e.g., change in watch rotation or assignment to shore duty)
 - Reporting to duty while distracted, emotionally drained, or physically tired
 - Negatively impacting morale—both for those who are facing child care challenges, as well as for those who have to “pick up the slack”
 - Leaving the Coast Guard

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- Despite the potentially negative impact that child care has on their jobs, parents generally felt supported by their leadership (i.e., supervisors, commanders):
 - Most leaders are reasonably flexible and responsive to needs of members (e.g., allow time off/leave for sick child, allow telecommuting or flex schedules)
 - Some leaders are more sensitive to child care concerns than others, however
- Leaders also expressed the importance of being flexible (when possible) to better support members, maintain morale and minimize attrition
 - Most leaders concurred that the Coast Guard should do more in the child care arena (e.g., provide/sponsor child care facilities and leverage contacts with other services)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- Stakeholders also viewed child care as an important retention issue:
 - Most members indicated that they planned to remain in the Coast Guard despite child care challenges
 - Some members, however, indicated that they would be leaving at the end of their obligation. This was more true for:
 - Single parents
 - Dual military
 - Those in operational units
 - Junior enlisted who were any of the above

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- In sum:
 - There are some difficult (but not unusual) child care-related challenges at ISC Portsmouth
 - Despite the challenges, parents are mostly pleased with the care they have found and are appreciative of the support and responsiveness the leadership has shown with respect to child care issues
 - Child care has a potentially negative impact on morale as well as job performance, but overall, most parents are satisfied with their Coast Guard jobs and expressed no intention of leaving

Next Steps

- Data collection will continue through early February
- Final report(s) will be provided to Headquarters 22 Mar 05
- Results will be used to assist the Coast Guard in developing strategic plans and initiatives to:
 - Better meet members' child care needs
 - Provide enhanced child care-related services to active duty members and families

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– **Dr. Melissa Zwahr**

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USCG HQ WASHINGTON, DC

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASESMENT
Coast Guard Office of Work-Life**

SITE VISIT SUMMARY

Headquarters Support Command
Washington, D.C.

January 12-13, 2005



CALIBER

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Project Overview

- Conduct comprehensive child care needs assessment of Coast Guard active duty members
- Assess child care utilization, issues and challenges and the impact of child care on morale and retention

Methodology

- Develop and administer a web-based survey to approximately 15,000 active duty members, including those with and without children
- Conduct site visits to 10 locations and collect qualitative data on needs and issues of service providers and active duty members

Survey Administration

- Survey launched week of 6 Dec 04
- “Live” for 6 weeks
- Non-respondents received email reminders
- Overall response rate: 60%

Site Visit Schedule

- Alameda, CA Dec 2004
- Portsmouth, VA Dec 2004
- Washington, DC Jan 2005
- Seattle, WA Jan 2005
- New Orleans, LA Jan 2005
- Topeka, KS Jan 2005
- Miami, FL Jan 2005
- Cleveland, OH Jan 2005
- Boston, MA Feb 2005
- New York, NY Feb 2005

Summary of Findings

- During the HSC Washington site visit, a total of **23** stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Parents (N=**14**)
 - Leadership (N=**2**)
 - Work-Life Staff (N=**7**)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at HSC Washington included:**
 - Availability of quality care due to:
 - Lengthy wait lists and wait list preferences in USCG CDC
 - No USCG sponsored family child care providers in the community
 - Relocation challenges (finding care long distance or very quickly, facing placement on long waiting lists and only after receipt of orders)
 - Non-traditional hours care for:
 - Holidays & liberal leave
 - Back up care for weather or security related emergencies
 - Extended shifts (e.g. 12- or 24-hour shifts)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at HSC Washington included: (Cont.)**
 - Affordability of quality care for junior enlisted and single parents in need of child care
 - CDC security:
 - Vulnerable location of USCG CDC if HSC is attacked
 - Windows shatterproof but not bulletproof
 - Anyone may use the CDC

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Overall, parents using the USCG CDC felt that it meets their preferences and were generally satisfied with the current arrangements, including:**
 - Quality
 - USCG CDC staff, program, curriculum, nursing room
 - Proximity
 - Accessibility of USCG CDC to HSC parents

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **But, in addition to challenges previously presented, both USCG CDC and private care parents expressed dissatisfaction with:**
 - Lack of child care subsidies
 - USCG CDC accessibility to metro
 - Proximity of private child care (often far from work or home)
 - Transportation/commuting challenges

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **The Work-Life Office is an important source of child care information for stakeholders; other sources included:**
 - Work-Life website and other internet resources
 - Resources and referrals from civilian spouse’s employer
 - Networking (word of mouth)
 - Conducting personal visits to local providers
- **Some problems within Work-Life include not offering:**
 - A referral specialist to adequately address requests for quality, affordable child care options for each AOR
 - Partnerships/connections with DoD and local child care providers
 - More assistance to families with infants and special needs children
 - Evacuation plan for USCG CDC in case of emergency

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Leaders expressed the importance of being flexible (when possible) to better support members, maintain morale, and minimize attrition:**
 - Leaders felt that the USCG should do more in the child care arena (e.g., extend use of RAS, assist with cost, extend maternity leave to 12 months, offer backup care during emergencies, balance family support with mission, enhance loyalty by providing accommodations for parents)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Parents felt inconsistently supported by their leadership (i.e., supervisors, commanders):**
 - Many leaders are reasonably flexible and responsive to needs of members (e.g., allow time off/leave for sick child, allow members to use RAS tokens or flex schedules)
 - Some leaders, however, are less supportive regarding child care needs or challenges than others (e.g., little flexibility with schedules)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Child care was viewed by all stakeholders as a critical work-life issue with the following potential impacts on job productivity and/or performance:**
 - Requesting leave (e.g., to care for children with minor illness, or when USCG CDC or other child care facility is closed)
 - Declining morale with non-supportive supervisors
 - Being distracted, stressed, or worried at work reduces productivity

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Stakeholders also viewed child care as an important retention issue:**
 - An on-site CDC positively impacts morale, retention, fosters sense of family support, and is an incentive to stay
 - Some would consider leaving the USCG if CDC was unavailable
 - Females are more likely to experience pressure to choose between child and career

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In sum:**
 - There are some difficult (but not unusual) child care-related challenges at HSC Washington
 - USCG CDC parents seem to be more pleased with their child care than those struggling to find quality, affordable care elsewhere
 - Support from leadership with respect to child care issues is highly valued but often varies between leaders
 - Child care challenges have a potentially negative impact on job performance, morale, and retention
 - Most parents intend to stay in the USCG but all indicated change needs to occur in the interest of mission, morale, and retention

Next Steps

- Data collection will continue through mid February
- Final report(s) will be provided to Headquarters 31 Mar 05
- Results will be used to assist the Coast Guard in developing strategic plans and initiatives to:
 - Better meet members' child care needs
 - Provide enhanced child care-related services to active duty members and families

ISC SEATTLE, WA

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASESMENT
Coast Guard Office of Work-Life**

SITE VISIT SUMMARY

Integrated Support Command
Seattle, WA

January 19-20, 2005



CALIBER

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Project Overview

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Methodology

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Survey Administration

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- Overall response rate: 60%

Site Visit Schedule

- Alameda, CA Dec 2004
- Portsmouth, VA Dec 2004
- Washington, DC Jan 2005
- Seattle, WA Jan 2005
- New Orleans, LA Jan 2005
- Topeka, KS Jan 2005
- Miami, FL Jan 2005
- Cleveland, OH Jan 2005
- Boston, MA Feb 2005
- New York, NY Feb 2005

Summary of Findings

- During the ISC Seattle site visit, a total of **18** stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Parents (N=**8**)
 - Leadership (N=**8**)
 - Work-Life Staff (N=**2**)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ISC Seattle included:**
 - Non-traditional hour care for:
 - Overnight Duty/Shifts (e.g., 12 and 24 hour watch standers)
 - Extended Duty/Shifts (e.g., overtime and CDC hours of operation)
 - Commute time (e.g., traffic and ferry boats)
 - Affordability of quality care:
 - For junior enlisted and single parents in need of child care
 - High cost of living in Seattle area makes it difficult to find affordable care
 - Availability of quality care due to:
 - Assignment to remote duty stations (e.g., small boat units)
 - Lengthy wait lists, limited spaces in area DoD CDCs
 - No family in area or USCG sponsored family child care providers
 - Relocation challenges (e.g., finding care long distance prior to PCS; or finding care very quickly due to TDA/TDY and training)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Overall, parents using area CDCs felt that they meet their preferences and were generally satisfied with the current arrangements, including:**
 - Quality of Civilian/DoD CDCs (care, staff, program, curriculum)
 - Availability of family child care providers
- **But, in addition to challenges previously presented, parents expressed dissatisfaction with:**
 - Lack of child care subsidies to offset high cost of care
 - Proximity and accessibility of DoD CDCs to USCG parents
 - Quality of family child care providers in small/remote duty locations
 - Commute time to quality, affordable child care and access to parking

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **The Work-Life Office is an important source of child care information for stakeholders; other sources included:**
 - Networking-word of mouth (e.g., referrals from USCG spouses)
 - Internet child care resources
 - Telephone book
 - Conducting personal visits to local providers
- **Some problems within Work-Life include not offering:**
 - A child care resource and referral specialist to adequately address requests for quality, affordable child care options throughout the AOR
 - Partnerships/connections with area DoD and civilian child care centers
 - USCG sponsored family child care providers

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Leaders expressed the importance of being flexible (when possible) to better support members, maintain morale, and minimize attrition. Leaders indicated that:**
 - Leaders felt that the USCG should do more in the child care arena (e.g., considering a CDC for Seattle, establishing partnerships with area DoD and civilian centers, providing child care subsidies, advertising Work-Life services, and expanding the use of telecommuting and flexible work schedules)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Depending on their duty assignment (ship vs. shore duty), parents felt inconsistently supported by their leadership (i.e. supervisors, commanders):**
 - Many leaders are viewed as reasonably flexible and responsive to needs of members (e.g., allow time off/leave for sick children, allow members to using telecommuting and flex schedules)
 - Some leaders, however, are viewed as less supportive regarding child care needs or challenges than others (e.g., little flexibility within operational units)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Child care was viewed by all stakeholders as a critical work-life issue with the following potential impacts on job productivity and/or performance:**
 - Late arrival/early departure (e.g., to drop off or pick up children)
 - Requesting leave (e.g., to care for children with minor illness or when CDC or other child care facility/family-based provider is closed)
 - Declining morale among non-married members (e.g., single members without children are relied upon to swap duty)
 - Being distracted, stressed, or worried at work due to child care concerns reduces productivity, performance, and readiness

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Stakeholders also viewed child care as an important retention issue:**
 - Child care is an important issued that impacts USCG ability to achieve its mission and become the employer of choice-child care concerns impact performance and productivity
 - Access to quality, affordable child care positively impacts morale and retention-members pleased with child care are more satisfied and likely to remain in USCG
 - Some members are considering leaving the USCG because of child care concerns
 - Female members, single parents, and dual military couples are more likely to experience pressure to choose between child and career

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In sum:**
 - There are some difficult (but not unusual) child care-related challenges at ISC Seattle
 - USCG parents in the Seattle area appear to be more pleased with their child care than those struggling to find quality, affordable care in remote/rural areas
 - Support from leadership with respect to child care issues is highly valued but often varies between leaders
 - Child care challenges have a potentially negative impact on job performance, morale, and retention
 - Most parents intend to stay in the USCG but all indicated change needs to occur in the interest of mission, morale, and retention

Next Steps

- Data collection will continue through mid February
- Final report(s) will be provided to Headquarters 31 Mar 05
- Results will be used to assist the Coast Guard in developing strategic plans and initiatives to:
 - Better meet members' child care needs
 - Provide enhanced child care-related services to active duty members and families

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ISC NEW ORLEANS, LA

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASESMENT
Coast Guard Office of Work-Life**

SITE VISIT SUMMARY

Integrated Support Command
New Orleans, LA

January 25-26, 2005



CALIBER

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Project Overview

- Conduct comprehensive child care needs assessment of Coast Guard active duty members
- Assess child care utilization, issues and challenges and the impact of child care on morale and retention

Methodology

- Develop and administer a web-based survey to approximately 15,000 active duty members, including those with and without children
- Conduct site visits to 10 locations and collect qualitative data on needs and issues of service providers and active duty members

Survey Administration

- Survey launched week of 6 Dec 04
- “Live” for 6 weeks
- Non-respondents received email reminders
- Overall response rate: 60%

Site Visit Schedule

- Alameda, CA Dec 2004
- Portsmouth, VA Dec 2004
- Washington, DC Jan 2005
- Seattle, WA Jan 2005
- New Orleans, LA Jan 2005
- Topeka, KS Jan 2005
- Miami, FL Jan 2005
- Cleveland, OH Jan 2005
- Boston, MA Feb 2005
- New York, NY Feb 2005

Summary of Findings

- During the ISC New Orleans site visit, a total of **33** stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Parents (N=**24**)
 - Leadership (N=**3**)
 - Work-Life Staff (N=**6**)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ISC New Orleans included:**
 - Affordability of quality care for:
 - All members, particularly junior enlisted and single parents
 - Families with infants
 - Families with multiple children
 - Availability of quality care due to:
 - Location (e.g., may not be near home or work)
 - Lengthy waitlists
 - Relocation challenges (finding care long distance or very quickly and only after receipt of orders, relying on word of mouth upon arrival to find quality care)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ISC New Orleans included: (Cont.)**
 - Non-traditional hours care for:
 - Standing watch, operational duties (e.g., 12- or 24-hour shifts)
 - Dual-military families
 - Early drop-off, late pick-up to coincide with Coast Guard work hours
 - Back-up care for emergencies
 - Mildly-ill children (e.g., colds, teething, low-fevers) who are not allowed back into daycare yet
 - Civilian holidays/seasonal breaks

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In addition to child care challenges previously presented, parents expressed dissatisfaction with:**
 - Lack of child care subsidies
 - Inconsistent support from leaders
 - Lack of child care support from Work-Life Office
 - Lack of policy standardization regarding child care issues (variations between ISCs and supervisors)
 - Commuting challenges that further complicate mismatch between child care and work hours

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **The Work-Life Office was not viewed as a source of child care information for stakeholders; important services they do provide include:**
 - Assistance to families with special needs children
 - Traveling to units to offer training on services provided
 - Relationship with local ombudsman
- **With respect to child care, Work-Life experiences difficulty offering:**
 - A resource and referral specialist to adequately address requests for quality, affordable child care options within the AOR
 - Partnerships/connections local child care providers
 - Current lists of quality child care providers in all AORs
 - Child care assistance for relocating members

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Leaders expressed that childcare issues affect morale more than mission. Leaders indicated that:**
 - The Coast Guard should do more to support relocating parents with child care needs
 - They are concerned for parents in operational units, especially single parents
 - They are concerned about unit morale and productivity when parents are stressed, or when parents have to leave early/arrive late and others have to fill in

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Parents felt inconsistently supported by their leadership (i.e., supervisors, commanders):**
 - Many leaders are reasonably flexible and responsive to needs of members (e.g., allow time off/leave for a sick child, allow members to use flex schedules)
 - Some leaders, however, are less supportive regarding child care needs or challenges than others (e.g., little flexibility with schedules)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Child care was viewed by all stakeholders as a critical work-life issue with the following potential impacts on job productivity and/or performance:**
 - Frequently requesting leave (e.g., to search for child care, to care for children with minor illness, to accommodate child care hours of operation, or when child care facility is closed)
 - Lower morale, higher stress
 - Parents concerned about burden on coworkers, especially those single without children
 - Negative impact on career (e.g., lower marks, less flexibility to accept certain billets)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Stakeholders also viewed child care as an important retention issue:**
 - Support from leadership regarding child care positively impacts morale and retention (parents are more likely to stay in the Coast Guard if they feel supported by leadership)
 - Females more likely to experience pressure to choose between child and career
 - Some members are planning to leave the Coast Guard due to unresolved child care issues or the desire to have children/have more children

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In sum:**
 - There are some difficult (but not unusual) child care-related challenges at ISC New Orleans
 - Work-Life FRS spends 90% of her time dealing with special needs issues, leaving little to no time to offer support for child care issues
 - Support from leadership with respect to child care issues is highly valued but often varies between leaders
 - Child care challenges have a potentially negative impact on job performance, morale, and retention
 - Most parents intend to stay in the Coast Guard but all indicated change needs to occur in the interest of mission, morale, and retention

Next Steps

- Data collection will continue through mid February
- Final report(s) will be provided to Headquarters 31 Mar 05
- Results will be used to assist the Coast Guard in developing strategic plans and initiatives to:
 - Better meet members' child care needs
 - Provide enhanced child care-related services to active duty members and families

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PSC TOPEKA, KS

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASESMENT
Coast Guard Office of Work-Life**

SITE VISIT SUMMARY

Personnel Support Command
Topeka, KS

January 25-26, 2005



CALIBER

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Project Overview

- Conduct comprehensive child care needs assessment of Coast Guard active duty members
- Assess child care utilization, issues and challenges and the impact of child care on morale and retention

Methodology

- Develop and administer a web-based survey to approximately 15,000 active duty members, including those with and without children
- Conduct site visits to 10 locations and collect qualitative data on needs and issues of service providers and active duty members

Survey Administration

- Survey launched week of 6 Dec 04
- “Live” for 6 weeks
- Non-respondents received email reminders
- Overall response rate: 60%

Site Visit Schedule

- Alameda, CA Dec 2004
- Portsmouth, VA Dec 2004
- Washington, DC Jan 2005
- Seattle, WA Jan 2005
- New Orleans, LA Jan 2005
- Topeka, KS Jan 2005
- Miami, FL Jan 2005
- Cleveland, OH Jan 2005
- Boston, MA Feb 2005
- New York, NY Feb 2005

Summary of Findings

- The Topeka site visit was originally scheduled to comprise PSC Topeka, ISC St. Louis, District 8-Omaha, and District 5-Pittsburgh. Only PSC Topeka and the FSC from ISC St. Louis participated in the 25 January 2005 site visit.

Summary of Findings

- During the PSC Topeka site visit, a total of **20** stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Parents (N=**17**)
 - Leadership (N=**2**)
 - Work-Life Staff (N=**1**)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at PSC Topeka included:**
 - Availability of quality care due to:
 - Lengthy wait lists
 - Limited provider options for families, particularly for infant care
 - Relocation challenges (identifying child care options long distance; lack of child care resource information for relocated families)
 - Affordability of quality care:
 - For junior enlisted and single parents in need of child care
 - For families with multiple children

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In addition to challenges previously presented, parents expressed dissatisfaction with:**
 - Lack of child care subsidies to offset high cost of care
 - Quality of family child care providers in rural locations

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **The Work-Life Office is a primary source of child care information for stakeholders; other sources included:**
 - *Every Woman’s Resource Center (ERC)*
 - Churches
 - Networking and word-of-mouth
- **Some problems within Work-Life include a lack of:**
 - A child care resource and referral specialist to adequately address requests for quality, affordable child care options across the 10-state area of responsibility of ISC St. Louis
 - Partnerships/connections with area DoD and civilian child care centers
 - Coast Guard-sanctioned (recommended) child care providers

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Leaders expressed the importance of being flexible (when possible) to better support members, maintain morale, and minimize attrition. Leaders indicated that:**
 - Flexible work schedules at PSC Topeka were important to families to maintain stability in child care arrangements
 - There is a considerable distance to the nearest support center at ISC St. Louis. Families in Topeka must be proactive in finding their own child care providers.

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In large part, parents felt supported by the CG leadership (i.e. supervisors, commanders):**
 - Most leaders are viewed as flexible and responsive to needs of members (e.g., allow time off/leave for sick children, allow members to using telecommuting and flex schedules)
 - Some leaders, however, are viewed as less supportive regarding child care needs that are “chronic”

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Stakeholders also viewed child care as an important retention issue:**
 - Female members, single parents, and dual military couples are more likely to experience pressure to choose between child and career

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In sum:**
 - There are some difficult (but not unusual) child care-related challenges at PSC Topeka
 - Geographic remoteness contributes to the challenges of finding affordable, quality child care
 - Special needs issues dominate the cases managed by the Work-Life FRS, leaving little to no time to offer support for other child care cases
 - High costs of child care need to be offset by subsidies
 - Support from leadership with respect to child care issues is highly valued by families
 - Most parents intend to stay in the Coast Guard but all indicated change needs to occur in the interest of mission, morale, and retention

Next Steps

- Data collection will continue through mid February
- Final report(s) will be provided to Headquarters 31 Mar 05
- Results will be used to assist the Coast Guard in developing strategic plans and initiatives to:
 - Better meet members' child care needs
 - Provide enhanced child care-related services to active duty members and families

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ISC CLEVELAND, OH

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASESMENT
Coast Guard Office of Work-Life**

SITE VISIT SUMMARY

Integrated Support Command
Cleveland, OH

January 27-28, 2005



CALIBER

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Project Overview

- Conduct comprehensive child care needs assessment of Coast Guard active duty members
- Assess child care utilization, issues and challenges and the impact of child care on morale and retention

Methodology

- Develop and administer a web-based survey to approximately 15,000 active duty members, including those with and without children
- Conduct site visits to 10 locations and collect qualitative data on needs and issues of service providers and active duty members

Survey Administration

- Survey launched week of 6 Dec 04
- “Live” for 6 weeks
- Non-respondents received email reminders
- Overall response rate: 60%

Site Visit Schedule

- Alameda, CA Dec 2004
- Portsmouth, VA Dec 2004
- Washington, DC Jan 2005
- Seattle, WA Jan 2005
- New Orleans, LA Jan 2005
- Topeka, KS Jan 2005
- Miami, FL Jan 2005
- Cleveland, OH Jan 2005
- Boston, MA Feb 2005
- New York, NY Feb 2005

Summary of Findings

- During the ISC Cleveland site visit, a total of **20** stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Parents (N=**9**)
 - Leadership (N=**9**)
 - Work-Life Staff (N=**2**)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ISC Cleveland included:**
 - Affordability of quality care:
 - For junior enlisted and single parents in need of child care
 - High cost of living in Cleveland area impacts ability to find affordable child care
 - Non-traditional hour care for:
 - Overnight Duty/Extended Duty Shifts (e.g., watch standers)
 - Weather Emergencies, Weekend Duty, and Recall
 - Mildly ill children

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ISC Cleveland included: (Con’t.)**
 - Availability of quality care due to:
 - Assignment to rural/remote duty stations (e.g., small boats)
 - Lengthy wait lists, limited spaces in area CDCs
 - No family in area or USCG sponsored family child care providers
 - Relocation challenges (e.g., finding care due to PCS, TDA/TDY, and training)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Overall, parents using the area CDCs, family child care providers, spouses, family, or friends felt that the care meets their preferences and were generally satisfied with the current arrangements, including:**
 - Quality of civilian CDCs and family child care providers (e.g., programs, curriculum, staff, facilities, and food)
 - Availability of CDCs and family child care providers (e.g., civilian)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **But, in addition to challenges previously presented, parents expressed dissatisfaction with:**
 - Lack of child care subsidies to offset high cost of care in Cleveland
 - Quality and availability of child care in rural/remote duty locations
 - Cost of child care and CDC hours of operation
 - Employment is limited for spouses -partly due to child care
 - Availability of child care information (e.g., need for a comprehensive listing of child care options for transfers)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **The Work-Life Office is not an important source of child care information for stakeholders:**
 - Families do not view Work-Life as a child care resource
 - USCG members rely on the following for child care information
 - Networking-word of mouth (e.g., referrals from USCG spouses)
 - Internet child care resources
 - Telephone book
 - Conducting personal visits to local providers
 - County social services and church referrals

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Some limitations of Work-Life services include:**
 - The lack of a child care resource and referral specialist to adequately address requests for quality, affordable child care options throughout the AOR
 - The need for partnerships with area DoD and civilian child care centers
 - No USCG sponsored family child care providers

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Leaders expressed the importance of being flexible (when possible) to better support members, maintain morale, and minimize attrition:**
 - Leaders felt that the USCG should do more in the child care arena (e.g., partnerships with area DoD and civilian CDCs, providing child care subsidies, and perhaps expanding the use of telecommuting and flexible work schedules)
 - Leaders also expressed concern that child care issues are perhaps more problematic (e.g., retention) for single parents and dual military parents rather than members married to non-members, and that discrimination against single members without children may persist

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Depending on their duty assignments, parents felt inconsistently supported by their leadership (i.e., supervisors, commanders):**
 - Many leaders are viewed as reasonably flexible and responsive to needs of members (e.g., allow time off/leave for sick children, and using telecommuting and flexible arrival and departure schedules)
 - Some leaders, however, are viewed as less supportive regarding child care needs or challenges than others (e.g., little flexibility within operational units)
 - Leaders with children are viewed as more supportive of child care issues and concerns

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Child care was viewed by all stakeholders as a critical work-life issue with the following potential impacts on job productivity and/or performance:**
 - Late arrival/early departure (e.g., drop off or pick up children)
 - Requesting leave (e.g., to care for children with minor illness, or when CDC, or other child care facility/family-based provider is closed due to inclement weather)
 - Declining morale among non-married members (e.g., single members without children are relied upon to swap duty)
 - Being distracted, stressed, or worried at work reduces productivity, performance and readiness

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Stakeholders generally viewed child care as an important retention issue:**
 - Child care is an important issue that impacts USCG ability to achieve its mission and become the employer of choice-child care concerns impact performance and productivity
 - Access to quality, affordable child care positively impacts morale and retention-members pleased with child care are more satisfied and likely to remain in the USCG
 - Among some members, child care issues and concerns are factors in considering whether to stay in the USCG
 - Female members, single parents, and dual military couples are more likely to experience organizational/cultural pressures to choose between child and career

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In sum:**
 - There are some difficult (but not unusual) child care-related challenges at ISC Cleveland
 - USCG parents in the Cleveland area appear to be more pleased with their child care options than those struggling to find quality care in remote/rural areas
 - Support from leadership with respect to child care issues is highly valued but often varies between leaders
 - Child care challenges have a potentially negative impact on job performance, morale, and retention
 - Most parents intend to stay in the USCG but all indicated change needs to occur in the interest of mission, morale, and retention

Next Steps

- Data collection will continue through mid February
- Final report(s) will be provided to Headquarters 31 Mar 05
- Results will be used to assist the Coast Guard in developing strategic plans and initiatives to:
 - Better meet members' child care needs
 - Provide enhanced child care-related services to active duty members and families

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ISC MIAMI, FL

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASESMENT
Coast Guard Office of Work-Life**

SITE VISIT SUMMARY

Integrated Support Command
Miami, FL

January 31-February 1, 2005



CALIBER

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Project Overview

- Conduct comprehensive child care needs assessment of Coast Guard active duty members
- Assess child care utilization, issues and challenges and the impact of child care on morale and retention

Methodology

- Develop and administer a web-based survey to approximately 15,000 active duty members, including those with and without children
- Conduct site visits to 10 locations and collect qualitative data on needs and issues of service providers and active duty members

Survey Administration

- Survey launched week of 6 Dec 04
- “Live” for 6 weeks
- Non-respondents received email reminders
- Overall response rate: 60%

Site Visit Schedule

- Alameda, CA Dec 2004
- Portsmouth, VA Dec 2004
- Washington, DC Jan 2005
- Seattle, WA Jan 2005
- New Orleans, LA Jan 2005
- Topeka, KS Jan 2005
- Miami, FL Jan 2005
- Cleveland, OH Jan 2005
- Boston, MA Feb 2005
- New York, NY Feb 2005

Summary of Findings

- During the ISC Miami site visit, a total of **41** stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Parents (N=**33**)
 - Leadership (N=**6**)
 - Work-Life Staff (N=**2**)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ISC Miami included:**
 - Affordability of quality care for:
 - All parents, particularly junior enlisted and single parents
 - Families with infants
 - Families of multiple children
 - Availability of quality care due to:
 - Difficulty in obtaining current lists of local providers
 - Lengthy wait lists for high quality care
 - Location often far from work or home
 - High quality care often in highest cost areas
 - English speaking daycares are preferred by members but often the most expensive

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ISC Miami included: (Cont.)**
 - Non-traditional hours care for:
 - Dual military families
 - Extended shifts (e.g., 12- or 24-hour shifts)
 - Recall, TAD, watch standing, or operational duty
 - Back-up care for:
 - Mildly ill children (e.g., colds, teething, low fevers) that are not yet allowed back into daycare
 - Emergencies (e.g., unexpected duty, hurricanes, temporarily ill or unavailable child care provider, etc.)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Overall, parents had mixed feelings when asked if their current child care arrangements met their preferences:**
 - For example, a few have found care where:
 - Curriculum is good
 - Ratio is good
 - Children seem happy
 - However, concerns were raised regarding:
 - Language barriers make communication with staff difficult
 - Lack of exposure to English for young children
 - Hours of operation clash with work schedules, and there are financial penalties for late pick-ups
 - Holiday and seasonal break schedules that force parents to take leave or pay additional fees for less than desirable alternate care

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **But, in addition to challenges previously presented, parents expressed dissatisfaction with:**
 - Lack of child care subsidies
 - Lack of support when relocating
 - Lack of policy standardization (variation between ISCs and supervisors)
 - Lack of consistency in support from leadership, especially for dual military and single parents
 - Commuting challenges that make it difficult to accommodate both work and child care hours

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **The Work-Life Office is one important source of family assistance for stakeholders; they provide:**
 - Assistance for families with special needs children
 - Marketing visits to units to reach out to members, explain services
- **However, Work-Life experiences difficulty offering child care resources to assist parents, such as:**
 - A referral specialist to adequately address requests for quality, affordable child care options for each AOR
 - Financial assistance to offset child care costs
 - Partnerships with local child care providers
 - Current lists of quality child care providers to relocating parents in each AOR

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Leaders expressed the importance of being flexible (when possible) to better support members, maintain morale, and minimize attrition:**
 - Flexibility with schedules
 - Occasionally allowing a change in assignment from operational to non-operational
 - Support for the Coast Guard’s Care for Newborns program
 - Use of RAS tokens when needed for non-operational duties
 - Allowing children in the office if no care is available

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Leaders also offered suggestions for improving the Coast Guard’s response to families with young children, including:**
 - Access to CDCs nearby, partnerships with local providers
 - Reduced child care costs for members and tax relief for child care (e.g., offer flex spending accounts)
 - Extended time off for child care more than just once at the time of the child’s birth
 - Firm regulations in place to screen providers used by members (e.g., screen for legal residency, quality of care and facility)
 - A parent sensitive assignment process that considers child care (e.g., does the location make it impossible for the member to have child care, therefore negatively impacting mission, morale, and retention?)
 - Reinstatement of the Coast Guard’s family child care program
 - Counseling for relocating families

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Parents felt inconsistently supported by their leadership (i.e., supervisors, commanders):**
 - Many leaders are reasonably flexible and responsive to needs of members (e.g., allow time off/leave for a sick child, allow members to use flex schedules)
 - Some leaders, however, are less supportive regarding child care needs or challenges than others (e.g., little flexibility with schedules)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Child care was viewed by all stakeholders as a critical work-life issue with the following potential impacts on job productivity and/or performance:**
 - Requesting leave (e.g., to care for children with minor illness, or child care facility is closed or provider is unavailable)
 - Declining morale among those with non-supportive supervisors
 - Being distracted, stressed, or worried at work reduces productivity

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Stakeholders also viewed child care as an important retention issue:**
 - Lack of options or adequate support leaves members to choose between child and career, increasing likelihood of attrition
 - Some considering leaving the Coast Guard to have a child or to better attend to their children
 - Females are more likely to experience pressure to choose between child and career
 - Child care concerns affect decisions about how long members plan to remain in the Coast Guard

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In sum:**
 - There are some difficult (but not unusual) child care-related challenges at ISC Miami
 - Work-Life FRS spends 90% of their time dealing with special needs issues, leaving little to no time to offer support for child care issues
 - Both enlisted and officer parents are struggling to find quality, affordable care and want more support from the Coast Guard
 - Support from leadership with respect to child care issues is highly valued but often varies between leaders
 - Child care challenges have a potentially negative impact on job performance, morale, and retention
 - Most parents intend to stay in the Coast Guard but all indicated change needs to occur in the interest of mission, morale, and retention

Next Steps

- Data collection will continue through mid February
- Final report(s) will be provided to Headquarters 31 Mar 05
- Results will be used to assist the Coast Guard in developing strategic plans and initiatives to:
 - Better meet members' child care needs
 - Provide enhanced child care-related services to active duty members and families

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ISC BOSTON, MA

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASESMENT
Coast Guard Office of Work-Life**

SITE VISIT SUMMARY

Integrated Support Command
Boston, MA

February 2-3, 2005



CALIBER

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- Project Overview
- Methodology
- Survey Timeline
- Site Visit Schedule
- Summary of Findings
- Next Steps
- Caliber Contact Information

Project Overview

- Conduct comprehensive child care needs assessment of Coast Guard active duty members
- Assess child care utilization, issues and challenges and the impact of child care on morale and retention

Methodology

- Develop and administer a web-based survey to approximately 15,000 active duty members, including those with and without children
- Conduct site visits to 10 locations and collect qualitative data on needs and issues of service providers and active duty members

Survey Administration

- Survey launched week of 6 Dec 04
- “Live” for 6 weeks
- Non-respondents received email reminders
- Overall response rate: 60%

Site Visit Schedule

- Alameda, CA Dec 2004
- Portsmouth, VA Dec 2004
- Washington, DC Jan 2005
- Seattle, WA Jan 2005
- New Orleans, LA Jan 2005
- Topeka, KS Jan 2005
- Miami, FL Jan 2005
- Cleveland, OH Jan 2005
- Boston, MA Feb 2005
- New York, NY Feb 2005

Summary of Findings

- During the ISC Boston site visit, a total of **32** stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Parents (N=**19**)
 - Leadership (N=**9**)
 - Work-Life Staff (N=**4**)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ISC Boston included:**
 - Affordability of quality care for:
 - All members, particularly junior enlisted and single parents
 - Families with infants
 - Families with multiple children
 - Availability of quality care due to:
 - Location (e.g., may not be near home or work)
 - Lengthy waitlists
 - Limited child care options in remote areas

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ISC Boston included: (Cont.)**
 - Non-traditional hours care for:
 - Standing watch, operational duties (e.g., 12- or 24-hour shifts)
 - Dual-military families
 - Early drop-off, late pick-up to coincide with Coast Guard work hours
 - Back-up care for emergencies, snow days
 - Mildly-ill children (e.g., colds, teething, low fevers) who are not allowed back into daycare yet
 - Civilian holidays/seasonal breaks

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In addition to child care challenges previously presented, parents expressed dissatisfaction with:**
 - Lack of child care subsidies to compensate for high cost of care and high cost of living in Boston area
 - Lack of child care support from Work-Life Office (e.g. parents feel they are on their own to find child care and rely on word of mouth, internet resources, their ability to find sponsors in the area, Coast Guard Central site, and local newspapers)
 - Commuting challenges that further complicate mismatch between child care hours of operation and work hours
 - Lack of an established network of Coast Guard parents at ISC Boston

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **The Work-Life Office provides important services for stakeholders such as:**
 - Assistance to families with special needs children
 - Ability to license in-home providers
 - Traveling to units to offer training on services provided
 - Leadership training (XO/CO)
- **With respect to child care, Work-Life office was not viewed as a major source of information. Work-Life experiences difficulty offering:**
 - A resource and referral specialist to adequately address requests for quality, affordable child care options within the AOR
 - Updated lists of quality child care providers in all AORs

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Leaders expressed that childcare issues affect both morale and retention. Leaders indicated that:**
 - They are concerned about unit morale and productivity when parents have to leave early/arrive late and others have to fill in
 - They are most concerned for parents in operational units, and any members with young children who are:
 - single
 - female
 - junior enlisted
 - The Coast Guard should do more to financially support parents with child care needs

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Parents felt inconsistently supported by their leadership (i.e., supervisors, commanders):**
 - Many leaders are reasonably flexible and responsive to needs of members (e.g., allow time off/leave for a sick child, allow members to use flex schedules)
 - Some leaders, however, are less supportive regarding child care needs or challenges than others (e.g., little flexibility with schedules)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Child care was viewed by all stakeholders as a critical work-life issue with the following potential impacts on job productivity and/or performance:**
 - Frequently requesting leave to address child care challenges
 - Arriving late, leaving early affects morale and productivity
 - Lower morale, higher stress
 - Being distracted at work affects performance
 - Parents concerned about burden on coworkers and how this affects readiness
 - Negative impact on career (e.g., decreases chance for promotion, hard to make qualifications, less flexibility to accept certain billets or to stand duty)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Stakeholders also viewed child care as an important retention issue:**
 - Females more likely to experience pressure to choose between child and career
 - Females, single parents, junior enlisted more likely to leave the Coast Guard due to child care challenges

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In sum:**
 - There are some difficult (but not unusual) child care-related challenges at ISC Boston
 - Work-Life FRSs spends 90% of their time dealing with special needs issues, leaving little to no time to offer support for child care issues
 - Support from leadership with respect to child care issues is highly valued but often varies between leaders
 - Child care challenges have a potentially negative impact on job performance, morale, and retention
 - Most parents want to stay in the Coast Guard but all indicated change needs to occur in the interest of mission, morale, and retention

Next Steps

- Data collection will continue through mid February
- Final report(s) will be provided to Headquarters 31 Mar 05
- Results will be used to assist the Coast Guard in developing strategic plans and initiatives to:
 - Better meet members' child care needs
 - Provide enhanced child care-related services to active duty members and families

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ACT NEW YORK, NY

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD CARE
NEEDS ASESMENT
Coast Guard Office of Work-Life**

SITE VISIT SUMMARY

Activities New York

New York, NY

March 22-23, 2005



CALIBER

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- Miami, FL Jan 2005
- Cleveland, OH Jan 2005
- Boston, MA Feb 2005
- New York, NY Mar 2005

Summary of Findings

- During the ACT New York site visit, a total of **29** stakeholders were interviewed:
 - Parents (N=**15**)
 - Leadership (N=**11**)
 - Work-Life Staff (N=**3**)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ACT New York included:**
 - Availability of affordable child care for:
 - All parents, particularly junior enlisted and single parents
 - Families with infant, toddlers, and/or school-age children
 - Access to quality child care due to:
 - High quality care on the island is cost prohibitive
 - Relatively few quality child care providers on Staten Island
 - Area family child care providers are considered unreliable
 - Lengthy wait lists at Ft. Hamilton CDC
 - Few Coast Guard sponsored family child care providers
 - Location of CDC requires bridge or tunnel passage, paying toll fares and fuel costs, and time delays due to traffic congestion

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Across the board, the most important child care challenges at ACT New York included: (Cont.)**
 - Non-traditional hours care for:
 - Extended duty hours (e.g., 12- or 24-hour watch, duty rotation, and terrorist threats)
 - Recall, training, watch standing, operational duty, and TAD/TDY
 - Back-up care for:
 - Mildly ill children (e.g., colds, teething, low fevers) that are not yet allowed back into daycare
 - Emergencies (e.g., unexpected duty, terrorist threats, bridge/tunnel closings, snow, or unreliable child care provider, etc.)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Overall, parents had mixed feelings when asked if their current child care arrangements met their preferences:**
 - For example, most have found child care where:
 - Quality of care is sufficient
 - Caregiver-child ratio is good
 - Children in safe, nurturing environs
 - However, concerns were raised regarding:
 - Costs of area child care
 - Availability of quality child care
 - Location of child care requires long commuting and traffic
 - Hours of child care operation are limited
 - Quality of area child care is relatively low

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **But, in addition to challenges previously presented, parents expressed dissatisfaction with:**
 - Lack of a 24/7 child development center
 - Lack of CG sponsored family child care providers
 - Lack of reliable civilian family child care providers
 - Lack of child care subsidies
 - Lack of transportation vouchers
 - Lack of child care support and referrals when relocating

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Work-Life is not viewed as an important source of child care assistance information:**
 - Insufficient number of CG sponsored family child care providers
 - Lack of up to date child care resource and referral information
- **Work-Life has experienced difficulties providing child care resources to assist parents:**
 - Insufficient number of family child care coordinator(s) to adequately address requests for quality, affordable child care options
 - Lack of family resources specialist(s) to assist with child care
 - MOU with local child care providers is required
 - Child care demands additional money, staff and resources along with reduced turnover

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Leaders expressed the importance of being flexible (when possible) to better support members, maintain morale, and minimize attrition:**
 - Flexibility with hours, schedules and duty rotations to achieve mission while supporting families (e.g., minor illness and snow emergencies)
 - Expanding opportunities for professional development, training, and career advancement
 - Supporting geo-bachelors, spouses, and dual–military couples
 - Revising BAH policy

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Parents felt inconsistently supported by their leadership (i.e., supervisors, commanders):**
 - Many leaders are reasonably flexible and responsive to needs of members (e.g., allow time off/leave for a sick child, allow members to use flex schedules)
 - Some leaders, however, are less supportive regarding child care needs or challenges than others (e.g., little flexibility with schedules)

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Child care was viewed by all stakeholders as a critical work-life issue with the following potential impacts on job productivity and/or performance:**
 - Requesting leave, late arrival and early departure (e.g., to care for children with minor illness, or drop-off and pick-up children during child care facility hours of operation)
 - Declining morale due to child care concerns in a climate of increasing demand for Coast Guard services and declining resources reduces performance
 - Being distracted, stressed, or worried about child care issues and concerns reduces productivity

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **Stakeholders also viewed child care as an important retention issue:**
 - Lack of options or adequate support leaves members to choose between child and career, increasing likelihood of attrition
 - Some members considering leaving the Coast Guard to have a child or to better attend to their children
 - Other members express concern that Coast Guard spouses are forced to put-off career and educational endeavors due to child care issues
 - Child care concerns affect decisions about how long members plan to remain in the Coast Guard

Summary of Findings—Cont.’

- **In sum:**
 - There are some difficult (but not unusual) child care-related challenges at ACT New York
 - Work-Life must do more to support for child care
 - Both enlisted and officer parents need access to quality, affordable care and want more support from the Coast Guard
 - Support from leadership with respect to child care issues is highly valued but often varies between leaders
 - Child care challenges have a potentially negative impact on job performance, morale, and retention
 - Most parents intend to stay in the Coast Guard but all indicated change needs to occur in the interest of mission, morale, and retention

Next Steps

- Final report(s) will be provided to Headquarters 15 Apr 05
- Results will be used to assist the Coast Guard in developing strategic plans and initiatives to:
 - Better meet members' child care needs
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