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Going it Alone: The Social and Emotional Life of Disconnected Youth

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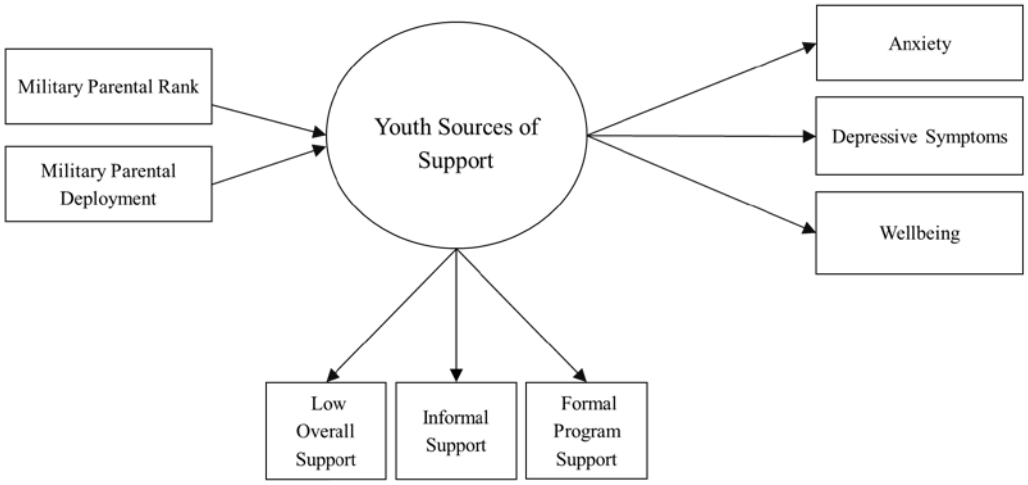
Going it alone: The social and emotional life of disconnected youth

Jacquelyn K. Mallette, Jay A. Mancini, Catherine Walker O'Neal, Alycia DeGraff & A. Rebecca Lanier
The University of Georgia

Figure 1. Conceptual model of youth sources of support



Our findings indicate that the presence of (or lack of) certain types of social supports was related to positive, not negative, adolescent functioning. It may be that the presence of certain types of informal supports, suc serve a beneficial or enhancing function for youth.

When exploring sources of social support in a general context, we found that the majority of these military youth reported fairly low overall support. However, military parental factors were not related to patterns of social support. These findings suggest that military contextual factors alone do not explain how youth perceive support.

In addition to the overall findings, there are some specific findings that are particularly useful for program and policy-makers and may provide a basis for application. These findings point to the importance of support from a variety of informal sources for wellbeing (peers, school personnel, non-parental adults) over support that comes primarily from formalized programs. Mobilizing these informal support networks can help interventionists to build collaborative and integrative support systems for military youth.

Figure 2. Variations in sources of support across sample of military adolescents

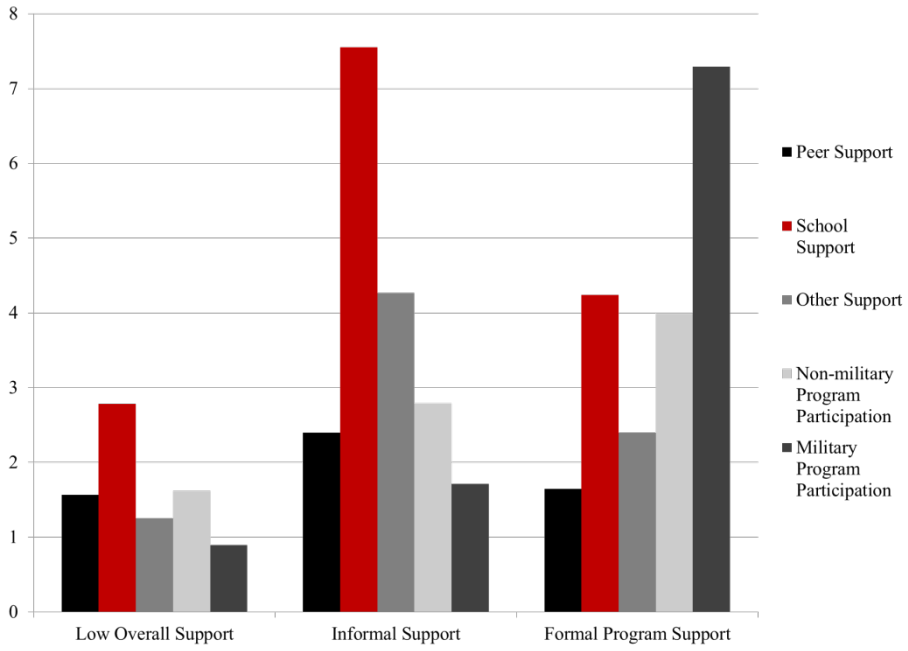


Table 1

Antecedents and covariate data for each of the youth sources of support profiles

	Low Overall Support		Formal Program Support		Informal Support	
	M	SE	M	SE	M	SE
Antecedents						
Military Parental Rank	1.044	0.108	0.981	0.209	0.913	0.190
Deployed in the past year	0.833	0.039	0.697	0.107	0.827	0.076
Covariates						
Anxiety	1.852	0.035	1.934	0.096	1.719	0.080
Depressive symptoms	1.739	0.039	1.847	0.110	1.619	0.094
Wellbeing	3.182[a]	0.037	3.231	0.109	3.425[a]	0.086