



Public Release Summer 2025 Propensity Update

Youth Poll Study Findings

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Spring 2025 Methodological Transition Overview

- The *Youth Poll* transitioned from a paper-only survey administration to a push-to-web survey administration with a paper fallback in its Spring 2025 fielding period.
 - Youth were mailed invitations to complete an online survey via a unique QR code or weblink with a unique PIN. A survey booklet was mailed with the final reminder to serve as a paper fallback.
- The decision to transition the *Youth Poll* to a new methodology was supported by numerous rigorous testing efforts that reinforced the benefits of a push-to-web transition to the study's health and provided best practices for its implementation. These include:
 - Reduced cost for survey administration,
 - Increased efficiency in data collection and management,
 - Higher response rates, and
 - Greater flexibility in survey design.
- Based on this methodological transition, significance testing was not conducted between the Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 estimates.
 - This approach aligns with the existing approach within the deck to not conduct significance testing between waves of different methodologies.
 - Additionally, data from Spring 2025 are not directly comparable to previous waves (due to novel online item formatting, higher refusals, and/or survey placement for select items). Future survey collection efforts have taken these factors into account to enhance wave-over-wave consistency.
 - Refusals from Spring 2025 to Summer 2025 generally decreased and returned to typical levels. Additional context on changes in refusals for specific metrics are reported within slide footnotes.



General Military Propensity

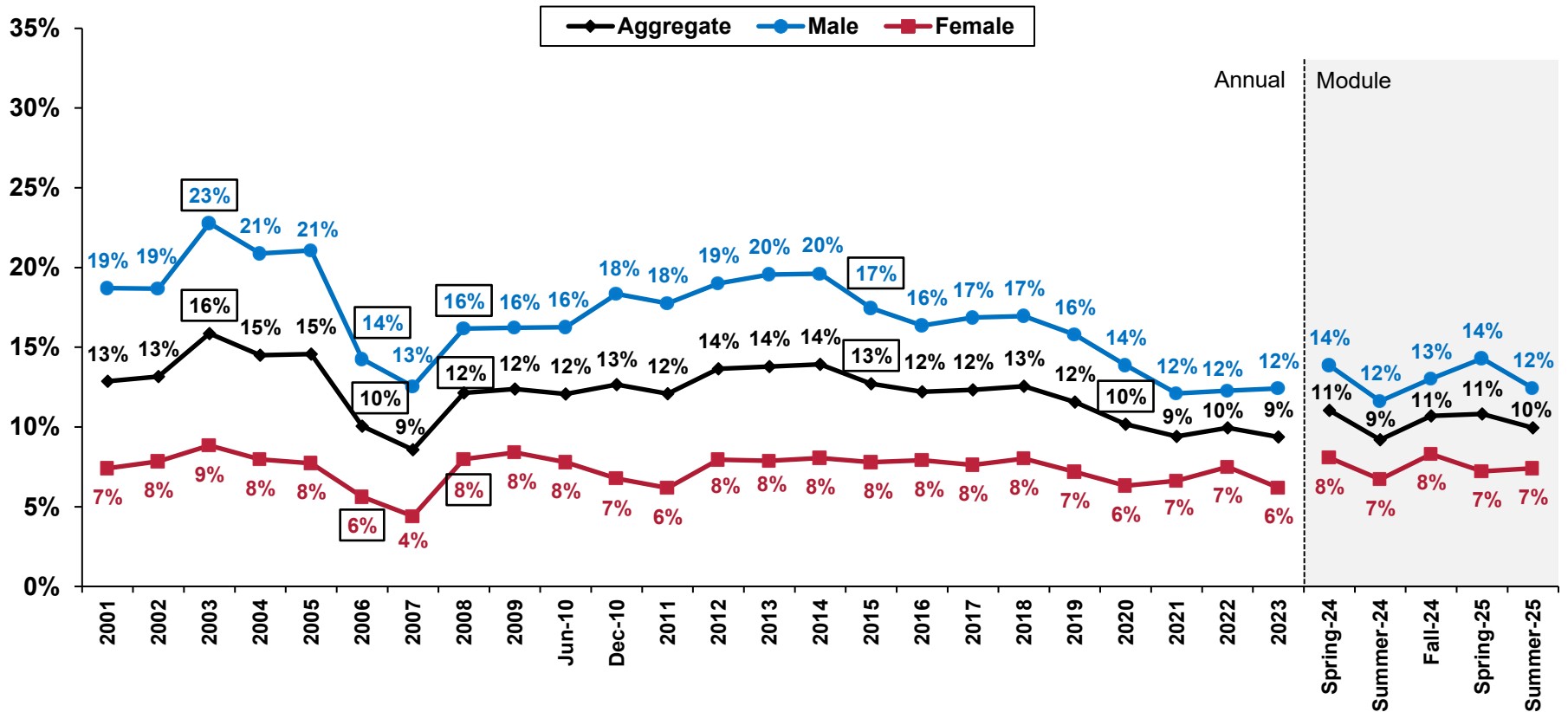
General Military Propensity

By Sex

- Military propensity remained stable from Spring 2025 (11%) to Summer 2025 (10%), consistent with values observed over the past few years.

In the next few years, how likely is it that you will be serving in the Military?

% Definitely/Probably



Note: Youth ages 16–21. Estimates are charted to precise values. Labels are rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Source: DoW Youth Poll



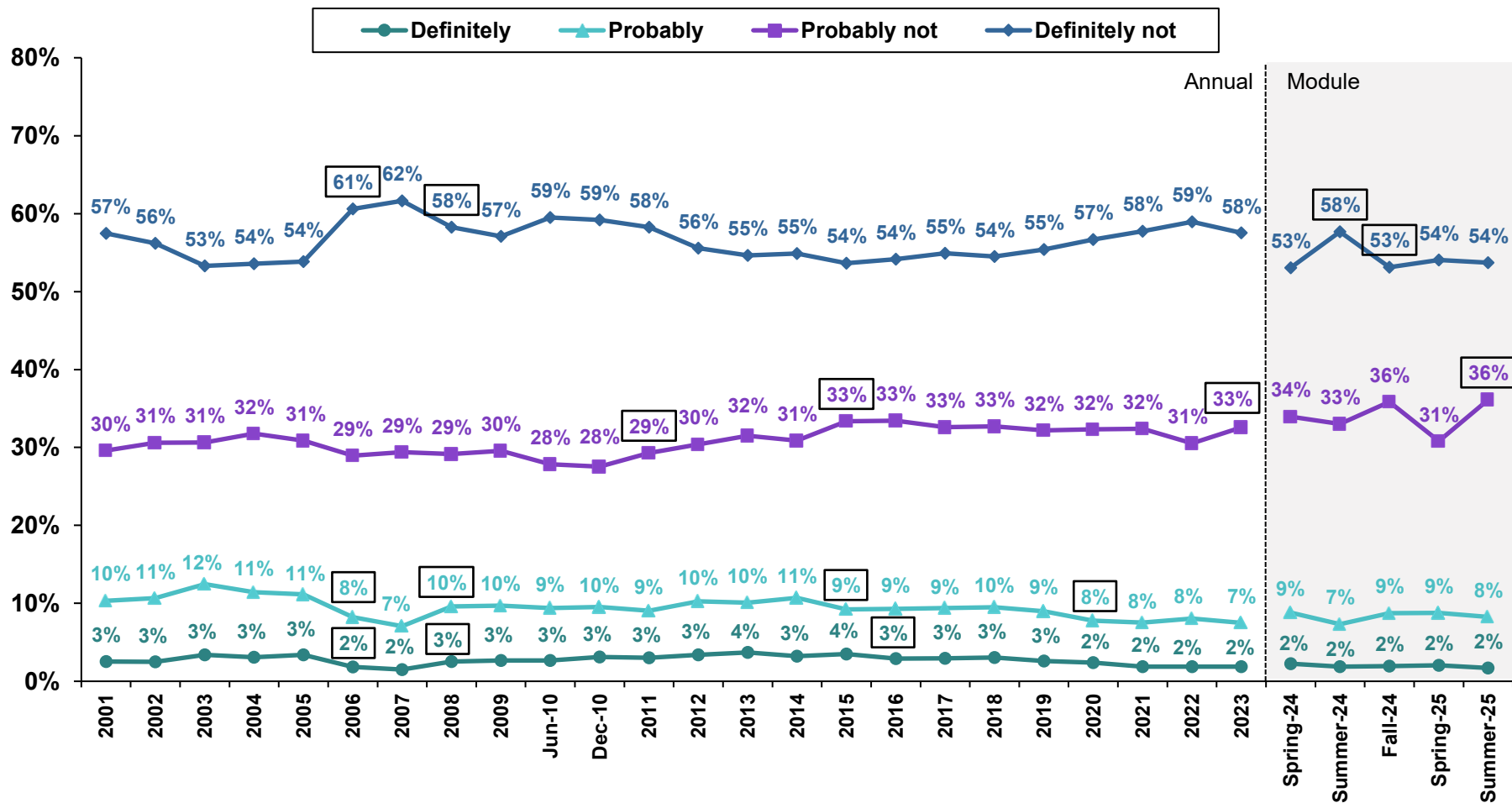
□ = Significant change from previous poll/year

Question: FPP9: "In the next few years, how likely is it that you will be serving in the Military?" Response options: Definitely, Probably, Probably Not, Definitely Not

General Military Propensity

By Response Option

In the next few years, how likely is it that you will be serving in the Military?



Note: Youth ages 16–21. Estimates are charted to precise values. Labels are rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Source: DoW Youth Poll



= Significant change from previous poll/year

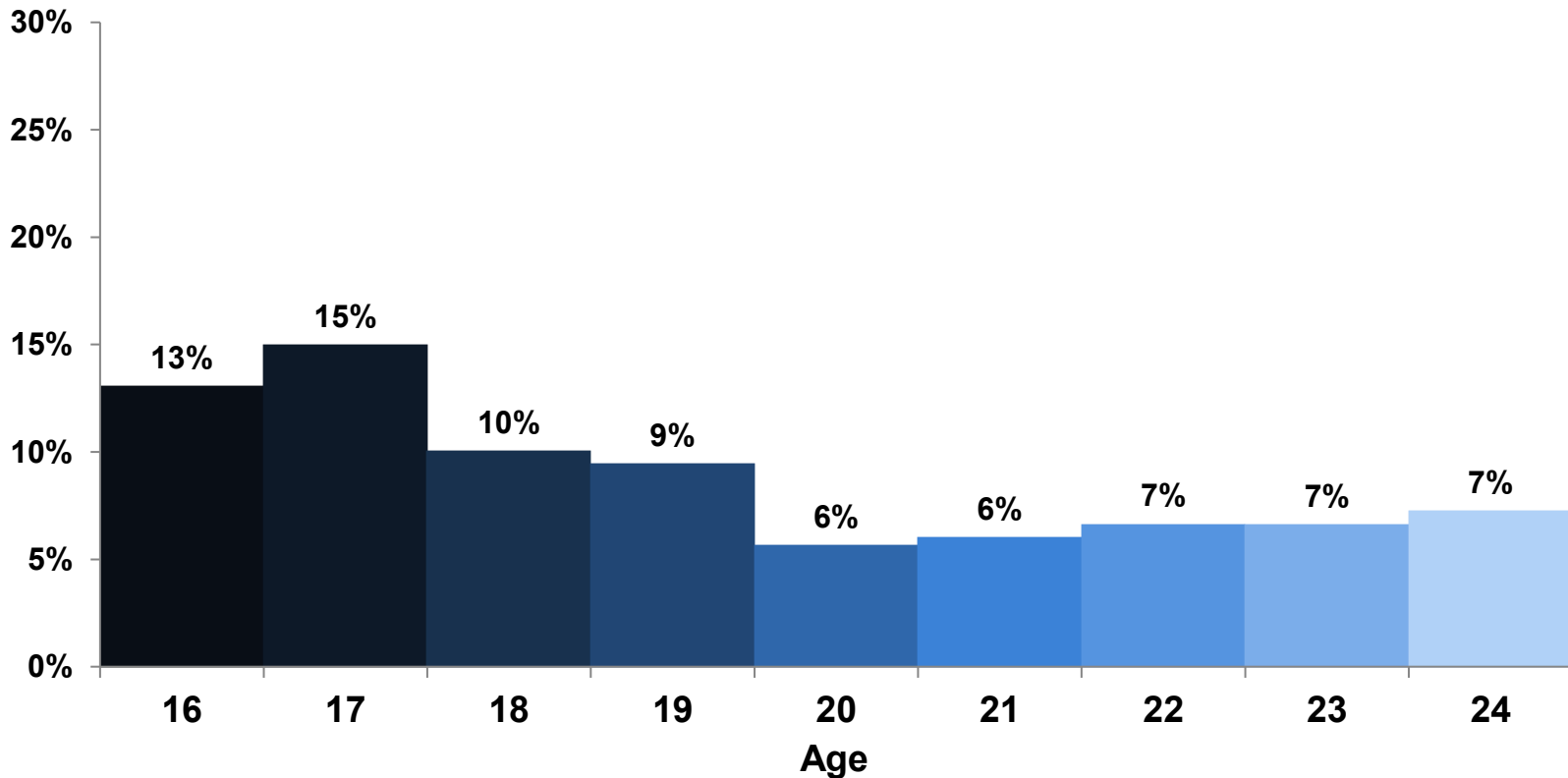
Question: FPP9: "In the next few years, how likely is it that you will be serving in the Military?"

Note: Higher refusals were observed for this item in Spring 2025 likely due to the methodological transition and survey item placement. Spring 2025 results are not directly comparable to previous waves. Refusals for this item returned to typical levels in Summer 2025.

General Military Propensity

By Age

In the next few years, how likely is it that you will be serving in the Military?
% Definitely/Probably



Note: Estimates are charted to precise values.
Labels are rounded to the nearest whole percentage.
Source: DoW Youth Poll (Summer 2025)



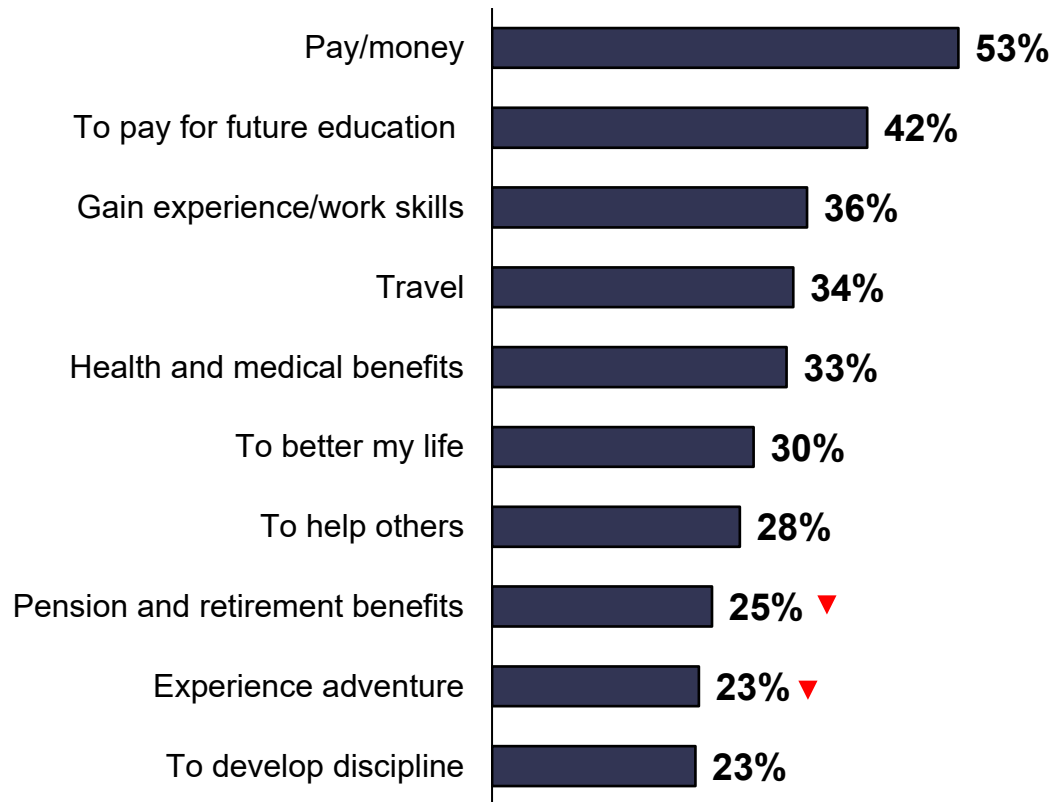


Motivators and Barriers to Service

Motivators Toward Service: Reasons to Join

If you were to consider joining the U.S. Military, what would be the main reason(s)?

Top 10 Reasons



Note: Youth ages 16–21.

Source: DoW Youth Poll (Summer 2025)



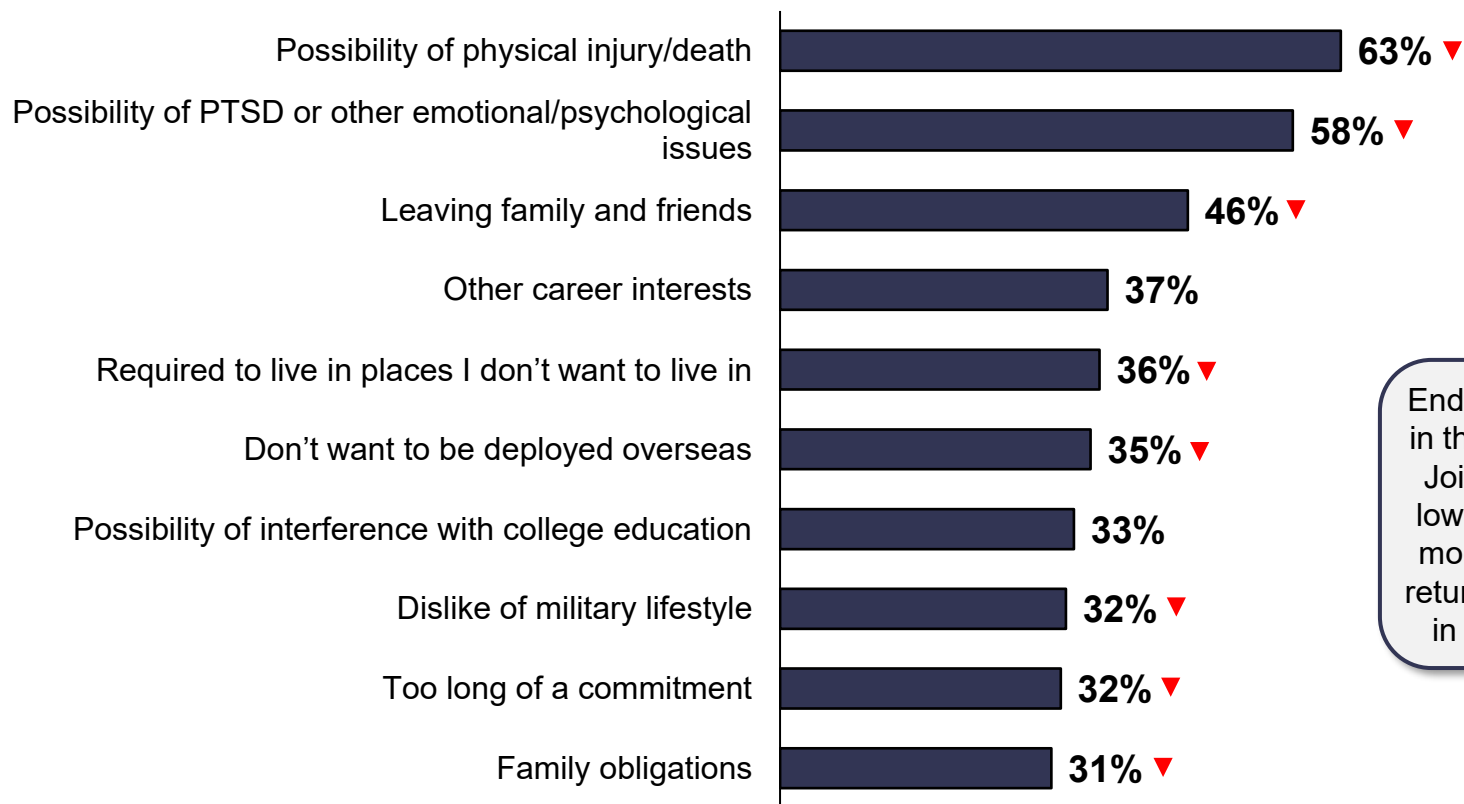
▲ ▼ = Significant change compared to previous wave

Question: RTJ: "If you were to consider joining the U.S. Military, what would be the main reason(s)? (Mark all that apply.)"

Barriers to Service: Reasons Not to Join

What would be the main reason(s) why you would NOT consider joining the U.S. Military?

Top 10 Reasons



Endorsement of items in the Reasons Not to Join battery is often lower in the Summer module and typically return to normal levels in the Fall module.

Note: Youth ages 16–21.

Source: DoW Youth Poll (Summer 2025)



▲ ▼ = Significant change compared to previous wave

Question: RNTJ: "What would be the main reason(s) why you would NOT consider joining the U.S. Military? (Mark all that apply.)"



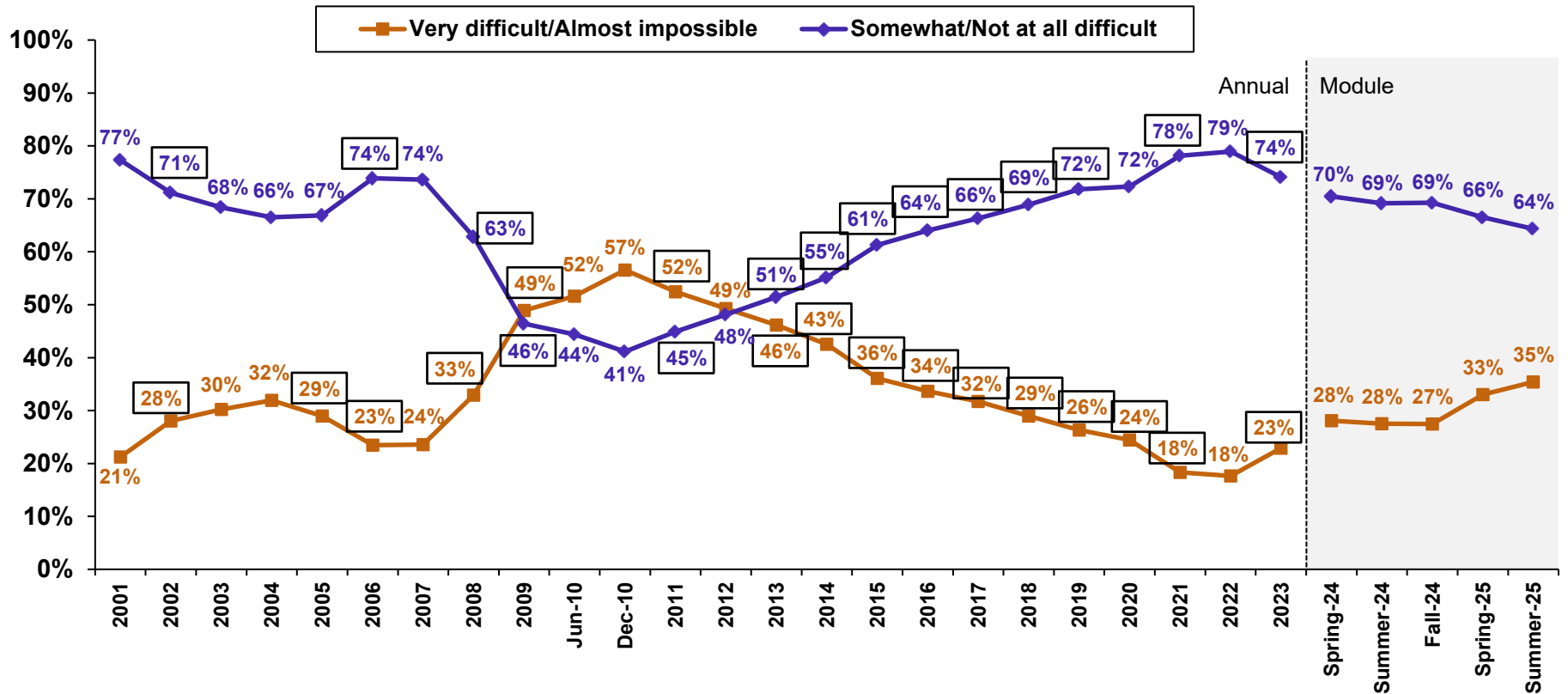
Economic Factors

U.S. Military and Economic Conditions

Difficulty Finding a Job

- The proportion of youth who say it is difficult to find a job in Summer 2025 remained stable compared to Spring 2025 but has been increasingly endorsed over the past few years.

How difficult is it for someone your age to get a full-time job in your community?



Note: Youth ages 16–21. Estimates are charted to precise values. Labels are rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Source: DoW Youth Poll



= Significant change from previous poll/year



Backup

Youth Poll Methodology and Sample

- Push-to-web survey with paper fallback fielded from April 28, 2025, to October 31, 2025.
 - Five mailings were sent to eight different cohorts semimonthly that invited recipients to participate in an online survey via QR code and weblink. The fifth mailing included a survey booklet in addition to the information to complete the survey online.
- Final *Youth Poll* sample: 8,033 youths ages 16 through 24
 - 6,274 (78%) youths ages 16 through 21—the metrics presented herein focus on this age group
 - 1,759 (22%) youths ages 22 through 24
- Weighted to reflect the general population on several dimensions:
 - Sex
 - Age
 - Race/Ethnicity
 - Educational attainment
 - Region
- Stratified random sample
- Note: Estimates are charted to precise values. Labels are rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Overview of *Youth Poll* Annual Data

- The *Youth Poll* used the following survey administration methodologies:
 - 2001–June 2010: Telephone survey using random digit dialing (RDD) conducted semiannually.
 - December 2010–2011: Mail-based paper survey conducted semiannually.
 - 2012–2024: Continuously fielded mail-based paper survey distributed every 4 months and fielded for 6 months (January–June, May–October, September–February).
 - 2025: Continuously fielded push-to-web online survey with paper fallback distributed every 4 months and fielded for 6 months (January–June, May–October, September–February).
- The annual data set creation process included the following steps:
 - 2001–2013: Annual data sets were created by combining a calendar year’s worth of module data sets. June 2010 and December 2010 data sets were not combined due to the change in survey methodology. Data sets for 2002 and 2006 only include one wave of data each.
 - 2014–Present: Annual data sets were created by combining a calendar year’s worth of module data sets. Then, the combined data sets were reweighted to be representative at the state level.
- All available data are reported.
 - Note: Specific instances when data were collected but are not reported are explicitly noted.
- Significance testing was not conducted when comparing:
 - Data across different methodologies (e.g., between June 2010 and December 2010, between 2011 and 2012, and between Fall 2024 and Spring 2025).
 - Annual-level and module-level data (e.g., 2023 and Spring 2024).

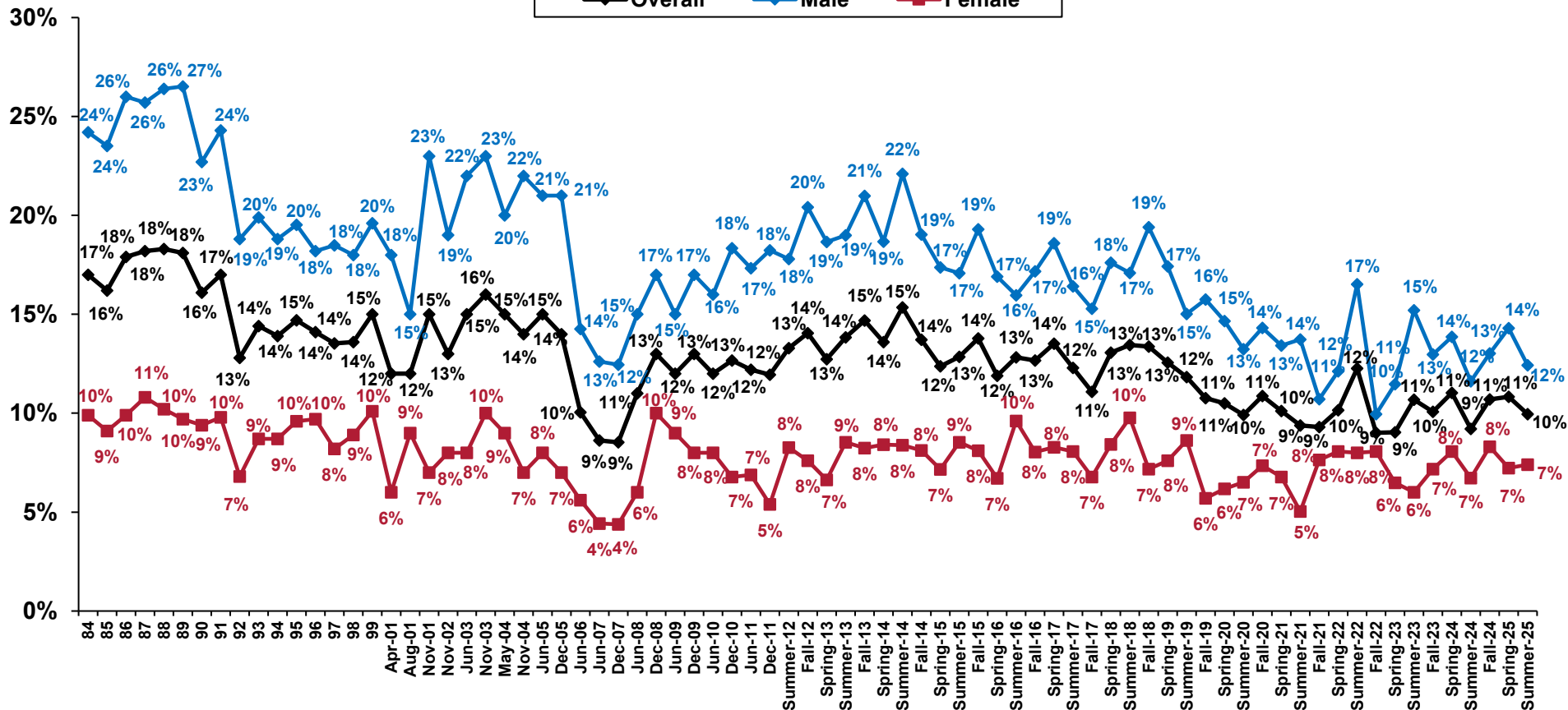
Historical General Military Propensity

By Sex

In the next few years, how likely is it that you will be serving in the Military?

% Definitely/Probably

Overall Male Female



Note: Youth ages 16–21. Estimates are charted to precise values. Labels are rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

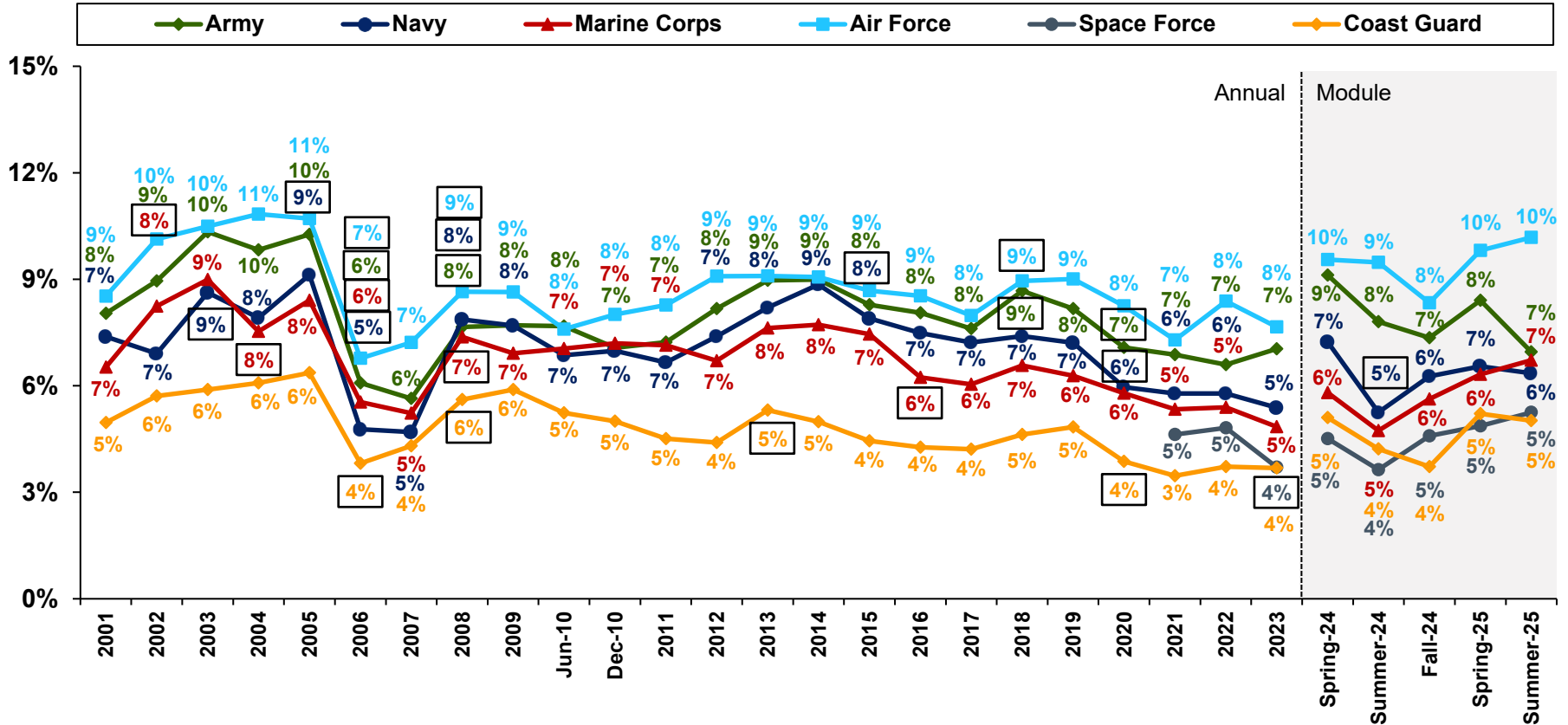
Source: DoW Youth Attitude Tracking Survey (YATS) and Youth Poll



Questions: YATS (Q503)–Jun-10 (FPP9): “Now, I’d like to ask you how likely it is that you will be serving in the Military in the next few years?”
Dec-10–Onwards (FPP9): “In the next few years, how likely is it that you will be serving in the Military?” Response options: Definitely, Probably, Probably Not, Definitely Not

Active Duty Propensity by Service

In the next few years, how likely is it that you will be serving
in any of the following Military Services?
% Definitely/Probably



Note: Youth ages 16–21. Estimates are charted to precise values. Labels are rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Source: DoW Youth Poll



☐ = Significant change from previous poll/year

Question: FPP10A–FPP10F: “In the next few years, how likely is it that you will be serving in any of the following Military Services?” Response options: Definitely, Probably, Probably Not, Definitely Not

Note: Space Force was added in Summer 2020. Reporting begins in 2021, which is the first full year of data available.