



MILITARY FAMILIES: IMPACT ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES' MENTAL HEALTH

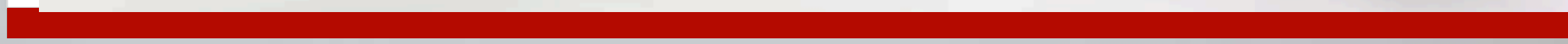
by...

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Some questions for today...



- ❖ **What are the issues that children and youth face when they have loved ones preparing for deployment, during deployment, or post deployment?**
 - ❖ **What specific strategies and protective factors can educators and mental health providers use to address the grief/loss/stress they face?**
 - ❖ **What resources are presently available to address this issue?**
 - ❖ **Are there simple or low-cost strategies schools and families can do to prevent some of the negative effects of the deployment cycles?**
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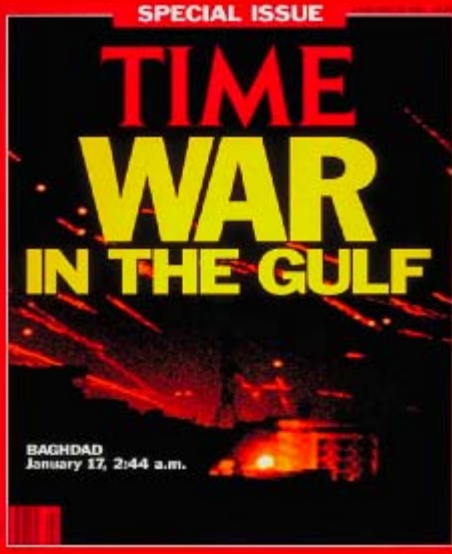
US War Effects on Children

- Analysis of a random sample of 1923-1983 child guidance clinic records showed an increase in children's academic problems and aggressive behaviors during and after World War II.
- Increases in anxiety and obsessive and aggressive behaviors occurred following the Vietnam conflict, along with the adverse effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) on family life.

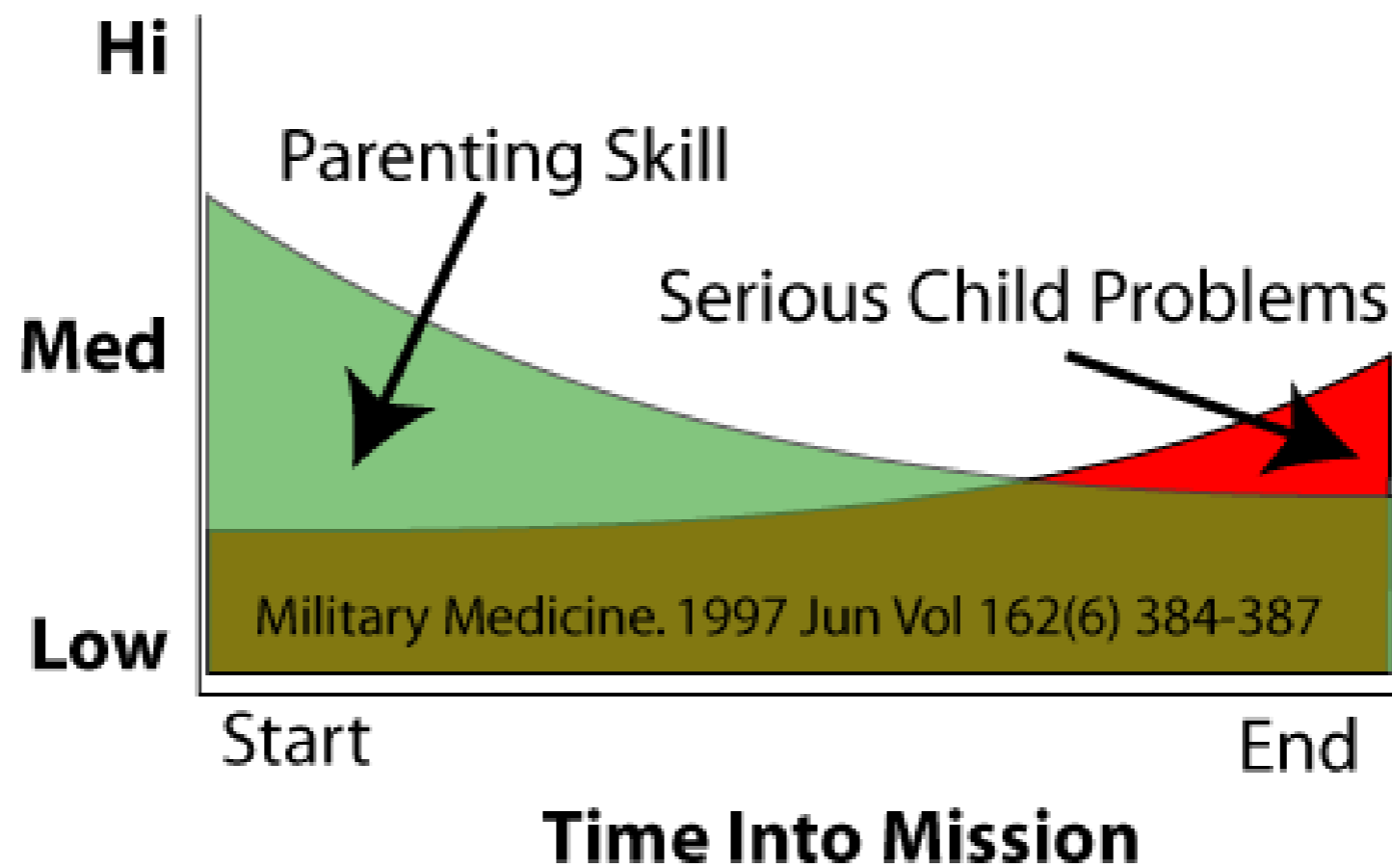
WW II

Vietnam

Lessons Learned from Desert Storm



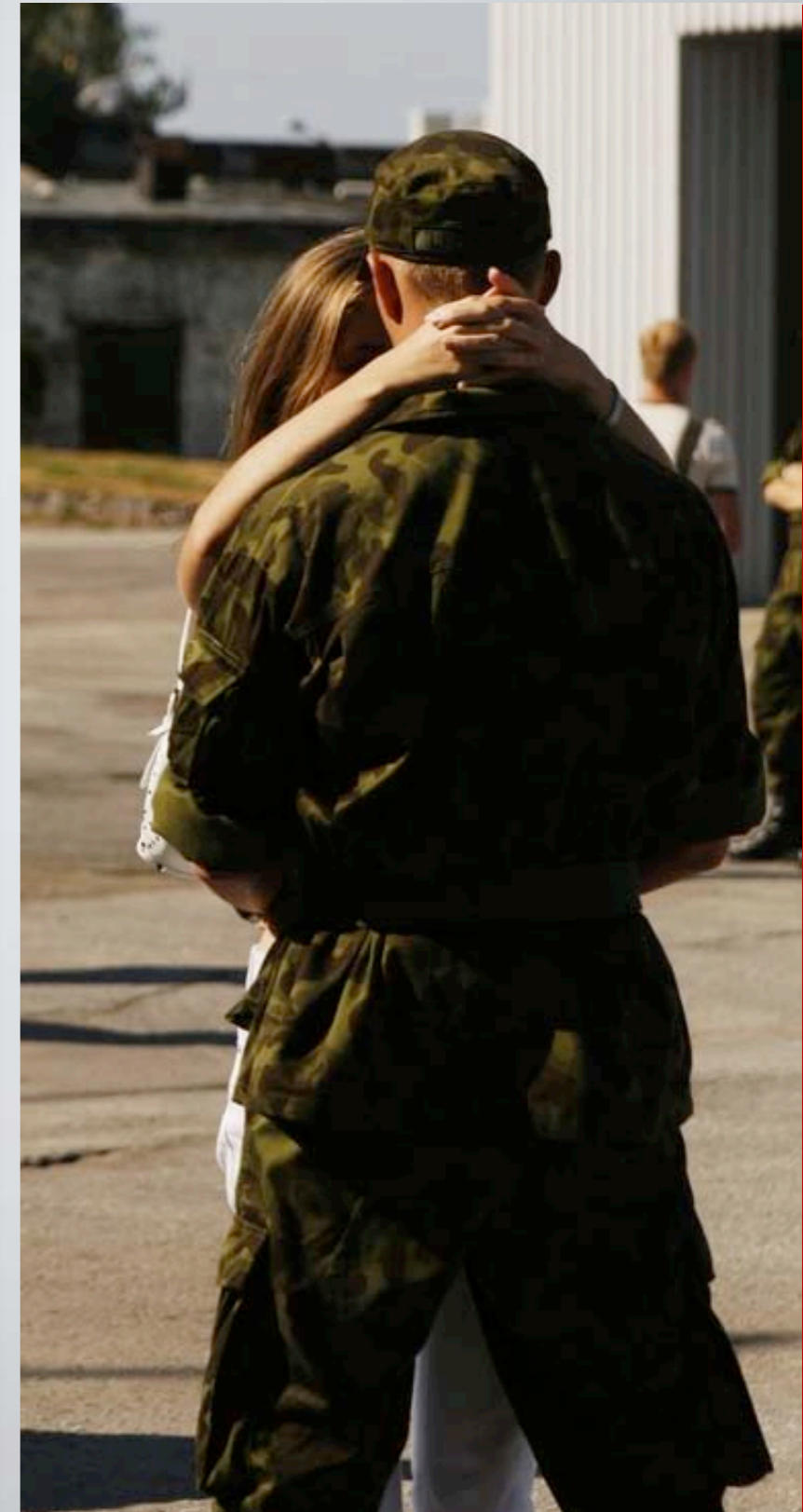
Timing of Difficulties in Military Families





Military Family Health Care Visits

Military spouses make more stress-related visits to health-care provider, both during and after their spouse's deployment.



CONUS Desert Storm Deployment

- ❖ Children of deployed personnel experienced elevated self-reported symptom levels of depression, as did their parents.
- ❖ Families of deployed personnel reported significantly more intervening stressors, compared with children and families of non-deployed personnel.
- ❖ Boys and younger children appeared to be especially affected.



Germany Desert Storm Deployment

- ❖ About 40% of the children on US military installations developed post-traumatic stress symptoms.
- ❖ Regression in young children
- ❖ Aggression, sex and drugs in teens
- ❖ Alcohol sales stayed the same in the PX's in January after 100,000 service members were deployed.





Data from the War on Terrorism



Military Children Near Pentagon

After the September 11 attack on the Pentagon, there were significant increases in the number of visits for anxiety disorder and acute stress reactions in children.





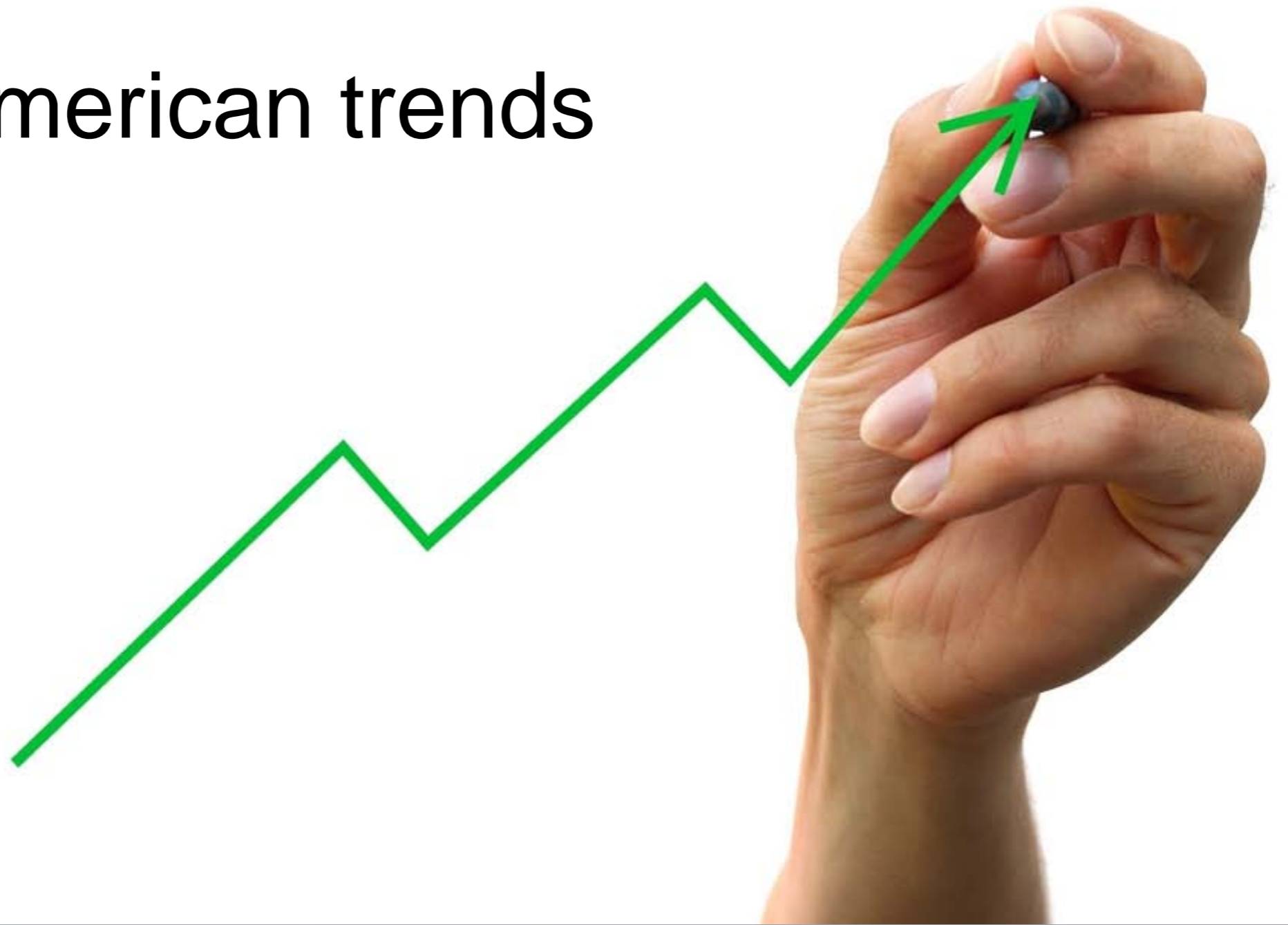
Parental and child problems

- ❑ Army spouses completed the Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC) & the Parenting Stress Index-Short Form and the Perceived Stress Scale-4.
- ❑ 32% of respondents exceeded the PSC cut off score for their child, indicating "high risk" for psychosocial morbidity and 42% reported "high risk" stress on the Parenting Stress Index-Short Form.
- ❑ The most significant predictor of child psychosocial functioning during wartime deployment was parenting stress.





American trends





Oklahoma Bombing: TV Exposure

- Over 2,000 middle school students were surveyed 7 wks after the bombing. As predicted, children/adolescents who reported no physical or emotional exposure to the bombing had significantly lower scores than exposed children on television viewing, initial reaction, and PTSD symptoms. Within the non-directly exposed group, those with high television exposure had significantly more PTSD symptoms.





Depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety and suicidality already increasing in youth.





ADHD, conduct disorders, and cutting already increasing in youth.

