Response to DACOWITS RFI W3:

Sexual Assault Prevention Programs

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The Committee remains interested in proactive programs that educate Service members on ways to prevent sexual assault from occurring.

The committee requests a literature review in the form of a written response from Insight on studies and research associated with a decrease in the occurrence of sexual assault or attempted sexual assault related to programs such as:

- Prevention training; socialization of women (potential victims); training on behaviors (e.g., warning signs, environmental awareness); resistance programs; self-defense training; etc.

Introduction

To build on its many years of working regarding sexual harassment and sexual assault in the military, DACOWITS requested a literature review on successful sexual assault prevention and education programs. While the committee has been briefed by the Department of Defense and the Services on the vast array of sexual assault prevention and response programs in place, this review focuses on 1) what makes a program successful and 2) examples of proven prevention and educations interventions. The literature on programs to reduce sexual assault, program strategies, and program effectiveness is vast and spans many years. This report synthesizes this information and gives brief descriptions of successful evidence-based programs and their outcomes. The first section of this report will focus on overarching trends found in the literature on what characteristics appear to make programs more effective by looking at two meta-analyses of sexual assault programs. In the first section, we also examine attitudes toward sexual assault education/training. Current sexual assault education programs used by DoD will also be examined. The second section consists of two tables, one that highlights 14 programs relating to adult education and training on sexual assault and describes evidence on each program's success, and one that illustrates the range of strategies employed by these programs.

A. Overview of Sexual Assault Literature: Best Practices From Meta-Analyses Evaluating Sexual Assault Education Programs

Meta-analysis is a method for contrasting and combining results from different studies in the hope of identifying patterns among study results. Meta-analyses are especially useful studies when examining a large body of literature such as research on sexual assault education. Below, we present best practices that comprise successful sexual assault education programs.

1. Number and Length of Intervention Sessions

In a meta-analysis conducted by Anderson and Whiston (2005),[1] the researchers found that "**longer interventions (length of time in minutes) seemed to be more effective in altering both rape[1] and rape-related attitudes**." In 2011, another meta-analysis on sexual assault programs found "programs that have multiple sessions with long session lengths particularly those with a lecture-based format are effective at improving rape attitudes and rape myth acceptance."[2] Although multiple-session programs seem to have a greater effect than single-session programs, according to these meta-analyses, the single-session programs highlighted in Table 1 still have significant effects on changing participants' attitudes or beliefs about sexual assault. Single-session programs like the Men's Program, which is aimed at men in college fraternities and uses an intense visual teaching aid (the "NO MORE" video), and InterACT, which use audience participation in role playing, have been shown to have a lasting effect on participants. Table 1 provides a summary of these programs.

2. Single-Sex or Mixed-Sex Audience

A major debate in the literature focuses on whether programs designed for a single-sex audience or a mixed-sex audience are more effective in educating participants about sexual assault and promoting participants' efficacy against assault culture and actual threats. Other studies in the meta-analyses

[1] We understand that rape only represents one type of sexual assault; however, the term is used commonly in the literature. Throughout this document, we use the word rape when directly quoting the literature to maintain the integrity of the findings.

showed that single-sex sessions give participants the chance to be more open about their feelings or experiences without scrutiny from the other sex. Another group of studies showed mixed-sex programs allow participants the opportunity to learn from and discuss with the opposite sex to get a better understanding from a different perspective. Anderson and Whiston (2005)[3] found in their meta-analysis that there was "no statistically significant difference in benefits for men in all-male groups compared to men in mixed-gender groups." However, Vladutiu, Martin, and Macy (2010)[4] found "interventions targeted toward a single-gender audience are effective at improving rape attitudes, behavioral intent, rape awareness, rape knowledge, rape empathy, and rape myth acceptance" as compared to mixed-sex programs.

3. Professional Leaders or Peer Leaders

Another major difference in how programs are implemented is whether they are led by peer-facilitators or professional presenters. Anderson and Whiston (2005)[5] found **"professional presenters [were] more successful while graduate students and peer presenters were less successful in promoting positive change."** Vladutiu et al. (2010)[6] explored this question further and found that success in facilitation depends on what outcomes a program is trying to achieve. Professional-facilitated programs should be considered for improving rape-related attitudes and behavioral intentions, while peer-facilitated programs should be considered for reducing rape myth acceptance.

B. Attitudes Toward Sexual Assault Education

In a study conducted by Rich, Utley, Janke, and Moldoveanu (2010),[7] 157 college men were surveyed to assess their attitudes on sexual assault education. The researchers were interested in attitudes among university students because they see universities as a "breeding ground for hypermasculinity." The researchers argue that since men commit most sexual assaults, it is vital to understand how they feel about sexual assault training. Men are not likely to see themselves as either sexual assault survivors or possible offenders, so their reactions or feelings about sexual assault training and education give valuable insight to how programs may want to address issues of sexual assault education within a male-dominate culture. The researchers found the following about the men surveyed:

- Fifty-one percent would not attend a one-day sexual assault program.
- Thirty-two percent thought a one-day course would be beneficial, but did not believe men would attend.
- Eight percent thought they would attend a semester-long sexual assault prevention course.
- Seventy-seven percent would not attend a semester long sexual assault prevention course.
- Eleven percent agreed men should be responsible for prevention efforts.

Many of these men believed attending a one-day seminar would be a waste of their time because it does not pertain to their lives, and some respondents even felt personally offended by the suggestion that they attend an educational session. Rich et al.[8] also noted, "Despite the arguments [in the literature] for same-sex audiences, 79 percent of respondents (124) preferred a mixed-sex audience. Many of these respondents argued that a mixed-sex audience would lead to a richer understanding of the issues, and that it was important to hear from both men and women."

C. Sexual Assault Education Programs in the Military

In 2008, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) did a comprehensive evaluation of sexual assault prevention and investigations in DoD and the Coast Guard. In this study, GAO found that neither DoD nor the Coast Guard had systematically evaluated the effectiveness of the training provided to date. GAO found that while all Service members were required to receive periodic training, most—but not all—Service members received the training. Some who received the training still did not know how or were not sure how to report a sexual assault using the restricted reporting option.[9] GAO also found that while most commanders supported the programs, some did not. As of April 2014, DoD had implemented 26 of the 32 implementations suggested by GAO and was actively working on the remaining six. [10]

DoD continues to address recommendations made by GAO through the Sexual Assault Prevention Response Office (SAPRO). The following events lead to this office's formation more than a decade ago. In 2004, DoD created the SAPRO Task Force, and by January 2005, DoD had presented a comprehensive policy on prevention and response on sexual assault to Congress. This policy became permanent in October 2005, and the Task Force began transitioning into a permanent office that very month.[11] Since that time, SAPRO has researched characteristics of promising programs and has developed the following recommended list of elements to include in sexual assault prevention programs:

- Leadership Involvement
- Peer-to-Peer Mentorship
- Education and Training
- Accountability
- Organizational Support
- Community Involvement
- Deterrence
- Communication
- Incentives
- Harm Reduction[12]

According to the 2014 study "Sexual Assault Training in the Military: Evaluating Efforts to End 'The Invisible War,'" SAPRO training initiatives have undergone little evaluation by outside researchers; it is standard practice in the military to use participant self-reporting to evaluate the effectiveness of military sexual assault training efforts. The study found exposure to comprehensive training predicted lower sexual assault incidence and superior knowledge. However, comprehensive training differed as a function of military branch, rank, gender, and sexual assault history. Judgments of training effectiveness also varied across these dimensions. The results highlight the importance of considering context, gender, and victimization history when evaluating institutional efforts to end sexual violence.[13] DoD's 2010 annual report on military sexual assault concluded that ''most Active Duty members receive effective training on sexual assault'' [14] but the findings of Holland, Rabelo, and Cortina (2014) cast doubt on that assertion.[15] In addition, findings from DACOWITS' 2015 focus groups illustrated participants' beliefs that trainings to date had been effective in changing military culture around sexual harassment and sexual assault, but others considered the trainings to be excessive.[16]

Overview of Successful Sexual Assault Prevention and Education Programs

Table 1 highlights examples of sexual assault prevention programs that have been proven successful. The target populations of these interventions (listed in the "Population" column of the table) have commonalities with military populations, either by age or because of the population's insular nature. Table 2 provides a snapshot of the "best practice" elements and range of strategies employed by each of the 14 programs listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Overview of Successful Sexual Assault Prevention and Education Programs

Program/Intervention Name	Target Population	Overview	Dose	Evidence
1. Coaching Boys Into Men[17]	Male high school athletes	Dating violence prevention program uses the relationships between high school athletes and their coaches to change social norms and behaviors.	11 brief coach-to-athlete sessions	At one-year follow-up, program had positive effects on dating violence perpetration (including physical and sexual violence). Effects on sexual violence were not assessed.
2. Bringing in the Bystander[18]	Male and female college students	Bystander education and training program aims to engage participants as potential witnesses to violence, rather than as offenders or survivors.	Two options: one 90-minute session or three 90-minute sessions	Program maintained a positive effect at four and one-half months following the intervention. More research is needed to understand the program's effects on bystander behavior and sexual violence.
3. Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)[19]	Male and female athletes and campus leaders in high-school and college	MVP seeks to empower young people to speak out against and intervene in harassment and other forms of abusive treatment toward women. MVP trains participants as peer leaders and mentors in the anti-violence work. Goals for men also include examining traditional masculinity and its link to violence and abuse.	12–14 hours of sessions over a two- to three-month period	Pre- and posttest survey results suggested participants significantly increased their knowledge of violence against women, reduced violence-supported attitudes, and had heightened feelings of self-efficacy related to their ability to confront harassing or disrespectful conduct.
4. Men Against Violence (MAV)[20]	Male fraternity members	MAV seeks to sever the ties between violence and traditional male gender roles. MAV members engage in four areas of programming: awareness, community action, education, and support.”	One-hour programs held at individual fraternity houses	Participants noted increased awareness of attitudes on rape and understanding of the importance of getting consent for sexual activity, although these results were short term.

Program/Intervention Name	Target Population	Overview	Dose	Evidence
5. Enhanced Assess, Acknowledge, Act Sexual Assault Resistance Program[21]	First-year female college students	Unit 1 of the program focuses on improving women's assessment of the risk of sexual assault developing problem-solving strategies to reduce offender advantages. Unit 2 helps women to acknowledge more quickly the danger in situations that have turned coercive. Unit 3 offers instruction of effective options for resistance; self-defense training. Unit 4 provides sexual information and safe-sex practices.	Four three-hour units	The risk of completed rape was found to be significantly lower in the treatment group, indicating that only 22 women would need to take the program in order to prevent one additional rape from occurring within one year after participation. The program also reduced the incidence of attempted rape In the current trial; these results were sustained up to one year.
6. Green Dot[22]	Male and female college students ages 18–26	Green Dot increases proactive self-reported active bystander behaviors and aims to reduce dating violence and sexual violence on college campuses.	Phase 1 includes a 50-minute motivational speech provided to students. Phase 2 of training consists of an intervention program.	Participants scored significantly lower on the rape myth acceptance index than students who did not attend a session. Students who attended the speech but not the training had significantly lower active bystander scores. Both intervention groups reported more observed and active bystander behaviors than nonexposed students did.
7. The Men's Project[23]	College males socialized in all-male groups	The Men's Project curriculum highlights gender socialization and privilege; intersections of identities; and the politics of oppression, sexual assault	2-hour sessions held once a week for 10 weeks	Participants had a new awareness of gender and learned new information about sexual assault. Participants also had more empathy in situations where women might be

Program/Intervention Name	Target Population	Overview	Dose	Evidence
		myths and facts, how to support a survivor, and sexual assault prevention/bystander intervention strategies.		uncomfortable. Participants consistently reported noticing situations involving sexist behavior.
8. First Year Campus Acquaintance Rape Education (FYCARE)[24]	Male and female first-year college students	Program aims to deter sexual victimization of college women.	One two-hour session	Participants who attended the education sessions decreased myth acceptance, improved knowledge, and increased support for prevention efforts. There was more use of services through the Office of Women's Programs and in number of sexual assaults reported to the University Police department. Superior outcomes were observed among students who attended more than one session.
9. Sexual Assault Self-Defense and Risk-Reduction Program[25]	Female college students	Program seeks to lower the risk of sexual assault by increasing behavior to reduce risk of sexual assault, including self-defense.	An education session followed by a two-and-a-half-hour self-defense course and a one-and-a-half-hour booster session held three months later	Participants significantly increased their protective behaviors. There were no differences between the two groups regarding rates of sexual victimization, assertive communication, or feelings of self-efficacy over the follow-up periods. Participants who were victimized during the three-month follow-up period evidenced less self-blame and greater offender blame for their assaults.

Program/Intervention Name	Target Population	Overview	Dose	Evidence
10. The Men's Program[26]	College men in a fraternity	Program attempts to influence men by appealing to beliefs they have been shown to have about helping to prevent sexual assault. Program presenters show a video (NO MORE, 2000) describing a male-on-male rape experience to teach men how a rape experience might feel. One treatment group in the study participated in an added module on bystander intervention in situations involving alcohol. Another treatment group received additional training on defining consent in situations involving alcohol.	One hour program	Both the consent and bystander group had significantly less likelihood of committing sexual assault after program participation than those in the control group. The bystander group had significantly lower rape myth acceptance than those in the control group. The bystander group had significantly more empathy toward female rape survivors than those in the control group. The consent group did not differ from the control group on either of these measures.
11. Sex Signals and Workshop[27]	First year college students, both female and male	Program educates participants about the effects of sex, sexual orientation, sexual assault victimization history, and substance use.	A two-pronged program package: (1) the 90-minute "Sex Signals" dramatic performance, and (2) a 90-minute small-group educational workshop	Students who had no exposure were more likely to report they were sexually assaulted during their first year of college. Results suggest that the program was effective for men and women, but not for students with a prior history of sexual assault victimization. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual students were at increased risk for victimization as compared with heterosexual students, and students who drank alcohol or engaged in binge drinking were at increased risk

Program/Intervention Name	Target Population	Overview	Dose	Evidence
				as compared with alcohol-abstinent students.
12. InterACT Sexual Assault Prevention Program [28]	Male and female college students	Program is an interactive, skill-building performance that seeks to train participants to engage in effective bystander interventions to prevent sexual assault. Program is in use by the Navy.[29]	60- to 75-minute performance followed by discussion and questions	Participants showed substantial increases in self-reported likelihood of intervening as a bystander to prevent sexual assault. Results suggest bystander intervention programs may continue to have an effect over time, particularly for participants with weaker initial beliefs about the efficacy of, and weaker intentions to engage in, bystander interventions.
13. Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy (SAPR) Training Evaluation[30]	Active duty men and women across all Services	SAPR is a proactive and comprehensive approach to prevent sexual assault on multiple levels; it is a multifaceted approach with initiatives in five lines of effort (prevention, investigation, accountability, advocacy/ victim assistance, and assessment). The key objectives of the strategy are to inform public policy and legislation; institutionalize prevention practices and programs across the force; set and enforce standards for appropriate conduct and integrating prevention into	Recruits receive an initial SAPR briefing during the first 14 days of training. Each Service then conducts SAPR training during follow-on initial training. Annually, SAPR refresher training is conducted for each Service and National Guard Bureau member.[32]	Air Force personnel had the greatest access to comprehensive sexual assault training. Those in the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard reported the least access to training and, when trained, the lowest content exposure. Personnel reporting Comprehensive Exposure, who described their training as covering a broad range of topics, had significantly greater knowledge of sexual assault resources and protocols than trainees who reported they had been exposed to only partial or minimal content. Moreover, trainees reporting Minimal

Program/Intervention Name	Target Population	Overview	Dose	Evidence
		command practices; mentor, develop skills, and educate Service members to promote healthy relationships and intervene against inappropriate or unacceptable behaviors.[31]		Exposure had no more knowledge of resources and protocols than those who had received no training at all. Deficient training may be as problematic as going untrained.
14. Navy Sexual Assault Intervention Training (SAIT)[33]	Male Navy personnel	SAIT educates participants on the military's definition of sexual assault and regulations concerning the consequences of sexual assault. SAIT helps men empathize with sexual assault survivors and recognize positive consent. SAIT also highlights the effect peer pressure may have on sexual aggression.	One session of one to two hours	The program was effective in increasing rape knowledge and empathy for rape survivors. The program reduced rape myth acceptance and was successful at changing the attitudes of all men, even those who had reported prior sexual coercive behavior.

Table 2. Summary of Characteristics of Successful Sexual Assault Prevention and Education Programs

	Single or Mixed Gender		Peer or Professional Facilitated		Single or Multiple Session	
Program	**Single Gender**	**Mixed Gender**	**Peer Facilitated**	**Professional Facilitated**	**Single Session**	**Multiple Sessions**
Coaching Boys Into Men	✓			✓[2]		✓
Bringing in the Bystander		✓	✓		✓	✓
Mentors in Violence Prevention		✓		✓		✓
Men Against Violence	✓		✓		✓	
Enhanced Assess, Acknowledge, Act, Sexual Assault Resistance Program	✓					✓
Green Dot		✓		✓		✓
The Men's Project	✓			✓		✓
First Year Campus Acquaintance Rape Education		✓	✓		✓	
Sexual Assault Self-Defense and Risk Reduction Program	✓			✓		✓
The Men's Program	✓		✓		✓	
Sexual Assault Prevention Strategy Training		✓	✓	✓		✓
Sex Signals and Workshop		✓		✓		✓
InterACT		✓		✓	✓	
Sexual Assault Intervention Training	✓[3]	✓		✓	✓	

[2] Facilitators in Coaching Boys into Men may not be professional trainers, but these coaches are trained in the program and are authority figures to participants.
[3] For the cited evaluation, the Sexual Assault Intervention Training program was held with only male participants. In the Navy, it operates under a mixed-gender strategy, and therefore can operate as both a single- and mixed-gender program.

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