MILITARY COMMUNITY AND FAMILY POLICY

M
STATE POLICY



Defense-State Liaison Office

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U.S. Department of War

Mission and Impact



The goal of the Defense-State Liaison Office is to act as a bridge between the federal and state governments to improve the quality of life for warfighters and their families in ways that:

- Enhance readiness
- Ease stress
- Increase satisfaction with military life
- Support retention

Collaboration With States

DSLO, part of Military Community and Family Policy, partners with state leaders to remove barriers affecting military families.

The office's outreach is intended to:

- Communicate policy priorities of concern for service members to state executive branches and state lawmakers.
- Support the legislative process with information and resources that may assist lawmakers/staff and the executive branch in advancing bills during legislative sessions.
- Build and nurture new relationships with previously unengaged state legislators, military installations and community stakeholders.

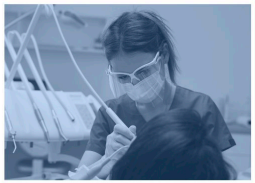


How DSLO Drives Change

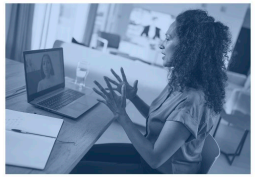
DSLO advances legislative solutions by identifying barriers, promoting best practices and supporting informed policymaking.

To inform their work, each year the DSLO gathers input from personnel and community support staff in the military services, joint staff, the National Guard Bureau, the Office of the Secretary of War and War Department components, military support organizations, veterans service organizations and the public.

State Policy Priorities for 2027



Occupational Licensure Interstate Compacts



Military Spouse Employment Preference



Military Clause in State Family Leave Laws



License Issuance and Reporting Uniformity



Solutions for Military Homeschoolers



State Exemption for Military-Certified Family Child Care Homes



State Support of Military Families with Special Education Needs



Education Policy Implementation Enhancements



Open Enrollment Flexibility



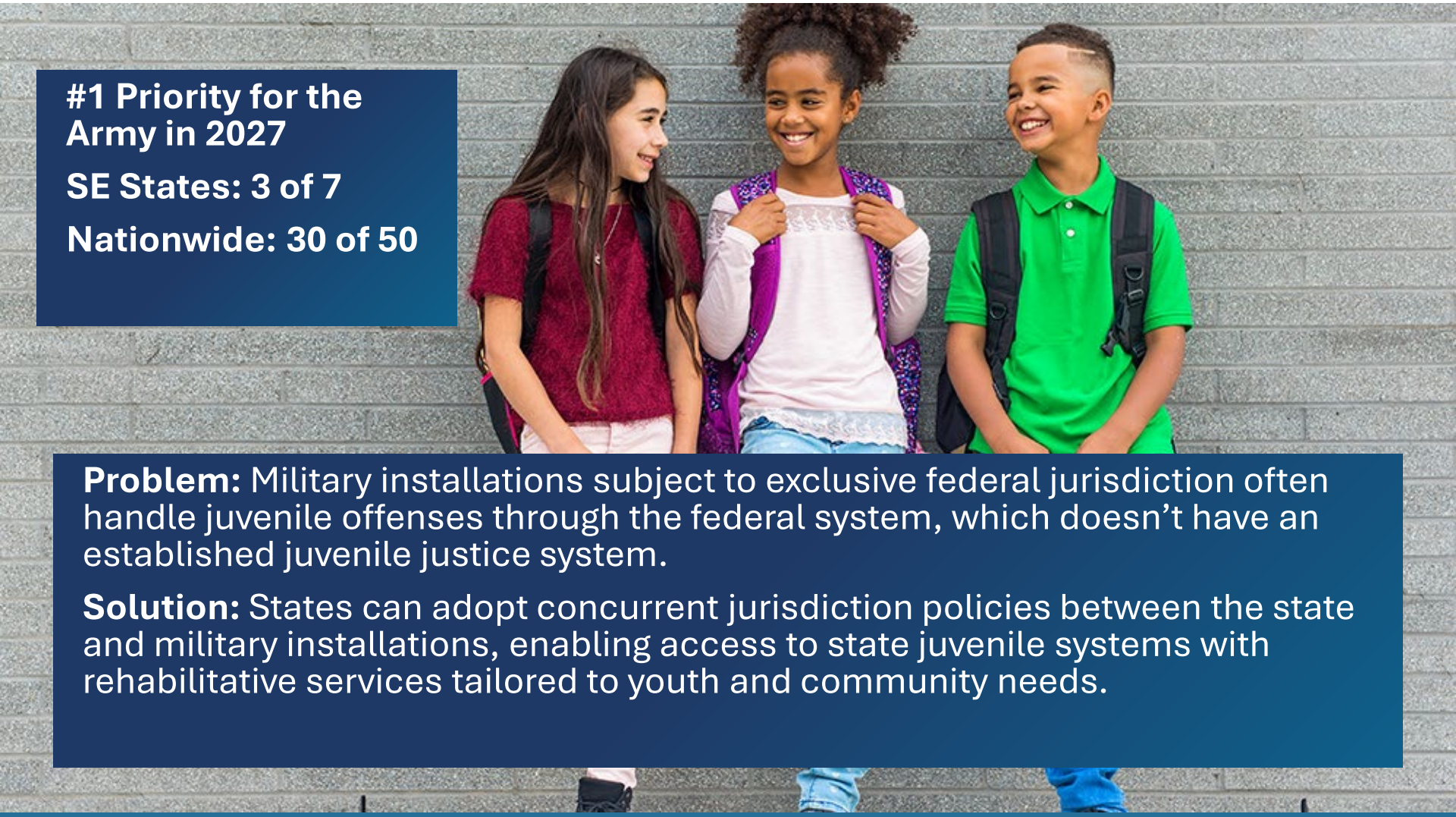
Concurrent Juvenile Jurisdiction



State Response to Military Interpersonal Violence

The DSLO helps policymakers understand important issues and unintended barriers created by state policies. They accomplish this work through education, relationship-building and direct assistance.

Concurrent Juvenile Jurisdiction



#1 Priority for the Army in 2027

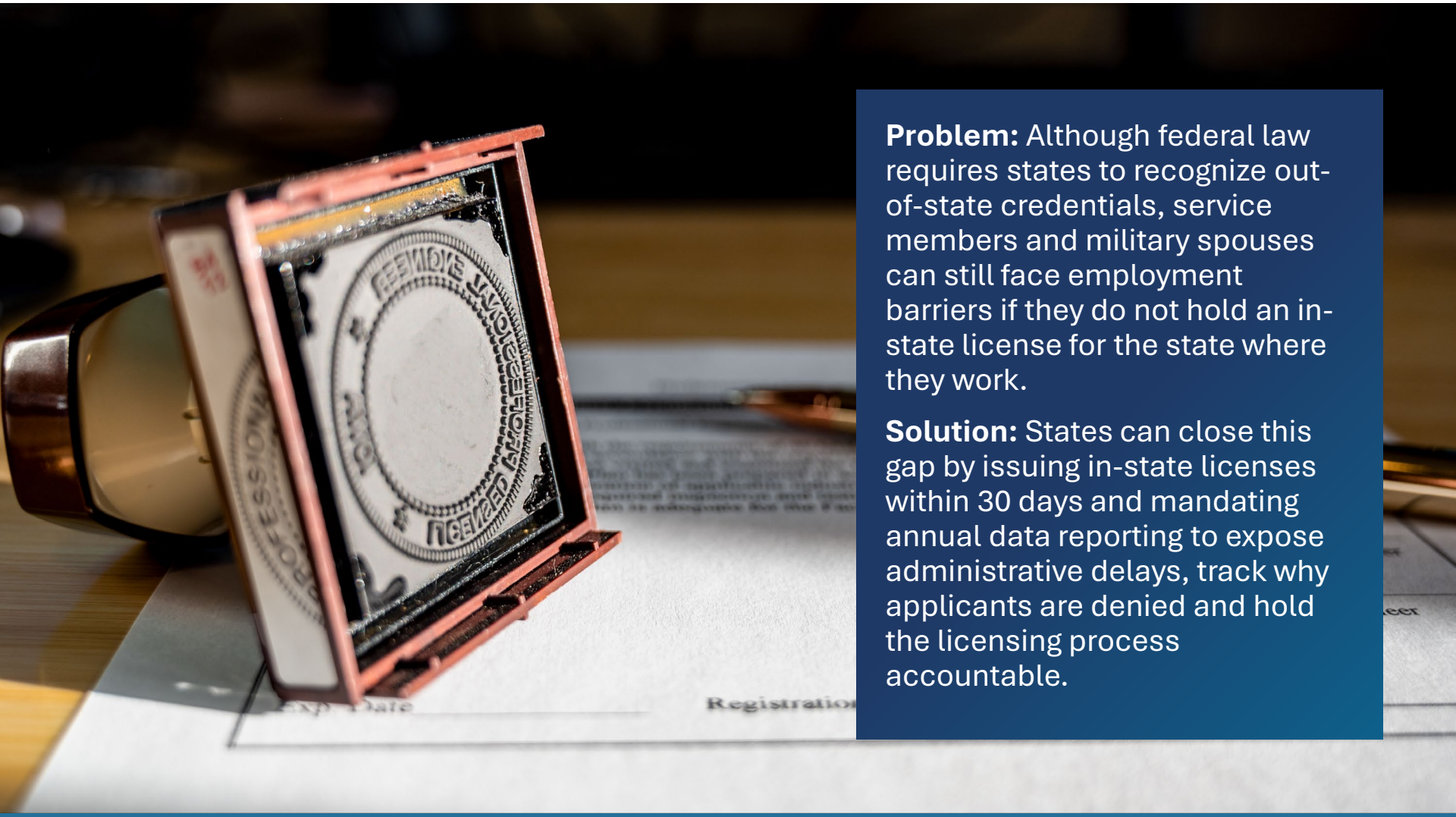
SE States: 3 of 7

Nationwide: 30 of 50

Problem: Military installations subject to exclusive federal jurisdiction often handle juvenile offenses through the federal system, which doesn't have an established juvenile justice system.

Solution: States can adopt concurrent jurisdiction policies between the state and military installations, enabling access to state juvenile systems with rehabilitative services tailored to youth and community needs.

License Issuance and Reporting Uniformity *NEW*



Problem: Although federal law requires states to recognize out-of-state credentials, service members and military spouses can still face employment barriers if they do not hold an in-state license for the state where they work.

Solution: States can close this gap by issuing in-state licenses within 30 days and mandating annual data reporting to expose administrative delays, track why applicants are denied and hold the licensing process accountable.

Military Spouse Employment Preference

Problem: Military spouses in the civilian workforce have a 20% unemployment rate, which negatively impacts military family economic security.

Solution: States can authorize public and private employers to offer hiring preferences for military spouses, helping reduce unemployment and strengthen family financial stability.

SE States Public: 3 of 7

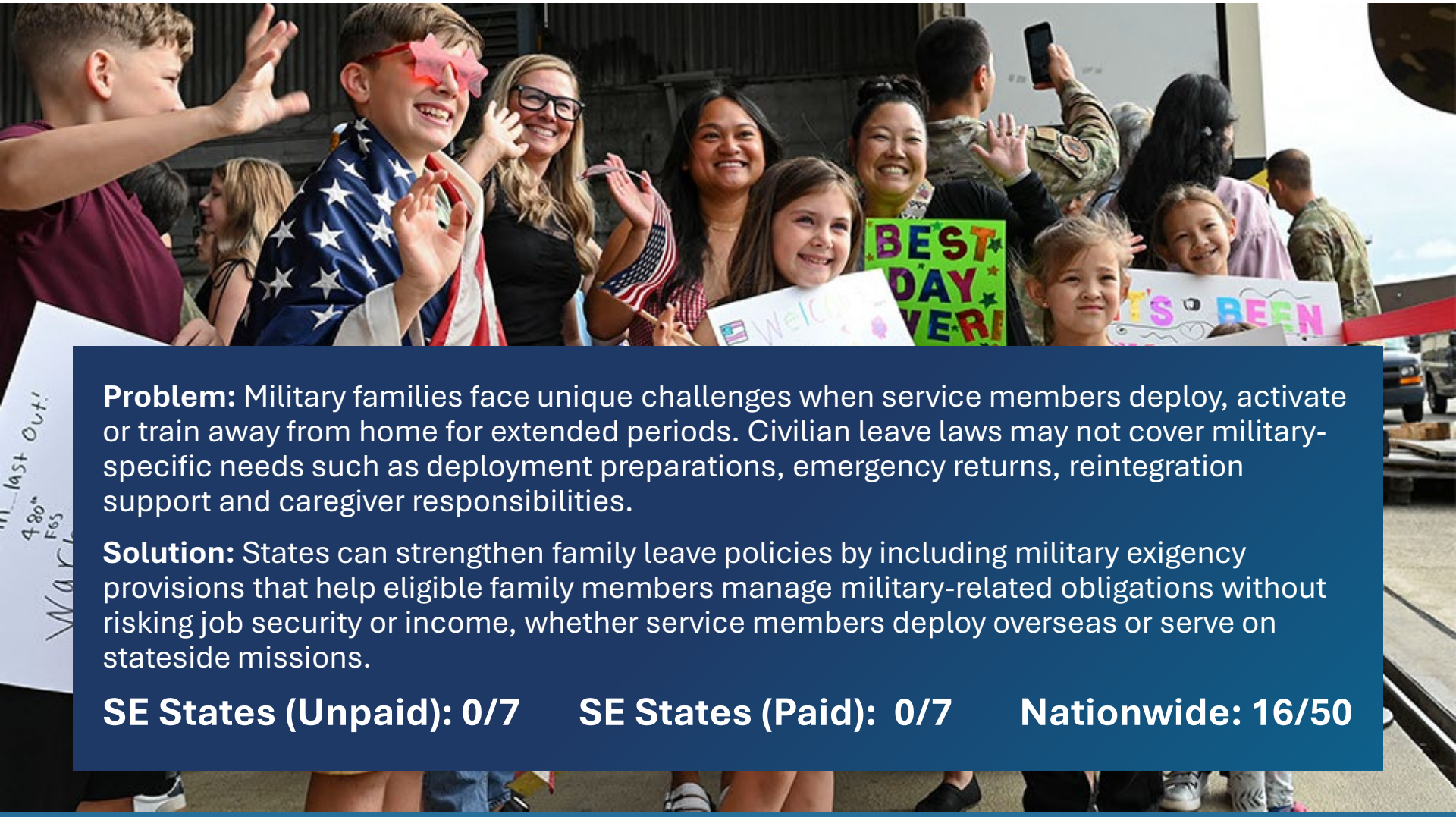
SE States Private: 1 of 7

SE States Procurement: 0 of 7

Nationwide: 14 of 50



Military Clause in State Family Leave Laws



Problem: Military families face unique challenges when service members deploy, activate or train away from home for extended periods. Civilian leave laws may not cover military-specific needs such as deployment preparations, emergency returns, reintegration support and caregiver responsibilities.

Solution: States can strengthen family leave policies by including military exigency provisions that help eligible family members manage military-related obligations without risking job security or income, whether service members deploy overseas or serve on stateside missions.

SE States (Unpaid): 0/7 **SE States (Paid): 0/7** **Nationwide: 16/50**



Solutions for Military Homeschoolers

Problem: Military families homeschool their children at nearly twice the rate of civilian families and face unique challenges associated with military life.

Solution: States can support families by streamlining homeschool rules and expanding access to sports, extracurriculars and the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

SE States (Streamline Reqs): 6 of 7

SE States (Access to Extra. Activities): 1 of 7

SE States (JRTOC Access): 1 of 7

Nationwide: 5 of 50

State Support of Military Families With Special Education Needs



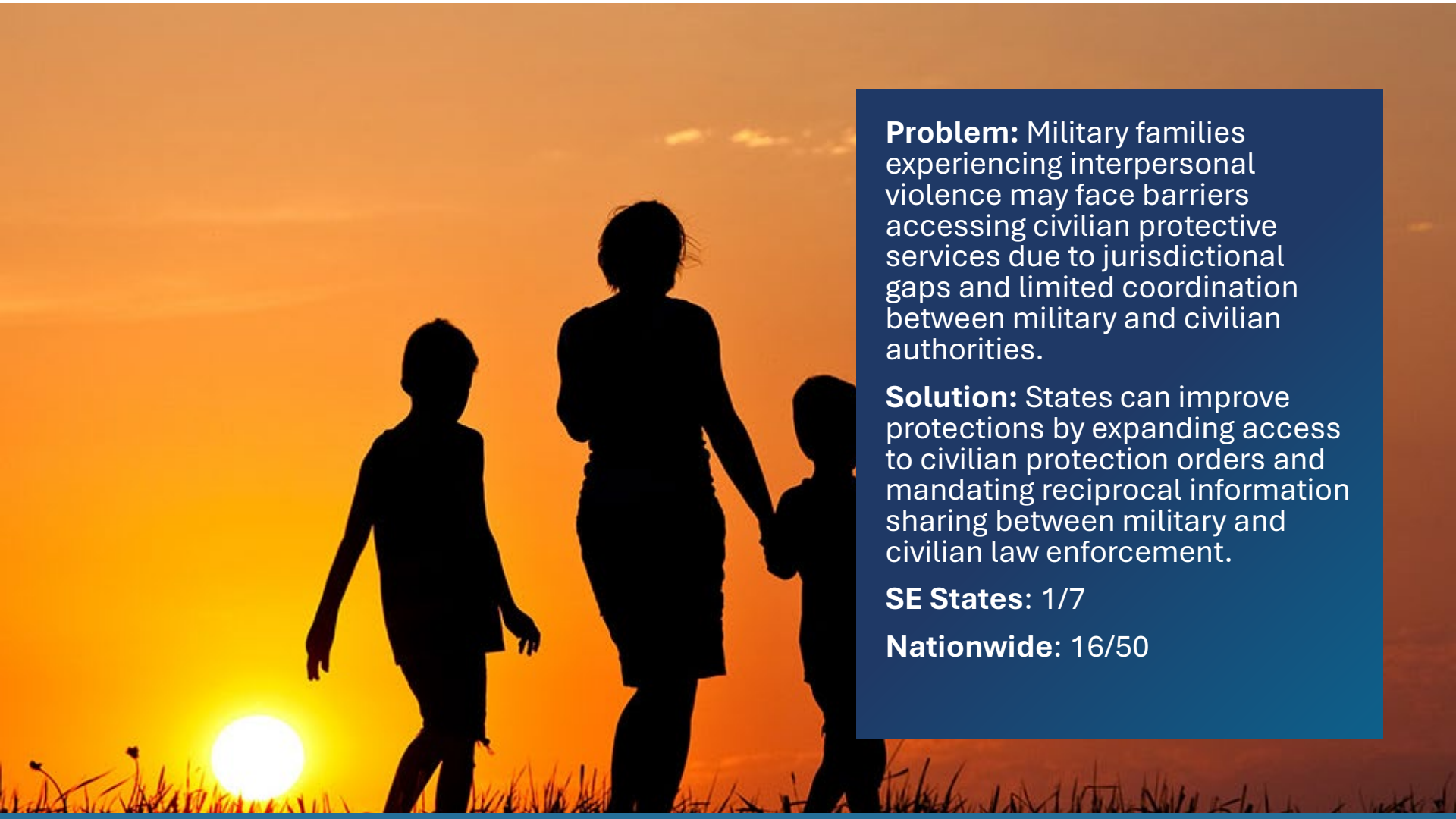
Problem: Military children face recurring disruptions and delays in accessing special education services due to frequent relocations.

Solution: States can reduce delays by aligning with federal standards and streamlining service setup for military children with special education needs after relocation.

SE States: 2/7

Nationwide: 23 of 50

State Response to Military Interpersonal Violence



Problem: Military families experiencing interpersonal violence may face barriers accessing civilian protective services due to jurisdictional gaps and limited coordination between military and civilian authorities.

Solution: States can improve protections by expanding access to civilian protection orders and mandating reciprocal information sharing between military and civilian law enforcement.

SE States: 1/7

Nationwide: 16/50

For additional information, visit statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil.



Working With State Policymakers and Military Community Advocates

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