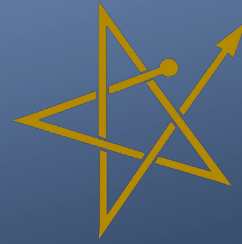


NPRST



Navy Personnel Research, Studies, and Technology

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2012 Navy Pregnancy and Parenthood Survey

Purpose

As of April 2013, women make up 17% of the Navy and 23% of the Navy's FY13 enlisted accessions. Navy leadership continues to monitor pregnancy and parenthood trends, and the impact of these issues on service members and Navy readiness. Relevant data may not exist in current medical or personnel databases, or may be difficult to accurately extrapolate. The Navy-wide biennial Pregnancy and Parenthood Survey has served, since 1988, as the primary source of metrics related to pregnancy, single parenthood, and related topics. The survey meets the requirements of SECNAVINST 1000.10A, Department of the Navy (DON) Policy on Parenthood and Pregnancy, to collect objective data for evaluating pregnancy policies.

Approach

NPRST administered the 2012 Pregnancy and Parenthood from late November 2012 to late April 2013. Survey invitation letters were sent to a stratified random sample of about 15,300 women and 10,100 men in pay grades E2-E9 and O1-O5; letters included a unique user login for each service member as well as the survey website. Before the field closed, two reminder letters were sent to respondents at their command address and one reminder Navy Message was sent to all commands that had a participant. The survey contained a common core of items for both genders, including items about parenthood, single parenthood, family planning, sabbaticals, attitudes towards birth control and health care providers, and sources of training on sexual and reproductive health; the only differences in these common questions were in gender-specific wording (e.g., "father a child" vs. "become pregnant"). Men were asked additional questions about paternity leave while women were asked additional questions about pregnancy experiences while in the Navy. Survey items were skipped automatically if they were not applicable to a respondent, based upon the respondent's previous answers. All login information was removed from the data before analysis was conducted in order to maintain the anonymity of respondents. Results were statistically weighted by pay grade and gender strata to be representative of the entire Navy population.

research at work

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The recurring Navy Pregnancy and Parenthood Surveys are sponsored by the Office of Women's Policy within the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

Trends over the last 12 or more years show consistent findings.

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Findings

About 5,000 men and women provided useable responses to the survey, yielding weighted response rates of 25% for men and 26% for women, similar to response rates on other recent Navy surveys. Margins of error for overall questions were no more than +/-2.8% for women and +/-3.9% for men.

Overall, results show consistency across survey administrations. Pregnancy rates are similar to previous years; about 9% of enlisted women and 5% of officer women are pregnant at any point-in-time (snapshot), and about 11% of Navy women became pregnant in FY11. Thirty-seven percent of enlisted and 75% of officer pregnancies are planned, with 38% of enlisted and 14% of officer women being single at the time they became pregnant. Few women assigned to shore or non-deployable units have orders to a ship or deployable unit when they become pregnant; those assigned to deployable units are most likely to be either not deployed, just returned from a deployment, or in a pre-deployment cycle when they become pregnant. Most officer women and almost half of enlisted women are not required to transfer or move because of their pregnancy. On average, women use about 50 days of leave (42 days convalescent and 8 days annual leave combined) after they give birth (enlisted men, on average, use 10 days of annual leave in addition to 10 days of paternity leave, while officer men use 4 additional days of annual leave beyond their paternity leave). Most women are able to successfully complete their next regularly scheduled PFA after the expiration of their pregnancy waiver.

Single parenthood rates are similar to 2010 rates; there are about 14,000 single Navy fathers and 6,000 single Navy mothers (6% of Navy men and 13% of Navy women). As before, women are more likely than men to have sole custody of their children. Sixty percent of enlisted women and almost 50% of enlisted men were unmarried when their child was born; most officer men and just over half of officer women became single parents through divorce. Although compliance with OPNAVINST 1740.4D, U.S. Navy Family Care Policy (which designates child care arrangements in the event of a deployment), is not 100%, most single parents and dual-military parents do have some type of child care plan in place in case they are deployed.

Attitudes towards family planning are similar to previous results; about 20% believe a Navy woman should have a child "whenever she wants". About half of Navy men and women indicate their sea/shore flow is good for family planning. Birth control usage is similar to previous years, with the pill and/or the condom being the most frequently used form of birth control. About half of Navy women know about long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARC) and discussed them at their last physical exam; about 1/3 of enlisted Navy women or partners of enlisted Navy men usually use a LARC (lower for officers). About one-quarter of those who do not use birth control (21% of enlisted women, 27% of enlisted men, 8% of officer women, and 25% of officer men), indicate they do not use it because they do not want to use birth control.

Historically, personnel received sexual health training at GMT; the majority of Navy men and women received training on STIs/STDs and most men received training about birth control methods at GMT. Noticeably fewer indicate they are receiving sexual health training at GMT

in this survey administration. However, because Sailors get training from other venues, there has not been a resulting increase in the number indicating they never receive training. Most respondents suggest that sexual health training should occur at Boot Camp (almost 3/4 of enlisted respondents), GMT (over 60% of all groups), and OCS/USNA/ROTC (almost 60% of officers), and should be done annually at either the physical exam or during command training.

Trends over the last 12 or more years show consistent findings (within a 10 percentage point window) in six key areas: (1) point-in-time and annual pregnancy rates have been relatively stable since 1992; (2) rates of pregnancy planning have been consistent for both enlisted (currently 37%) and officers (currently 75%); (3) rates of single parenthood and single parent custody have been consistent since 1999 (currently 6% of Navy men and 13% of Navy women are single parents); (4) completion of the Family Care Plan has been consistent for women (currently almost 80%), while it has increased for men (currently about 50%) since 2001; (5) results for questions asked about family planning attitudes have been similar since 2001; and (6) about 2/3 of enlisted and over 3/4 of officers usually use birth control, similar to rates found since 1997.

NPRST is the Navy's Manpower and Personnel (M&P) research laboratory, dedicated to shaping the Navy's human resources vision while providing the research and products to attain it. Our goal is to improve Navy M&P processes and the life of every Sailor, from initial service application through retirement. For more information, please see our website www.nprst.navy.mil or contact us at nprstpao.fct@navy.mil.



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