

THE HIDDEN WOUNDS OF WAR: RESPONDING TO SEXUAL ASSAULT IN THE MILITARY

Pamela Jacobs, J.D.
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We will discuss ...

- Military population in Kansas
- Prevalence of sexual assault in the military
- Unique barriers faced by survivors in the military
- New policies enacted by the **Department of Defense**
- Sexual assault in the context of domestic violence in military families
- Impact of combat exposure and distinguishing between post traumatic stress reactions and abusive behaviors
- Increasing collaboration between military and civilian service providers

Kansas Military Population

- **Military Installations**
 - Ft. Riley
 - Ft. Leavenworth
 - McConnell AFB
 - Coast Guard HR Center
 - Reserve and National Guard

- **Numbers of Personnel**
 - Army 13,264
 - Navy & Marine Corps 179
 - Air Force 2,911
 - Coast Guard 190
 - Active Duty Military 16,354
 - Reserve and National Guard 16,832
- **Total Military Personnel 33,376**
- * In addition to spouses, partners, and children.

Sexual Assault Facts

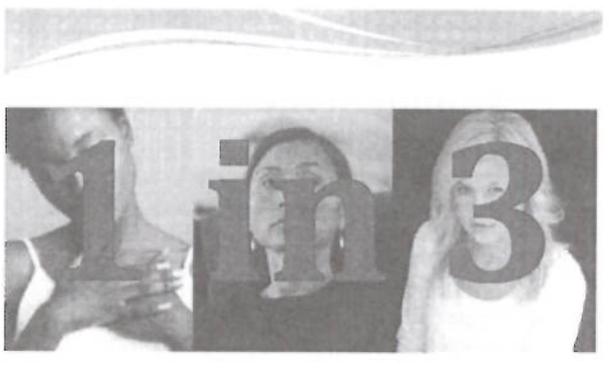
- Nearly 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men have been raped in their lifetime. 1 in 2 women and 1 in 5 men have experienced some form of sexual violence.
- Approximately 80% of female victims were raped before the age of 25, and almost half before the age of 18.
- Every 2 minutes, someone commits a sexual assault in the United States.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) 2010 Summary Report

Sexual Assault of Military Members

- DoD estimates that more than 86% of sexual assaults go unreported.
- Between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013 there were 3,553 reports of sexual assault, a 43% increase from the year before.
- But, Pentagon estimates actual sexual assault numbers are close to **26,000**.



Service members are
15 times more likely to be
 raped by a comrade than killed
 by an enemy.

Which war are we fighting?

Military Sexual Assault

- Most victims are junior enlistees under the age of 25, and the vast majority of perpetrators are older males (25-35) and generally higher-ranking.
- At least 53% of sexual assaults were committed by service members against other service members.
 - 87% were male on female rapes
 - 7% were male on male
- Most common case involved an 18-to-25-year-old male service member perpetrating sexual violence against a female service member; alcohol was *used*.

Similarities Between Military and Civilian Sexual Assault

- The attacker usually knows the victim.
- While women are much more likely to be sexually assaulted, men are also victims.
- Vast majority of perpetrators are men.
- High rates of sexual assault on civilian campuses and in military academies.
- Alcohol is often *used*—not involved.
- Perpetrator often alleges it was consensual.

Women in the Military

- 42,000 Active Duty enlisted women in 1973.
- 214,000 in 2013, making up almost 15% of the Armed Forces.
- There are currently approximately 1.8 million women veterans.
- 17% of women are commissioned officers vs. 15% of men.



Women in the Military

- Estimated 20% of women in the general population will be sexually assaulted at some point in their lives.
- Study of female veterans estimates that 33% of women in uniform have been sexually assaulted; 55% reported sexual harassment.
- Also, higher rates of child sexual abuse in histories of women in the military. Why?
 - How might they be impacted by rape culture?

The Military is a Family

Military service members are not just coworkers, they are part of the *military family*.



Rape in the Military

"Rape in the military is much like rape in the family. It's where you live. It's not just where you work."

(Resick 2007)

Consent?

Consent?

- In a 2012 anonymous DoD survey, 27% percent of those who reported being sexually assaulted said the offender was in their chain of command.
- 22% said the offender used physical force.
- 21% said the offender threatened to ruin his/her reputation if they did not comply.
- 73% of incidents occurred at a military installation.
- 49% occurred during duty hours.
- 20-26% occurred in a combat zone.

What is Military Sexual Trauma?

"Sexual harassment that is threatening in character or physical assault of a sexual nature that occurred while the victim was in the military, regardless of geographic location of the trauma, gender of the victim, or the relationship to the perpetrator."

Department of Veterans Affairs

Video: Military Sexual Trauma Michelle's Story

- How did being in the military impact Michelle's reactions to the sexual assault?
- How could what happened to Michelle affect the entire unit and mission readiness?

Barrier: Collateral Misconduct

- When a Service Member is disciplined for his or her own behavior at or around the time of an assault.
- Examples: Underage drinking at the time of the assault. Drinking while in a combat zone.

Barrier: Command Need to Know

- The focus of the military is soldier/airman/sailor **readiness** for war/disaster.
- A Commander may at times be required to monitor areas of an individual's life that a civilian manager would not.
- If the victim is not able to perform his/her duties to accomplish the mission, the Commander may need to know.

A Commander's Perspective

"It is sometimes frustrating to try and explain to someone – military or civilian – what this "Being a Commander" thing is all about simply because they cannot possibly understand the depth, complexity, and hours involved. Nor could you.

I am a teacher, counselor, rescuer, parent, mentor, confessor, judge, and jury, executioner, cheerleader, coach, nudger, butt-kicker, hugger, social worker, lawyer, shrink, doctor, analyst, budgeter, allowance-giver, career planner, assignment-getter, inspector, critiquer, scheduler, planner, shopper, social-eventer, party-drower, and absolutely as often as possible – sacrificial lamb.

I am my squadron's Commander, and will only do this job one way while I'm in it...whatever it takes to serve them."

~ Lt. Col. Eileen Isola, Commander, 463d Operations Support Squadron

Male Victims

- Of the estimated 26,000 service members who were sexually assaulted, 14,000 were men, 12,000 were women.
 - Based on estimates gathered from anonymous survey in 2012.
- However, only 12% of reported sexual assaults were by male victims.

Barriers for Male Victims

Video

(9-min)

"God didn't protect me, and that's the toughest betrayal of all. I also feel betrayed by the government and the military and that person."

– Mike Scott, Army Veteran, Second Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division

Economic Barriers

- In the military sector, unlike the civilian sector, reporting a sexual assault involving an active duty service member—offender or a victim—means reporting it to that person's employer (command).
- For most civilians, it would be unusual for police contact or even an arrest to be communicated directly to someone's employer.
- Creates additional barriers to reporting and seeking help.

Lack of Accountability: Rebecca's Story

<http://www.painandtrauma.com/rebecca-stone-efbaw/>

- Rebecca Johnson Stone always had a calling to serve, and she joined the Army after 9/11.
- Born into a military family, for Rebecca, it was the highlight of her life. She was deployed to Iraq -- and immediately, the sexual harassment started.
- Just a few days after arriving in Iraq, Rebecca was viciously assaulted by a fellow soldier. She sustained severe head trauma.
- Subsequent to the attack, graffiti -- words like "slut" and "whore" -- began appearing regularly outside her sleeping quarters.
- Rebecca did not report the crime because of what she calls "the secret code of keep your mouth shut." She didn't want to lose her job or the opportunity to serve her country.
- Multiple cases of assault were reported against the attacker but all he received was 80 days in the brig for a DUI.

Employment/Economic Consequences

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Victim Blaming in the Military

- "Don't get upset and overreact because you changed your mind."
- "Are you sure you didn't misunderstand what happened?"
- "Do you know what this will do to the unit?"
- "He's a very well-respected soldier. I don't think he would do that."
- "What did they expect?" ~ Fox News Commentator Liz Trotta

Video: Natalie's Story

Summary

- Sexual assault in the military is a pervasive epidemic.
- An estimated 26,000 service members were sexually assaulted in one year.
- 1 out of every 3 female service members will be sexually assaulted.
- While women are at a higher risk of being sexually assaulted, men are victims also.
- Victims are often blamed for the assault.
- Victims face many barriers after a sexual assault, including victim blaming, economic and privacy concerns.

The Military Response

Understanding Military Culture

"You are not average citizens - and so you can never be content to be merely 'good citizens.' You must be great citizens. In everything you do, you must always make sure that you are living up to the highest personal and professional standards of duty, service, and honor - the values of the American Armed Forces, indeed the values of the United States."

Remarks as delivered by Secretary of Defense
Robert M. Gates, Colorado Springs, Colorado, May 30, 2007.

The United States Military 101

- Men and women of all ranks.
- Five different branches of service: Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard.
- Active Duty, Reserves, Guard.
- None can completely fulfill the mission of the other.
- No one Service does it all.
- Rank: Enlisted (lower and senior), Warrant Officers (not in Air Force, technical skill), Commissioned Officers (all with degrees, may have been Enlisted formerly).

National Guard

Video: An American Soldier



A Day in the Life

What are some differences between military and civilian life?



The Military Has Its Own:

- Laws
- Social Customs
- Protocols
- Language
- Dress
- Titles
- Traditions



Understanding Military Culture

[The military] "exerts enormous pressure on its members to conform to its unique institutional culture, a culture characterized by unconditional commitment to the mission, service before self, uncertainty and unpredictability in lifestyle, sometimes dangerous and frequent missions, frequent separations from family, and acceptance of a way of life without some of the constitutional protections commonly expected by American citizens."

Hunter Mic, 2007. Honor Betrayed: Sexual Abuse in America's Military. Fort Lee, New Jersey: Barricade Books

Impact of Honor and Service

Military branches emphasize certain character traits and values.

- Army: *Loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, personal courage*
- Navy and Marine Corps: *Honor, courage, commitment*
- Air Force: *Integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do*

How might these values impact a survivor?

How Much Control Do YOU Have Over Your Life?



Military Justice System

Uniform Code of Military Justice

- Complete set of criminal laws
- Includes unique military offenses:
 - Desertion
 - Absence without leave
 - Failure to obey
 - Dereliction of duty



Benefits of Military System

- Swift punishment; no delays like in civilian justice system
- Code of ethics
- Extensive support system
- Additional resources, such as MPOs

Military Protection Orders (MPO)

MPO may direct a Service Member to:

- Refrain from contacting, harassing, or touching a certain named person;
- Stay away from certain areas;
- Refrain from doing certain acts or activities.

MPOs are

- Generally short term
- May be written or verbal
- Issued by offender's Commander
- Not available for Restricted Reports

6-90

The Role of the Commanding Officer

- Military Commanders make decisions that police and prosecutors make in civilian system.
- The Commanding Officer's options for disciplinary actions:
 - No Action
 - Administrative Action
 - Non-Judicial Punishment
 - Court-Martial
 - Court-Martial Convening Authority

Steps in the Military Justice Process

- Preferral
- Article 32 Hearing
- Convening the Court-Martial
- Pretrial Agreement/Pleas
- Trial Procedures/Sentencing
- Court-Martial Verdict Proceedings
- Appellate Review

6-12

Military Criminal Investigative Organization (MCIO)

In Sexual Assault Cases

- MCIO investigates allegations in which the military is, or may be, a party of interest.
- Primary role is an objective fact finder.

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Suspect's Rights

The major differences between the civilian and military judicial processes are in the apprehension of the suspect.

- Miranda Rights
- Article 31 Rights
- Right to Counsel
- Pretrial Confinement in the Military
- The civilian justice system varies from state to state.
- The military justice process is the same for all military organizations.
- Some issues are specific to victims and the military justice system.

Military Response to Sexual Assault

Sexual Assault Policies: SARPO

- DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) – <http://www.myduty.mil/>
- The DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) serves as the single point of responsibility for sexual assault policy matters.
- Use the SAPRO website to find information on : reporting a sexual assault (Unrestricted/Restricted reporting options); DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response policy; resources; and links to related sites.

DoD (Military) Definition of Sexual Assault

- Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by use of force, physical threat, or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent.
- Sexual assault can occur without regard to gender or spousal relationship or age of victim.
- "Consent" shall not be deemed or construed to mean the failure by the victim to offer physical resistance.
- Consent is not given when a person uses force, threat of force, coercion, or when the victim is asleep, incapacitated, or unconscious.

The Problems

- In 2010, fewer than 21% of sexual assault cases in the military went to trial, for a number of reasons, including decisions by commanding officers not to prosecute or to impose nonjudicial or administrative punishments.
- About 6% of the accused were discharged or allowed to "resign in lieu of court-martial" — quit their jobs.
- Only about half the cases prosecuted resulted in convictions.
- Military victims often have difficulty getting away from the perpetrator; they can't just quit their jobs or leave a combat zone.

Command Discretion

- Military Judicial System was dependent on command. If the commander decides to go the non-judicial route, a judge has no role in the case.
- Commanders had significant discretion in dealing with accusations of sexual assault.
 - Reporting sexual assault by a commander could adversely affect their career.
 - Any negative press about a post/base reflects poorly on the commander.
- The military's default position was that redress must come through the chain of command.
- According to the Manual for Courts-Martial, "Each commander has discretion to dispose of offenses by members of that command."

Advances

- Decreased Ops Tempo, increased dwell time—more time to recover.
- 62% of sexual assault perpetrators faced court martial in 2011. Up from 52% in 2010 and 30% in 2007.
- Less severe forms of discipline—such as administrative actions and discharges—have declined.
- More people and entities are talking about sexual assault—most importantly, the DoD.
- Increase in number of sexual assaults reported. Why is this good news?

The Military's Response

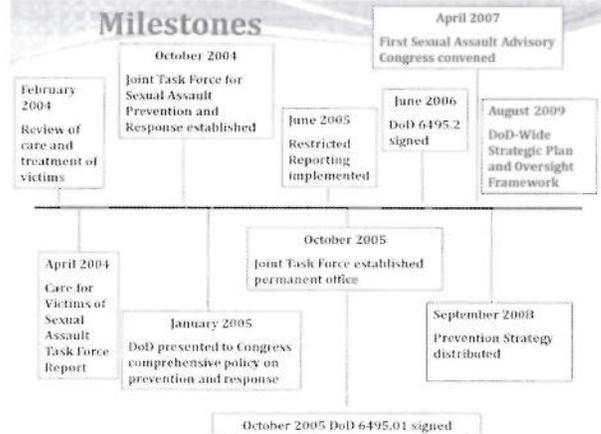
"One sexual assault is one too many."

Former Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwUExeNS6BU&feature=player_embedded

Milestones



Reporting Options

DoD Policy on Reporting Options

"The Department believes its first priority is for victims to be protected, treated with dignity and respect, and to receive the medical treatment, care and counseling that they deserve. Under DoD's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Policy, military victims of sexual assault have two reporting options – Restricted and Unrestricted Reporting."

"Reporting Options," United States Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, www.sapr.mil, February 5, 2008.

Restricted Reporting

- Similar to Anonymous Reporting
- Victim may report to a:
 - Sexual Assault Response Coordinator
 - Victim Advocate
 - Healthcare provider
- Allows the active duty victim to access medical and counseling services *without* informing law enforcement or Command.

Forensic Exam

At the victim's request, the healthcare provider may perform a Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE).

- The victim will not be charged for the SAFE.
- Evidence kits will be stored in the installation Provost Marshal's (aka, Chief's) evidence room, separate from other evidence and property.
- Property/evidence kits for restricted reports will be stored for five years and then destroyed, unless earlier released to investigative authorities.

Restricted Reporting: What will Command know?

For documentation purposes within 24 hours, the SARC office must notify senior Commander of assault and provide non-identifying information, including:

- Gender (unless identifying)
- Grade (Rank)
- Service/Component
- Status
- Location of incident
- Type of assault

Benefits of Restricted Reporting

- Medical treatment
- Survivor-driven
- Time to consider options
- Information and support
- Control of personal information
- Survivor decides when and how to move forward
- Commander/investigators get accurate picture

Unrestricted Reporting

- Victim may report to law enforcement, chain of command, SARC, or healthcare provider.
- Same process as a restricted report, except that an investigation will be started.
- In unrestricted cases, collected evidence will be retained for 50 years.
- Cannot later change to a restricted report.

Victim Reporting Preference Statement (VPRS)

- Victim is notified of two reporting options.
- VPRS provides explanation on reporting options and limitations of Restricted Reporting.
- For Restricted Reporting, victim must initial and sign.
- If victim refuses to sign, Unrestricted Reporting procedures are followed.

Reporting in the National Guard and Reserves



New Sexual Assault Policies

Announced December 27, 2011

1. Allows a service member who makes an unrestricted report of a sexual assault to request an **expedited transfer** to a new duty station. A restricted report, which is confidential, allows a victim to seek medical aid and counseling but is not communicated to the chain of command.
2. Standardizes retention periods for sexual assault records across the military services to ensure victims have extended access to those documents.

Expedited Transfer

Expedited transfers for Service Members filing Unrestricted Reports:

- Option of temporary or permanent transfer.
- Intent is to protect victims from offenders.
- Commanders have 72 hours to approve or deny request.
- Denied requests can be submitted and reviewed by first general or flag officer in chain of command.
- If granted a PCS, family members will re-locate with the Service Member.

New Policies, cont.

Announced April 22, 2012

- **Initial disposition authority** is withheld from any officer who is below the O-6 – colonel or Navy captain – level and who does not hold special court-martial convening authority.
 - This means that unit commanders at the company or squadron level no longer have authority to decide whether to take further action in sexual assault cases.
 - The new policy also applies to any associated charges related to an alleged assault, such as allegations of retaliatory actions.

Announced April 22, 2012

- Establishing "Special Victim's Unit" capabilities within each of the services, to ensure that specially trained investigators, prosecutors and victim-witness assistance personnel are available to assist with sexual assault cases;
- Requiring that sexual assault policies be **explained** to all service members **within 14 days** of their entrance on active duty;
- Allowing Reserve and National Guard members who have been sexually assaulted while on active duty to **remain in active-duty status** to obtain the treatment and support afforded to active-duty members;
- Requiring a record of the **outcome** of disciplinary and administrative proceedings related to sexual assault, and requiring that copies of those records be centrally retained;
- Requiring annual **organizational climate assessments**; and
- Mandating wider public dissemination of DOD resources, including the DOD Safe Helpline (hotline).

Special Victims' Counsel

- Air Force Pilot Program – legal assistance for victims of sexual assault
- "Victims, who are dealing with a sense of loss of control and sometimes post traumatic stress disorder, are often overwhelmed by what can be a grueling and lengthy criminal process. With legal counsel providing greater support and advocacy throughout the investigatory and trial process, most victims will not walk away feeling victimized a second time." Lt. Gen. Richard C. Harding, Air Force Judge Advocate General.
- 60 attorneys, specially trained and who expressed an interest in sexual assault, will be placed geographically.

Navy Victims' Legal Counsel

- Announced in August 2013
- Navy established Victims' Legal Counsel (VLC) Program, which will provide legal advice and advocacy for eligible victims of sexual assault.
- VLC Program will consist of 29 specially-trained, independent judge advocates assigned regionally to maximize availability of counsel across the Fleet.

More Navy Initiatives

- In July 2013 Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced a new initiative designed to enhance accountability and transparency across the Department, specifically in criminal proceedings.
- Navy now publishes the weekly results of all Special and General Courts-Martial, including sexual assault cases.

Better Training

- DOD Sexual Assault Advocate Certification Program (D-SAACP) is a training and certification program for Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Victim Advocates (VAs).
- Professionalizes the victim advocacy roles.
- More than 22,000 SARCs and SAPR VAs have completed D-SAACP training and met national certification standards.
- To apply, SARCs and VAs must submit an application, which requires signing a Code of Ethics, submitting two letters of recommendation, and completing 32 hours of victim advocacy continuing education training.
- SARCs and SAPR VAs must re-certify to continue providing victim assistance services every two years.

Centralized Database

- October 1, 2013: DoD implemented a standardized, centralized, case-level database which maintains information on sexual assaults.
- Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (DSAID) will serve as the database of record for all future sexual assault reports.

President Orders Action

- December 2013: President Barack Obama gave the military one year to make progress on sexual assault or face potential tougher reforms.
- Ordered Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel and Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to report back to him by Dec. 1, 2014.

"If I do not see the kind of progress I expect, then we will consider additional reforms that may be required to eliminate this crime from our military ranks and protect our brave service members who stand guard for us every day at home and around the world."

Pending Legislation – MJIA

- National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2013, which authorizes funding for the Department of Defense, included historic changes in an ongoing effort to address military sexual assault—which did not pass.
- Proposed amendments (Military Justice Improvement Act) by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., to strip military commanders of their authority to prosecute and to overturn convictions.
- Would require a civilian review if commander declines to prosecute.
- Would require anyone convicted of sexual assault to face a dishonorable discharge or dismissal.
- Provides victims with legal counsel, eliminate statute of limitations for court-martial in sexual assault cases, and make retaliation against a victim a crime.
- Would limit intrusive questioning of victims in Article 32 proceedings, making it more similar to a grand jury.

Summary

- The military has a unique culture and set of laws.
- There are benefits to the military system, such as a quicker disposition of cases.
- The biggest critique of the military system has been unbridled discretion for commanders, which has been limited recently.
- Victims in the military now have more options, including reporting options, legal counsel, MPOs, and expedited transfers.
- Policies and legislation continue to enhance options for victims and accountability for offenders.

Lunch Time!



Sexual Assault in the Context of Domestic Violence in Military Families



DoD Definitions

The Department of Defense distinguishes between the terms "domestic abuse" and "domestic violence."

Domestic violence is an offense under the United States Code, the Uniform Code of Military Justice, or State law involving the use, attempted use, or threatened use of force or violence against a person of the opposite sex, or a violation of a lawful order issued for the protection of a person of the opposite sex, who is:

- A current or former spouse,
- A person with whom the abuser shares a child in common, or
- A current or former intimate partner with whom the abuser shares or has shared a common domicile.

DoD Definitions

Domestic abuse is (1) domestic violence *or* (2) a pattern of behavior resulting in emotional/psychological abuse, economic control, and/or interference with personal liberty that is directed toward a person of the opposite sex who is:
 A current or former spouse,
 A person with whom the abuser shares a child in common, or
 A current or former intimate partner with whom the abuser shares or has shared a common domicile.

Rates of Family Violence Among Military Members

- Difficult to determine exact numbers
- In FY2012, reports made to Family Advocacy Programs (all branches of service):
 - 18,671 reports of spousal abuse
 - 15,656 reports of child abuse
 - 909 reports of abuse of former spouse/intimate partner abuse (many others likely reporting to civilian authorities)
 - 17 fatalities
- Most reports to FAP were by "abusers."
- 88% of abusers were men.

Possible Explanation

By FAP Representative:

Increase in reported spousal and child abuse cases "may reflect the cumulative effects of a decade of high rates of deployment on military families' capacity to sustain coping strategies that are successful for shorter terms of deployment."

"We do not know if this increase is related to adjustment reactions following return from military operations in Iraq or Afghanistan or to other factors, such as marital stress resulting from financial problems associated with the economy, continued public awareness activities encourage reporting, or to some combination of one or more of these."

What do you think?

Decade of War

- Over 2.5 million service members have served in Iraq (OIF) and Afghanistan (OEF)
- About 1.6 million have since transitioned out of the military
- Over 500,000 National Guard and Reservists have served
- Most have served multiple deployments
- At least 37,000 Americans have been deployed more than five times.
- Service members leave behind spouses, partners, and children who all experience effects of the separation and trauma, as well as the difficulty reintegrating

Barriers for Military Members and Families

- Fear of repercussions
- Isolation
- Lack of confidentiality
- Lack of collaboration between civilian and military resources
- Distrust of non-military service providers
- Repeated trauma exposure



Abusive Tactics



Domestic Violence or Post Traumatic Stress?

- Most people returning from war zones will have stress reactions and will need to readjust to being home.
- Most returning service members do not become abusive to their partners and/or families.
- It is often difficult to transition from battlemind to civilian mind set.
- There are reports of increased violence upon return in relationships with and without a history of domestic violence.
- Some studies show that male combat veterans are approximately four times more likely to perpetrate intimate partner violence than other men.

What is PTSD?

- To develop PTSD, a person must have gone through a trauma.
- Almost all people who go through trauma have some symptoms as a result. Yet most people do not develop PTSD.
- A certain pattern of symptoms is involved in PTSD.
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder occurs when:
 - (1) The person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others; and
 - (2) the person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror.

Who Experiences PTSD?

Survivors of ...

- Child abuse
- Sexual assault
- Domestic violence
- Auto Accidents
- Natural disasters
- Combat



Symptoms of PTSD

- Major types of symptoms:
 - Re-experiencing
 - Avoidance
 - Numbing
 - Hyper-vigilance
 - Hyper-arousal



PTSD and Reintegration

- PTSD symptoms are often exposed during reintegration—period after military personnel returns home from combat.
- Military personnel and families may mistake PTSD symptoms for common reintegration issues, until symptoms escalate.
- Family members may be confused, afraid, ashamed, uncertain how to help.
- PTSD may be compounded by reintegration issues, and vice versa.

Impact of Guilt and Shame

- Recent studies have found that PTSD is caused more by internal conflict and guilt than by fear of being killed or sight of dead bodies.
 - "Moral Injury"
- PTSD that is linked to a moral injury is typically more severe than PTSD that results from being part of a near-death experience.
- Veterans who experience a moral injury may be more likely to commit suicide, or exhibit violent tendencies towards family members.

PTSD

- All combat veterans have experienced trauma; some will also suffer from PTSD
- While PTSD does not cause interpersonal violence, it must be addressed
- Critical to provide trauma-informed services to address symptoms and combat reactions

What is a TBI?

- Traumatic Brain Injury
 - Traumatically induced disruption of brain function/disturbance of consciousness, resulting in impairment of cognitive, emotional, and physical functioning.
 - Symptoms may include: headaches, insomnia, fatigue, memory loss and trouble concentrating, quick anger, anxiety, poor impulse control, misinterpretation of communication with others.

TBI Prevalence

- Blasts are the leading cause (70%) of TBIs in current Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts
- Effects of concussion from blast injuries are not always immediately recognized
- Estimated over 300,000 service members experienced probable TBI
- Many TBIs are caused by repeated, smaller incidents, not one large, dramatic incident

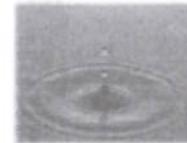
Other Common Post-Combat Stress Reactions

- Sleep disturbance
- Nightmares
- Short temper
- Agitation, irritation
- Easily startled
- Increased alcohol/drug use
- Mistrust
- Over-protective behaviors



Layered Trauma

- Survivors may have experienced multiple layers of trauma.
- For example, child sexual abuse and combat exposure.
- May magnify PTSD experience and symptoms.



Why Don't They Seek Help?

Civilians experiencing trauma:

- 1 out of 5 people say they might not get help because of what other people might think.
- 1 out of 3 people say they would not want anyone else to know they were in therapy.

Military personnel have added barriers of:

- Fear of career repercussions
- Fear of being "weak"
- Financial concerns
- Allegiance to military and other service members
- Silent oath among soldiers/sailors/airmen

Substance Use

- Some combat veterans self-medicate with alcohol or drugs to numb the thoughts, feelings, memories.
- Some combat veterans with substance abuse problems may be violent and some may not.
- Alcohol or drug use does *not* cause domestic violence, but may intensify it.
- Alcohol and drug use does *not* cause sexual violence, but may be used as a tool to perpetrate.
- If violence is already present, substance use may pose an increased risk for dangerousness and lethality.

Suicide

- A U.S. military veteran commits suicide every 65 minutes (about 22 a day) according to a recent VA study.
- Record high in 2012: 182 in Army, 60 in Navy, 59 in Air Force, and 48 in Marine Corps.
- Repeat combat exposure increases the risk of suicide, especially when veteran is experiencing guilt and shame.
- PTSD, depression, substance abuse, and TBIs also increase suicide risk.
- Suicidal thinking and behaviors is one of the risk factors for lethal domestic violence.
- Military family members are also at a high risk of suicide.

DV or PTS(D): Recognizing and Responding

PTSD v. DV

PTSD

- Perpetrator may be unaware that he is using violence; may be re-experiencing combat
- Stand alone violence with no pattern of coercive or abusive behavior
- Violence may be directed at multiple people
- Other power and control dynamics/tactics not present
- Perpetrator is remorseful and takes responsibility for his actions

DV

- Perpetrator is using violence to gain or maintain control over his partner
- Other power and control tactics are present, and were likely present during the deployment
- Violence is directed almost exclusively at intimate partner
- Perpetrator minimizes, makes excuses for, denies, and blames the victims or others for his violence.

PTSD v. DV

PTSD Symptoms

- Avoidance & social isolation
- Hyper vigilance
- Irritability
- Increased anger
- Re-experiencing traumatic event
- **Shame and remorse**

DV Behaviors

- Isolating victim
- Stalking & surveillance
- Intimidation & threats
- Righteous rage (entitlement)
- Emotional abuse
- Economic abuse
- Coercion
- **Minimizing, denying, blaming**

TBI v. DV

TBI Symptoms

- Violence is diffuse, not specifically targeted at intimate partner
- Emotional symptoms, not part of a pattern of coercive behavior
- Meds & treatment will decrease TBI symptoms, but will not impact DV behaviors
- TBI symptoms may make it more difficult for the victim to monitor perpetrator's verbal & non-verbal cues

DV Behaviors

- Tactics are targeted at the intimate partner
- Tactics and behaviors are part of a pattern of abusive and coercive behavior
- DV behaviors may be aggravated by the TBI, and vice versa

Ask Questions, Dig Deeper

Domestic Violence is all about
context, context, context.

We should focus less on telling victims what to do and more on telling abusers what not to do.

Conversation Starters

- What brought you here today? Can you tell me what happened?
- How can I help you?
- Can you describe your relationship?
- What was s/he like before they deployed?
- What are you most concerned about?
- What would you like to see happen?

Ask open ended questions.
Listen for context.



Challenge Assumptions

- Do not assume that all military members are violent, nor that all violence is caused by combat exposure.
- Many combat veterans will experience PTSD, TBIs, or combat stress—but, this does not excuse violence.
- Understand “difficult” victim behavior may be a trauma response.
- Understand that military members and families have unique barriers and experiences.
- Ensure that victims are referred, and perpetrators are sent, to appropriate services.
- Support victims’ decisions. Do not judge.

Creating a Culture of Change

The Future

NEXT EXIT

Building Successful Collaborations

- Not merely exchanging information, but understanding who the other parties are, their role, what motivates them, and what they need from the collaboration.
- Based on trust and integrity, but also on a mutual understanding of the perspectives of the other party.
- Organizations come together to create something new, such as a new process—with an outcome and objectives in mind.

A Successful Collaboration ...

- Has a clear goal that all parties support and understand.
- Respects diversity—of backgrounds, roles, and viewpoints.
- Seeks a consensus that respects different views and opinions.
- Determines smaller incremental benchmarks of success.
- Regularly evaluates and develops alternatives when needed.
- Avoids turf wars (stay in your lane) and checks egos at the door.

Who needs to be involved?

- Non-profit sexual assault advocates
- Sexual assault coalitions
- SARCs
- Military Victim Advocates
- Law enforcement and/or LE advocates
- Nurses
- Who else?



Memoranda of Understanding

Collaborative relationships can be strengthened through formalized Memoranda of Understanding (MOU).

What is each person's role? What are each person's limitations?

Remember confidentiality.

Addressing Misconceptions

Misconceptions from Advocacy Community About the Military

- Service members are all controlling and violent.
- Military encourages members to be violent and perpetrate sexual assault.
- Military members are all sexist and blame victims.
- Victims would be better off without the military.

Misconceptions from the Military About Sexual Assault

- All violence committed by service members is caused by PTSD, TBI, or combat stress.
- Responsibility should be placed on victims.
- Advocacy services are not necessary.
- The only interventions needed are through the chain of command.

Cross Training

Civilian Advocates

- Understanding sexual assault
- Impact of trauma and providing trauma-informed services
- Program confidentiality and limitations
- Services available through sexual assault advocacy program

Military Personnel/Advocates

- Military culture and structure
- Unique issues for survivors who are military service members
- Military confidentiality and limitations
- Military response and options, services available through the military



Changing the Culture: Ending Sexual Assault in the Military

Ending Silence

- Reports of sexual assault in the military are increasing, which could mean more victims are coming forward.
- More people are talking about the epidemic, but it's important to do so in a way that encourages victims to come forward, and enhances collaboration.
- Celebrate survivors!
- Support all victims and hold all perpetrators accountable.



End Victim Blaming

- Refocus on perpetrator accountability.
- Do not tolerate sexist/homophobic comments or jokes about sexual assault.
- Get the facts. Remember that most rape reports are true.
- Take all allegations/concerns seriously.
- Focus prevention efforts on changing culture, *not* changing victim behavior.

We Must Realize that
Sexual Violence is NEVER
the Victim's Fault

Change Our Language

- How we talk about sexual assault frames how we respond to it.
- Avoid language that implies consensual sex:
 - "Intercourse"
 - "Performed oral sex"
 - "He kissed/caressed/fondled her"
- Avoid language that allows the rapist to be invisible:
 - "S/he was raped"
- Avoid language that minimizes the seriousness of the crime
 - "He said, she said"

Risk Reduction, Not Prevention

- Strategies that teach women how to "stay safe" (aka, Buddy Systems) are risk reduction, not prevention, strategies
- May be helpful for empowerment and may reduce risk, but will not prevent rape
- Misconceptions may lead to victim blaming, cause victims to feel shamed for being assaulted

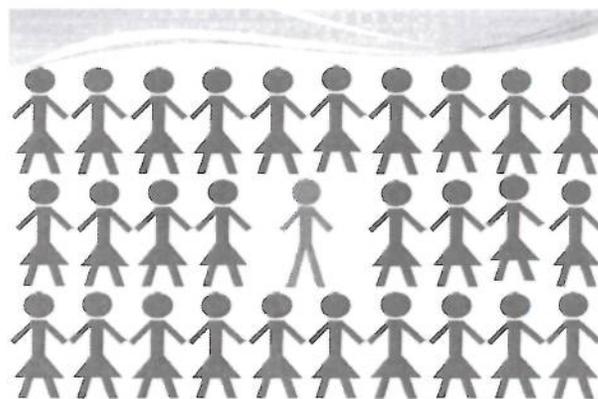
Messages for Command Staff

- Sexual assault is pervasive in society, not just in the military. But, military members face additional barriers.
- Some things to address:
 - Sexual comments and sexist jokes should not be tolerated.
 - Victims should be, and feel, supported—never blamed.
 - Intervene. And encourage others to do so as well.
 - Understand that any sexual act without consent is *rape*.
- Command Staff can help create a culture and environment that does not tolerate sexual violence.

Messages for Troops

- Always ASK before engaging in any sexual act.
- Intervene when you see someone harassing, pressuring, or using alcohol to coerce someone.
- Hold each other accountable. Wingman, Battle Buddy.
- Any form of sexual violence is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.
- If they are ever made to feel uncomfortable or if they are assaulted, they have a safe place to turn.
- Lead by example!

Ending Sexual Assault = Changing Rape Culture



To Change This Culture, We Must Focus on the Perpetrators

Take a Stand



- Sexual comments should not be tolerated.
- Sexist/racist/homophobic jokes should not be tolerated.
- Victims should be supported.
- Intervene.
- Understand that any sexual act without consent is *rape*.
- Support a culture and environment that does not allow sexual violence.

Preventing Sexual Violence Means Balancing the Scales



Things to Say to a Survivor

1. I believe you.
2. This is not your fault.
3. You are not alone.

Resources

- Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence
<http://kcsdv.org>, (785) 232-9784
- Kansas Statewide Hotline
• **1-888-END-ABUSE**
- Domestic Violence National Hotline:
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
- Sexual Assault National Hotline:
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
- Safe Helpline
(for service members and DoD civilians)
1-877-995-5247
Call, text, or chat online
<https://www.safehelpline.org>



More Resources

- **National Suicide Prevention Hotline**
1-800-273-TALK (8255) www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- **Military OneSource**, available for active duty military and veteran families 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Contact 1-800-342-9647 or <http://www.militaryonesource.com>.
- **Courage Beyond**
Private non-profit, support for service members, veterans, and families
<http://couragebeyond.org>
eClinic 24/7 hotline:
1-866-781-8010



Goodbye, for now.

Contact Information

(803) 386-9336
pam@pamelajacobs.com

PAMELA
Jacobs

www.pamelajacobs.com

 facebook.com/pamelajacobsconsulting