Military Family Advisory Network

Methods and Demographics

2019 Military Family Support Programming Survey

The Military Family Advisory Network (MFAN) was founded in 2013 to fill a persisting gap in the military community: the inability to quickly and effectively understand the modern military family and connect military families to the resources they need to thrive.

Since its inception, MFAN has taken a data-driven approach to decision-making. Its Military Family Support Programming Survey℠ has been the cornerstone of its research portfolio, providing deep insight into the support needs of families living military lives. MFAN shares this research with others so that it is actionable—it leads to data-informed programming from MFAN and others, ultimately yielding positive outcomes for military and veteran families.

MFAN's research is primarily qualitative or open-ended, which generates data that are rich with perspective and experiences and provide a greater diversity of topics to understand and evaluate. Quantitative questions, such as multiple choice, are used as a navigation system to ensure that participants receive only the questions relevant to them. While these quantitative questions supply valuable data, the qualitative data are the heart of the research.

Cerner

Presented by Cerner

MFAN's research goals are to offer deeper context. While quantitative data can explain the "what," qualitative can explain the "why" and "how." Some researchers may avoid relying heavily on open-ended responses because of the time and effort required to analyze them, but MFAN has established a systematic method for analysis. Because MFAN conducts and analyzes its data in-house, it has the agility to conduct intermittent surveys when needs present.

The data are analyzed with Qualtrics survey software, cutting-edge software that allows not only methodologically sound qualitative coding, but also comparisons with other data within the sets. MFAN's coding team reads every written response submitted to every question and tags each one with themes and subthemes. Then, the team evaluates all of those themes to explain