

Supporting Research:

The San Diego Chamber of Commerce financed a study on behalf of 'Vets' Community Connections' to examine how veterans and military family members could tap the experience of a greater number of community members to make reintegration easier. The results, available January 2015, overwhelmingly supported a role for the greater community in assisting veterans and their families transition from the military:

SUPPORTING DATA:

Top difficulties Veterans/Family Members report when transitioning from the military:

- Loss of community
- Lack of structure
- Loss of support network
- Civilians don't understand the military or military experience
- Difficulty translating military skills to civilian jobs

Top areas Veterans/Families would like to see increased community support:

- Demonstrate more tangibly they care about returning veterans and military families
- A central point of contact for transitioning veterans/military families can go to for assistance
- Make it easier for veterans/military families to assimilate and become part of the community
- Let transitioning veterans/military families know the community members are willing to use their experience/expertise to make their transition easier
- Recognize and give credit for leadership skills returning veterans/military families offer

KEY FINDINGS:

1. There is clearly a role for the greater community in local veteran reintegration

Supporting Research:



KEY FINDINGS:

2. Veterans and military families want to tap a broader spectrum of community experience/expertise to make the transitions of veterans/military families easier

SUPPORTING DATA:

Top ways Veterans/Family Members feel the greater community can assist them:

- Help translate military skills to civilian jobs
- Job networking
- Volunteer time and expertise
- Better understand the skills and discipline returning veterans have

Top ways returning veterans and military families feel they could have benefited from assistance but did not know where to find:

- Career advice
- Money management, finance, budgeting
- Assistance with trade professions
- Mentoring and networking opportunities
- Guidance for building family strength
- Connecting with opportunities to volunteer
- Legal advice

Supporting Research:



KEY FINDINGS:

3. People want personal connection and not another online tool

SUPPORTING DATA:

- Respondents overwhelmingly reported that current online or web-based resources do not provide them and their family with enough personal information to meet their needs in transitioning from military to civilian life.
- Their key reasons:
 - Would rather talk/get help from a real person
 - Would rather get assistance talking to someone that went through a similar experience
 - Web tools provide incomplete answers
 - Many answers aren't found on the web
 - Web tools often are geared toward civilians and not returning veterans

Supporting Research:



KEY FINDINGS:

4. Overwhelming support for a navigator service or 211-type concierge service that would connect them with individuals in the community

SUPPORTING DATA:

- Respondents overwhelmingly thought there was a need for a 211-type concierge number where discharged veterans could speak to a returned veteran or military family member who could listen to their questions and direct them to a specific individual or organization in the community who could help answer or address their question
- Respondents overwhelmingly would be willing to use this service
- Main reasons why:
 - They can trust and rely on the advice of another veteran or veteran family member
 - Having one number to call for everything
 - It simplifies things and saves them time