



July 31 – Aug. 4, 2023

New Orleans, LA



The Power of Connection

#NOVA49

Developing a No Wrong Door Approach:

Enhancing Support for Military Domestic Violence Survivors

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MILITARY ADVOCACY FOR DOMESTIC ABUSE

NATIONAL EVALUATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD)
DOMESTIC ABUSE VICTIM ADVOCATE (DAVA) PILOT PROJECT

“Without the advocate, it would have been a very horrible experience because I knew nothing. I was blind to everything about the Army. I knew nothing, no resources; I didn’t know anything of what I could do. My advocate just made everything clear and easy and within reach.”

DR. CRIS SULLIVAN
DEC. 2005

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AGENDA

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ Background of DOD Domestic Abuse Advocacy
- ✓ Service Delivery and Challenges
- ✓ Special Considerations and Resources: No Wrong Door
- ✓ Questions and Answers

BACKGROUND OF DOD DOMESTIC ABUSE ADVOCACY



MILITARY ADVOCACY FOR DOMESTIC ABUSE - BACKGROUND



In 2000, the problem of domestic abuse in the military was analyzed and researched by the **Defense Task Force on Domestic Violence (DTFDV)**.



Based upon interviews with victims of domestic abuse in the military, the task force identified some specific barriers to reporting domestic abuse and accessing services, which included a fear of loss of privacy and the potential impact on an Active-Duty member's military career.



In 2003, the Department of Defense (DOD) established a DOD-wide (all military branches) **Domestic Abuse Victim Advocacy (DAVA) Program** to provide crisis response and safety planning, as well as ongoing coordinated case management services.



VICTIM'S MOST DESIRED TYPES OF HELP

As reported in the National Evaluation of the DOD DAVA Pilot Project | Dec. 2005, Dr. Cris Sullivan

- **94%** Information about legal rights and options
- **93%** Information about military processes
- **92%** Information about legal processes
- **91%** Help getting safe from the person who abused them
- **62%** Civilian Protection Orders
- **60%** Treatment for offenders
- **52%** Military Protection Orders
- **52%** Court accompaniment

IMPACT OF MILITARY ADVOCACY SERVICES

As reported in the National Evaluation of the DOD DAVA Pilot Project | Dec. 2005, Dr. Cris Sullivan

- **89%** Knew more about their rights and options
- **81%** Were more aware of community resources and services
- **78%** Developed a safety plan
- **76%** Were more comfortable asking for help
- **71%** Thought they would be safer in the future
- **67%** Were more hopeful about the future
- **66%** Felt less alone

DOMESTIC ABUSE VICTIM ADVOCATE (DAVA)

- **Provides 24-hour access** to non-clinical support, safety planning, information, and essential case coordination (lengthy description of duties outlined in DODI)
- **Nationally credentialed**
- **Has MRE 514 privileges** within the military systems
 - MRE 514 (Military Rules of Evidence of the Uniformed Code of Military Justice) provides a victim the privilege to refuse to disclose—and to prevent any other person from disclosing—confidential communication made between the victim and advocate



Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 6400.06

SERVICE DELIVERY AND CHALLENGES



COMPREHENSIVE ADVOCACY SERVICES

- Information and resources
- Information on victim's rights/reporting options
- Risk assessment
- Collaboration with others involved in the case (civilian agencies, Commanders/First Sergeant, Legal, civilian advocates, etc.)
- Education on the impact of domestic violence on children
- Safety planning (at every contact)
- Accompaniment to medical, legal, and law enforcement appointments
- Consultation with the Family Advocacy treatment team
- Support groups

VICTIMS SERVED: INTIMATE PARTNERS

- Person who is a current or former spouse
- Person with whom the abuser shares a child in common
- Current or former person with whom the abuser shares, or has shared, a common domicile (not just a roommate)
- Those who are dating or have been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature as determined by the relationship length, type, or frequency of interaction
- Factors that MAY be used for intimate partner determination:
 - Consensual intimate or sexual behaviors
 - History of on-going dating
 - Expressed interest in continued dating
 - Potential for an ongoing relationship (history of repeated breakups or reconciliations)
 - Self-identify as a couple or been defined that way by others
 - Emotional connectedness (relationship is a priority; partners may have discussed a future together)
 - Familiarity and knowledge of each other's lives

OTHERS SERVED

Child focused advocacy services provided to:

- Non-abusing parent/caregiver
- Child abuse victims who are military beneficiaries
- Problematic Sexual Behavior – Child/Youth (impacted child)

REPORTING OPTIONS FOR ADULT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE*

Unrestricted

- Command is notified
- Investigation is conducted: includes interview with offender
- Can NOT change to Restricted
- Eligible for Medical, Advocacy, and Counseling
- Can get a Military Protective Order

Restricted

- Command is NOT notified
- Investigation is NOT initiated
- Can change to Unrestricted
- Eligible for medical, advocacy, and counseling
- CANNOT get a Military Protective Order
- Not an option if children exposed (child abuse is mandatory report)
- Not an option if law enforcement, Commander, or First Sergeant already knows
- Not an option if situation is assessed as **High Risk**

*Taken in part from Rand Publication – [rand.org/t/RR3019](https://www.rand.org/t/RR3019)

REPORTING OPTIONS FOR ADULT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE*

Stressors

- Multiple deployments
- Family separation and reintegration
- Combat-related brain injuries
- Frequent relocations
- Financial strains
- Higher rates of substance use
- Military cultural norms around authority and hierarchy

Boundaries to Reporting

- Potential reduction in rank
- Limitations in promotion
- Loss of income, housing, insurance, and retirement benefits
- Community stigma or disbelief
- Fear of retribution from a dangerous partner
- Loss of privacy
- When a protection order is issued, military offenders lose access to firearms – even on the job

Risk Factors

- Geographical isolation
- Social isolation
- Economic dependence
- Fear of adverse impact on career
 - Security clearance
 - Do not fly/arm
- Offender has opportunities to develop/enhance techniques for intimidation
 - Access to weapons
 - Combat stress and PTSD
 - Heavily concentrated in the highest risk population (ages 20 – 40)

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RESOURCES – NO WRONG DOOR



RISKS OF HARM FOR CONSIDERATION: VICTIM

- Been previously abused by the alleged abuser
- Sustained grievous bodily harm
- Indicated their intention to leave the alleged abuser
- Indicated their intention to take the children and/or file for legal custody
- Been accused of infidelity by the abuser - whether factually or not
- Reported fear that the alleged abuser will seriously injure or kill victim/children, or other family member
- Required immediate protection due to threat of life by the alleged abuser
- Sought or obtained any kind of no-contact order against the alleged abuser
- Limited resources to escape future violence
- Pregnancy
- Accepted or rejected assistance from agencies that offer support services
- Experienced or continues to experience psychological trauma as a result of domestic abuse

(per dodi 6400.06)

RISKS OF HARM FOR CONSIDERATION: OFFENDER

- Threatened the victim with a weapon
- Verbally threatened to kill the victim without brandishing a weapon
- Threatened, attempted, or has a plan to kill the victim or their children
- Threatened, attempted, or has a plan to die by suicide
- Stalked the victim
- Strangled, choked, or suffocated the victim
- Exhibited obsessive behavior, extreme jealousy, extreme dominance, rage, agitation, or instability
- Abused the victim or children in the past
- Forced sex on the victim, or coerced sex with the victim
- Physically abused the victim while they are or were pregnant
- Isolated the victim (restricted communication/device access, prevented access to transportation)
- Required the victim to recant their statements about the alleged incident
- Harassed the victim using electronic means (e.g., texting, negative posting on social media, sending or threatening to send illicit photos to embarrass the victim)
- Violated a protection order in place for the victim or their children

(per dodi 6400.06)

MILITARY ADVOCACY COLLABORATIONS:

No Wrong Door

- **FAP** advocates (DAVA) provide intervention and ongoing support to intimate partner victims of sexual abuse (assault)
- The **DOD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program** (Air Force, Marines, Navy, Space Force, Coast Guard) and the **Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention Program** (Army) provide **ongoing support to non-intimate** victims of sexual assault and sexual harassment
- If a non-intimate partner sexual assault victim presents to a DAVA for care and support, the DAVA will immediately notify the installation sexual assault prevention and response office (SAPR or SHARP) for a coordinated hand-off of care
- In the event a DAVA inadvertently responds to a non-intimate partner sexual assault victim:
 - The advocate will immediately notify the installation sexual assault response office and provide initial support until a warm hand-off can be achieved
 - The DAVA will not discuss reporting options or complete any documentation with the victim, referring questions about reporting options to the installation sexual assault response program office.

NOTE: *Military advocates, no matter their program affiliation, are all on the same team for effective victim support and pledge to help victims connect with the program experts who can provide the most effective response and care.*

MILITARY RESOURCES (FREE)

- Transitional Compensation
- Relocation
- Expedited Transfer
- Threatened Person
- Humanitarian
- Safety
- Command Intervention for Dependent Support
- Army Community Services/Military and Family Readiness Center/Fleet and Family Services
- Chaplains
- Family Advocacy
- Batterer Intervention Program
- Mental Health
- New Parent Support Program
- Dependent Support Regulations
- Military Protection Order
- Military No Contact Order
- Victim's Counsel
- Military Justice (can take over jurisdiction of a case pending in civilian criminal courts)



MALE VICTIMS: A CLOSER LOOK

- Per the DOD Report on Child Abuse and Neglect and Domestic Abuse in the Military – in FY2020, 31% of victims (405) were male in FAP and met the criteria for abuse cases.
- According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1 in 4 men have been abused by an intimate partner.
- Male victims often do not seek help – the barriers include fear of not being believed by responders, service providers, or military leadership.
- Many men do not identify as victims and do not embrace the “victim” language.
- Male victims may feel stigmatized by hurtful and limiting assumptions about gender roles and masculinity – especially in the military setting.
- Males may have internalized feelings of shame about being a victim based on cultural norms around males/masculinity.
- Male victim concerns include the impact of reporting their partner, losing access to their children, and/or excessive attorney fees.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

- Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with local victim services agencies (Family Justice centers, etc.)
- Private sector domestic abuse councils/committees
- Prosecutor advocates
- Local domestic violence programs/shelters
- Child protective services/child advocacy centers



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DOD DAVA AND FAP LOCATOR

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/tools/domestic-abuse-victim-advocate-locator>





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Session Code: 745
And please complete your survey!

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