

## **Adverse Childhood Experiences, Family Functioning and Resilience in Military Families: A Pattern-Based Approach**

Oshri, A., Lucier-Greer, M., O'Neal, C.W., Arnold, A.L., Mancini, J.A., & Ford, J.L. (2015). *Family Relations*, 64, 44-63. DOI: 10.1111/fare.121108

This study was guided by the Circumplex Model and it studied 273 military families (parents and adolescents) using FACES IV. The goal of the study was to examine family functioning as a resource that mitigates the relationship between adversity in the family of origin and current behaviors (physical health, mental health and parenting). While most research on resilience has been done at the individual level, this was a family based study.

Data analysis revealed four family types which were similar to four of the six types identified by Olson (2011). Using the Olson nomenclature for the four types they were: Balanced, Unbalanced, Mid-range and Rigidly Balanced. The *Balanced type* had high levels of balanced cohesion and flexibility and low levels of unbalanced scales (disengaged, enmeshed, rigid and chaotic). Conversely, the *Unbalanced type* had the opposite pattern with low scores on the balanced scales and high scores on the four unbalanced. The *Mid-Range type* had moderate scores on both the balanced and unbalanced scales. The *Rigidly Balanced type* had high scores on rigidity and on the balanced scales.

As hypothesized from the Circumplex Model, it was found that the Balanced type had the highest score on family communication and family satisfaction, while the Unbalanced type had the lowest scores on these scales and the Mid-Range had scores between the Balanced and Unbalanced types. The Rigidly Balanced had higher scores on communication and satisfaction than the Mid-range and the Unbalanced type.

“Accordingly, this investigation not only provides information about which military families are the most vulnerable to poor outcomes, but also empirically elucidates the family functioning types that promote the most optimal paths for successful adaptation among individual family members....The balanced and unbalanced family types, described in the Circumplex Model, have been identified and replicated statistically and conceptually. Consistent with the Circumplex Model, the balanced and unbalanced profiles exhibited the highest and lowest levels of positive communication, respectively, compared to the other types (2015, p. 57).”