

Domestic Violence in the United States Military

Jennifer Martinez, MSW candidate

Introduction to domestic violence

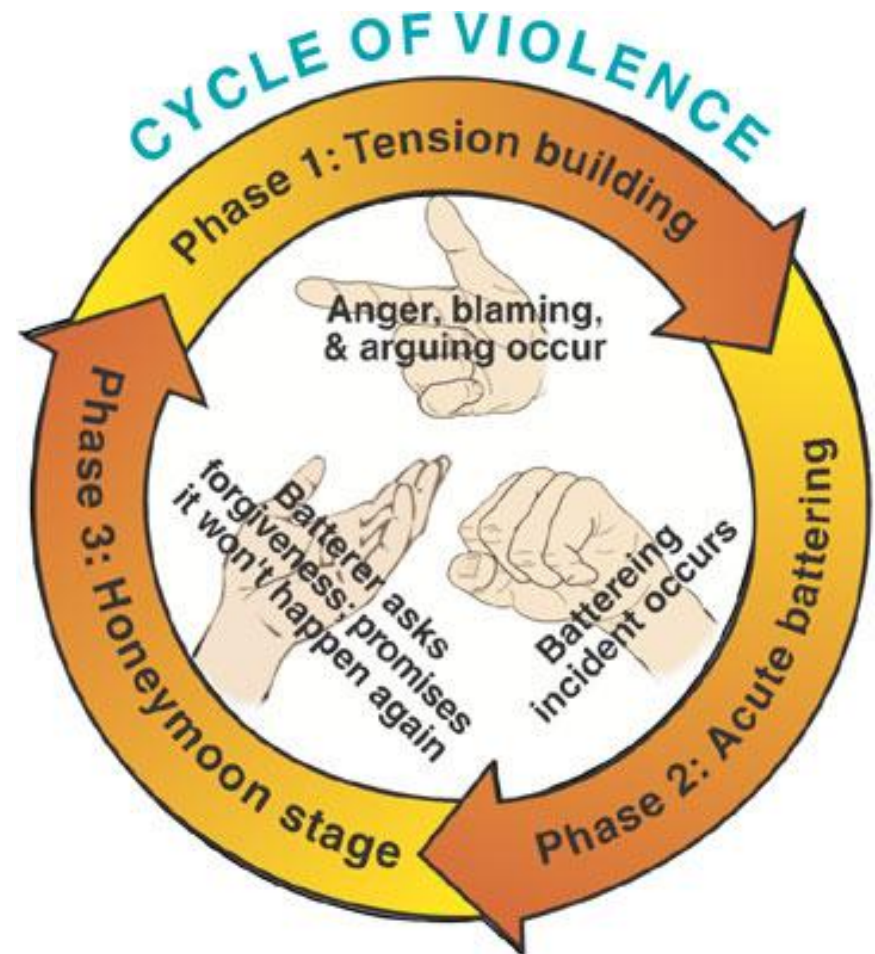
- Domestic violence consists of behaviors used by one person in a relationship to control the other.
- Domestic violence (DV) is also referred to as Interpersonal Violence (IPV)
- Partners may be married or not married; heterosexual, gay, or lesbian; living together, separated or dating.

(<http://www.domesticviolence.org>)

What is Domestic Violence?

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial abuse

- Abuse is cyclical
- Batterers make it very difficult for victims to escape relationships



From: <http://www.nnedv.org/resources/stats/faqaboutdv.html#1whatisdv>

Picture: <http://extension.missouri.edu>

Military Domestic Violence Prevalence:

- Violence occurs in military families and between male and female soldiers
- It is very difficult to obtain information about DV in military because records are guarded very closely, little is released to the public, and because many victims do not report violence due to threats from the abuser
- DV appears to occur at similar rates in the military as it does in the general US population
- “One Army-funded study that was done, however, found that reports of “severe aggression” against spouses ran more than three times higher among Army families than among civilian ones in 1998.”
 - The level of violence is more extreme* (Lutz & Ellison, 2002)

What Makes the Military Different?

- The military has their own definitions for specific acts of domestic violence which are very different from civilian definitions
 - EX: Strangulation
 - Civilian- this form of domestic violence is viewed as “Very Dangerous” to most civilians who work in the field
 - Military- the DoD (Department of Defense) defines this action as “Mild or Moderate” abuse- (DTFDV, 2003)
- Life stressors
- Military culture
 - Above-the-law culture (Lutz & Ellison, 2002)
- Cultural Spillover Theory (Bradley, 2007)
 - Violence is part of the military training, but that may spill over to the soldiers life outside of work

Example of Cultural Spillover:

“A Special Forces soldier, who was once arrested for domestic violence, told one of us that Memorial Day ceremonies always left him pondering why he would get medals for killing others in battle but would be arrested if he killed his wife.” (Lutz & Ellison, 2002)

Actual Numbers:

Comparison of civilian and Army wives:

- For demographically matched civilian wives, Army wives had higher rates of:
 - Moderate husband-to wife violence
 - Moderate was defined as: Threw something that could hurt; pushed, grabbed, or shoved; slapped; kicked, bit, or hit with a fist
 - 13.1% vs. 10%
 - Severe husband-to-wife violence
 - Severe was defined as: Beat up; choked; threatened with a knife or gun; used a knife or gun
 - 4.4% vs. 2% (Heyman & Neidig, 1999)

Actual Numbers:

Active Duty Women:

- Active duty women with 1 child or 3 or more children were more than 2x more likely to experience physical and/or sexual abuse than women in the military with no children (Campbell et. al, 2003)
- Prevalence rates of IPV experienced by active duty women varies between 13.5-58% (Campbell et. al, 2003)

Actual Numbers:

Post Deployment:

- Length of deployment has been positively correlated with the severity of IPV in the year following the deployment
 - The longer the deployment, the more severe the violence (McCarroll et al., 2000)

Perpetration:

- Each year less than 1% of active duty Army service men are formally identified as perpetrators (McCarroll et al., 1999 as cited by Marshall et al., 2005)

Current DV military programs

Policy:

- Via a 2001 memorandum the DoD formally stated that:
“domestic violence will not be tolerated in the Department of Defense (DoD)... Domestic violence is an offense against the institutional values of the Military Services of the United states of America. Commanders at every level have a duty to take appropriate steps to prevent domestic violence, protect victims, and hold those who commit it accountable.”
(DFTDV, 2003, attachment 1)
- Army policy AR 608-18 requires commanders to report suspected *spouse* and child abuse
- The DoD created the Defense Task Force on Domestic Violence in 2000 to complete 3-yearly reviews
 - Reviews include:
 - Assessment of current services
 - Recommendations for how to improve services

Current DV military programs

Victim Assistance:

- Commanders refer victims to chaplains
 - Some chaplains advised victims that suffering is a woman's lot or that their husbands were just "working off some excess energy."
- The commanding officer *can* issue a MPO (military protective order)
 - Military equivalent to a Civilian Restraining Order
 - MPO's are issued without notice to the offender
 - MPO's are only admissible through the issuing chain of command
 - MPO's do not hold up in civilian courts (Somerville, 2009)
- Family Advocacy Program (FAP)
 - Military service provider to victims of domestic violence
 - Non-clinical service for victims (Lutz & Ellison, 2002)

How FAP works:

1. When there is an incident reported, a FAP worker is assigned to the case
2. They file a report (restricted or unrestricted) * see notes
3. Their investigation must be reported to the offender or victims commanding officer

“Nothing that the service-member (as an alleged offender) says to the FAP caseworker, FAP agent, or FAP employee is confidential” (Somerville, 2009)

Recommendations

- As per the recommendations of the DTFDV, establish and enforce a system to hold perpetrators accountable
- Batterer education programs should be mandated on military bases for those who are abusive
- Programs should:
 - Educate batterers about their use of power, male privilege, and entitlement and the effects it has on women
 - Teach batterers to identify/articulate feelings/emotions, and to view DV as a choice not a mental health problem
 - Assist in breaking the cycle of violence by employing approaches that address beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors

THANK YOU!

- Verizon Wireless
- Dean Richard Edwards
- Center on Violence Against Women and Children
- My family for all their support

Resources for presentation:

- Army OneSource. (2007). Family Advocacy Program Domestic Abuse Restricted/Unrestricted Reporting Option. Retrieved from <https://www.myarmyonesource.com/FamilyProgramsandServices/FamilyPrograms/FamilyAdvocacyProgram/TipsfortheHome/default.aspx>
- Bourassa, D. (2009). Compassion Fatigue and the Adult Protective Services Social Worker. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 52(3), 215-229.
- Bradley, Christopher (2007). Veteran Status and Marital Aggression: Does Military Service Make a Difference?. *Journal of Family Violence*, 22(4), 197-209.
- Campbell, J. C., Garza, M. A., Gielen, A. C., O'Campo, P., Kub, J., Dienemann, J., Jones, A. S., & Jafar, E. (2003). Intimate partner violence and abuse among active duty military women. *Violence Against Women*, 9(9), 1072–1093.
- Defense Task Force on Domestic Violence. (2003). Third annual report. Washington, DC: Department of Defense.
- Forgey, M., & Badger, L. (2006). Patterns of Intimate Partner Violence Among Married Women in the Military: Type, Level, Directionality and Consequences. *Journal of Family Violence*, 21(6), 369-380.
- Hansen, Christine. (2004). Prepared Statement of Christine Hansen, Executive Director, The Miles Foundation Personnel Subcommittee, Senate Armed Services Committee, February 25, 2004. Retrieved from http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/congress/2004_hr/040225-hansen.pdf
- Heyman, R.E., & Neidig, P.H. (1999). A comparison of spousal aggression prevalence rates in U.S. Army and civilian representative samples. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 67, 239-242.
- Jordan, B.K., Marman, C.R., Fairbank, J.A., Schlenger, W.E., Kulka, R.A., Hough, R.L., et al. (1992). Problems in families of male Vietnam veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 60, 916-926.
- Kanno, H., & Newhill, C. (2009). Social Workers and Battered Women: The Need to Study Client Violence in the Domestic Violence Field. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 18(1), 46-63.
- Lutz, C., & Elliston, J. (2002). Domestic Terror. *Nation*, 275(12), 18-20.
- Marshall, A., Panuzio, J., & Taft, C. (2005). Intimate partner violence among military veterans and active duty servicemen. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 25(7), 862-876.
- McCarroll, J.E., Ursano, R.J., Liu, X., Thayer, L.E., Newby, J.H., Norwood, A.E., et al. (2000). Deployment and the probability of spousal aggression by U.S. Army soldiers. *Military Medicine*, 165, 41-44.
- Somerville, K. (2009). The Military Report Card Concerning Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Including Compliance with the Lautenberg Amendment. *Family Law Quarterly*, 43(2), 301-314.