



CULTIVATING KNOWLEDGE OF RESILIENCY AND REINTEGRATION AMONG MILITARY YOUTH THROUGH A NATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

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BRIEF SUMMARY: The [Military Teen Ambassadors \(MTA\) training program](#) aims to train military teens to help other military teens adjust to the reintegration process and develop leadership skills by targeting the seven Cs of resiliency (i.e., competence, confidence, character, connection, contribution, coping, and control). This study examined the impact of the MTA training on military teens' knowledge of resiliency and reintegration, awareness of the needs of other military teens in the community, self-perceptions of personal growth and skill development (i.e., leadership skills, public speaking), and civic efficacy (i.e., ability to impact community). Thirty-four military teens participated in the three-day MTA training and completed pretest, posttest, and six-month follow-up questionnaires. At the six-month follow-up, military teens also responded to an open-ended question about how MTA had improved their leadership skills. There was some evidence that military teens' participation in the MTA may contribute to greater knowledge of resiliency and reintegration, awareness of other teens' needs in their communities, and self-perceived leadership skills.

PROGRAMMATIC OVERVIEW: MILITARY TEEN AMBASSADORS TRAINING PROGRAM

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1. CONCEPTUAL Desired program outcomes identified	2. DEVELOPING Program components created	3. IMPLEMENTATION Pilot/initial programmatic research conducted	4. ADAPTATION Program adapted based on research and feedback	5. EFFICACY Program effectiveness established from evaluation research

Note. The MTA training program is administered through the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

KEY FINDINGS

- From pretest to follow-up, military teens reported increased knowledge of the 7 Cs of resiliency and reintegration, awareness of other community teens' needs, and leadership skills.
- Military teens did not report changes in their public speaking skills or civic efficacy across the study period.
- Based on qualitative responses, military teens felt that the MTA training had improved their leadership skills by helping them collaborate with new people, communicate more effectively, and model leadership skills.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILIES

- Encourage military teens to participate in programs and use resources, such as the MTA training, that can foster leadership skills and a greater understanding of resiliency.

IMPLICATIONS FOR HELPING PROFESSIONALS

- Educate military teens and family members on the process of reintegration and discuss [resources](#) and [tangible steps](#) they can use to better manage the changes and potential stress of reintegration.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS AND MILITARY LEADERSHIP

- Invest in further research to develop and evaluate evidence-based family programming for military families, especially those targeted towards military youth.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

- ✓ The total sample included 91 military-connected teens between 14 and 18 years old. However, the analytic sample included 34 military teens (37% of the total sample) who completed measures at every timepoint.
- ✓ 33% White; 24.1% Black; 14.9% Hispanic/Latino; 48.4% female; 44% male.
Note. Some military teens did not provide demographic information.

METHODOLOGY

- Teen ambassadors who participated in the Military Teen Ambassadors (MTA) training program in 2017 were asked to participate in this study.
- Teens completed a pretest questionnaire before training began and reported on their demographic information (e.g., age, gender, race), knowledge regarding resiliency and reintegration, self-perceived leadership and skill development, and awareness of the needs of other military teens in their community.
- MTA training lasted for three days, and participants completed a posttest questionnaire after the training. Teens answered questions presented in the pretest and additional measures of personal growth.
- Teens completed a six-month follow-up questionnaire with the same measures as the pretest and posttest. Additional qualitative data (i.e., open-ended questions) were collected on the perceived impact of the MTA training.
- Repeated measure **analyses of variance** and **paired t-tests** were conducted to examine changes in knowledge of the 7 Cs of resiliency, skills, and personal growth across the pretest, posttest, and six-month follow-up questionnaires. Responses to open-ended questions were coded for common themes among participant responses.

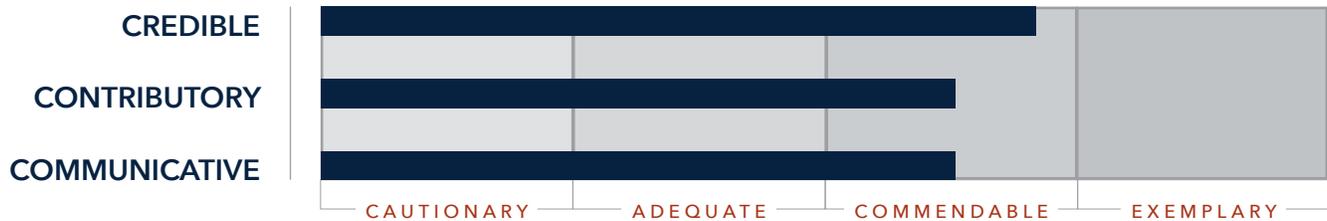
STRENGTHS

- This study incorporated both quantitative and qualitative measures of the changes in military teens' skill development, which provides insight on how the MTA training accomplished its goal of developing resiliency and leadership abilities among military teens.

LIMITATIONS

- No **comparison group** was included in this study as a comparison to program participants. Therefore, it cannot be concluded that participation in the MTA training directly leads to improvements in study outcomes.

ASSESSMENT OF THE STUDY



DIMENSIONS OF ASSESSMENT

- **CREDIBLE**: Research that is rigorous, transparent, consistent, and generalizable. This dimension reflects an evaluation of the study's scientific methodology.
 - **CONTRIBUTORY**: Research that is original, applicable, and has the potential to enhance the well-being of military families. This dimension examines the impact of the study.
 - **COMMUNICATIVE**: Research that is coherent, understandable, and readable. This dimension assesses how effectively the authors convey the content of the study.
- * These dimensions are adapted from the work of Mårtensson et al. (2016). For more information on the REACH evaluation framework and rubric visit: MilitaryREACH.org

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Underlined terms in **red font** are linked to the definition in the Military REACH Dictionary. To explore more terms visit: <https://militaryreach.auburn.edu//DictionaryResult>. Terms in blue font are linked to additional resources.

PARTNERSHIP

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