

MFRI Resources for Researchers

Family Adjustment of Wounded Military Members: An Annotated Bibliography

Military Family Research Institute
Purdue University

By

Rona L. Schwarz
Shaunna Cari
Colleen Pagnan
Kamala Ramadoss
Mary Ann Remnet
Belinda Richardson
Mindy Schelling
Mary Schultheis
Elaine Willerton
Shelley M. MacDermid

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TOPIC AREAS

	Number of Studies Described
Amputation.....	7
Burns	3
Chronic Disability	7
Combat Stress Reaction	3
Combat/War	5
Multiple Injuries	3
Prisoners of War	6
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.....	24
Reservist Family Health Care.....	1
Spinal Cord Injury.....	8
Trauma.....	1
Traumatic Brain Injury	27

Suggested Citation

Schwarz, R. L., et al. (2007). Family Adjustment of Wounded Military Members: *An Annotated Bibliography*. West Lafayette, IN: Military Family Research Institute.

Annotated Bibliography: Family Adjustment of Wounded Military Members

Advances in technology and battlefield medicine have resulted in unprecedented survival rates for U.S. service members injured in Iraq and Afghanistan. U.S. military hospitals provide the best medical, physical rehabilitation, psychiatric, and prosthetic care in the world, and thousands of war injured are currently receiving, or have received, treatment. According to a recent study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, only about 10 percent of Americans injured in combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have lost their lives compared to 30 percent of Americans injured in World War II, and 24 percent injured in Vietnam.

DoD reports that more than 18,000 U.S. soldiers have been wounded since combat operations began in Afghanistan and Iraq. While many of these soldiers are able to return to duty, those who are not are discharged. Hundreds are amputees, and hundreds more have been severely burned or sustained debilitating head injuries. In addition to their physical injuries, many must also overcome emotional damage such as coping with post-traumatic stress disorder. As a result of their increased survivability, injured soldiers and their families require tremendous support after they return home. Financial difficulties, decreased mobility, and limited career prospects are just a few of the many challenges they must confront.

How the Annotated Bibliography Was Compiled

This annotated bibliography contains brief descriptions of 95 studies, many of which were conducted during the past 10 years, on the adjustment of families of wounded service members. Our focus was on family and relationship issues associated with wounds and injuries. We selected these studies using a standardized process. First, we identified a set of civilian and military databases containing research relevant to the topic. Due to the paucity of empirical research in this area, we included relevant articles on civilian families with a chronically disabled or severely injured family member as well as service members injured in combat. The selected databases included:

Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC)	Army Research Institute (ARI)
Office of Navy Research (ONR)	Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT)
Defenselink – Official Web Site of the U.S. Department of Defense	Department of Defense Education Activity
DMDC	Military Family Resource Center
The United States General Accounting Office	PsycINFO
Sociofile	Web of Science
Social Sciences Abstracts	ProQuest
JSTOR	IngentaConnect

Second, we developed a standard set of search terms to allow for consistent searching between databases. We used these terms to locate all journal articles, reports, and book chapters that pertained to each of the topic areas identified above. The standard set of search terms included:

Main Search Term	Related Search Terms
Wounds/Wounded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injuries/Injured
Injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical trauma • Trauma (physical) • Burns • Head injuries • Spinal cord injuries • Coma • Disorders • Falls • Physical disfigurement • Physical disorders • Accidents
Physical Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical dexterity • Physical disabilities • Physical disfigurement • Orthopedically handicapped • Physically handicapped • Physical disfigurement
Disability/Disabled (attitudes toward)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitudes • Mental illness • Physical disabilities • Sensory disabilities
Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical disorders • Mental disorders • Behavior disorders • Brain damage • Chronic illness • Disability discrimination • Injuries • Recovery • Severity
Adjustment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional adjustment • Occupational adjustment • Social adjustment • Adaptation • Adaptability • Adaptive behavior • Adjustment disorders • Well-being

Injury Category	Search Terms
Amputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of limb AND family adjustment • Loss of limb AND family adaptation • Amputation AND family • Amputation AND family adjustment • Amputation AND family adaptation • Amputees
Burns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burns • Burn Injury AND family • Electrical burns • Burn Rehabilitation • Military families AND burns
Chronic Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability (see above)
Combat Stress Reaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Combat related” AND Solomon, Z • Combat stress
Combat/War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military Families AND war OR combat
Multiple Injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace Injuries
Prisoners of War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POWs AND adjustment • POWS AND family adjustment
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTSD AND family • PTSD AND family relationships
Spinal Cord Injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spinal Cord Injury AND family adjustment • Spinal Cord Injury AND family adaptation • Spinal Cord Injury AND family • Spinal Cord Injury
Trauma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological Distress AND military • Secondary Traumatization • Secondary Traumatization AND military
Traumatic Brain Injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traumatic Brain Injury • Family Adaptation to Brain Injury

Once we identified and obtained the research materials (either the actual report/article or the abstract), we read them for topic relevance. If these materials contained information about other pertinent studies that were not identified in the primary search, we also obtained these secondary-source studies for review.

With some exceptions, we limited our search to relevant studies/reports identified within the last 10 years in order to ensure that this annotated bibliography represented only the most current work in each of the topic areas. However, in certain categories, such as Combat/War, Prisoners-of-War, and PTSD, we include several classic, older studies, and/or widely cited studies conducted in the late 80s and early 90s as well.

How to Use the Annotated Bibliography

These articles are set up as an Excel spreadsheet which is saved as "Read Only" file. Each study appears in a row; specific information about each study appears in the columns. This format allows readers to scan through columns across studies. Studies with particular study features, such as samples of a certain size or measurement of specific constructs, can be identified quickly. This format also permits easy sorting according to wounded category, author, date of publication, etc.

The following table describes the information provided under each column heading.

COLUMN	DESCRIPTION
Wounded Category	The category of wound or injury. Current categories include: amputation, burns, chronic disability, combat stress reaction (CSR), general combat/war, multiple injuries, prisoners-of-war, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury (TBI) and other head injuries.
Date of Posting	Month that article is posted to the website
Authors; Year; Title; Source	The complete reference of the article or report.
N	The number of participants in the study.
Participants	Characteristics of the participants in the study.
Method	Usually the type of method used for data collection (e.g., questionnaire, interview). Also, the method of sample selection (e.g., random sampling, convenience sample). If reports are literature reviews that do not involve data collection, it will be indicated here.
Retrospective	This column is marked when respondents are asked to recall <i>previous</i> thoughts/feelings/behaviors as part of the data collection.
Concurrent	This column is marked when respondents are asked to describe <i>current</i> thoughts/feelings/behaviors as part of the data collection.
Predictor variable(s)IV construct	The independent, cause, or predictor variable, usually domain-related.
Predictor measure(s)IV operation	How the predictor variable(s) is/are measured. The specific measure is given when it is available.
Outcome variable(s)DV construct	The dependent, effect, or outcome variable.
Outcome measure(s)DV operation	How the outcome variable(s) is/are measured.
Findings	A brief summary of important study findings.
Notes	This column contains various information, including: the MFRI author's evaluation of the study; links to other studies; number of times article cited in Social Sciences Abstracts, and ideas for future studies.