Assessing Human Dimension Programs Impact on First-Term Attrition

2018 – Year 3 Final Study Report

Maneuver Center of Excellence

Directorate of Training and Doctrine

Approved by:

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ATZK-TD 17 April 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Accessing Human Dimension Programs' Impact on First-term Attrition – Year 3 Final Study Report

1. The enclosed report documents the culmination of the 3-year study conducted at Fort Benning, GA. The study's intent was to determine outcomes in trainees exposed to Human Dimension (HD) programs during Initial Entry Training (IET)

Results: This study included a total of 2,721 participants over three years: 960 in the control group, 534 in the I-PREP group, and 1,227 in the CH-DEV group. Participants in I-PREP developed more mental resiliency and were able to overcome challenges later in their career, which led to higher rates of first-term enlistment completion. Overall, both programs showed an increased rate of first-term completion compared to the control group. That completion rate translated to $5.2 million dollars in savings.

Recommendations: The evaluation team had four recommendations: (1) conduct more evaluation of programs designed to build mental resiliency for Soldiers, (2) implement Character Development training in operational units, (3) allocate additional resources for research regarding reasons for attrition and mitigating training interventions, and (4) encourage researchers and evaluators to use the PDE and agencies to provide data.

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Rory P. O'Brien

ENCL
HD Year 1 Report
HD Year 2 Report

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DISTRIBUTION:

Executive Summary

Background & Purpose

In 2015 Accession Medical Standards Analysis & Research Activity (AMSARA) annual report, it was reported that there was a 12% attrition across all the military services for first-term enlistments and a 16.5% rate for active Army (Boivin et. al, 2015). Costs to transition civilians into Soldiers was estimated to be ~$22,000 (recruiting) plus ~$50,000 for Initial Entry Training (IET) in 2010 (Grier, 2019). A recruit who ships to training, but attrits before their enlistment is complete is, at a minimum, a $72,000 loss to the Army per trainee who attrits.

Since 2016, the Program Evaluation Office has collected data to evaluate the effectiveness of two Human Dimension (HD) programs at reducing first-term attrition; the Initial Entry Training – Physical Resiliency Enhancement Program (I-PREP) and Character Development (CH-DEV). This report contains a culmination of findings for all three study years to answer the evaluation questions and provide recommendations regarding future evaluations related to HD programs.

The overall purpose of this evaluation was to determine the extent to which both I-PREP and CH-DEV contributed to reducing first-term attrition and how leadership and graduates perceived the benefits of these programs. The evaluation questions for the final study year were:

1. How did Soldiers perceive I-PREP?
2. What fitness and resiliency behaviors did Soldiers adopt after completing I-PREP?
3. How did Soldiers who participated in I-PREP impact unit medical readiness?
4. How did the Character Development program impact Soldiers behaviors/attitudes?
5. What was the first-term attrition rate of Soldiers who participated in these programs compared to Soldiers who did not participate in the programs?
6. What factors contributed to first-term enlistment completion?
7. How can evaluators use existing capabilities to better assess the long-term effectiveness of HD programs?

Methodology

For the final study year, the evaluation team focused on data from original instruments (i.e., surveys and focus groups) to obtain information about the participants' perceptions of these programs. The tables below depict the indicators of interest for this final study year.

I-PREP	
Indicator	**Measure**
Satisfaction	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Relevance	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale

Benefit	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Motivation	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Initiative	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Resiliency	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Deliberate Techniques	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Medical/physical chapter attrition	Fewer medical/physical chapters for I-PREP
First-term attrition	Fewer first-term attrit for I-PREP

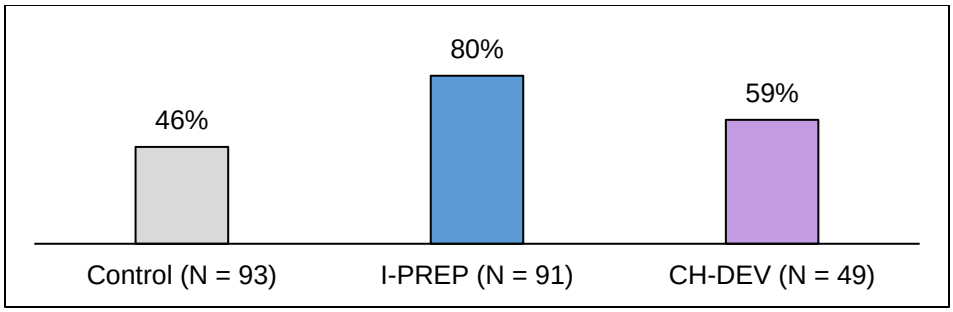
CH-DEV	
Indicator	**Measure**
Sense of belonging	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Goal-setting	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Self-improvement	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Commitment	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Compliance	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Loyalty	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Integrity	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Displaying Army Values	More trainees adhere to Army Values
Disciplinary chapter attrition	Fewer disciplinary chapters for I-PREP
First-term attrition	Fewer first-term attrit for I-PREP

Results

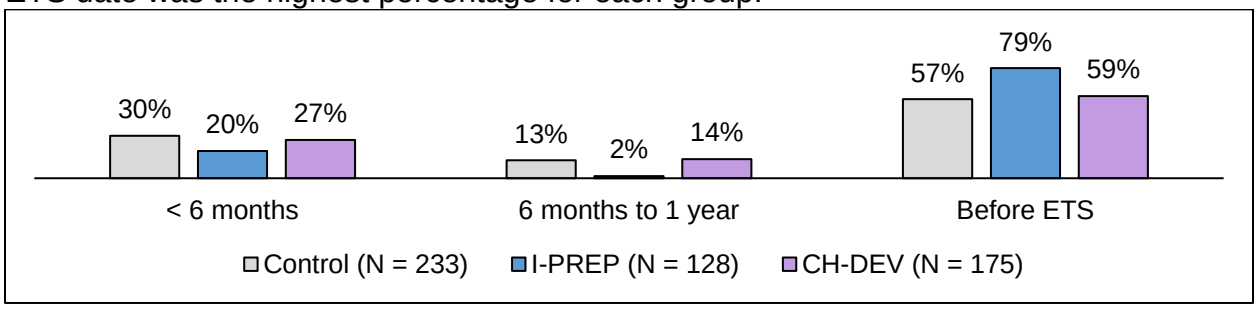
A total of 2,721 participants were included in this study over three years: 960 in the control group, 534 in the I-PREP group, and 1,227 in the CH-DEV group. The table below depicts the demographics of the participants.

	Control (N = 960)	I-PREP (N = 534)	CH-DEV (N = 1227)
Enlistment Term			
≤ 2 years	5	5	13
3 years	186	239	81
4 years	329	105	337
≥ 4 years	414	185	684
Separations			
Uncharacterized	75	25	52
IET	70	26	46
Medical	58	44	50

Participants from both the I-PREP and CH-DEV groups had higher rates of first-term completion compared to the control group. That difference in attrition translated to over 5.2 million dollars in savings.



Evaluators divided separations into three time intervals; separations in less than six months, separations from six months to one year, and separations that were after the first year, but before expired term of service (ETS) date. Evaluators identified all Soldiers who separated before completing their enlistments. The figure below illustrates the percentage of Soldiers who separated early at the time interval they were separated. Of those who separated before completing their enlistment, the period after one year and before the ETS date was the highest percentage for each group.



Recommendations

The evaluation team had four recommendations: (1) conduct more evaluation of programs designed to build mental resiliency for Soldiers, (2) implement Character Development training in operational units, (3) putting additional resources into research regarding reasons for attrition, not research into factors, but also in training interventions, and (4) encourage researchers and evaluators to use the PDE and agencies to provide data.

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Glossary of Acronyms

AMSARA	Accession Medical Standards Analysis and Research Activity
AG	Adjutant General
AIT	Advanced Individual Training
ARDEC	Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center
AAG	Army Analytics Group
APHC	Army Public Health Center
ARI	Army Research Initiative
BASD	basic active start date
BCT	Basic Combat Training
CAPE	Center for Army Professional Ethics
CIMT	Center for Initial Military Training
CSF	Comprehensive Soldier Fitness
DUA	Data Use Agreement
DAT	Drug and alcohol test
EO	equal opportunity
ETSD	expired term of service date
FUA	first unit of assignment
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FMS	functional movement screen
GAO	Government Accounting Office
HD	human dimension
HRC	Human Resource Command
IET	Initial Entry Training
I-PREP	Initial Entry Training - Physical Resiliency Enhancement Program
IAWA	Institutional Army Warfighter Assessment
IRB	Institutional Review Board
ITAP	Integrated Total Army Personnel
MCoE	Maneuver Center of Excellence
MEPS	Military Entrance Processing Station
MOS	Military Occupation Specialty
MSI	musculoskeletal injury
OSUT	One Station Unit Training
PII	personal identifiable information
PDE	Person-event Database Environment
PERSNID	Personnel Information Systems Directorate
PEO	Program Evaluation Office
POI	Program of Instruction
SHARP	Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention
SPA	Special Projects Addendum
SJA	Staff Judge Advocate
UCMJ	Uniform Code of Military Justice

1.0 Introduction

Attrition has been a topic long discussed and researched in the military. In 2015 Accession Medical Standards Analysis & Research Activity (AMSARA) annual report, it was reported that there was a 12% attrition across all the military services for first-term enlistments and a 16.5% rate for active Army (Boivin et. al, 2015). Costs to transition civilians into Soldiers was estimated to be ~$22,000 (recruiting) plus ~$50,000 for Initial Entry Training (IET) in 2010 (Grier, 2019). A recruit who ships to training, but attrits before their enlistment is complete is, at a minimum, a $72,000 loss to the Army per trainee who attrits.

Since 2016, the Program Evaluation Office has collected data to evaluate the effectiveness of two Human Dimension (HD) programs at reducing first-term attrition; the Initial Entry Training – Physical Resiliency Enhancement Program (I-PREP) and Character Development (CH-DEV). This report contains a culmination of findings for all three study years to answer the evaluation questions and provide recommendations regarding future evaluations related to HD programs. It should be noted that the goal of these programs was not to reduce first-term attrition. However, the benefits and unintended outcomes of these programs may contribute to that end.

1.1. Background and History

Historically, there has been approximately a 12% attrition of Army recruits who were discharged within their first six months of service and this attrition trend has remained consistent through recent years (GAO,1997; Boivin et. al, 2015). The first six months is when much the time is spent in IET, including basic combat training (BCT), advanced individual training (AIT), or one station unit training (OSUT) if both BCT and AIT are completed at the same installation.

Between 2014 and 2015 the Maneuver Center of Excellence implemented two programs that targeted HD concepts to improve success during IET and cultivate Army values. I-PREP was started in 2014 to help reduce musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs) during IET by identifying recruits at rick for injury and providing more physical preparation and training before they were assigned to IET units. In 2015, the CH-DEV program began at the 1st Battalion 46th Infantry to encourage ethical discussions with trainees to help them identify and use the seven Army values (i.e., selfless service, integrity, respect, honor, duty, personal courage, and loyalty). Both programs were designed to train and educate trainees so they can develop physically, cognitively, and socially as indicated by the HD concept[1].

[1] The Human Dimension Concept is described in detail in *The U.S. Army Human Dimension Concept*. (2014, May 21). TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-7. Fort Eustis, VA, U.S.

1.2. Program Description

1.2.1. I-PREP

I-PREP was a program conducted at Fort Benning, GA from 2014 to 2019. The objective of I-PREP was to prepare trainees considered a risk for MSIs for the physical rigor of training and to reduce MSIs in training. A logic model for I-PREP is in Appendix A. Trainees were screened upon arrival at the 30th Adjutant General Reception Battalion at Fort Benning. Initial one-mile run times were used as an initial discriminatory to assign trainees to the program. In 2018, the Infantry OSUT transitioned from a 14-week to a 22-week program. Early evidence pointed to an increase in injured trainees still graduating with their first OSUT company (Tucker et. al, 2019). I-PREP was permanently suspended in 2019 because the additional eight weeks of training (from a 14-week course to a 22-week course) added to the Infantry One Station Unit Training (OSUT) provided the opportunity for at-risk trainees to slowly increase performance levels and more time to convalesce from injuries[2].

1.2.2. Character Development (CH-DEV)

The CH-DEV program is an MCoE and 194th Armored (AR) Brigade (BDE) initiative that provides additional instruction related to the Army Values. Drill sergeants attend a two-day course where they learn about personality types, teambuilding techniques, moral reasoning instruction, and measuring drill sergeants' level of emotional and social competency. Drill sergeants receive instruction on using 270-degree assessments for trainees (from drill sergeants and peers) and how to deliver CH-DEV focused counseling. Table 1 illustrates the two-day CH-DEV Instructor Certification Course curriculum. A logic model for the CH-DEV program is in Appendix A.

Table 1
Two-day CH-DEV Instructor Certification Curriculum

Day 1: *Who are you? The Warrior Soul*	
Time	*Lesson*
0600-0800	CrossFit Total
0800-0900	Personal hygiene/chow
0900-1130	Meyers-Briggs Personality Type Indicators (MBTI)/Teambuilding
1130-1300	Lunch/personal time
1300-1700	Moral courage and combatives/Boxing
Day 2: *How do you make decisions and lead? Soldier and Statesman*	
Time	*Lesson*
0600-0800	Smart, Fast, Lethal, Precise
0800-0900	Personal hygiene/chow
0900-1130	Moral Reasoning
1130-1230	Lunch/personal time
1230-1500	Emotional Social Competency Inventory (ESCI) Assessment/Feedback 360
1500-1730	Confidence Leadership Reaction Course

[2] Major General Gary Brito, Fort Benning Commanding General, suspended the I-PREP program permanently in 2019. Memorandum ending the program is included in Appendix B.

1.3. Previous Study Year Findings

1.3.1. Baseline Data

During the first study year, the evaluation team collected and analyzed data provided from the U.S. Army Public Health Center (APHC)[3] to determine injury rates, discharges for UCMJ violations, number of females at each location, attrition rates, and graduation rates for the IET locations. The first study year report found that injury rates were not consistent across all IET locations; Fort Leonard Wood and Fort Benning had higher injury rates than Fort Jackson and Fort Sill (between FY14 and FY16). UCMJ violations were not consistent across training locations. Fort Leonard Wood had the highest number of discharges for drug abuse, patterns of misconduct, and serious offenses while Fort Benning had the highest number of "in lieu of trial by Court-Martial" discharges. Fort Sill had the lowest number of total UCMJ discharges. Fort Jackson had the highest number of females in training while Fort Leonard Wood had the lowest. Fort Benning did not have any female trainees prior to gender integration of females in BCT units. Graduation and attrition rates for IET (BCT and OSUT combined) were not consistent across training locations: Fort Benning had the lowest graduation rate (86.6%) and Fort Sill had the highest (92%).

1.3.1.1. I-PREP Findings

For the second study year, evaluators examined data for trainees based on the fiscal year they joined the Army. Soldiers who participated in I-PREP were less likely to attrit before their first enlistment term was completed. Figure 2 depicts the percentage of participants who attrited during the first 180 days in each group for 2015, 2016, 2017, and the total percentage for the three years. In 2015, the results did not yield a statistically significant difference in attrition rates, but the attrition was significant in 2016 and 2017 and ultimately the total attrition for the I-PREP group was lower over the three years compared to the control groups.

[3] The APHC is an organization that enhances Army readiness by "identifying and assessing current and emerging health threats, developing and communicating public health solutions, and assuring the quality and effectiveness of the Army's Public Health Enterprise." The APHC collects IET discharge data through the Army Training Requirements and Resource System (ATRRS) and Transition Processing (TRANSPROC). TRANSPROC provides the discharge reason listed on a Soldier's DD-214. The data is collected approximately six months after an FY ends to ensure all Soldiers who started in the FY are included (i.e., Soldiers who are held from training and discharged after the FY ends are still included in the data for the FY in which they started training).

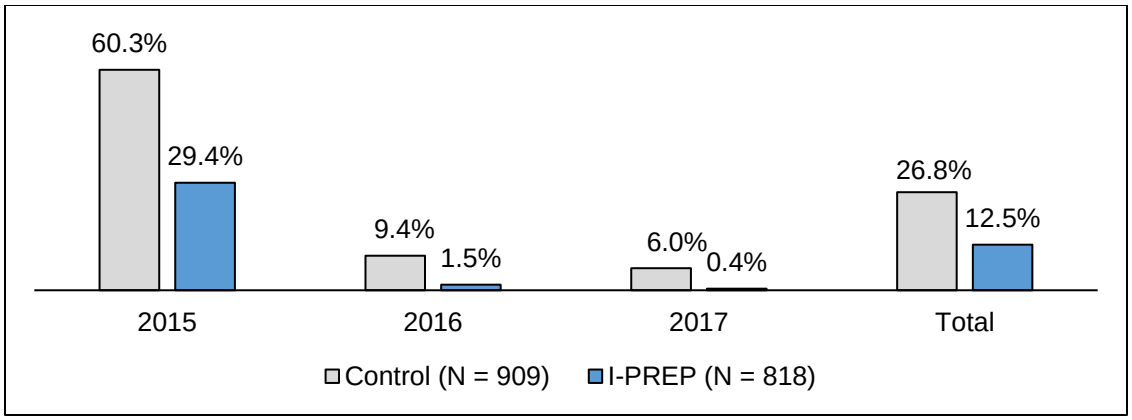

Figure 1. I-PREP Attrition Rates for First 180 Days of Service

Figure 3 shows the attrition percentages for medic
al/physically-related issues. The I-PREP group had significantly lower attrition ($p < .05$, ***2016:*** $F = 13.78$; ***2017:*** $F = 10.07$) starting at 6.4% in FY15 and ending at 1.3% in FY17.

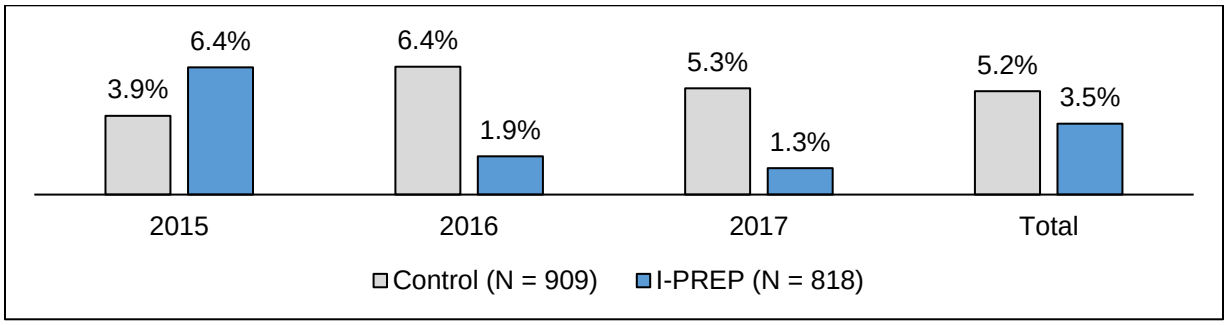

Figure 2. Attrition Rates for Medical/Physical Issues[4]

Figure 3 depicts the annual attrition rates for the FY15 I-IPREP and control groups for years FY15 to FY18. The high number of attrition in FY15 were a result of a high number of uncharacterized service codes, meaning the separations happened within the first 180 days of service.

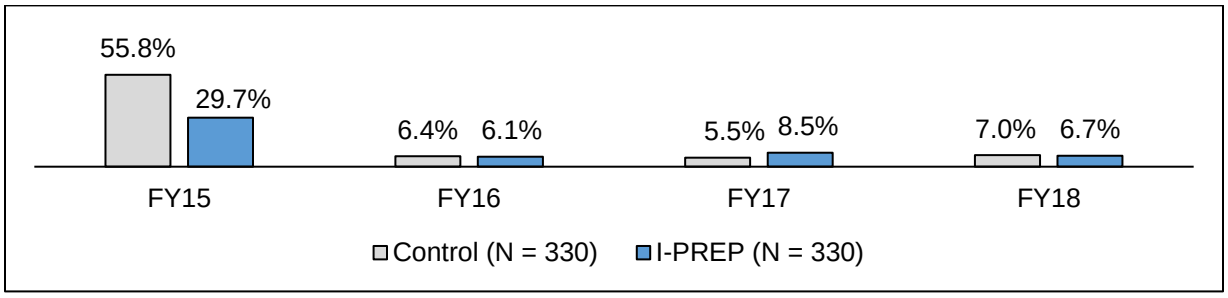

Figure 3. I-PREP Overall Attrition Rates for FY15 through FY18

[4] Population sizes for Figure 8 are: 2015 – I-PREP (n=330); Control (n=330); 2016 – I-PREP (n=261); Control (n=297); 2017 – I-PREP (n=227); Control (n=282).

FTU Leader Perception

Evaluators conducted a focus group session with FTU leadership (i.e., company commander, first sergeant, two drill sergeants, and an athletic trainer) at two points in 2018 to discuss the benefit of the training and motivation of the trainees who attended the course[5]. There were diverging views of the program between outgoing and incoming leaders. Leaders all agreed trainees typically felt defeated when they were told they could not immediately ship to training because they were not physically prepared. However, as drill sergeants took on a mentor role and helped trainees push themselves physically beyond what trainee's thought they were capable of, the drill sergeants saw improvement in trainees' attitudes (more positive about I-PREP and going to training) and self-esteem (i.e., confidence in their physical ability and mental resilience). The incoming leadership thought the additional training conducted during the I-PREP course was most beneficial (e.g., readiness and resilience (R2), learning the Soldier's creed, learning the Army song, and getting comfortable in a structured environment). Leaders did not think the program offered an additional benefit for physical preparation because they said the new 22-week Infantry One Station Unit Training (OSUT) course would help alleviate the issue of physical preparation and injury prevention.

1.3.1.2. CH-DEV Findings

Overall, the attrition rate for the CH-DEV group was lower than the control group, but not statistically significant for the total attrition for all three years. The most common reasons for trainees to attrit early were related to drug and alcohol issues (i.e., abuse and rehabilitation failures). Figure 6 depicts the percentage of participants who attrited during the first 180 days in each group for 2015 - 2017, and the total percentage for the three years. There was significantly less attrition ($p < .05$, $F = 6.97$) in the first 180 days among the CH-DEV participants compared to the control group for 2016, but no significant difference for 2017.

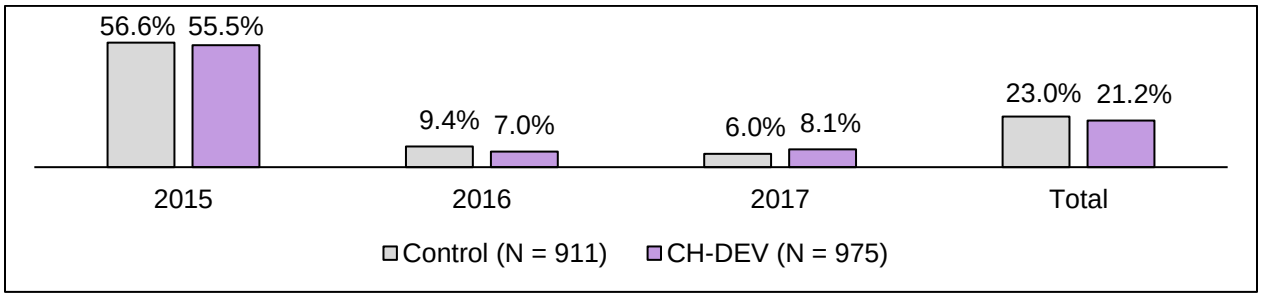

Figure 4. CH-DEV Attrition Rates for First 180 Days of Service [6]

[5] A change in company leadership in 2018 allowed evaluators the opportunity to collect data from leadership who had observed the program for an extended amount of time and leadership who observed the program for approximately six months.

[6] The PDE catalog did not have a variable for dates of separation, so evaluators were unable to determine full first-term attrition, but used separation codes to determine IET attrition, and character of service codes to determine attrition within first 180 days. Since data was collected two-three years after graduates entered

Reasons for separation included entry-level performance and conduct, pattern of misconduct, misconduct-minor infraction, misconduct-serious offense, drug and alcohol related issues, and in lieu of trial by Court Martial.

Figure 7 shows the attrition percentages for misconduct and legal-related issues. For 2015, attrition rates varied between the CH-DEV and control groups, but the CH-DEV had a slightly lower attrition rate over time[7]. There were no statistically significant differences in attrition between the CH-DEV and control group.

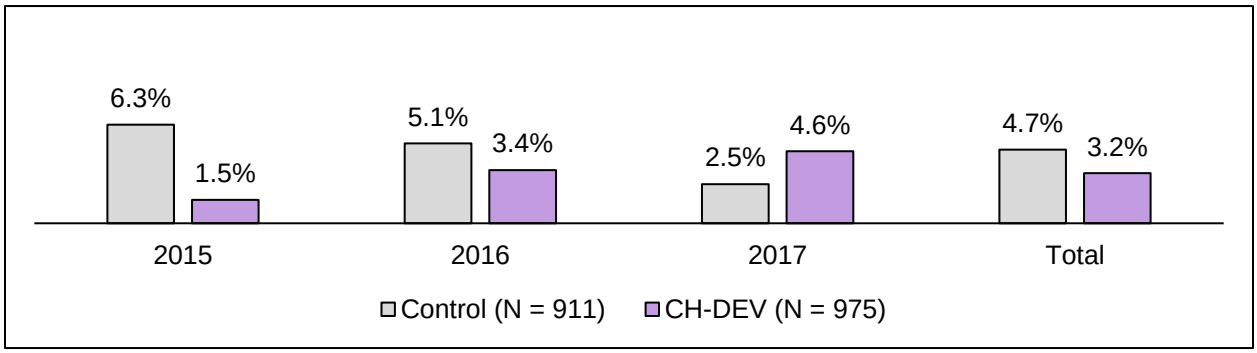

Figure 5. Attrition Rates for Misconduct/Legal Issues[8]

Drill Sergeant Perception

In 2017, evaluators conducted focus groups and administered surveys to drill sergeants at 1-46th Bn. Drill sergeants attended a two-day program for Character Development and answered survey questions about that training as it related to their role as a drill sergeant. The biggest benefit drill sergeants received was the ability to understand their own personality and how personality related to interactions with others. Although drill sergeants were satisfied with the program, they did not think the material was relevant to drill sergeants and they did not use any new techniques after receiving the training. Drill sergeants thought the program would be more useful in the operational environment rather than the institutional training environment. Drill sergeants did not observe significant changes in their trainees' behaviors or attitudes.

1.4. Purpose of Evaluation

The overall purpose of this evaluation was to determine the extent to which both I-PREP and CH-DEV contributed to reducing first-term attrition and how leadership and graduates perceived the benefits of these programs. The evaluation questions for the final study year were:

service, it may not include completed service or re-enlistment codes for graduates with three-year or longer enlistment contracts.

[7] There were no statistically significant difference in rates for 2016, 2017, or for all study years combined.

[8] Population sizes for Figure 9 are: 2015 – CH-DEV (n=330); Control (n=332); 2016 – CH-DEV (n=298); Control (n=297); 2017 – CH-DEV (n=347); Control (n=282).

1. How did Soldiers perceive I-PREP?
2. What fitness and resiliency behaviors did Soldiers adopt after completing I-PREP?
3. How did Soldiers who participated in I-PREP impact unit medical readiness?
4. How did the Character Development program impact Soldiers behaviors/attitudes?
5. What was the first-term attrition rate of Soldiers who participated in these programs compared to Soldiers who did not participate in the programs?
6. What factors contributed to first-term enlistment completion?
7. How can evaluators use existing capabilities to better assess the long-term effectiveness of HD programs?

2.0 Evaluation Protocol

2.1. Evaluation Overview

Evaluators examined historical records for 2,721 graduates over the three study years to determine overall attrition between test (program participants) and control groups. Evaluators recruited participants in the 2018 study cohort while they were at Fort Benning to collect original data about participants' perceptions of the programs and how the programs impacted participants' behavior when they went to their first units of assignment (FUAs). For program graduates who agreed to participate, evaluators visited FUAs once graduates had been there at least 90 days. Graduates completed surveys for both programs and I-PREP graduates participated in focus group sessions. The evaluation team also conducted a literature review of previous evaluations to determine what capabilities exist to help evaluators and researchers examine the long-term effectiveness of HD programs.

2.2. Evaluation Design

The evaluation design was non-experimental and longitudinal, designed to measure data over time. It was a mixed methods approach, collecting qualitative data from focus group sessions and quantitative data from surveys and historical records. Surveys and focus group sessions provided data about how these two programs were perceived and impacted Soldiers' behaviors and attitudes. Historical records for both the trainees who completed both programs and an appropriate control group provided data to determine the extent I-PREP and the CH-DEV program reduced first term attrition and effects of I-PREP on unit medical readiness. For the final data collection year, data was collected directly from program participants.

For I-PREP, Data collection occurred no earlier than 90 days after graduates arrived at their FUA. Figure 8 depicts the data collection process for I-PREP, only data from the FUA and historical records were collected for this final study year. Graduates completed a survey and participated in a focus group session. No leadership/cadre will be present during focus group sessions with trainees or graduates.

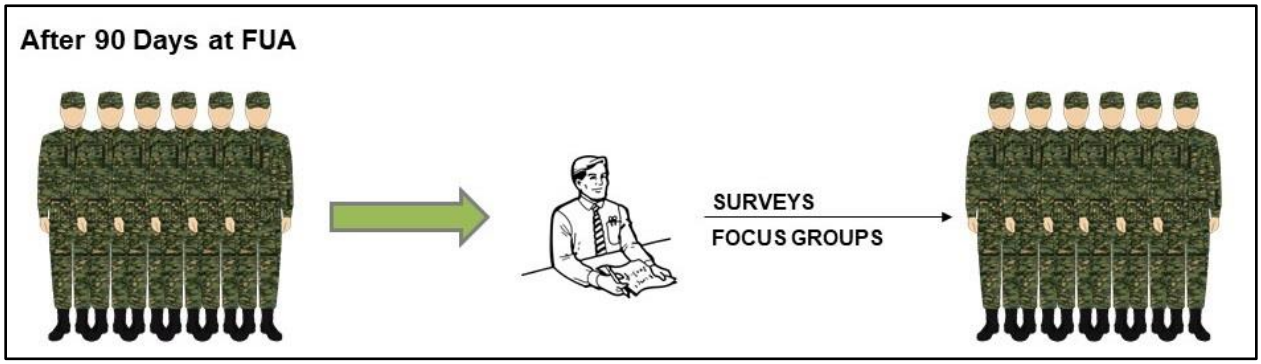

Figure 6. I-PREP Data Collection Overview

Table 2 shows the indicators and measures evaluators used for the answering the I-PREP evaluation questions.

Table 2
Indicators and Measures for I-PREP

Indicator	Measure
Satisfaction	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Relevance	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Benefit	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Motivation	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Initiative	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Resiliency	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Deliberate Techniques	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Medical/physical chapter attrition	Fewer medical/physical chapters for I-PREP
First-term attrition	Fewer first-term attrit for I-PREP

For the CH-DEV evaluation, data collection occurred at least 90 days after graduates arrived at their FUA. Figure 9 depicts the data collection process for CH-DEV, only data from the FUA and historical records were collected for this final study year. Graduates completed a survey once they were at their FUA at least 90 days. Graduates' unit leadership (company commander, platoon leader, platoon sergeant, first sergeant, and team/squad leader) provided data through an online survey. Evaluators collected historical record data related to awards and separations (if applicable). Figure 9 illustrates the data collection process for CH-DEV.

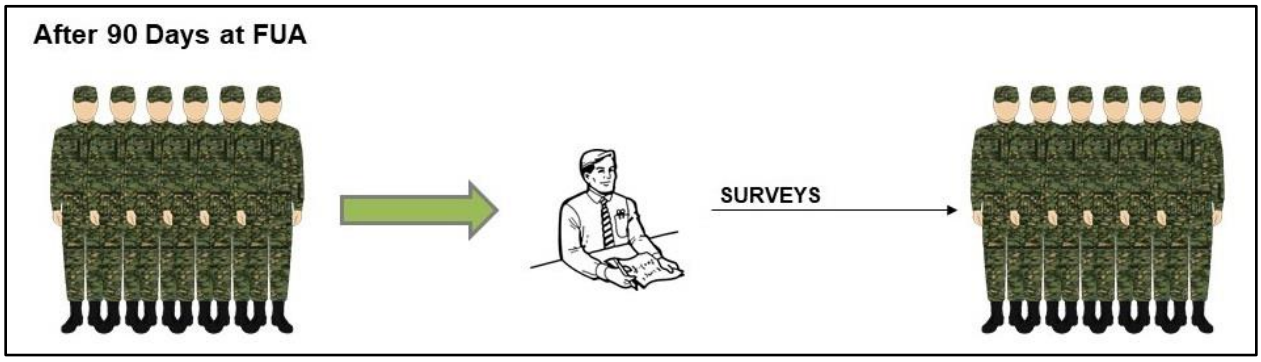

Figure 7. CH-DEV Data Collection Overview

Table 3 shows the indicators and measures evaluators used for the answering the CH-DEV evaluation questions.

Table 3
Indicators and Measures for Character Development

CH-DEV	
Indicator	**Measure**
Sense of belonging	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Goal-setting	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale

Self-improvement	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Commitment	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Compliance	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Loyalty	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Integrity	≥ 4.0 on 5.0 Likert-type scale
Displaying Army Values	More trainees adhere to Army Values
Disciplinary chapter attrition	Fewer disciplinary chapters for I-PREP
First-term attrition	Fewer first-term attrit for I-PREP

2.3. Instruments and Methodology

The instruments used for the final study year are:

Graduate I-PREP FUA Survey: 2018 graduates will complete a survey (Appendix C) 90 days after arriving at their FUA. Evaluators will use the data to determine participants' perception of the program, how they benefited from the program, which skills they found relevant to their basic training, what types of injuries they incurred, and what physical fitness and resiliency behaviors they adopted after I-PREP.

Graduate I-PREP FUA Focus Group: 2018 graduates will participate in a focus group session (Appendix D) 90 days after arriving to their FUA. Evaluators will use the data to determine how I-PREP prepared them to meet the physical demands of IET training, what physical and mental techniques they used, what motivated them, what additional content should be included in I-PREP, and what physical fitness and resiliency behaviors they adopted after I-PREP.

Graduate Character Development FUA Survey. Graduates will complete a survey (Appendix E) once they have been at their FUA for 90 days. Evaluators will use the data to determine what behaviors and attitudes graduates adopted after IET.

Evaluators used historical records to determine attrition rates during IET and during the first six months of trainee's enlistment. Examples of data from historical records included rank, APFT score, current duty status, separation type, and separation narrative. Evaluators used the Person-event Data Environment (PDE) (managed by the Army Analytics Group–AAG) to gather and analyze the data for this 2018 report.

Evaluators used the findings from the three study years and conducted additional literature views to answer the final two evaluation questions about factors that contribute to first-term enlistment completion and what existing capabilities can help evaluators track the effectiveness of HD programs.

3.0 Results

3.1. I-PREP

3.1.1. Demographics

A total of 960 control group graduates and 534 I-PREP graduates were included in this final study year analysis. Table 1 depicts the enlistment length by years and numbers of separations for the I-PREP and control groups[9]. Enlistment term percentages do not add up to 100% for the control group because a portion of that group accepted officer commissions and thus had no expired term of service (ETS) date for evaluators to determine enlistment length.

Table 4
I-PREP and Control Group Demographics

	2016		2017		2018		Total	
	Control (N = 295)	I-PREP (N = 252)	Control (N = 297)	I-PREP (N = 228)	Control (N = 368)	I-PREP (N = 54)	Control (N = 960)	I-PREP (N = 534)
Enlistment Term								
≤ 2 years	3	0	2	3	0	2	5	5
3 years	56	105	50	102	80	32	186	239
4 years	54	47	96	54	179	4	329	105
≥ 4 years	180	100	147	69	87	16	414	185
Separations								
Uncharacterized	25	3	17	0	33	22	75	25
IET	24	3	16	0	30	23	70	26
Medical	22	19	22	25	14	0	58	44

3.1.2. How did Soldiers Perceive I-PREP?

Graduates were generally satisfied with the program. Not all graduates remembered what they were taught, but they did credit I-PREP with helping them to be physically prepared for OSUT. Five graduates (all 11Bs) completed surveys related to their satisfaction with I-PREP, motivation in their job, benefits they got from attending I-PREP, and the relevance of I-PREP to what tasks they did in BCT/OSUT. The target measure for each indicator was 4.0 on a 5.0 Likert-type scale. Only one indicator met the target measure of 4.0. Figure 8 shows the average for each indicator and the red line indicates the target measure of 4.0.

[9] Total number of enlistment lengths do not add up to the N of 960 because some ETS dates were missing for Soldiers who accepted officer or warrant commissions.

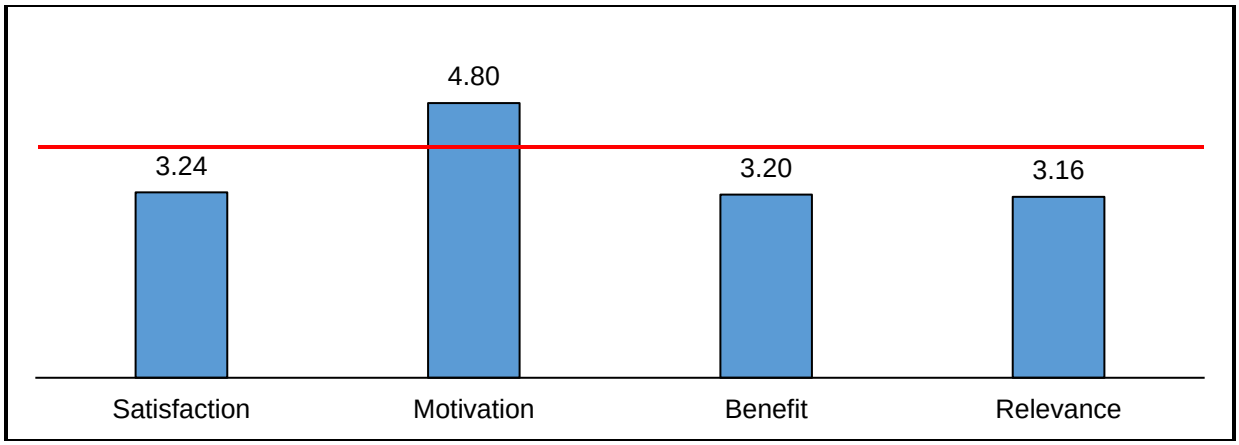

Figure 8. Indicator Averages for Soldier's Perception of I-PREP

Open-ended Survey and Focus Group Question Responses

Six Graduates participated in focus group sessions and five completed the online survey. There was a change in leadership and drill sergeants at I-PREP between the first three participants and the last three participants. Of the first three participants, deliberate breathing, physical movement (i.e., running gait), and active recovery were most useful Two graduates said they did not remember techniques taught in I-PREP, while three said the techniques either helped them with physical fitness and recovery in BCT/OSUT or with resiliency (i.e., positive thinking) during training.

3.1.3. What fitness and resiliency behaviors did Soldiers adopt after completing I-PREP?

When participants were initially told they had to attend I-PREP instead of shipping to their IET units, they all experienced negative reactions – frustration, disappointment, and demotivation. However, two graduates saw I-PREP as an opportunity to improve and the chance to overcome the demotivation helped them later when they ran into difficult obstacles in BCT/OSUT (i.e., morale issues and training events). Four of the five graduates said I-PREP prepared them for the physical demands of BCT/OSUT. Three said they learned to stay motivated and focus on meeting training standards. The physical techniques taught in I-PREP helped graduates with running and they went on to teach running and stretching techniques to other trainees while they were in BCT/OSUT. Three graduates said the deliberate breathing techniques and resiliency training helped them calm down during stressful training or running events. Graduates were still using the resiliency and deliberate breathing techniques today. Only one of the five still uses the nutrition information he learned in I-PREP by selecting specific foods to eat and avoiding foods like sweets and sodas; he also limits intake of energy drinks to days when he has 24-hour duty.

3.1.4. How did Soldiers who participated in I-PREP impact unit medical readiness?

The evaluation team looked at separations related to medical and physical issues to determine if there were fewer among the I-PREP group compared to the control group. Separations related to medical and physical issues included; conditions–not a disability (CON), unsatisfactory performance (UP), weight control failure (WCF), and physical standards (PS). Figure 9 provides an overview of these separations for the control and I-PREP (IP) groups for each study year (total number of separations for medical and physical issues are included in the far-left columns). The I-PREP group had the lowest attrition for all separations except meeting physical standards. By the final study year (2018), I-PREP had no separations related to medical or physical standards. There are statistically significant differences for the I-PREP group for all medical/physical separations except for PS–all significant differences are $p < .001$. By the final study year, the I-PREP group had no attrition related to medical or physical issues. Hence, units with I-PREP participants have fewer manning deficiencies related to medical and physical separations.

	n		CON		UP		WCF		PS	
	CTL	***IP***	***CTL***	***IP***	***CTL***	***IP***	***CTL***	***IP***	***CTL***	***IP***
2016	100	49	6.0%	4.1%	8.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	6.0%	30.6%
2017	73	60	15.0%	6.7%	4.0%	3.3%	1.0%	0.0%	10.0%	31.7%
2018	64	26	3.0%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.0%	0.0%
Total	237	135	8.0%	4.4%	7.0%	2.2%	1.0%	0.7%	8.0%	25.2%

Figure 9. Percentage of Participants Separated for Medical and Physical Issues[10]

3.1.5. What was the first-term attrition rate of Soldiers who participated in I-PREP compared to Soldiers who did not participate in I-PREP?

The I-PREP group had less first term attrition compared to the control group; 20% of I-PREP participants did not complete their first enlistment compared to 54% of the control group[11].

There was a difference in number of days served between the I-PREP and control groups. Evaluators calculated the number of days of service for participants by subtracting the date of separation (DOS) from the base active start date (BASD) or, if Soldiers had not yet been separated), used February 15, 2020 in place of DOS[12]. Using the alternate date of February 15, 2020 allowed evaluators to determine how many days participants had served of their enlistment if they were still active in the Army. Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics (i.e., mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation) for the number of days participants served in the Army. I-PREP participants stayed in the Army

[10] Percentages will not equal 100% because the percentage is based on the number of separations under that code divided by the total number of separations in the group (I-PREP = 135, Control = 237).
[11] The percentage of enlistment completion can be found in Figure 12. Levene's Test for equality of variances[11] was used to determine the statistical difference between the study groups (i.e., I-PREP and CH-DEV) and the control groups.
[12] The date of February 15, 2020 was used because the evaluation team requested the data from HRC at this time. Hence, any data provided by HRC would have been up-to-date as of this date.

longer and had less variance in number of days served compared to the control group. This difference was statistically significant ($p < .001$).

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics for Number of Days Served by Group (I-PREP)

	Control (N = 960)	I-PREP (N = 534)
Mean	857 days	1087 days
Minimum	2	16
Maximum	1656	2230
SD	425.5	351.9

Figure 10 depicts attrition at different time intervals (i.e., first six months, six months to a year, and before Soldiers reached their ETS date. Attrition calculations were based on separations divided by total number of separated Soldiers for all time intervals. There were more separations for the control group compared to the I-PREP group and the period of highest attrition was after the first year of enlistment. The difference in percentages was significant ($p < .001$, $\boldsymbol{F} = 52.567$).

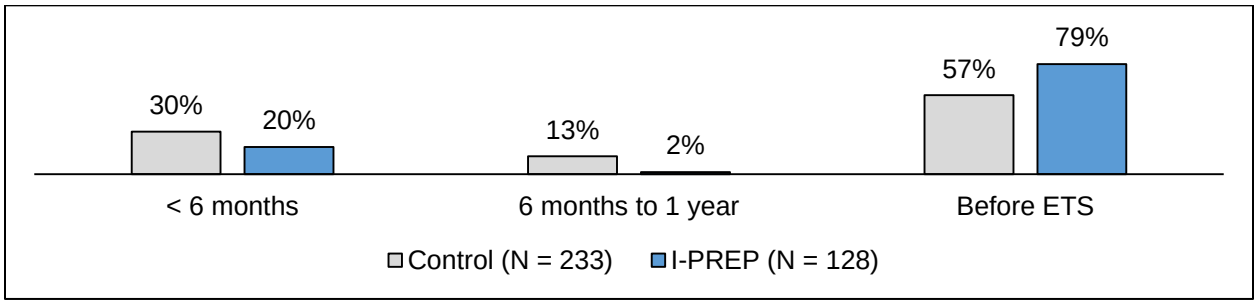

Figure 10. I-PREP Attrition at Time Intervals by Group

Figure 11 shows the percentage of Soldiers who completed their first term attrition for the I-PREP and control groups – reported by enlistment length. I-PREP Soldiers with a four-year enlistment contract had the highest likelihood of completing their first-term. The difference between groups is statistically significant ($p < .001$) for all enlistment contract lengths.

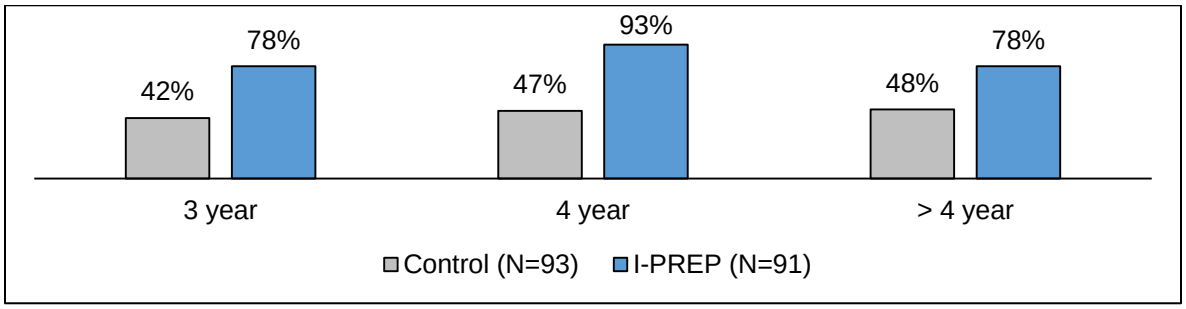

Figure 11. I-PREP First-term Enlistment Completion by Enlistment Length

The 2016 group was included in calculations for first enlistment completion because that study year had the highest number of Soldiers reach their first-term ETS date (93 of 295 control and 91 of 252 I-PREP). Soldiers who had an ETS date of February 15, 2020[13] or earlier were included in the analysis. Figure 12 illustrates the aggregate percentage of Soldiers who completed their first enlistment. The I-PREP group had a significantly higher percentage of enlistment completion compared to the control and this difference was statistically significant ($p < .001$). I-PREP Soldiers were 4.5 times more likely to complete their first enlistment compared to the control[14].

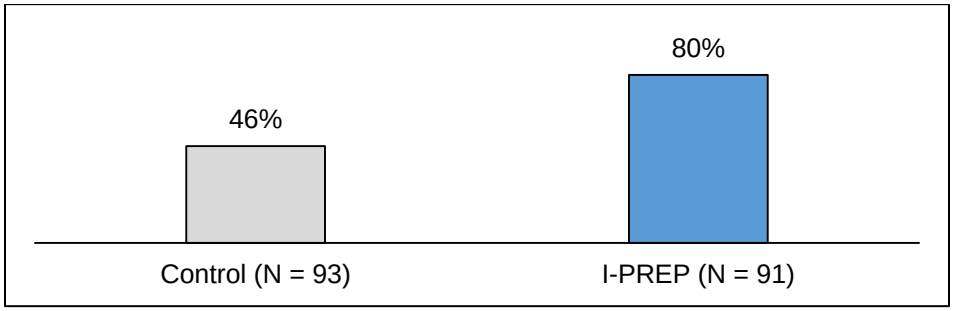

Figure 12. I-PREP Percentage of Soldiers Who Completed First Enlistment

Using the dollar amounts from the beginning of this report as an approximate cost to get recruits to IET (~$22,000) and through IET (~$50,000), the evaluation team calculated the cost to the Army in dollars for the attrition percentages reported in Figure 12.

The calculations below show the cost of IET and Post-IET attrition between the I-PREP and control groups based on the estimated costs reported in the introduction of this report (i.e., $22,000 for IET attrition and $72,000 Post-IET attrition)[15]. The I-PREP group from this study saved the Army $3.272 million dollars.

Control Group (IET Attrition Cost)	vs.	I-PREP Group (IET Attrition Cost)	**Difference of**
70 x $22K = $1.54 Million		26 x $22K = $572K	$968K
Control Group (Post-IET Attrition Cost)	vs.	I-PREP Group (Post-IET Attrition Cost)	
50 x 72K = $3.6 Million		18 x $72K = $1.296 Million	$2.304 Million

[13] The date of February 15, 2020 was used because the evaluation team requested the data from HRC at this time. Hence, any data provided by HRC would have been up-to-date as of this date.
[14] odds ratio (***OR***) = 4.596. Attrition rate is the inverse of the completion rate (Control = 54%; I-PREP = 20%)
[15] These approximate costs are calculated with a lower value than the actual cost because if a trainee attrits during IET the money spent on their training to that point is not included in the cost. The estimate of $22,000 is only an estimate of getting a recruit into IET.

3.2. Character Development (CH-DEV)

3.2.1. Demographics

A total of 960 control group participants and 1,227 CH-DEV participants were included in this final study year analysis. Table 6 depicts the enlistment length by years and numbers of separations for the CH-DEV and control groups[16]. Enlistment term percentages do not add up to 100% for the groups because a portion of graduates accepted officer commissions and thus had no ETS date for evaluators to determine enlistment length.

Table 6
CH-DEV and Control Group Demographics

	2016		2017		2018		Total	
	Control (N = 295)	CH-DEV (N = 291)	Control (N = 297)	CH-DEV (N = 337)	Control (N = 368)	CH-DEV (N = 599)	Control (N = 960)	CH-DEV (N = 1227)
Enlistment Term								
≤ 2 years	3	2	2	2	0	9	5	13
3 years	56	24	50	46	80	11	186	81
4 years	54	80	96	131	179	126	329	337
≥ 4 years	180	167	147	135	87	382	414	684
Separations								
Uncharacterized	25	18	17	27	33	7	75	52
IET	24	14	16	25	30	7	70	46
Legal	27	20	18	25	13	5	58	50

3.2.2. How did the Character Development program impact Soldiers behaviors/attitudes?

Twenty-two graduates answered questions related to the indicators of goal-setting, self-improvement, commitment, compliance, loyalty, integrity, and their sense of belonging. Figure 13 shows the average responses for each indicator. The red line indicates the target measure of 4.0 of 5.0.

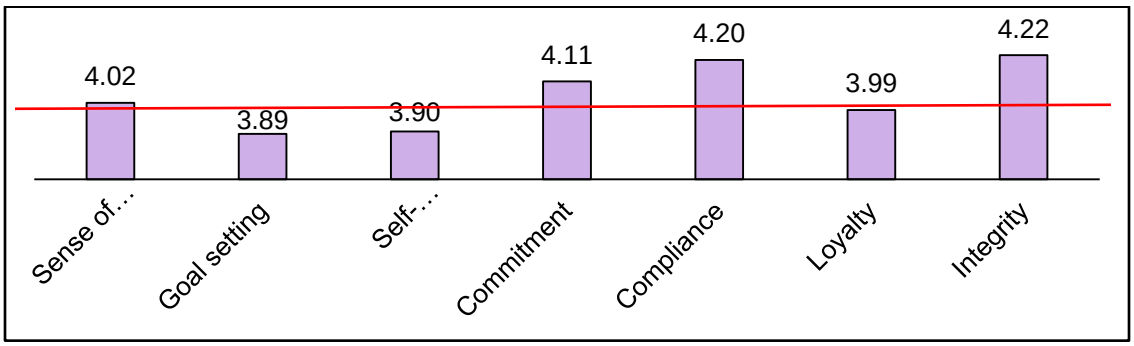

Figure 13. Response Averages for the CH-DEV Indicators

[16] Total number of enlistment lengths do not add up to the N of 960 because some ETS dates were missing for Soldiers who accepted officer or warrant commissions.

Eleven graduates answered survey questions related to their behaviors, attitudes, and experiences at their FUAs. Seven of the graduates said they felt supported by the peers and eight felt supported by their leaders. Graduate said they were supported because their units provided resources and leaders provided guidance to help graduates accomplish their goals. Graduates most frequently said the Army Values provided a guideline or moral code and helped them spend time thinking about decisions before acting.

Graduates reflected on a time when they were confronted with a situation that contradicted an Army Value and how they reacted. Of 19 who answered, three did not adhere to the Army Values either by acting contradictory to the Values or by not speaking up against the behavior[17] (e.g., drinking and driving, or reporting leaders behaving inappropriately during field exercises). Eight provided specific examples of how they adhered to the Army Values (i.e., not drinking and driving, not lying for a peer, and not providing other Soldiers with alcohol). Three graduates said they were able to help their peers make better decisions.

Of 22 graduates, seven said other Soldier's values have no effect on them. Eight said positive behavior and adherence to values motivates and encourages them to behave similarly. Two graduates said that when Soldier's do adhere to the Army Values or behave badly, it lessens their own commitment to the Army. One graduate summarized his feelings by stating, "*Army Values are much better enforced and reinforced when you have examples around you*."

Thirteen of the 20 graduates already plan on reenlisting in the Army, four want to get out when they are done with their current enlistment, and three are unsure of what they want to do at the end of their enlistment (two graduates did not answer the question). Of the graduates who were unsure, they wanted more time to make a decision about their Army career before committing to reenlist.

The evaluation team examined separations related to misconduct issues after Soldiers completed IET. Separations related to misconduct issues included; pattern of misconduct (PM), misconduct–serious offense (SO), misconduct–drug abuse (DA), and alcohol or drug rehabilitation failures (RF). Figure 14 provides an overview of these separations for the control and CH-DEV (denoted as CD in the figure to save space) groups for each study year (total number of separations for misconduct issues are included in the far-left columns)[18]. There were similar percentages of attrition for both groups for all separation types. There are no statistically significant differences between the CH-DEV and control groups for separations related to misconduct. Hence, the impact of Character

[17] Soldier answers were vague and general and did not state specific events or names in accordance with the guidance evaluators gave when trainees consented to participate in the study.

[18] The figure excludes separation categories with very low n's. Additional misconduct separations included; Court Martial (n = 2, one in each group), in lieu of trial by Court Martial (n = 1 in CH-DEV group), civil conviction (n = 2, one in each group), minor infraction misconduct (n = 1 in control group), and AWOL (n = 1 in control group).

Development during IET was minimal on reducing behaviors that lead to misconduct separations.

	N		PM		SO		DA		RF	
	CD	***CTL***	***CD***	***CTL***	***CD***	***CTL***	***CD***	***CTL***	***CD***	***CTL***
2016	72	100	3%	4%	8%	6%	11%	13%	1%	3%
2017	86	73	3%	8%	7%	5%	13%	8%	6%	1%
2018	27	64	11%	3%	0%	3%	7%	9%	0%	2%
Total	185	237	4%	5%	6%	5%	11%	11%	3%	2%

Figure 14. Percentage of Participants Separated for Misconduct Issues[19]

3.2.3. What was the first-term attrition rate of Soldiers who participated in these programs compared to Soldiers who did not participate in the programs?

The CH-DEV group had less first term attrition compared to the control group; 41% of CH-DEV participants did not complete their first enlistment compared to 54% of the control group[20]. The difference in enlistment completion is statistically significant ($p < .05$).

There was a difference in number of days served between the CH-DEV and control groups. Evaluators calculated the number of days of service for participants by subtracting the date of separation (DOS) from the base active start date (BASD) or, if Soldiers had not yet been separated), used February 15, 2020 in place of DOS[21]. Using the alternate date of February 15, 2020 allowed evaluators to determine how many days participants had served of their enlistment if they were still active in the Army. Table 7 shows the descriptive statistics (i.e., mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation) for the number of days participants served in the Army. Control participants stayed in the Army longer and had less variance in number of days served compared to the CH-DEV group. This difference was statistically significant ($p < .001$).

Table 7
Descriptive Statistics for Number of Days Served by Group (CH-DEV)

	Control (N = 960)	CH-DEV (N = 1227)
Mean	857 days	665 days
Minimum	2	9
Maximum	1656	1656
SD	425.5	463.86

[19] Percentages will not equal 100% because the percentage is based on the number of separations under that code divided by the total number of separations in the group (CH-DEV = 185, Control = 237).
[20] The percentage of enlistment completion can be found in Figure 17. Levene's Test for equality of variances[20] was used to determine the statistical difference between the study groups (i.e., I-PREP and CH-DEV) and the control groups.
[21] The date of February 15, 2020 was used because the evaluation team requested the data from HRC at this time. Hence, any data provided by HRC would have been up-to-date as of this date.

Figure 15 depicts attrition at different time intervals (i.e., first six months, six months to a year, and before Soldiers reached their ETS date. Attrition calculations were based on separations divided by total number of separated Soldiers for all time intervals. There were more separations for the control group compared to the CH-DEV group and the period of highest attrition was after the first year of enlistment. The difference in percentages was significant ($p < .05$, $\boldsymbol{F} = 5.598$).

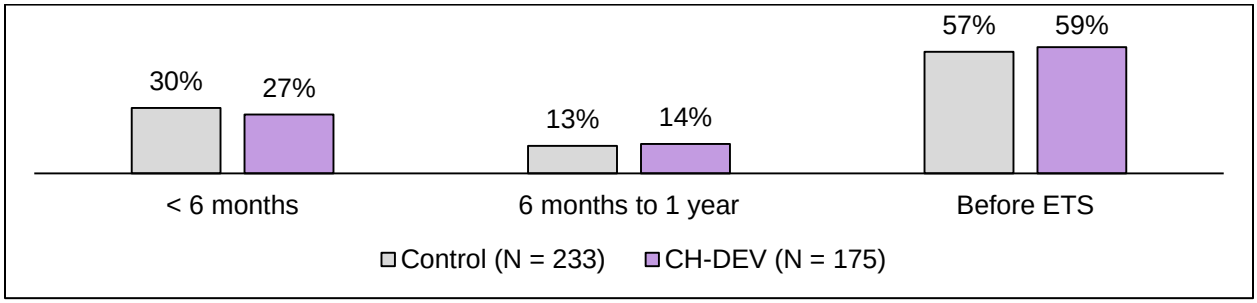

Figure 15. CH-DEV Attrition at Time Intervals by Group

Figure 16 shows the percentage of Soldiers who completed their first term attrition for the CH-DEV and control groups – reported by enlistment length. Soldiers with a four-year enlistment length had the highest likelihood of completing their first term compared to the control group[22]. Only the Soldiers with a four-year enlistment contract who completed their first-term were significantly higher than the control ($p < .001$)

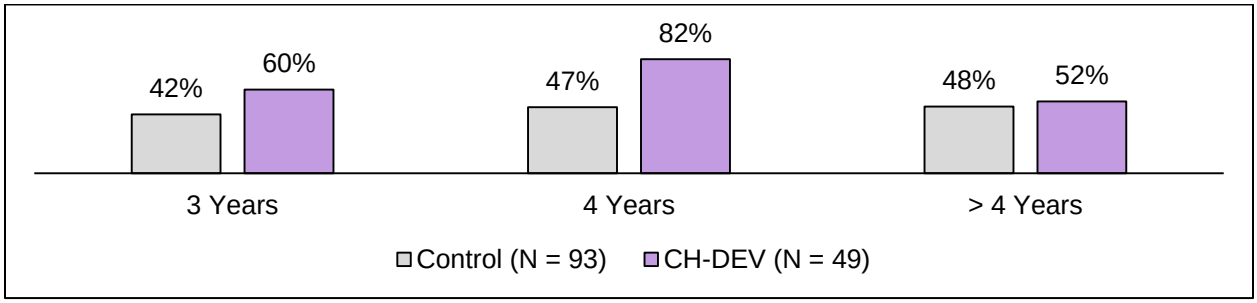

Figure 16. CH-DEV First-term Enlistment Completion by Enlistment Length

The 2016 group was included in calculations for first enlistment completion because that study year had the highest number of Soldiers reach their first-term ETS date (93 of 295 control and 49 of 291 CH-DEV). Soldiers who had an ETS date of February 15, 2020[23] or earlier were included in the analysis. Figure 17 illustrates the aggregate percentage of Soldiers who completed their first enlistment. The CH-DEV group had a significantly higher percentage of enlistment completion compared to the control and this difference was statistically significant ($p < .05$), and were twice as likely to complete their first enlistment.

[22] ***OR*** = 1.813.

[23] The date of February 15, 2020 was used because the evaluation team requested the data from HRC at this time. Hence, any data provided by HRC would have been up-to-date as of this date.

Figure 17. CH-DEV Percentage of Soldiers Who Completed First Enlistment

Using the dollar amounts from the beginning of this report as an approximate cost to get recruits to IET (~$22,000) and through IET (~$50,000), the evaluation team calculated the cost to the Army in dollars for the attrition percentages reported in Figure 12.

The calculations below show the cost of IET and Post-IET attrition between the CH-DEV and control groups based on the estimated costs reported in the introduction of this report (i.e., $22,000 for IET attrition and $72,000 Post-IET attrition)[24]. The CH-DEV group from this study saved the Army $2.04 million dollars.

Control Group (IET Attrition Cost)	vs.	CH-DEV Group (IET Attrition Cost)	**Difference of**
70 x $22K = $1.54 Million		46 x $22K = $1.012 Million	$528K
Control Group (Post-IET Attrition Cost)	vs.	CH-DEV Group (Post-IET Attrition Cost)	
50 x 72K = $3.6 Million		29 x $72K = $2.088 Million	$1.512 Million

3.3. What factors contributed to first-term enlistment completion?

For this study, exposure to I-PREP during IET had a positive correlation with first-term enlistment completion ($p < .001$) for the 2016 study cohort. Contextual data from graduates at their FUAs revealed that I-PREP participants used the fitness and recovery techniques after they left I-PREP, indicating the program helped them stay healthy and uninjured. Soldiers also said the program helped their mental resiliency, such as overcoming obstacles during IET and at their FUA.

From the contextual data provided by FTU leadership, motivation and mental resilience had a significant impact on trainees' perceptions. Graduate focus group data confirmed these observations and early exposure to defeat and learning to overcome obstacles

[24] These approximate costs are calculated with a lower value than the actual cost because if a trainee attrits during IET the money spent on their training to that point is not included in the cost. The estimate of $22,000 is only an estimate of getting a recruit into IET.

helped trainees during IET to overcome challenges they faced, which then extended to the FUAs.

Evaluators reviewed past studies on first-term attrition to identify common factors in attrition. The studies came from multiple authors studying different services and spanned a decade. Additional factors that contributed to attrition before first-terms are complete included education, gender, and weight at enlistment.

Wenger & Hodari (2004) identified that all recruits who had considered leaving high school had a higher rate of attrition than their peers who never considered leaving high school, even if those that considered leaving stayed and graduated high school. Buddin (2005) identified a difference in attrition rates between Soldiers who had a GED versus a high school diploma; GED recipients were more likely to attrit early.

Wenger & Hodari (2004) found a connection between married females and higher attrition rates, compared to males. Single and married males attrited at similar rates. Buddin (2005) also found a connection between gender and attrition, but their view was broader in the terms of comparing aggregate attrition by gender with females being more likely to attrit. However, he also determined that married females who did complete their first-term were more likely to re-enlist.

Martin (1995) found a significant correlation between recruits who were medically overweight at enlistment and the likelihood of attrition. Overweight recruits attrited at a higher rate than their peers. Buddin (2005) confirmed this connection and found that recruits who enter the Army in poor physical shape are unlikely to complete IET. Hence, attitudes about fitness may stay with recruits into the IET process and hinder their ability to keep up with the physical demands.

3.4. How can evaluators use existing capabilities to better assess the long-term effectiveness of HD programs?

There are three variables that can significantly impact a research or evaluation study. First is the time that is required, including getting IRB approval and signing DUAs between organizations. Second, there are associated costs with printing, travel, or software needed to collect and analyze data. Lastly, there is the matter of data instruments and the subject matter expertise (SME) needed if researchers and evaluators are designing and using original data collection instruments (i.e., focus groups, surveys, tests, etc.). To alleviate the time, cost, and need for SMEs, researchers and evaluators can use existing cloud-based databases that are kept up to date by government agencies and contain data on any number of variables (Vie, Scheier, Lester, Ho, and Labarthe, 2015).

The evaluation team examined the question of what databases are used to track Soldier performance during the first study year. From that analysis, evaluators found the following data sources:

- IPERMS (Interactive Personnel Electronic Records Management System)

- EDAS (Enlisted Distribution & Assignment System)
- PERNET (Personnel Network)
- MEDPROS (Medical Protection System)
- AMEDD (Army Medical Department)
- AHLTA (Armed Forces Health Longitudinal Technology Application)
- JAGCNET (Judge Advocate General Corps Network)
- PDE (Person-Event Data Environment – Users have access to 85 databases)
- Military Justice Online
- DTMS (Digital Training Management System)

During the first study year, the team also discovered a database managed by the Army Analytics Group (AAG) called the Person-Event Data Environment, or PDE. For this final study year, the team conducted a literature review of 13 articles between the years 2011 and 2019. The most used source for data collection was the PDE. Aside from highly controlled data, such as JAGCNET, most databases which receive data from Army units is connected to the PDE or can be collected with AAG acting as an intermediary to coordinate Data Usage Agreements (DUAs) (Interview with Brent Ivester on November 9, 2018).

The purpose of the PDE is to, "acquire, integrate, and securely store data for Army approved research projects…and…provide a secure virtual workspace where approved researchers can access to 'sensitive' although unclassified Army military service, performance, manpower, and health data" (Vie et. al 2015, p. 2). The PDE contains data related to entrance testing (e.g., ASVAB), health assessments for pre- and post-deployments, medical treatment records, annual physical information, psychological assessments, job performance data, and military service qualification tests (Vie et. al, 2015, p.1).

Since the PDE has become more accessible to researchers and evaluators, it has become a more frequent source of data over the last five years. The DMDC began contributing to the database in recent years. The DMDC is located under the Defense Human Resource Activity, DHRA, and collects data related to training, finances such as retirement information, personnel, and other data as needed for the DoD (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017). The five main areas that the DMDC covers are as followed, "decision support; entitlements, benefits, and readiness reporting; personnel identification, validation, and authentication; enterprise integration; and survey management (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017).

The PDE is currently the most widely used database and continues to grow in the number of agencies providing data. They have staff to help researchers and evaluators adhere to the research protocols put forth in Institutional Review Board (IRB) study approvals, make connections with agencies that have not yet contributed data, and can provide data analysis if necessary.

4.0 Discussion

An unanticipated outcome of I-PREP became the increase in mental resilience and motivation among participants in IET and later in their Army career at their FUA. All FTU leadership noticed that trainees initially felt defeated, and graduates later confirmed their disappointment and frustration with the delay in going on to training. However, I-PREP provided some one-on-one mentorship between drill sergeants and I-PREP participants and led to trainees building self-confidence and increasing their ability to overcome later setbacks and obstacles when encountered in training. I-PREP also led to higher degrees of motivation at the FUAs, as reported by graduates. The only indicator to reach the target measure for I-PREP was motivation.

The graduates who perceived I-PREP positively (i.e., as an opportunity to improve or to overcome obstacles) reported more benefits and used the skills taught more often. The graduates who perceived I-PREP negatively, did not report any benefits and did not use the skills taught. In the case of our study, the trainees who developed a negative attitude at the start of I-PREP soon adopted behaviors (i.e., not using skills taught) and subsequently forgot or could not remember what benefits they derived from I-PREP when evaluators followed up with them. A majority of the graduates (80%) attributed their success in meeting the physical demands of BCT/OSUT to their participation in I-PREP, hence the program's original goal of helping trainees succeed in IET was successful from this viewpoint.

For the first-two years of the study, the I-PREP group had a large percentage of separations for failing to meet physical standards (25.2%). Although the group had fewer separations for unsatisfactory performance (2.2%), conditions (not a disability; 4.4%), and very few weight control failures (.7%). During the final study year, the 2018 cohort had zero separations for physical standards. The decline in percentage is likely because of a low number of participants in the final year, or the length of time 2018 Soldiers had been in the Army.

The graduates of the 1-46th BN at Fort Benning did not appear to be impacted by the CH-DEV program. The trainees themselves were not exposed to the training itself, but their drill sergeants were. From the results of this study, evaluators did find CH-DEV graduates had high levels of agreement with questions related to integrity, compliance, and commitment. However, the CH-DEV group had similar percentages of misconduct separations indicating the program itself does little to curb attrition related to misconduct. Drill sergeants reported no differences in trainee behavior during IET. Exposure to the program after IET may ultimately lead to a reduction in attrition for misconduct.

If Soldiers are exposed to HD programs early, especially ones the increase their mental resilience and motivation, there can be great benefit to the Army. The programs that focus on mental resilience translate to better outcomes at FUAs and overall better chances of completing first enlistment terms. Additionally, the increase in first enlistment completion for I-PREP (which helped build mental resilience) saved the Army 3.2 million dollars, equivalent to training an additional 45 trainees. There was not as big a difference

in the CH-DEV group, but there was a savings of a little more than 2 million dollars, equivalent to training an additional 28 trainees.

The team discovered multiple factors that are associated with first-term attrition. A key factor though, which directly relates to this study is physical shape before IET. I-PREP was developed to decrease MSIs, although a key discriminator in identifying trainees for the program was extreme weight loss in the last year (Program Evaluation Office, 2019). Martin (1995) posited that the attrition was probably less likely a factor of simply being overweight, but more likely related to a recruits' attitude about health and fitness. If a recruit enlists and never adopts physical fitness as an important factor in their life, they are not likely to adapt to the physical expectations without reinforcement early in the process. I-PREP provided such reinforcement of not only physical techniques for running and stretches, but instilled a greater mental toughness to overcome challenges for the participants. Eventually translating to higher rates of first-term enlistment completion.

The PDE has become a well known and used source in recent years. More academic institutions, including military institutions like the Post-Naval Graduate School in Monterey, CA, are turning to the PDE for information. As more researchers and evaluators use the PDE, more agencies are providing data to it. A caveat mentioned in the study's first year report was that data from the PDE is only as reliable as the data entry within units. Hence, a quality control measure at the lower unit levels (i.e., battalion or company level) could translate into more complete and accurate data within PDE.

5.0 Constraints and Limitations

During the second study year, the I-PREP program was permanently suspended at the MCoE. Since the program was cancelled, evaluators were unable to keep consenting I-PREP trainees. This impacted the sample size for original data collection and historical data for the FY18 cohort. Since 54 trainees consented and provided data, evaluators were able to run parametric analysis, although the confidence interval (CI) remained at 95%, the margin of error was 15% rather than the intended 10%. For attrition calculations, the CI was 90% with a 15% margin of error based on the population size in this study and total number of Soldiers who reached their ETS date. Thus, the results are generalizable to the entire population, but with more room for estimation error.

Evaluators sent electronic surveys to all participants who consented to participate for CH-DEV, but only 22 responded to the surveys. The low response rate limited the original data, but evaluators were still able to use the survey data to lend context to the historical findings.

The G8 Army Study Program approved the first-three years of this study. However, the program was removed from the G8 and given to RAND Arroyo to approve and mange future projects. Since the management and process for the study program changed, there will not be five years of study data for this project. The team collected all data possible for the three study years, including all historical data for consented participants.

The survey data provided by graduates introduced two constraints. First, graduate were asked to recall periods of time that were six months to a year before they completed the survey–depending on length of BCT/AIT or OSUT and length of time at FUA. Evaluators tried to mitigate the gap in time by having a discussion with graduates after re-consenting to remind them of the training they received to help them with recall, but graduates may not have remembered all components of their training. The second constraint was that survey data itself is bias in nature because it is self-reported by individuals. There was no way to mitigate the bias in the survey, but evaluators used data from other sources such as speaking with multiple participants, collecting historical records, and speaking with program leaders to complement the self-reported data.

6.0 Recommendations/Future Research

Evaluate additional resiliency programs, such as Ready and Resilient (R2), to capture best practices and incorporate those into IET. At the time of this report, the I-PREP program was permanently suspended. However, given the findings in this study, the evaluation team would have recommended expanding the program. However, there are still resiliency programs in place at Fort Benning, such as Ready and Resilient (R2, formerly the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness program). Evaluation of programs such as this, which are designed to build mental resiliency for Soldiers, are necessary if it can be ascertained these programs correlate with higher rates of enlistment completion.

As the drill sergeants recommended, the evaluators recommend implementing Character Development training in operational units and conducting an evaluation to determine if exposure to the training in the operational force contributes to a reduction in first-term misconduct attrition. The findings did not indicate a change in trainees' attitudes and behaviors in OSUT and there was still an 24% attrition rate for misconduct separations.

The evaluation team recommends putting additional resources into research regarding reasons for attrition and developing training interventions. During this three-year study, the team found numerous articles and studies that examined causes of attrition, but could find no evidence of where that research was put into practical use. For example, changing recruiting tactics to target older recruits or developing IET programs to help trainees who are overweight or in poor physical shape change their attitudes about fitness. Studies that can add new information to this discussion and factors that keep emerging with correlations to attrition are critical, but the information is useless if the key stakeholders are not using that information to implement change where it matters.

Lastly, the team recommends leveraging data in the PDE for future research and evaluation into HD programs. This database provides enough infrastructure support to assist researchers and evaluators with data collection and analysis, and to assist with DUAs with external agencies. The Army would benefit from additional research into the PDE process and developing user guide to assist researchers and evaluators with the nuances of the system. The Army should also encourage agencies to work with AAG and provide data to the system. The increased data sharing can present more robust findings and solutions for future issues.

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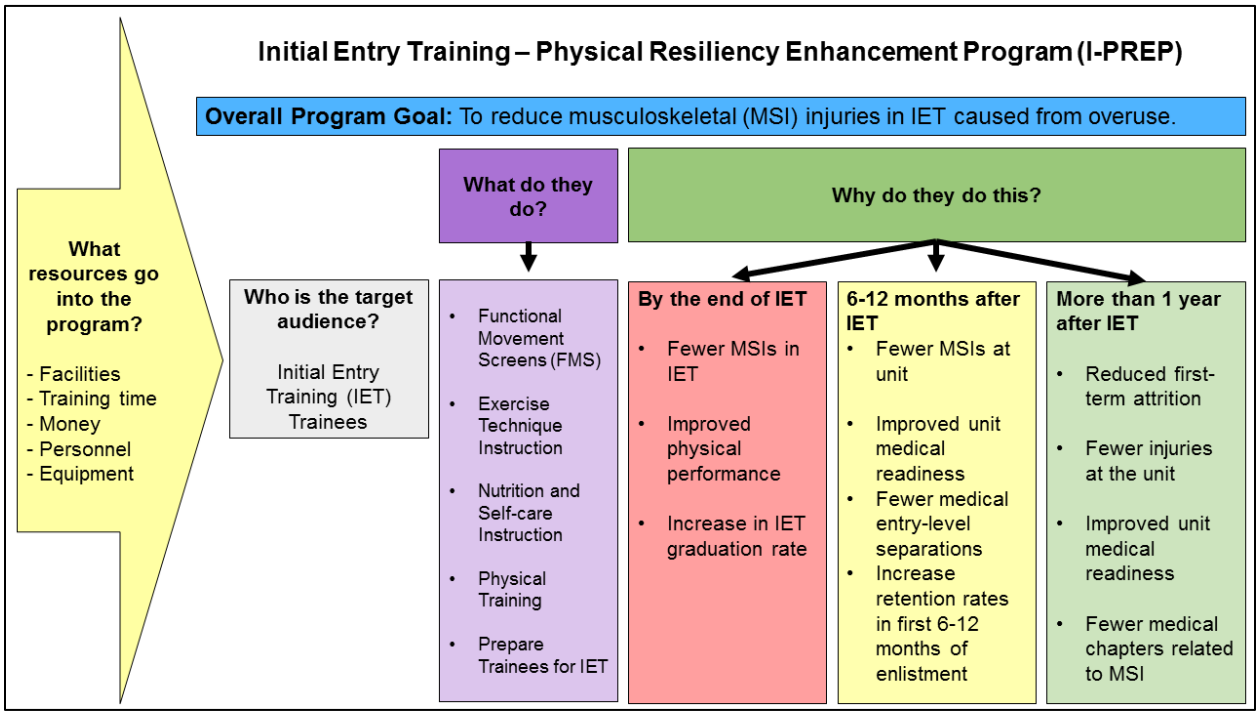
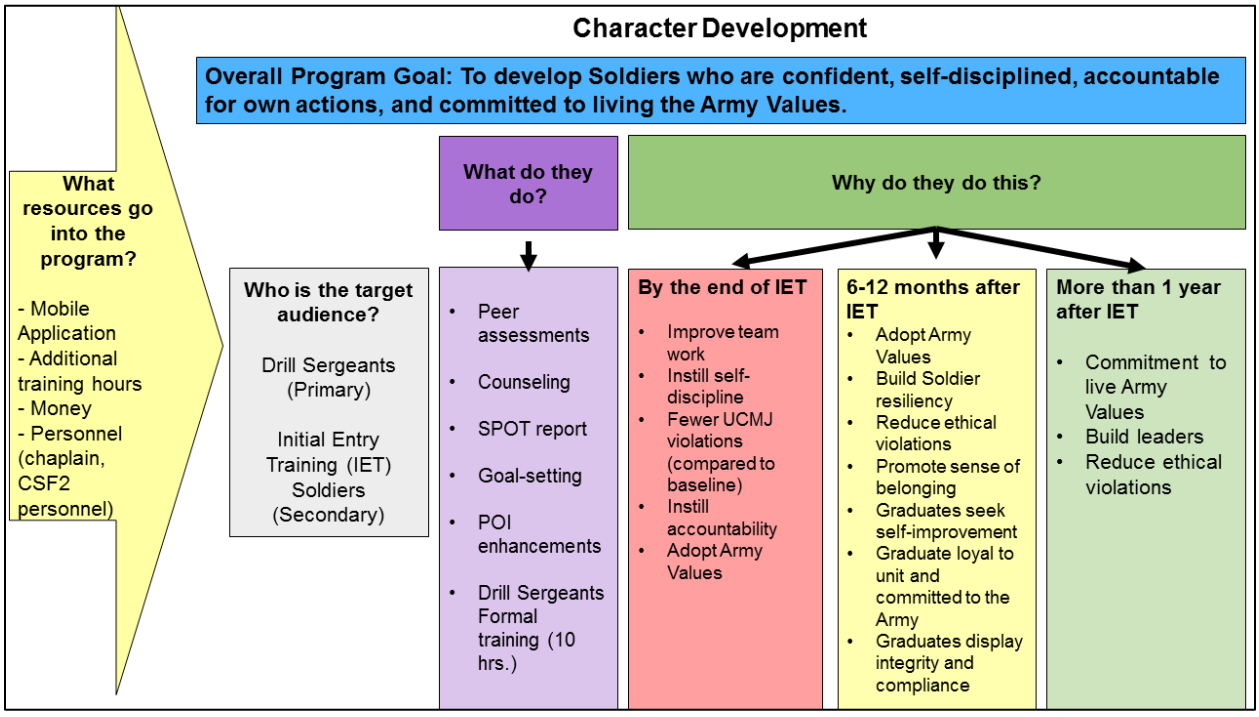
Appendix A – Program Logic Models





Appendix B – I-PREP Memorandum

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES ARMY MANEUVER CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
1 KARKER STREET
FORT BENNING GEORGIA 31905-5000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Policy Memorandum 05-19
ATZK-BAZ-B 13 March 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Maneuver Center of Excellence Initial Entry Training Physical Resilience Enhancement Program

1. PURPOSE: To provide information and guidance on the Initial Entry Training Physical Resilience Enhancement Program (I-PREP).

2. POLICY: Effective the date of this policy memorandum, the MCoE I-PREP is suspended permanently. Based on the effectiveness of the Armor and Infantry One Station Unit Training – Transformation (OSUT-T) Programs of Instruction (Program of Instruction (POI), the stand-alone I-PREP initiative is no longer required. The resources formally applied to I-PREP will be realigned in direct support to OSUT-T POIs.

3. PROPONENT: 194th Armored Brigade S3, Major Ryan Nugent, at 706-626-5942.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

DOUGLAS G. VINCENT
COL, IN
Chief of Staff

DISTRIBUTION:
ADMIN L, MCoE BDE CDR, MCoE BN CDR, MCoE CSM/SGM, and MCoE DCO/XO Lists

Appendix C – Grad I-PREP FUA Survey

The purpose of this survey is to determine your perception of I-PREP and what impact I-PREP had on your Initial Entry Training. Names are only used to connect responses between data collection instruments. All information will remain confidential and no identifying information will be shared in any published material. Your participation is voluntary and you can stop participating at any time.

Please answer the following demographic questions.

1. What age were you when you started basic combat training (BCT)? (*Check **one***)

__ 17-20 years old
__ 21-24 years old
__ 25-27 years old
__ 28 years or older

2. What rank were you when you started BCT? (*Check **one***)

__ E1
__ E2
__ E3
__ E4
__ Other (specify) _____

3. What was your highest level of education when you started BCT? (*Check **one***)

__ GED
__ High School
__ Some College
__ Associate's Degree
__ Bachelor's Degree
__ Master's Degree or highe

4. What was your marital status when you started BCT? (*Check **one***)

__ Single
__ Married
__ Divorced
__ Other (specify)
_____

5. Did you receive an enlistment bonus?

__No __Yes (list amount) $_____

6. What is your current rank? ___ PVT ___ PFC ___SPC

7. What is your gender? ___ Male ___ Female

8. What is your age? (*Check **one***)

__ 17-20 years old
__ 21-24 years old
__ 25-27 years old
__ 28 years or older

9. What is your MOS? _____

10. Do you have any dependents (spouse or children)?

__ No __ Yes (number of dependents) _____

11. Did you receive any Army Values training prior to Basic Combat Training?

___ No ___Yes

11a. If yes, where did you receive Army Values training? (*Check **all** that apply*)

___ Recruiter Office
___ MEPS
___ 30th AG Reception
___ I-PREP

12. How long is your initial term of enlistment?

___ 3 years
___ 4 years
___ 5 years
___ 6 years
Other: How long in years? _____

Instructions: *Using the response scale below, please circle your level of satisfaction with the portions of training mentioned in each statement. (Circle **one** answer per row)* 1 = Very Unsatisfied 2 = Unsatisfied 3 = Neutral 4 = Satisfied 5 = Very Satisfied NA = Not Applicable						
The overall program.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
What I learned about functional movement techniques.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
What I learned about nutrition.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
The physical resiliency coaching I received.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
The variety of physical fitness training sessions.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**

Instructions: *Using the response scale below, please circle your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. (Circle **one** answer per row)* 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree NA = Not Applicable						
I am excited to be a part of the Army community.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
I am inspired to meet the goals I set for myself.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
I am ready to meet leadership expectations.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
I am determined to give my best effort in my first duty assignment	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
I used I-PREP fitness techniques when I did physical fitness training during basic combat or one station unit training.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
I used the resiliency techniques taught in I-PREP during basic combat or one station unit training.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
Other than general aches and stiffness, I do not feel pain when I exercise.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
I-PREP helped me gain confidence in my physical ability.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
I use I-PREP fitness techniques when I conduct physical fitness training.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
The knowledge and skills I learned in I-PREP were relevant in basic training.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**
I have applied the knowledge and skills I learned in I-PREP to my own personal life.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**

Did you experience any of the following medical injuries during IET? (*Select **all** that apply)*

_____ Strain

_____ Sprain

_____ Shin splints

_____ Stress fractures

_____ Did not experience any of these injuries during IET training

How did you handle these injuries?

_____ Reported it to one of my Drill Sergeants

_____ Visited the Battalion athletic trainer

_____ Visited the medical clinic for treatment

_____ I dealt with the pain and did not report it

_____ Other (*please explain*):

_____

Caution: Please DO NOT disclose any Personal Identifying Information (PII) (for yourself or others) and any information contrary to good order and discipline and/or UCMJ infractions. Disclosing such information can result in disciplinary action.

Please describe how the injury occurred and what action you took to treat the injury.

How did you use what you learned in I-PREP in basic combat or one station unit training?

What I-PREP techniques helped you the most to meet the physical demands of basic combat/one station unit training?

How did the techniques you learned in I-PREP help you during basic combat or one station unit training?

How will you use the knowledge and skills from I-PREP at your first duty station?

What is the most important thing you learned during I-PREP?

Do you have any additional comments, suggestions, or recommendations regarding IPREP?

Thank you for completing this survey!

Appendix D – I-PREP Graduate Focus Group

Instructions: Prior to beginning, each Graduate must receive a verbal explanation of the Informed Consent and must sign a hard copy form of the Informed Consent. Next, assign a respondent identifier to each Graduate and instruct him or her to use this identifier before he/she answers questions (this will keep respondents distinguished when you transcribe this session). Notify Graduates that you will be recording the session on audio so we do not miss any comments.

START AUDIO RECORDING

State moderator's name, date, time, evaluation name, and focus group population for transcription purposes

Hello, my name is _____ and I work with the Directorate of Training and Doctrine at the Maneuver Center of Excellence, Fort Benning, GA. Assisting me today is/are _____. The purpose of today's discussion is to discuss the I-PREP training you received before your initial entry training. Our role today will be to serve as moderators. We will ask questions as the discussion progresses. If you would like to follow-up on someone else's comment, please feel free to do so. Do not feel like you have to respond to me all the time. Feel free to have a conversation with one another about these questions.

Please DO NOT disclose any Personal Identifying Information (PII) (for yourself or others) and any information contrary to good order and discipline and/or UCMJ infractions at any time during this focus group. Disclosing such information can result in disciplinary action.

I am here to ask questions, listen, and make sure everyone has a chance to share. We will be taking notes during the discussion and are recording this session because we do not want to miss any comments. No names will be included on any data we collect today. Please use the respondent identifier I gave you earlier so we can keep your information confidential. You have all signed an Informed Consent and are aware that your participation in this data collection is voluntary and you can stop participating at any time. Does anyone have any questions before we begin?

If there are no questions, proceed to the focus group sessions below.

Trainee Focus Group

1. How do feel now that you are at your first duty station? *Follow-on: Do you feel you physically ready for the job? What about your overall confidence in your ability to do your job?*

2. What was your reaction when you were told you had to attend I-PREP?

3. How do you feel about successfully completing basic combat/one station unit training?

4. How did I-PREP contribute to your completing basic combat/one station unit training?

5. How did I-PREP prepare you for the physical demands of basic combat/one station unit training?

6. How did the physical movement techniques you learned in I-PREP help you during basic combat/one station unit training?

7. How did I-PREP contribute to your motivation to be physically fit?

8. How have you used the resiliency techniques taught in I-PREP?

9. How have you used what you learned from the diet and nutrition counseling?

10. How did the resiliency coaching help you?

11. What is your biggest take-away from I-PREP?

12. What additional activities or information should be included in I-PREP?

13. Do have any additional comments, recommendations, or suggestions about I-PREP?

Appendix E – Character Development Graduate FUA Survey

Subject ID: _____

The questions in this survey are about your basic demographics and Army Values training. Please answer each question to the best of your ability. Participant numbers are used to connect your responses between surveys. All information will remain confidential and no identifying information will be shared in any published material. Your participation is voluntary, and you can stop participating at any time.

Please answer the following demographic questions.

1. What age were you when you started basic combat training (BCT)? (*Check **one***)

__ 17-20 years old __ 25-27 years old

__ 21-24 years old __ 28 years or older

2. What rank were you when you started BCT? (*Check **one***)

__ E1 __ E3 __ Other (specify) _____

__ E2 __ E4

3. What was your highest level of education when you started BCT? (*Check **one***)

__ GED __ Some College __ Bachelor's Degree

__ High School __ Associate's Degree __ Master's Degree or higher

4. What was your marital status when you started BCT? (*Check **one***)

__ Single __ Divorced

__ Married __ Other (specify) _____

5. Did you receive an enlistment bonus?

__No __Yes (list amount) $_____

6. What is your current rank? ___ PVT ___ PFC ___SPC

7. What is your gender? ___ Male ___ Female

8. What is your age? (*Check **one***)

__ 17-20 years old __ 25-27 years old

__ 21-24 years old __ 28 years or older

9. What is your MOS? _____

10. Do you have any dependents (spouse or children)?

__ No __ Yes (number of dependents) _____

11. Did you receive any Army Values training prior to Basic Combat Training?

___ No ___Yes

11a. If yes, where did you receive Army Values training? (*Check **all** that apply*)

___ Recruiter Office ___ 30th AG Reception

___ MEPS ___ I-PREP

12. How long is your initial term of enlistment? *(Check **one**)*

___ 3 years ___ 4 years ___ 5 years ___ 6 years

___ Other: How long in years? _____

13. What unit were you first assigned to after Initial Entry Training?

_____

14. What is your current duty position? _____

1. Using the scale below, please circle how often you have done the following in the last 60 days. *(Circle **one** response per row)* 1 = I have never done this 2 = I have done this once or twice in the last 60 days 3 = I have done this once or twice a week in the last 60 days 4 = I have done this three to four times a week in the last 60 days 5 = I have done this every day in the last 60 days					
a. I did not comply with an Army Value(s) because they did not apply to me.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
b. I was not interested in Army Values/ethics training topic(s).	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
c. I resisted peer pressure encouraging me to act unethically.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

1. Using the scale below, please circle how often you have done the following in the last 60 days. *(Circle **one** response per row)* 1 = I have never done this 2 = I have done this once or twice in the last 60 days 3 = I have done this once or twice a week in the last 60 days 4 = I have done this three to four times a week in the last 60 days 5 = I have done this every day in the last 60 days					
d. I tried to live by the Soldiers' Creed.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
e. I spoke positively about the Army in front of others.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
f. I helped another trainee get squared away in training.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
g. I spoke negatively about the Army in front of others.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
h. I offered suggestions to improve how work is done.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
i. I manipulated the system for personal gain.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
j. I chose the *hard right* over the *easy wrong*.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
k. I avoided telling the truth.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
l. I was honest with leaders and peers.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
m. I did what I promised or committed to do.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
n. I used good moral judgment to make decisions.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
o. I helped another trainee perform a difficult task or lift a heavy object.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
p. I gave encouragement or expressed appreciation to another trainee.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
q. I defended another trainee who was being "put-down" or spoken ill of by other trainees.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
r. I shared snacks, food, or drink with a peer.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
s. I set a goal to meet.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
t. I stayed focused on a to-do list.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
u. I kept a journal on my progress to achieve a goal.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
v. I adjusted my expectation based on past performance.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
w. I set a goal to exceed the standard.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
x. I talked with a peer about how to do a task/work better.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
y. I sought advice on job performance from a leader in my unit.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

1. Using the scale below, please circle how often you have done the following in the last 60 days. *(Circle **one** response per row)* 1 = I have never done this 2 = I have done this once or twice in the last 60 days 3 = I have done this once or twice a week in the last 60 days 4 = I have done this three to four times a week in the last 60 days 5 = I have done this every day in the last 60 days					
z. I helped keep my squad morale up.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
aa. I was courteous to other Soldiers regardless of rank or title.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
ab. When other trainees were wrong, I stood up to them.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
ac. I took responsibility for my actions, good or bad.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
ad. I volunteered for a detail or other task(s).	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Caution: Please DO NOT disclose any Personal Identifying Information (PII) (for yourself or others) and any information contrary to good order and discipline and/or UCMJ infractions. Disclosing such information can result in disciplinary action.

10. Please describe what kind of support your receive from your peers when it comes to job performance and tasks. *For instance, do your peers encourage you when you are up for a promotion, do they give you resources to help you develop as a Soldier, do your peers speak negatively about your job performance or the unit, do your peers speak negatively about their own job performance?*

_____

_____

_____

11. Please describe what kind of support your receive from your peers when it comes to job performance and tasks. *For instance, do does your squad leader/first sergeant encourage you when you are up for a promotion, do they give you resources to help you develop as a Soldier, does your leadership speak negatively about your job performance or the unit?*

_____

_____

_____

12. How has your current unit demonstrated caring for your well-being? Please provide a detailed explanation for your answer.

_____

_____

_____

13. Based on your Army Values training experience, describe how living up to the Army Values influences your daily decision-making.

_____

_____

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13. Describe a time when you were confronted with a situation that went against an Army Value. How did you respond to that situation?

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14. How do other Soldiers' values affect your commitment to the Army?

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15. Where do you see yourself at the end of your first enlistment? Please provide a detailed explanation for your answer.

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16. Do you have any additional comments, suggestions, or recommendations about Army Values training?

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Thank you for completing this survey!