



## The Target Population for Military Recruitment: Youth Eligible to Enlist Without a Waiver

*September 2016*



Defense Advisory Committee  
on Women in the Services

# Eligibility Standards

## ■ Why?

- The Department establishes standards designed to ensure that individuals under consideration for enlistment, appointment, or induction are able to perform military duties successfully, and to select those who are the most trainable and adaptable to Service life.

## ■ What is considered?

- Standards considered are: age, aptitude, citizenship, dependents, education, medical, character/conduct, physical fitness, drug use, and other conditions

## ■ Are these standards reviewed on regular basis?

- Societal norms, medical findings, internal and external analyses of performance, and other studies help inform the Department in the establishment of these standards. Each area is reviewed by subject matter experts on a regular basis.

## ■ What is the “recruitable population”?

- DoD policy establishes a minimum baseline from which eligibility is derived. The Services have the latitude to be more restrictive as well as allow waivers for most standards they choose. These Service policies more aptly define the “recruitable population” and the type of youth that each Service seeks.

# Estimating Eligibility: Qualified Military Available (QMA)

## ■ What is it?

- DoD's official metric estimating the number of youth who are eligible and available for enlisted military service without a waiver.
- The basic ingredient of this metric is the size of the population aged 17–24 reduced by the number who are disqualified for one or more criteria within seven overarching categories:
  - 1) Medical/Physical, 2) Overweight, 3) Mental Health, 4) Drugs, 5) Conduct, 6) Dependents, 7) Aptitude.

## ■ When was the metric last examined?

- The 2013 QMA Study revised and updated previous QMA estimations by using more recent data to estimate the prevalence of disqualifying conditions and by accounting for the correlations of disqualifying conditions that account for overlap among multiple disqualifiers.

## ■ What criteria and rationale were used?

- After reviewing the particular guidelines established by DoD Instructions 1304.26, QUALIFICATION STANDARDS FOR ENLISTMENT, APPOINTMENT, AND INDUCTION and 6130.03, MEDICAL STANDARDS FOR APPOINTMENT, ENLISTMENT, OR INDUCTION IN THE MILITARY SERVICES, which govern military entrance eligibility criteria, disqualifying conditions were grouped into seven broad disqualification categories.

# Estimating Eligibility: Qualified Military Available (QMA)

## ■ What data sources were used?

- National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)
- National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)
- Joint Advertising, Market Research & Studies Youth Poll surveys (JAMRS – YP)
- Military Entrance Processing Command (MEPCOM) Production Applicants Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) Score Database
- Woods & Poole Economics' Population Estimates
- 1997 Profile of American Youth (PAY97)

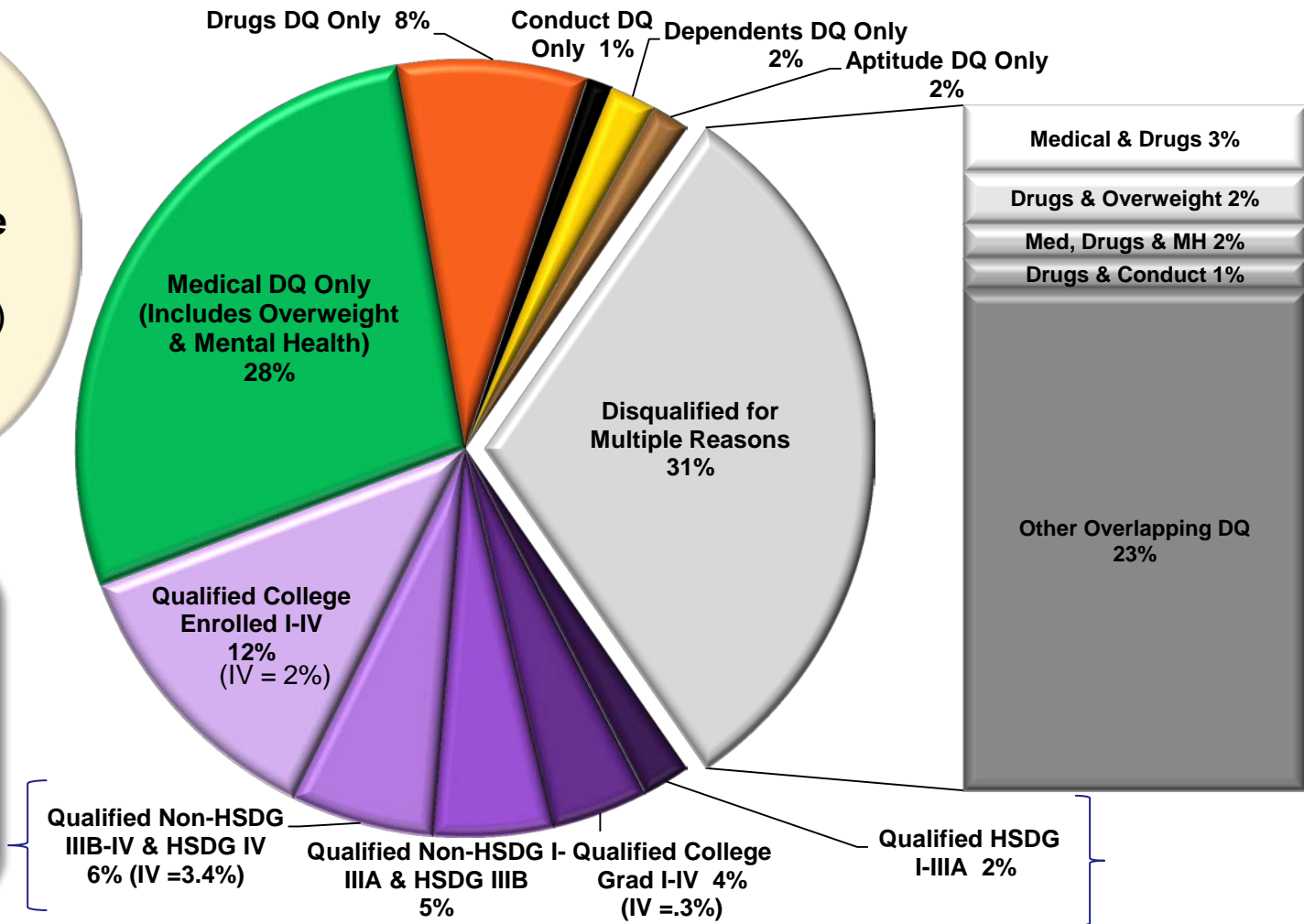
## ■ What are the key results?

- 29% of youth would meet all the core eligibility requirements
- 17% would qualify and be available for enlisted active duty service
- 13% would qualify, be available, and score above the 30th percentile on the AFQT
  - The AFQT score is a composite made of math and verbal tests from the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)
  - Scores are normed against a nationally representative sample of 18-23 year olds and reported as percentile scores

# Qualified Military Available (QMA): 2013 Estimates

**29%**  
are eligible  
to serve  
(9.6 million)

**QMA:**  
**17%**  
(5.8 million)  
**QMA I-III B:**  
**13%**  
(4.4 million)



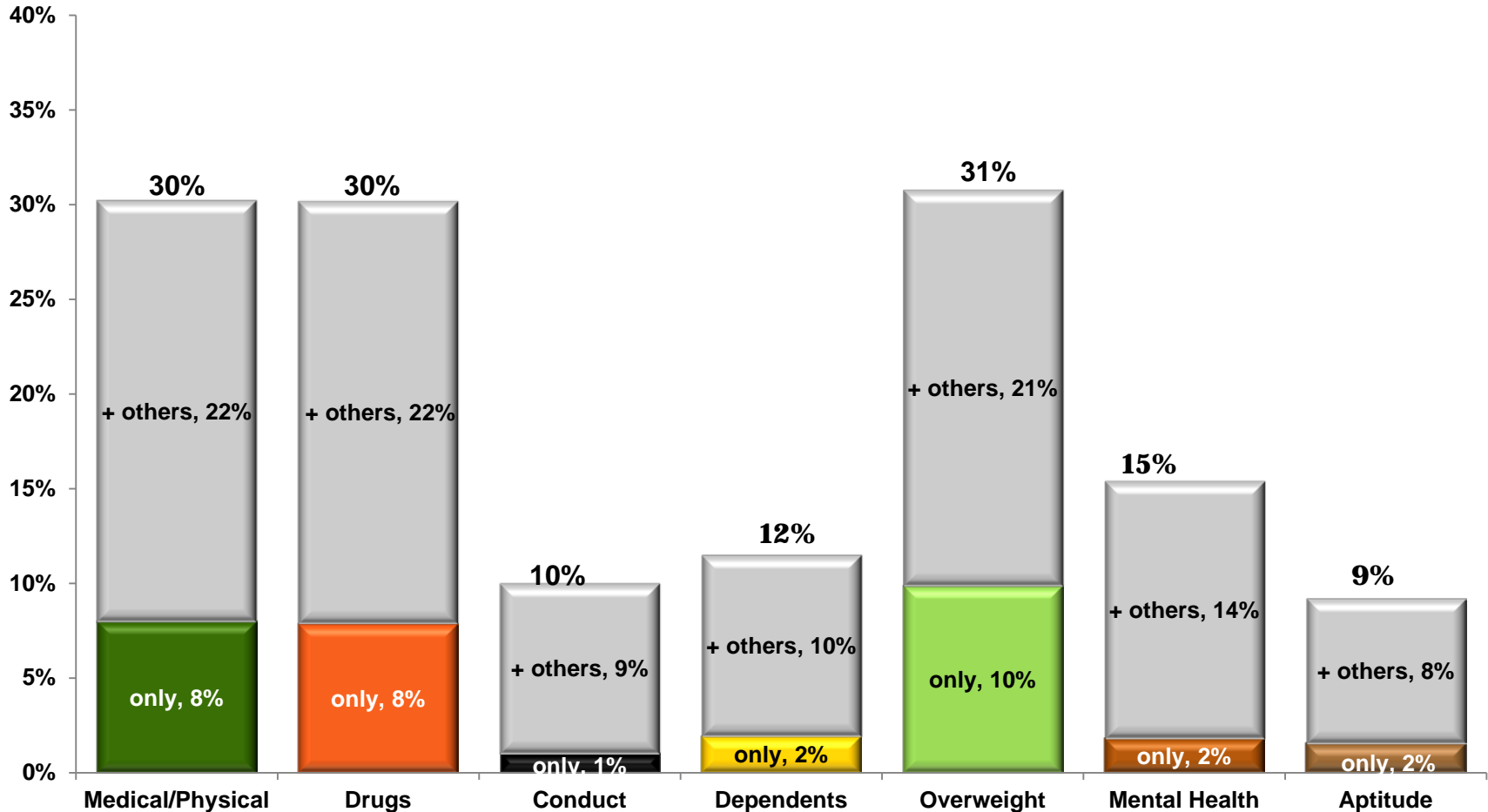
Note: Percentages may not sum due to rounding.

Source: DoD Qualified Military Available (QMA) Study 2013



Note: Youth ages 17-24

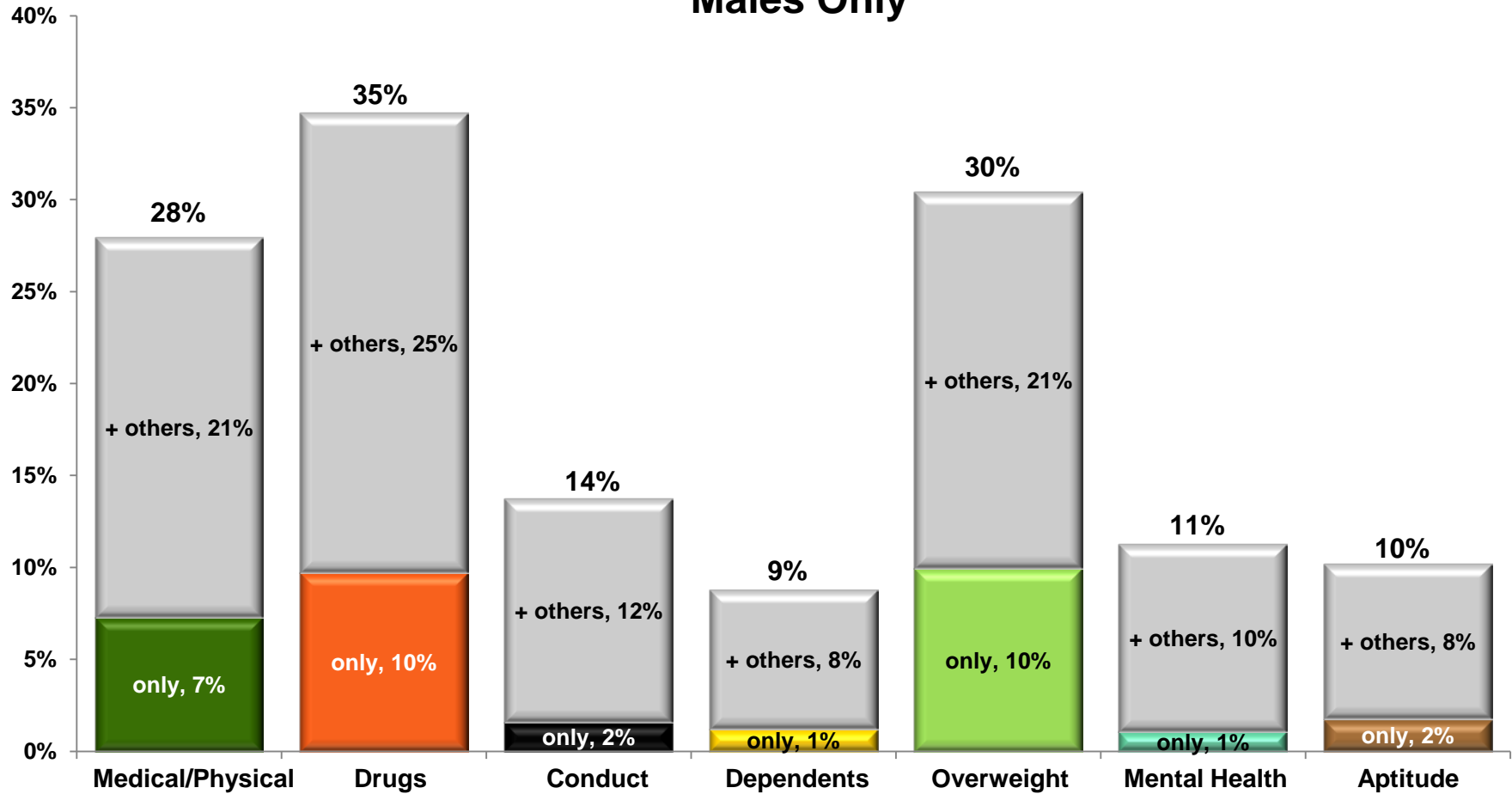
# QMA Disqualification Categories: Unique and Combined Impact



**12% of youth are ineligible as a result of dependents. Two percent are ineligible *only* because of dependents.**

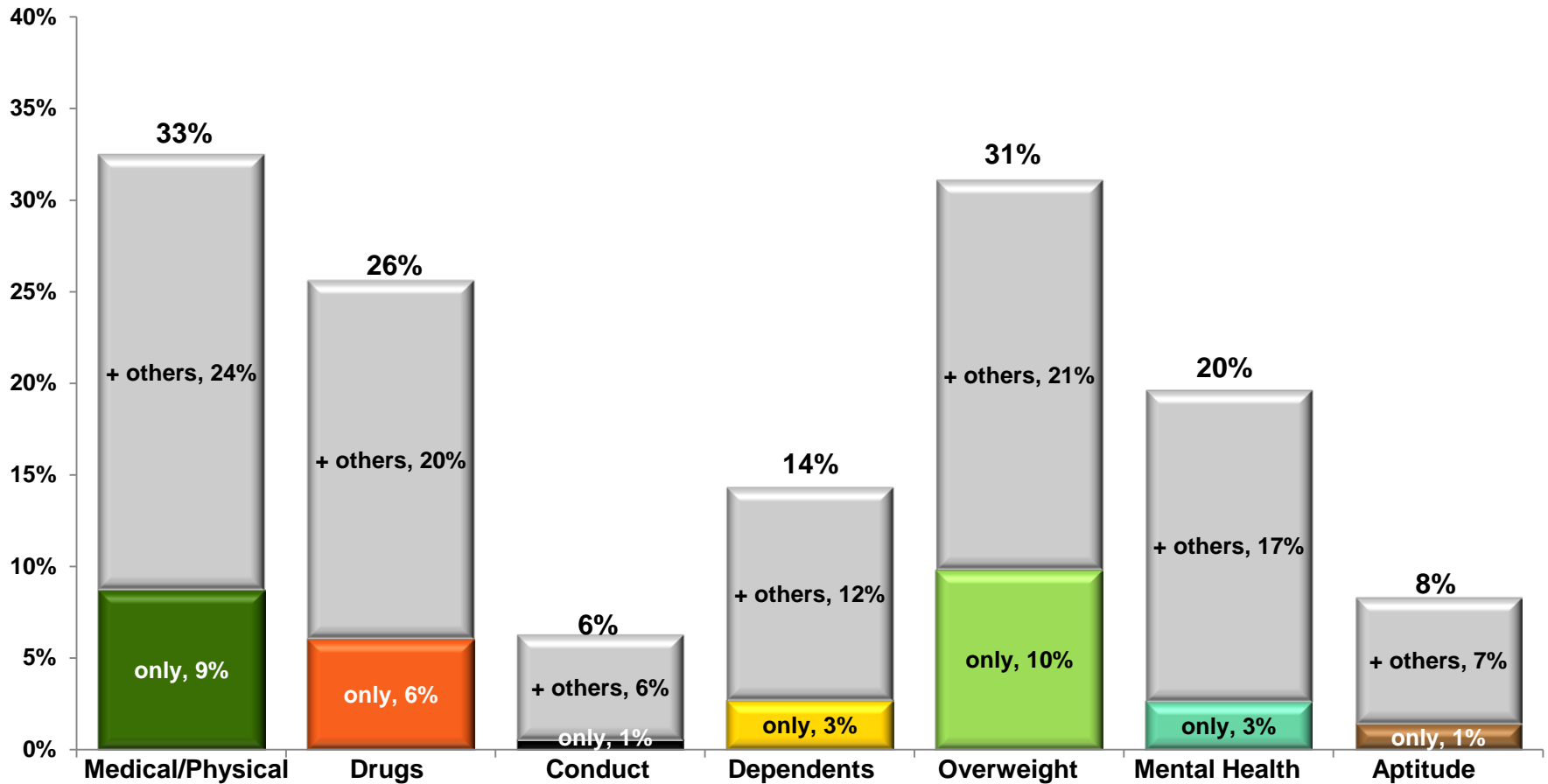
# QMA Disqualification Categories: Unique and Combined Impact

## Males Only



# QMA Disqualification Categories: Unique and Combined Impact

## Females Only



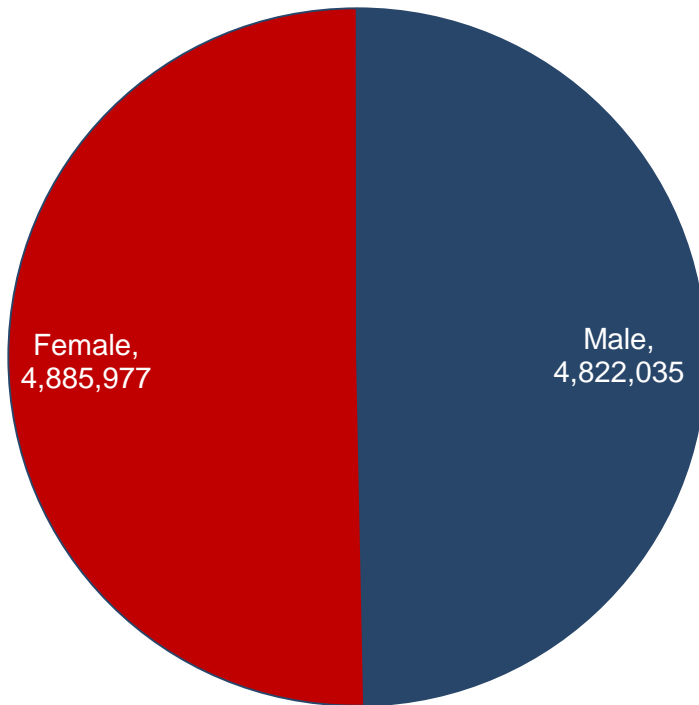


# Gender Composition of the Recruitable Population (2016)

## Recruitable Population by Gender (2016)

*DoD Qualified Military Available (QMA) Study 2013*

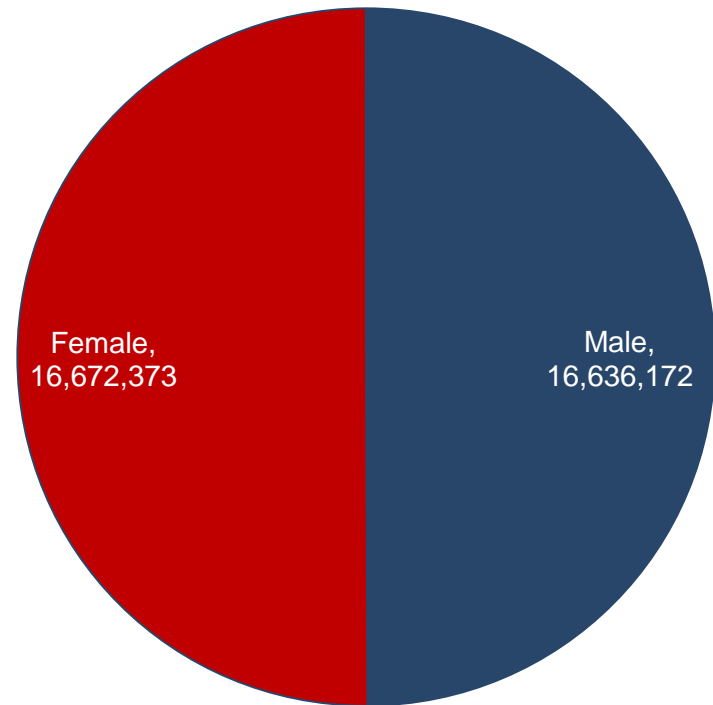
*Youth ages 17–24*



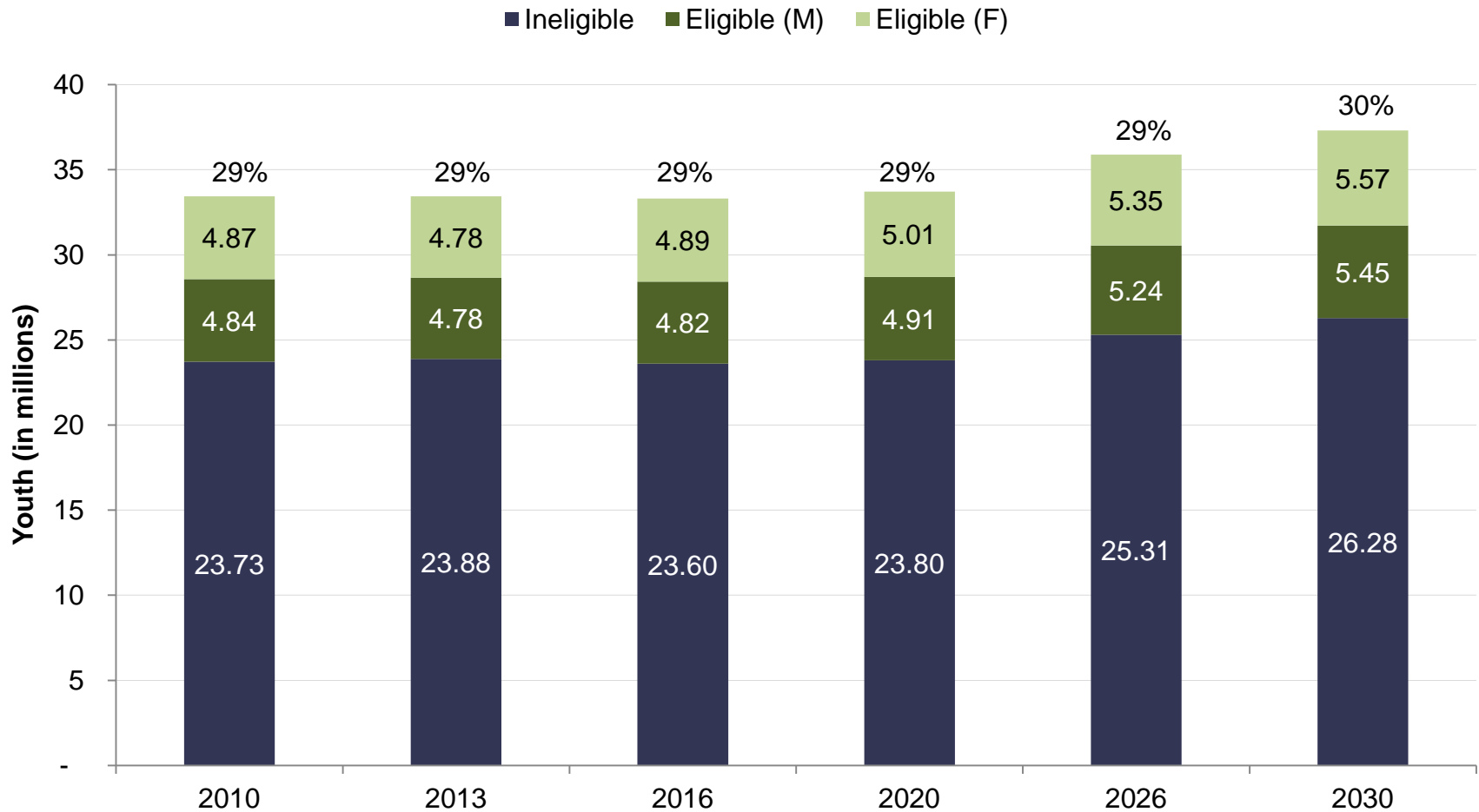
## Youth Population by Gender (2016)

*Woods & Poole Economics (2013 release, 2016 projection)*

*Youth ages 17–24*



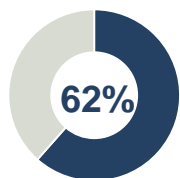
# Projected Recruitable Market



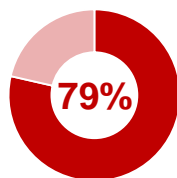
# Eligible Youth: Academic Quality and Career Goals

## High Academic Quality (As and Bs in High School)

Youth Ages 17 to 24; Spring 2016



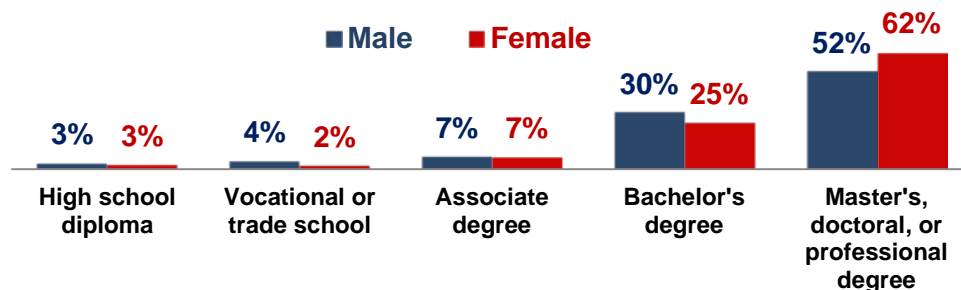
Male



Female

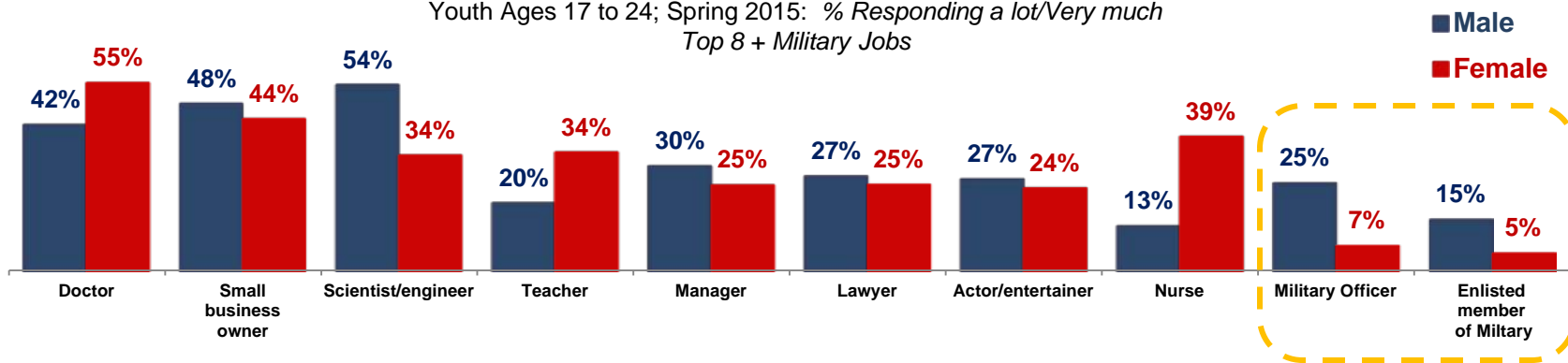
## What is the highest level of education you would eventually like to complete?

Youth Ages 17 to 24; Spring 2016  
% Responding Probably/Definitely



## If you were completely free to choose, how much would you like to have each of these jobs/positions when you are 35 years old?

Youth Ages 17 to 24; Spring 2015: % Responding a lot/Very much  
Top 8 + Military Jobs





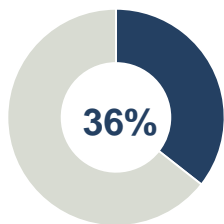
# Appendix

# Eligible Female Youth Market: Barriers to Service

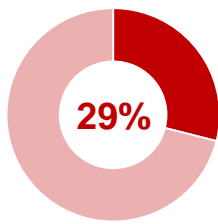
## How likely is it that joining the Military would allow you to have an attractive lifestyle?

Youth Poll (Fall 2015)

Eligible Youth Ages 17 to 24  
% 5-7 Extremely Likely



Male

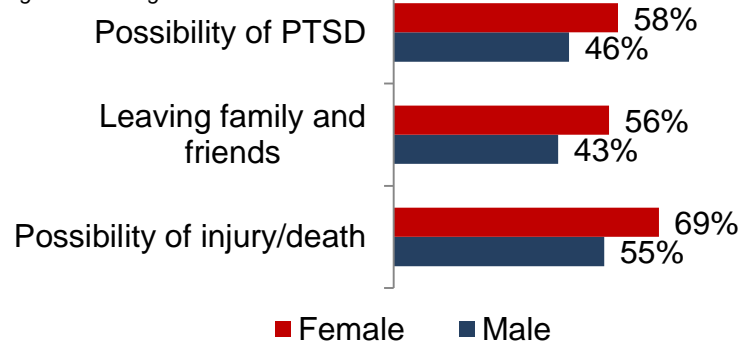


Female

## Reasons Not to Join

Youth Poll (Fall 2015)

Eligible Youth Ages 17 to 24



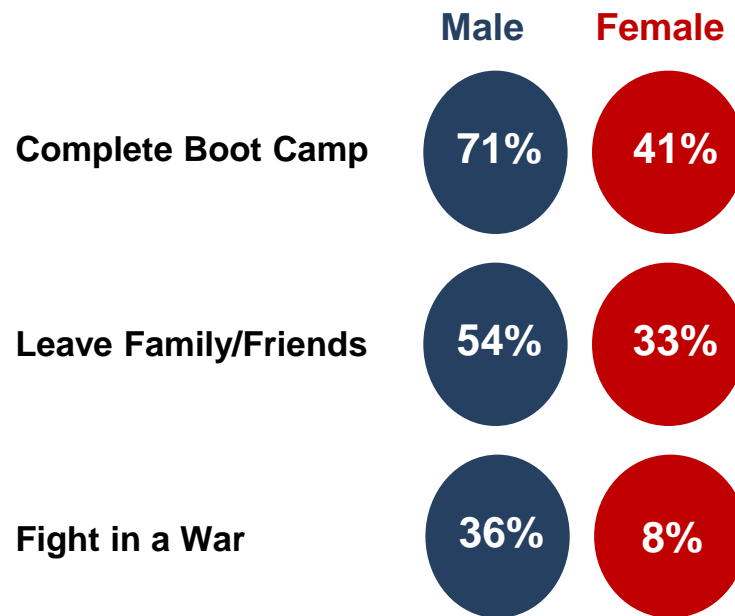
■ Female ■ Male

## Military Self-Efficacy

Youth Poll (Fall 2015)

Eligible Youth Ages 17 to 24

How confident are you that you could do each of the following activities  
% Probably/Definitely Yes

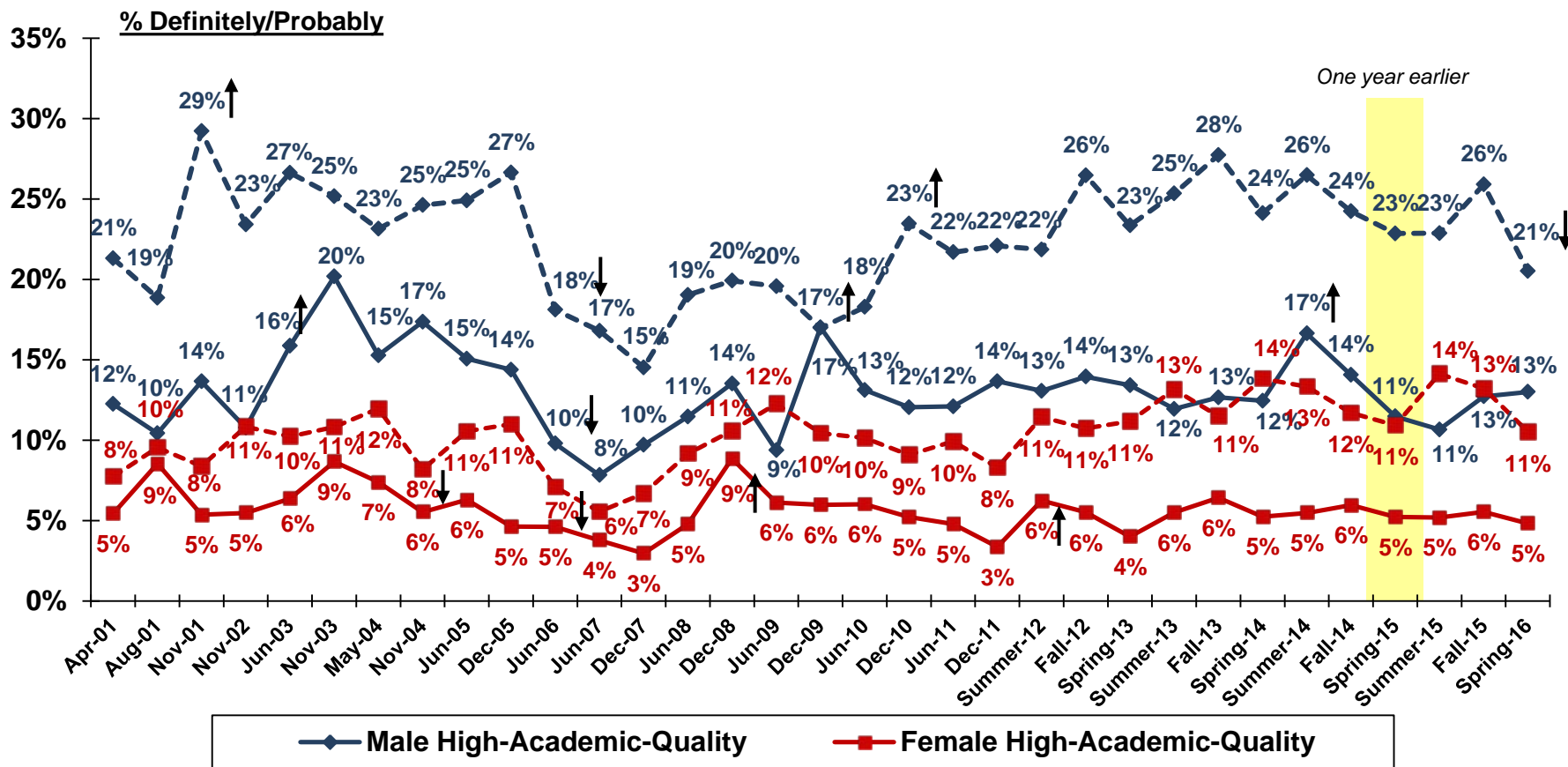


# General Military Propensity

## By Academic Quality and Gender

### FPP9: How likely is it that you will be serving in the Military in the next few years?

Response options: Definitely, Probably, Probably Not, Definitely Not



Note: Youth ages 16–21. Estimates are charted to precise values.

Labels are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

Source: Department of Defense Youth Poll



↑ ↓ Significant change from previous poll