

INFORMATION PAPER

Family Programs Branch, Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management
17 MAY 2019

SUBJECT: Response to Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service (DACOWITS) Request for Information

1. Purpose: To provide answers to questions on Army response to domestic violence as requested by DACOWITS

2. Questions

a. **Provide a copy of the annual report provided to DoD on domestic violence fatality reviews, per DoDI 6400.06, "Domestic Abuse Involving DoD Military and Certain Affiliated Personnel," for the past five years.**

Response: Copies of the requested reports are enclosed.

b. **Does your Service collect domestic abuse and domestic violence data on current or former intimate partners who have not been married, and do not have children together and with whom the abuser has not or does not share a common domicile (e.g., data on 'dating partners' as provided by the Air Force). If so, please provide the data from 2014-2018.**

Response: The Army does not collect data on "dating partners" in our central registry. However, under all circumstances, our policy is to support protection of the victim and offer counseling services to victims and others impacted by abuse. If necessary, we will coordinate off-post services.

c. **Provide a list of what prevention programs are in place to preclude domestic abuse and domestic violence, to include but not limited to**

- (1) **training for potential domestic abuse and domestic violence bystanders**
- (2) **adopting domestic abuse and domestic violence prevention programs from non-military entities like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention; and**
- (3) **partnering with other non-military entities on assessing the effectiveness of domestic abuse and domestic violence prevention programs.**

Response:

a. The Family Advocacy Program (FAP) prevention program is designed to create community and command awareness of abuse, provide information of existing services, and provide specific educational programs. The FAP prevention programs span the continuum of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. The installation Family

Advocacy Program Manager is responsible for coordinating the management of the installation FAP, developing and managing prevention programs, and serves as the point of contact for FAP briefing and training and liaison with military and civilian organizations. Community partners and other installation agencies also offer various programs designed to enhance family well-being that can serve to prevent domestic violence by strengthening individual and Family skills. Each installation is required to have the following domestic violence specific prevention programs:

(1) Community education program – This program informs the military community of the extent and nature of spouse/intimate partner and child abuse, and focuses on awareness of Family violence. The training includes information on what services are available through the FAP and how to report suspected or known incidents. Community education involves ensuring that military and non-military personnel know FAP services are available, accessible, and attractive to those in the military community who can best use the services to improve their Family functioning. Services may include both regular and special programming around domestic abuse prevention awareness and recognition months. These trainings target the community, as a whole. Awareness activities also target bystander reporting to encourage early intervention.

(2) Commander education program – This covers education regarding the FAP to ensure that commanders at all levels are aware of the nature of spouse/intimate partner abuse and child abuse; FAP policies and availability of services and resources; command responsibilities for identifying and reporting incidents of domestic violence and FAP prevention services. Commanders are required to receive a mandatory briefing within 45-days of appointment.

(3) Troop education program – This consists of routine troop education by FAP personnel for all Soldiers on the Family dynamics of spouse/intimate partner and child abuse, the availability of prevention and treatment services, and the Army's policies regarding Family violence. Troop education encourages building knowledge on the importance of reporting known or suspected incidents of domestic violence, which seeks to promote unit and individual readiness.

(4) Spouse/intimate partner abuse programs – These programs strengthen and stabilize intimate relationships in order to prevent and/or reduce relational distress and spouse/intimate partner abuse. The goals of spouse/intimate partner abuse prevention programs are to enhance and sustain communication, decision-making, and conflict-resolution skills and to clarify perceptions within the relationship. Prevention strategies may include educational programs and interactive workshops on couples communication, conflict resolution, assertiveness training, stress management and marital enrichment classes, and programs for children who witness Family violence.

(5) Domestic violence victim advocacy – Provides comprehensive assistance, advocacy, and support 24/7 to victims of spouse/intimate partner abuse, including crisis intervention, safety planning, assistance in securing medical treatment for injuries, information on the victims' legal rights and military justice proceedings, and information

and/or referral to military and civilian shelters and other resources available to victims. Domestic Abuse Victim Advocates are authorized to receive restricted reports of spouse/intimate partner abuse to provide victims the resources and assistance needed to end the cycle of violence in their relationship.

(6) New Parent Support Program (NPSP) provides intensive in-home visitation and parenting education to Families with children ages 0-3 who have stressors that could lead to abuse or neglect. NPSP services are provided by Licensed Clinical Social Workers and Registered Nurses.

b. FAP uses manualized educational programs such as Scream Free Parenting, Scream Free Marriage, Parenting with Love, and Logic and Marriage and Relationship Enrichment Seminars.

c. The Army partners with Military OneSource throughout the year and during Domestic Violence Prevention Month to help military communities understand the signs of healthy, unhealthy, and controlling behaviors and learn ways to improve relationships through information, skill-building, resources, counseling and support.

d. The Army FAP participates in both DoD and Army research and pilot studies to enhance understanding of issues facing Army Families and identify gaps in program service delivery to improve program effectiveness, i.e., New Parent Support Program (NPSP) Engagement Study (Penn State), and Strength at Home (Couples)(Taft). In 2017, HQDA FAP partnered with researchers from the University of Pennsylvania to assess the scope of spouse/intimate partner abuse programs in the Armed Forces. That research is currently ongoing. The goal of the research is to inform HQDA efforts to improve standardized program delivery and further adoption of trauma-informed and evidence-informed community education programs.

d. What is being done to encourage servicewomen to report incidents or indicators of domestic abuse and domestic violence?

Response: Both the command education and troop education programs target how to report domestic violence and available services. FAP services are designed to be sensitive to the needs of women and to address the needs of women who serve in the Army.

e. What is being done to ensure servicewomen feel safe reporting incidents of domestic abuse and domestic violence?

Response:

a. In addition to troop and command education (and implicit command support) service women have the option to report abuse as a restricted report to either healthcare professionals or Domestic Abuse Victim Advocates. In addition, service

women have the option for expedited transfer to another installation in order to avoid further incidents of spouse/intimate partner abuse.

b. Screenings for all service members are given for every primary care appointment; questions regarding "safety in the home" are asked at every visit. Many primary care clinics have behavioral health support or easy referral to behavioral health assets if service members or others respond needing services. Furthermore, we have behavioral health support embedded in all our operational units. Embedded Behavioral Health (EBH) teams are available, including active duty behavioral health providers to provide direct support to each member and provide command consultation to ensure all members, including victims of abuse, receive timely services. The Army's robust behavioral health system of care works in concert with the Army FAP Clinical Services.

f. What actions are being taken to communicate what resources are available from Family Advocacy, including the domestic abuse victim advocates?

Response: The community education program informs the Army community of the extent and nature of spouse/intimate partner and child abuse and focuses awareness of Family violence, including how to report it and what services are available. Community education involves all forms of outreach including print and on-line media to regular briefings at family, command and community-based forums.