

Department of Defense

Report on Child Abuse and Neglect and Domestic Abuse in the Military for Fiscal Year 2017



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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CAN - Child Abuse and Neglect
CCR - Coordinated Community Response
CI - Confidence Interval
CPC-CBT - Combined Parent Child–Cognitive Behavior Therapy
DAVAP - Domestic Abuse Victim Advocacy Program
DMDC - Defense Manpower Data Center
DoD - Department of Defense
DoDI - Department of Defense Instruction
DoDM - Department of Defense Manual
FAP - Family Advocacy Program
FIT - Feedback Informed Treatment
FY - Fiscal Year
IDC - Incident Determination Committee
NDAA - National Defense Authorization Act
NPSP - New Parent Support Program
OPM - Office of Personnel Management
ORS - Outcome Ratings Scale
OSD - Office of the Secretary of Defense
SAPR - Sexual Assault Prevention and Response
SRS - Session Rating Scale
USUHS - Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

Executive Summary

For 37 years, the Office of the Secretary of Defense Family Advocacy Program (OSD FAP) has worked to prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse in military families. This report provides the child abuse and domestic abuse incident data from the FAP Central Registry for Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, as required by section 574 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2017 (Public Law 114-328). In addition to meeting the Congressional requirement, this report provides critical information on the circumstances of these incidents, which will further inform ongoing prevention and response efforts. Using aggregated FAP Central Registry data submitted from each Military Service (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force), this report offers a Department-wide description of the child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse incidents that were reported to FAP in FY17.

Background and Methods

The FAP Central Registry is designed to capture reliable and consistent information on child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse incidents reported to FAP from each of the Military Services. Each Military Service maintains comprehensive clinical case management systems, which include required data elements that they extract and submit quarterly to the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC). Per Department of Defense (DoD) policy, DMDC operates the DoD FAP Central Registry and provides the OSD FAP with aggregated data on which this report is based.¹

Key Findings

Overall

- The data contained in this report only reflect child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse reported to the OSD FAP in FY17. These data do not represent a prevalence estimate of all child abuse and neglect or domestic abuse that occurred in military families in the past fiscal year.
- Findings from this report indicate that FY17 rates of child abuse and neglect do not reflect statistically significant increases when compared to prior years.² The Department, however, is committed to examining historical fluctuations in rates of child abuse and neglect (such as the year-to-year increase in the child abuse and neglect rate of met criteria incidents between FY09 and FY14) to better understand the impact and effectiveness of FAP policies and implemented programs. Additional analysis conducted in 2017 (included in Appendix A) reframes this trend and indicates that this overall increase in child abuse and neglect incidents, compared to a relatively static unique victim rate, was more likely driven by data process improvements rather than a true increase in military children experiencing abuse and neglect. Nevertheless, in 2015, the Department launched an awareness campaign designed to educate, strengthen, and protect families.
- The FY17 rate of spouse abuse reports increased by five percent, and although not statistically significant, may be an indication that Department efforts (e.g., training and prevention campaigns)

¹ The implementing policy issuance for this registry is DoDM 6400.01, Volume 2 (FAP: Child Abuse and Domestic Abuse Incident Reporting System), August 11, 2016.

² Fluctuations in unwanted complex human behaviors – such as child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse – across a large population like the Armed Forces are inevitable and reflect any number of factors within and outside of the purview of the Department. Any incident of these behaviors merits concern. Statistical analyses in this report are intended to gauge whether these fluctuations are likely to occur by chance or are indicative of a true increase or decrease in abusive behaviors.

to promote awareness of FAP as a resource for military families are effective, as the rate of incidents that align with DoD criteria for spouse abuse and rate of unduplicated spouse abuse victims do not reflect any statistically significant increases. The Department, however, continues to be concerned about any incident of spouse abuse and will continue to ensure availability of supportive services for military families.

- In FY17, there was a statistically significant increase in the number of met criteria domestic abuse incidents involving sexual abuse (300 incidents) and the proportion of domestic abuse that was sexual abuse (3.72 percent) when compared to the average of previous years. Although the FY17 number of domestic abuse incidents involving sexual abuse only increased by one incident when compared to the previous year (299 incidents in FY16), a growth in any number of incidents involving sexual abuse is deeply concerning to the Department. While it is not possible to identify a singular driver of this increase, exploratory analysis using demographics and contextual factors (presented in Appendix B) provides a deeper understanding of this trend and highlights several relevant policy and program changes, which may have contributed to this growth, and allows for appropriate, targeted actions.
- In reports that met the DoD criteria for abuse, the offender may have been an active duty Service member, a civilian family member, or (in child abuse or neglect incidents) a caregiver outside the family. In 93 percent of the met criteria child abuse or neglect incidents, the offender was a parent.

Child Abuse & Neglect

- In FY17, there were 12,849 reports of suspected child abuse and neglect to FAP. The FY17 rate of reported child abuse and neglect per 1,000 children was 13.7, which is a 5 percent decrease in reports from the FY16 rate (14.4).
- There were 6,450 incidents of child abuse and neglect that met criteria in FY17. The FY17 rate of incidents that met criteria per 1,000 children was 6.9, which was a 4 percent decrease from the FY16 rate (7.2).
- Findings from this report indicate that FY17 rates of child abuse and neglect do not reflect statistically significant increases when compared to prior years. Specifically, the FY17 rates of reported child abuse and neglect, child abuse and neglect incidents that align with DoD criteria for child abuse and neglect, and unduplicated child abuse and neglect victims did not vary significantly from the 10-year average rates.³
- The DoD rates of child abuse and neglect victims are much lower than their counterpart rates in the U.S. civilian population as compiled by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.⁴ The DoD unduplicated child victim rate for FY17 is 5.0 victims per 1,000 military children (a 2 percent decrease from the FY16 rate of 5.1), and the civilian rate for FY16 is 9.1 per 1,000 children.
- Civilian data compiled by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services indicate that the U.S. civilian substantiation (met criteria) rate for reported cases of child abuse and neglect was 17.2 percent in FY16,⁵ and the rate has decreased steadily since FY03.⁶ The military met criteria rate for reported incidents was 50.2 percent in FY17. While both of these rates have fluctuated individually, the military met criteria rate has consistently been well above the civilian rate of substantiation in the past decade. Thus, the comparatively lower military rates of child

³ All analyses in this report tested for significance at the $p < .05$ level, resulting in a Confidence Interval (CI) of 95 percent. Any value outside of this CI is indicative of a statistically significant increase or decrease not likely to have occurred by chance.

⁴ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2016). *Child maltreatment 2017*. Available from: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/child-maltreatment-2016>

⁵ Ibid

⁶ *Child Maltreatment* 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 reports.

maltreatment are not attributable to DoD confirming (meeting criteria on) fewer reports, because DoD confirms child maltreatment reports at more than double the rate of the civilian sector.

- There were 17 child abuse-related fatalities involving 23 offenders that were presented to the Incident Determination Committee and entered into the Central Registry in FY17. In the child fatality incidents, 11 of the met criteria offenders were male and 12 were female. Thirteen met criteria offenders were active duty, and 10 had a non-military status. Twelve of the child victims were under 5 years old and 65 percent of the child victims were 1 year old or younger.
- Of the active duty parent met criteria child abuse and neglect offenders, 69 percent were in the pay grades E4-E6. These pay grades had the second highest rate of active duty parent offenders at 5.4 per 1,000 active duty parents in the military population in these pay grades. Pay grades E1-E3 had the highest rate at 14.0 per 1,000 active duty parents in the military population with these pay grades.
- In FY17, 54 percent of the met criteria child abuse and neglect offenders were male, 46 percent were female. This ratio of male to female met criteria offenders has been consistent since FY05. Ninety-three percent of the met criteria offenders were parents.

Spouse Abuse

- FYs 08-17 data on spouse abuse include only those incidents involving currently married individuals. Either the victim or the offender may have been an active duty Service member or the civilian spouse of an active duty Service member. In FY17, the rate of reported spouse abuse per 1,000 couples was 24.5, which is an increase of 5 percent compared to the rate in FY16 (23.4).
- In FY17, the unduplicated rate of victims of spouse abuse was 9.1 per 1,000 couples, a decrease of 5 percent from the FY16 rate (9.3).
- Four spouse abuse fatalities were presented to the Incident Determination Committee and entered into the Central Registry in FY17.
- In FY17, spouse abuse offenders with a military status (active duty as well as Guard and Reserve in active status) represented 57 percent of all met criteria offenders.
- In FY17, of the active duty met criteria offenders, 63 percent were in pay grades E4-E6. These pay grades had the second highest spouse abuse rate per 1,000 active duty members at 6.2. The pay grades E1-E3 had the highest rate per 1,000 active duty members at 14.8.
- In FY17, 64 percent of victims in spouse abuse incidents that met criteria were female. Of all spouse abuse victims in incidents that met criteria, 53 percent were Military Service members and 47 percent were civilian spouses.

Unmarried Intimate Partner Abuse

- In FY06, an additional category, “intimate partner” was added to capture incidents involving: 1) a former spouse; 2) a person with whom the victim shares a child in common; or 3) a current or former intimate partner with whom the victim shares or has shared a common domicile. In such cases, the victim or the offender may have been an active duty Service member or a civilian. Complete data were available beginning in FY09.
- In FY17, there were 916 met criteria incidents of intimate partner abuse involving 756 victims. A rate per thousand of intimate partner abuse incidents and/or victims cannot be established, as data on unmarried individuals involved in intimate partner relationships as defined by DoD are not available.
- Five intimate partner abuse fatalities were presented to the Incident Determination Committee and entered into the Central Registry in FY17.

Sexual Abuse

- In FY17, there were 282 unduplicated victims of adult sexual abuse, including both spouses and unmarried intimate partners. These incidents are referred to as Domestic Abuse Related Sexual Assault in the *2017 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military*. In the domestic violence field, sexual abuse remains contextually distinct from sexual assault in that it occurs within a marriage or intimate partner relationship as part of a larger pattern of behavior resulting in emotional or psychological abuse, economic control, and/or interference with personal liberty. In FY17 there were a total of 300 met criteria incidents of sexual abuse, indicating that one or more victims experienced more than 1 incident of sexual abuse.
- Domestic abuse incidents involving sexual abuse comprise approximately 3.72 percent of all met criteria domestic abuse incidents.
- In FY17, 96 percent of victims in met criteria sexual abuse incidents were female. Of all sexual abuse victims in met criteria incidents, 61 percent were family members, 34 percent were Military Service members, and the remaining 5 percent had a non-military status.

Program & Policy Implications

The Department is committed to keeping our families safe and healthy and taking every measure to prevent child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse/intimate partner violence in our military communities. One incident of child abuse and neglect or domestic abuse is too many, and programs like FAP implement evidence-based prevention and treatment programs with the goal of ensuring the safety and well-being of all military families.

Findings from this report indicate that rates of child abuse and neglect and spouse abuse have not dramatically increased in recent years, which may be a sign of the comprehensive prevention strategy and additional research efforts to reduce the incidents of family maltreatment. However, FY17 data did indicate an increase in the number of incidents of domestic abuse involving sexual abuse, which is an area of concern for the Department. Continual monitoring and assessment in areas relating to key findings is necessary to inform current and future program efforts, and the Department continues to address the results of its analyses through deliberate action and implementation of evidence informed programs.

1. INTRODUCTION

For 37 years, OSD FAP has worked to prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse in military families. Family maltreatment is incompatible with military values and ultimately impacts mission readiness. The Department is dedicated to addressing issues of family violence to ensure the health and safety of military families.

This report provides the child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse incident data from the DoD FAP Central Registry for 2017, as required by section 574 of the NDAA for FY 2017 (Public Law 114-328). In addition to meeting the Congressional requirement, this report also provides critical aggregate information on the demographics of these incidents, which will further inform ongoing prevention and response service efforts. Using aggregated FAP Central Registry data submitted from each Military Service (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force), this report offers a Department-wide picture of the child maltreatment and domestic abuse incidents that were reported to FAP in FY17.

Subsequent report sections will include a brief description of the FAP, Congressional reporting requirements for child maltreatment and domestic abuse incidents, and a review of the findings from an analysis of the FY17 FAP Central Registry data. The report concludes with an analysis of the effectiveness of the Family Advocacy Program, as well as an overview of potential implications for current and future policy and program initiatives. It should be noted that the use of the word “significant” throughout this report refers not to a level of importance, but rather to analytical and statistical thresholds.

2. BACKGROUND

FAP is a congressionally mandated DoD program designed to be the policy proponent for and a key element of the DoD’s coordinated community response (CCR) system for preventing and responding to reports of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse in military families. The Service FAPs, at every military installation where families are located, work closely with the other entities within the CCR (law enforcement, legal, military criminal investigative organizations, chaplains, command, child and youth programs, Department of Defense Education Agency schools, and medical), as well as with civilian social services agencies and civilian law enforcement, to provide comprehensive prevention and response to family maltreatment.

The mission of FAP is to provide comprehensive prevention, advocacy, early identification, treatment of child and domestic abuse victims and offenders, and intensive home visitation for expecting and new parents. To execute this mission, the DoD funds over 2,000 positions in the Military Departments to deliver FAP services, to include credentialed/licensed clinical providers, Domestic Abuse Victim Advocates, New Parent Support Home Visitors, and prevention staff. Family Advocacy staff are mandated reporters to state child welfare service agencies for all allegations of child abuse and neglect, and they are considered “covered professionals” under 34 U.S.C. § 20341. DoD policy⁷ also requires the Service FAPs to report incidents of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse to OSD through the DoD FAP Central Registry. In recent years, DoD has enhanced its emphasis on preventing the occurrence of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse through Department-wide

⁷ DoDM 6400.01, Volume 2, August 11, 2016.

initiatives and programs within each Military Service.

Once a report of child abuse and neglect or domestic abuse is received by FAP, it is taken to the Incident Determination Committee (IDC) to determine whether the incident meets criteria for abuse, as defined by DoD.⁸ The IDC uses a standardized research-based decision tree algorithm to determine which reports for suspected child abuse or domestic abuse meet the DoD definition of abuse, thereby requiring entry into the Service FAP headquarters central registry of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse incidents. The IDC is comprised of the deputy to the installation or garrison commander who serves as the chair, the senior enlisted noncommissioned officer advisor to the chair, a representative from the Service member's chain of command, a representative from the Staff Judge Advocate's office, a representative from military law enforcement, and the FAP Manager or FAP supervisor of clinical services. Additional members, as appropriate, may participate and vote in accordance with policy. The case is presented to the IDC, followed by the members voting to determine whether the incident meets the criteria for an act or failure to act, and a resulting impact, according to standards specified in policy.⁹ The IDC is not a disciplinary proceeding in accordance with the Uniform Code of Military Justice; it is a clinical process to determine whether an incident meets the threshold for more rigorous treatment, intervention, support, safety planning, and victim protection.

The DoD review of child abuse and domestic abuse related fatalities is also required by policy,¹⁰ which directs the Secretaries of the Military Departments (Army, Navy to include Marine Corps, and Air Force) to conduct a multidisciplinary, impartial review of each fatality known or suspected to have resulted from child abuse or domestic abuse. Each Military Department has its own team and conducts its own internal review on an annual basis. In order to avoid interference with ongoing investigations and prosecutions, fatalities are reviewed by the Military Departments retrospectively, generally two years after their occurrence or in the first year that the disposition becomes closed. This delay ensures that the review is able to take into account all available information. OSD FAP holds an annual Fatality Review Summit to discuss the findings of the reviews held in the previous year at the Military Department level; essentially, the DoD Fatality Review Summit examines deaths three years after occurrence. The purpose of the DoD Fatality Review Summit is to conduct deliberative examinations of any interventions provided to the deceased, to formulate lessons learned from agency or system failures, to identify trends and patterns to assist in prevention efforts across the Department, and to develop policy for earlier and more effective intervention.

⁸ DoDI 6400.03 (Family Advocacy Command Assistance Team (FACAT)), April 25, 2014 and DoDM 6400.01, Volume 3, (FAP: Clinical Case Staff Meeting and Incident Determination Committee), August 11, 2016.

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ DoDI 6400.06 (Domestic Abuse Involving DoD Military and Certain Affiliated Personnel), Incorporating Change 2, effective July 9, 2015.

Central Registry

The FAP Central Registry is designed to capture reliable and consistent information on child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse incidents reported to FAP from each of the Military Services. It is based on Department of Defense Manual (DoDM) 6400.01, Volume 2, “Family Advocacy Program: Child Abuse and Neglect and Domestic Abuse Incident Reporting System,” which directs Service FAPs to track incidents of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse that meet criteria for abuse. Each Military Service maintains comprehensive clinical case management systems, which include the required data elements that are extracted and submitted quarterly to the DMDC in the Central Registry of reports. Per DoD policy, DMDC operates the DoD FAP Central Registry and provides OSD FAP with aggregate data, which is the basis of this report.¹¹

The DoD FAP Central Registry contains information on: (1) reports of abuse that did not meet criteria for child abuse and neglect or domestic abuse, in which identifiable individual information is not tracked; and (2) information on reports of abuse that meet objective, standardized criteria and are linked to identifiable Service members, their family members and the alleged offenders. Specifically, the Services are required to submit information on 46 data elements on met criteria incidents, delineated in DoD Policy, which include:

- Sponsor Service, location, relevant dates, case status, and source of referral;
- Demographic data on the military sponsor, victim, and alleged offender(s) including name, social security number, branch of Service, military status, sex, age, and relationship indicators;
- Type of abuse or maltreatment, level of severity, and, if applicable, resulting fatalities.

The DoD FAP Central Registry **does not** include measures of accountability (command action), law enforcement data, or legal disposition. These processes are distinctly different processes from FAP intervention and services.

The Central Registry also **does not** include allegations of domestic abuse that were made via restricted report. Restricted reports do not move forward to the Incident Determination Committee (where command, legal, and law enforcement are participants). Instead, reports are handled on a case-by-case basis to provide risk and safety planning to the victim without the independent assessment of the decision tree algorithm, which determines whether an allegation has met DoD criteria for abuse or neglect.

The data from the DoD Central Registry are broadly used to assist in overall management of the OSD FAP, to inform prevention and intervention initiatives, to determine budget and program funding, and to conduct research, as well as to prepare for reports to Congress, respond to public/other governmental inquiries, and formulate ad hoc reports relating to the volume and nature of family violence cases handled by the Military Services through outreach, prevention, and intervention efforts. DoD and Military Service FAP Central Registry data is used to conduct background checks on individuals seeking employment in DoD-sanctioned child and youth serving organizations that involve contact with minor children.

¹¹ DoDM 6400.01, Volume 2, August 11, 2016.

Methods of Data Collection & Analysis

As noted, this report relies on Central Registry data that were extracted by each Military Service and submitted to DMDC for FY17 (October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017). DMDC then aggregates these data, provides initial quality assurance checks, and provides OSD FAP with information on the incidence of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse across the Department.

DMDC has been collecting these aggregate FY FAP data for the last 20 years; however, the timeframe of data submission and analysis was adjusted substantially in 2017 to coordinate with the release of the *DoD FY16 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military*. Services submitted FY17 data no later than December 20, 2017, for inclusion in this report. All statistical analyses included in this report were performed only after these data had undergone a series of rigorous quality control checks to ensure uniformity and validity of aggregate data.

Previous fiscal year data on both child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse contained met criteria incidents that included multiple types of maltreatment in one entry (e.g., physical, sexual, emotional, neglect). Beginning in FY15, the process was standardized such that each met criteria incident represents only one type of maltreatment. Thus, more than one incident may be submitted on an individual victim. This treatment of incident data provides a more comprehensive picture of incidents of abuse experienced by military families, and aligns with the approach used by the Department of Health and Human Services for reporting civilian data in their annual report to Congress on child maltreatment.¹²

Incidents of domestic abuse are reported separately as spouse abuse and intimate partner abuse (see definitions in Section 4). Calculated rates of intimate partner abuse across the military are not reportable, as data to establish a denominator (number of Service members in an intimate partner relationship as defined by DoD) are unavailable. Any notable increases or upward movement in key rates and findings command the attention of OSD FAP to ensure that any perceived increase in family violence is analyzed for significance and potential causes. This approach ensures that OSD FAP is able to reconcile any potential contributing factors from both a mathematical and programmatic lens.

As in prior years, all analyses in this report were tested for significance using a Type 1 error rate of 5 percent (i.e., $\alpha = .05$), resulting in a Confidence Interval (CI) of 95 percent. This CI approach tells us whether the FY17 values are within the range of plausible values for the years considered. Any value outside of this CI is indicative of a statistically significant increase or decrease.

However, this year a second analytical approach was added to examine statistical significance. The Grubb's test provides a more nuanced look at the difference (i.e., how many standard deviations) between a given data point (in this report, the current fiscal year, FY17) and the average of other data points (in this report, prior fiscal years). This difference was tested using a z-distribution to calculate the probability of observing the data point and whether the calculated difference was extreme. The Grubb's test indicates when an individual data point (FY17) is noticeably different from other values in the data (i.e., not likely to occur by chance fluctuation). If the specified data point is noticeably different, it is indicative of a statistically significant increase or decrease.

Analyses were conducted using both analytical approaches to determine whether rates of child abuse

¹² U.S Department of Health and Human Services. (2017). *Child maltreatment 2016*.

and neglect, spouse abuse, and intimate partner abuse reflected statistically significant increases or decreases. There was agreement between the two tests for absence or presence of statistical significance for all rates presented in this report; however, for ease of comprehension, only the results of the more nuanced Grubb's test are presented for each rate in the body of this report.

Key Findings

The data contained in this report only reflect child maltreatment and domestic abuse reported to the OSD FAP in FY17. These data do not represent an estimate of the total amount of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse that occurred in military families in the past fiscal year. Findings from this report indicate that FY17 rates of child abuse and neglect do not reflect statistically significant increases when compared to prior years. Specifically, the FY17 rates of reported child abuse and neglect (13.7/1,000 children), child abuse and neglect incidents that met criteria (6.9/1,000 children), and unduplicated child abuse and neglect victims (5.0/1,000 children) did not vary significantly from the 10-year average rates.

Spouse abuse has seen a similar pattern over the past few years. The FY17 rates of reported spouse abuse (24.5/1,000 married couples), spouse abuse incidents that met criteria (11.2/1,000 married couples), and unduplicated spouse abuse victims (9.1/1,000 married couples) do not reflect any statistically significant increases.

It is not possible to calculate rates per thousand for intimate partner abuse incidents and/or victims, as data on unmarried individuals involved in intimate partner relationships defined by DoD are not available. In FY17, the number of incidents of intimate partner abuse (916) and number of unduplicated victims of intimate partner abuse (756) are not significantly different than in past years.

Finally, the number of met criteria domestic abuse incidents involving sexual abuse in FY17 (300 incidents) and the percentage of domestic abuse incidents involving sexual abuse (3.72 percent) are higher than in previous years. Analysis conducted on the number of incidents and percentage of domestic abuse incidents involving sexual abuse in FY17 reveal that the current year represents a statistically significant increase when compared to the average of the previous years.

3. CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

This section discusses reports to FAP of child abuse and neglect in FY17, incidents of child abuse and neglect that met criteria for child abuse and neglect, and the characteristics of those children and associated alleged offenders for cases that met criteria.

DoD policy defines child abuse and neglect in the following manner:

- **Child abuse:** “The physical or sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect of a child by a parent, guardian, foster parent, or by a caregiver, whether the caregiver is intrafamilial or extrafamilial, under circumstances indicating the child’s welfare is harmed or threatened. Such acts by a sibling, other family member, or other person shall be deemed to be child abuse only when the individual is providing care under express or implied agreement with the parent, guardian, or foster parent.”¹³
- **Child neglect** is defined as “the negligent treatment of a child through acts or omissions by an individual responsible for the child’s welfare under circumstances indicating the child’s welfare is harmed or threatened.” Neglect includes abandonment, medical neglect, and/or non-organic failure to thrive.¹⁴

Child abuse and neglect, per DoD policy, represents four distinct types of maltreatment: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Each of these types of maltreatment is outlined in implementing guidance for use during the standardized incident determination process.¹⁵

It is possible for one report of child abuse and neglect to involve more than one type of maltreatment (e.g., physical abuse and neglect). More than one incident may be submitted on an individual victim, and each incident is considered separately to determine whether it meets criteria for child maltreatment. Beginning in FY15, OSD FAP began to treat each reported incident of child abuse and neglect as representing only one type of maltreatment to capture a more comprehensive picture of well-being for children in military families. This approach is consistent with how other federal agencies report incidents of child abuse and neglect and therefore enables us to make more direct comparisons to civilian populations.

There are three rates calculated for child abuse and neglect in this report: the rate of reported incidents, the rate of met criteria incidents, and the rate of child victimization. The first two rates can be impacted by external factors. For example, the rate of reports can fluctuate based on impact of awareness campaigns, training, and efforts to reduce stigma in the community associated with contacting FAP. Process improvements attributed to the implementation of the IDC – counting each type of maltreatment as a distinct incident (described above) and identifying all individuals involved in a reported incident as a separate offender – can impact the rate of met criteria incidents. The child victimization rate measures the number of children experiencing child abuse and neglect per 1,000 military children and offers an alternative way to examine the rates of child abuse and neglect that reflects the unique number of children who experienced abuse and neglect across years.

¹³ DoDM 6400.01-Volume 3 (Family Advocacy Program (FAP): Clinical Case Staff Meeting (CCSM) and Incident Determination Committee (IDC)), Glossary, August 11, 2016; and DoDI 6400.03 (Family Advocacy Program Command Assistance Team (FACAT)), Glossary, April 25, 2014.

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Ibid

Although the child victimization rate for child abuse and neglect has remained relatively constant over the past 10 years (FY08-FY17), there was a meaningful year-to-year upward trend in the rate of met criteria incidents of child maltreatment from FY09 through FY14 with child neglect accounting for the majority (58 percent) of the incidents. This overall upward trend in child abuse and neglect incidents was initially attributed to a steady increase in the number of incidents involving child neglect during that timeframe. However, additional analyses conducted in 2017 revealed that process improvements, such as the implementation of the Incident Determination Committee and treatment of parents as unique offenders (instead of the parental unit being counted as one offender) of child abuse and neglect, were more likely the drivers of any rate increases from FY09-FY14 rather than a true increase in military children experiencing abuse and neglect. Full information regarding this analysis is contained in Appendix A.

Nevertheless, this increase in incidents of child neglect, regardless the reason(s) to which it is attributed, spurred heightened DoD attention and monitoring, and in 2015, the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy launched a DoD digital strategy to reach, inform, and engage military families where they live and thrive online, highlighting available resources – including FAP programs – to protect and strengthen families.

3-1 INCIDENTS

As shown below in Table 1, there were 12,849 reports of suspected child abuse and neglect to FAP in FY17. The FY17 rate of reported child abuse and neglect per 1,000 children was 13.7, which is lower than the rate per 1,000 in FY16 (14.4) (see Figure 1). This numerical difference of .7 represents a 5 percent decrease in the rate of reported incidents.¹⁶

Table 1: Reports and Incidents of Child Abuse and Neglect (FYs 08-17)

Fiscal Year	Child Population	Reported Incidents	Reports/1000	Met Criteria Incidents	Met Criteria Incidents/1000
2008	1,122,098	12,661	11.3	5,406	4.8
2009	1,147,318	12,845	11.2	5,499	4.8
2010	1,166,079	14,986	12.9	6,633	5.7
2011	1,165,812	15,081	12.9	6,819	5.8
2012	1,140,024	15,656	13.7	7,003	6.1
2013	1,099,702	15,346	14.0	6,989	6.4
2014	1,050,889	16,526	15.7	7,676	7.3
2015	1,005,626	15,579	15.5	7,208	7.2
2016	969,058	13,916	14.4	6,998	7.2
2017	939,186	12,849	13.7	6,450	6.9

Note. This table shows the number of CAN incidents that were reported to FAP and the number of CAN incidents that met criteria for maltreatment. Incidents of maltreatment are reported separately by type of maltreatment (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect); one or more incidents may be submitted on a single victim.

¹⁶ Although Figure 1 shows year to year variations between FY08 and FY17 in the number of child abuse and neglect incidents reported per 1,000 children, the FY17 rate of reported child abuse and neglect per 1,000 children (13.7) did not vary significantly from the average rate of reported child abuse and neglect incidents during this period (Grubbs test, $z = 0.10$, $p = .46$).

There were 6,450 incidents of child abuse and neglect that met criteria in FY17. The rate of incidents that met criteria per 1,000 children in FY17 was 6.9, which is lower than the rate per 1,000 in FY16 (7.2). This numerical difference of .3 represents a 4 percent decrease in the rate of incidents that met criteria.¹⁷

Child Abuse and Neglect Report vs. Met Criteria Incident Rates per 1,000 Children

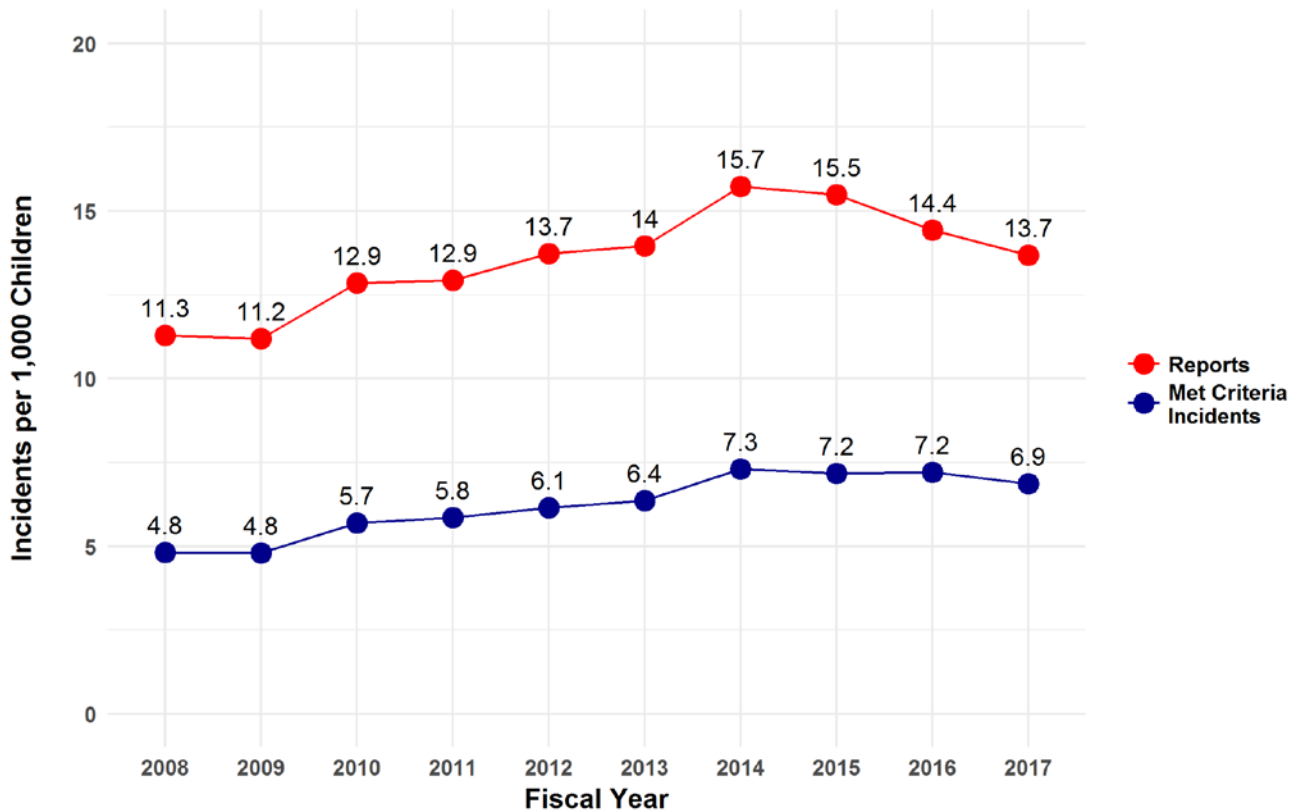


Figure 1. Rates of child abuse and neglect incidents reported to FAP and the rates of child abuse and neglect incidents that met DoD criteria per fiscal year.

¹⁷ Despite year to year variation in the rate of child abuse and neglect incidents that met criteria per 1,000 children, the FY17 rate (6.9) did not vary significantly from the average rate of incidents that met criteria during this time period (Grubbs test, $z = 0.69$, $p = .25$).

As shown in Figure 2, neglect represents the largest percentage of met criteria incidents in FY17 (57.41 percent). In FY17, physical abuse (19.66 percent) represents the next largest percentage of met criteria incidents, followed by emotional abuse (18.50 percent) and sexual abuse (4.43 percent). The two most prevalent forms of child neglect in military families are a lack of supervision that is appropriate to the age and functioning of the child and exposure to physical hazards, such as bathtubs, electrical outlets, and unsafe cribs.

Types of Child Abuse and Neglect in Met Criteria Incidents (FY17)

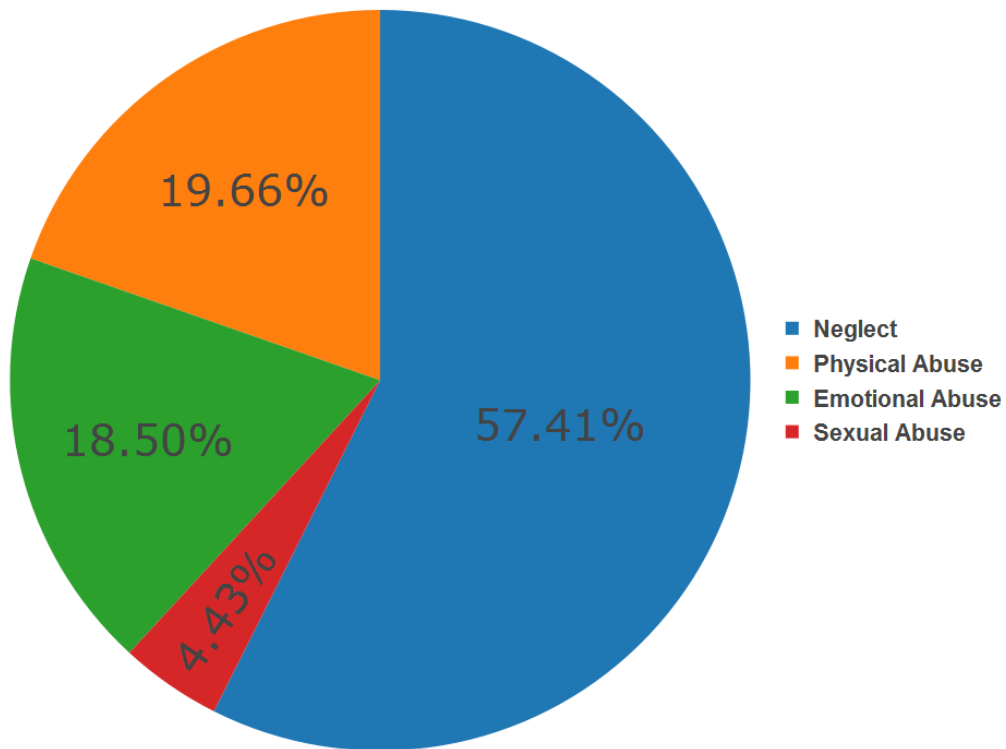


Figure 2. Frequency of the types of maltreatment in child abuse and neglect incidents that met DoD criteria in FY17.

The number of incidents of each type of child maltreatment is displayed in Figure 3. As discussed previously, the upward trend in met criteria incidents from FY08 to FY14 was driven primarily by the steady increase in incidents during those years that involved child neglect, whereas the numbers for other types of child maltreatment stayed fairly steady. The number of these met criteria incidents involving child neglect has decreased since FY14.

Child Abuse and Neglect Met Criteria Incidents by Maltreatment Type, Over Time

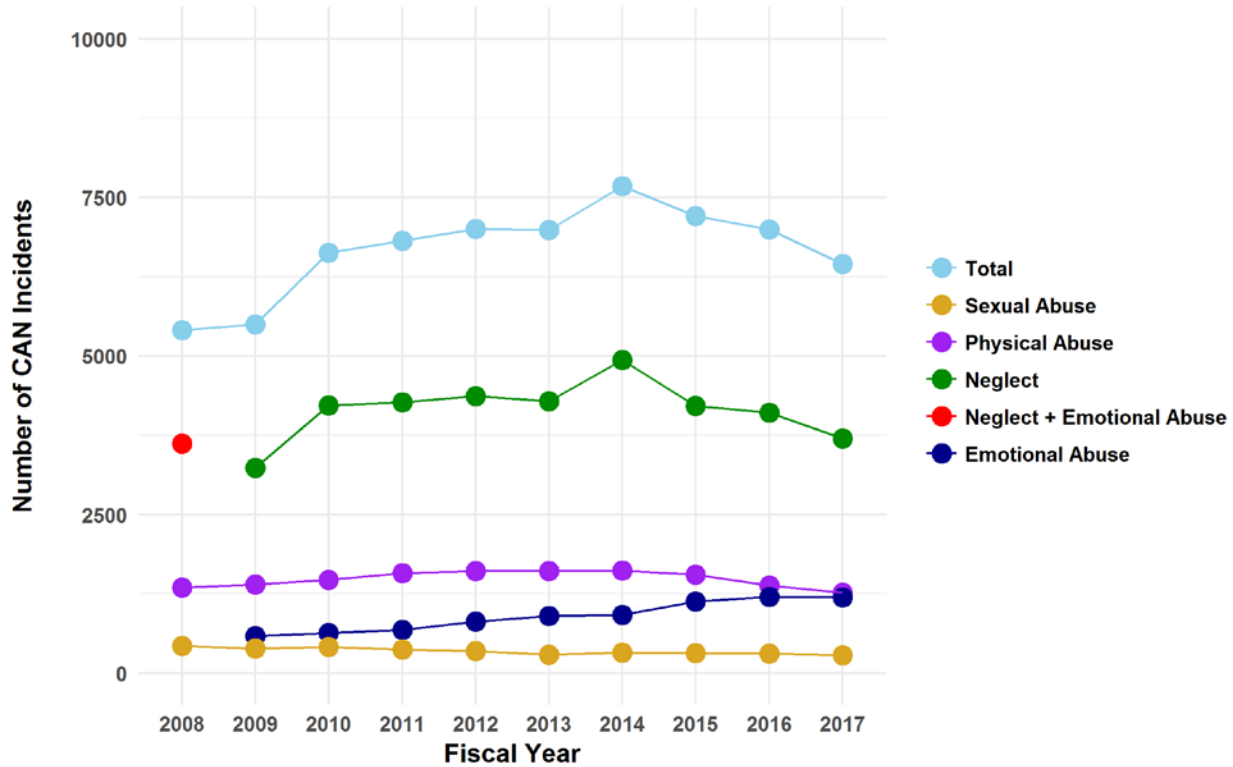


Figure 3. Number of incidents by type of child maltreatment per year. FY09 was the first year that neglect could be calculated separately from emotional abuse.

3-2 VICTIM PROFILE

This section describes children who were the subjects of reports of child abuse and neglect to FAP, as well as the characteristics of children involved in incidents that met criteria for child abuse and neglect, and a comparison to the most recent civilian child abuse and neglect data.

As shown in Table 2, there were 4,667 unduplicated victims of child abuse and neglect in FY17. The FY17 child abuse and neglect victim rate per 1,000 children is 5.0, which is lower than the rate per 1,000 in FY16 (5.1) (see Figure 4). This numerical difference of .1 represents a 2 percent decrease in the rate of child victims.¹⁸

Table 2: Unduplicated Victims of Child Abuse and Neglect (FYs 08-17)¹⁹

Fiscal Year	Met Criteria Incidents	Unduplicated Victims	Child Population	Met Criteria Incidents/1000	Rate of Victims/1000
2008	5,406	4,782	1,122,098	4.8	4.3
2009	5,499	5,027	1,147,318	4.8	4.4
2010	6,633	5,548	1,166,079	5.7	4.8
2011	6,819	5,916	1,165,812	5.8	5.1
2012	7,003	6,054	1,140,024	6.1	5.3
2013	6,989	5,773	1,099,702	6.4	5.2
2014	7,676	5,670	1,050,889	7.3	5.4
2015	7,208	5,123	1,005,626	7.2	5.1
2016	6,998	4,960	969,058	7.2	5.1
2017	6,450	4,667	939,186	6.9	5.0

Note. This table shows the number of CAN incidents that met criteria for maltreatment and the number of unique child victims who experienced those incidents. Incidents of maltreatment are reported separately by type of maltreatment (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect); one or more incidents may be submitted on a single victim.

¹⁸ As shown in Figure 4, although there were slight year to year variations in the unduplicated child abuse and neglect victim rates per 1,000 children from FY08-FY17, the rate of 5.0 for the most recent fiscal year did not significantly vary from the average child victim rate during this time period (Grubbs test, $z = 0.02$, $p = .49$).

¹⁹ In FY16, the Department initiated data process improvements, including the use of additional criteria to determine the number of unique victims in each fiscal year. Therefore, victim counts and victim rates presented in Table 2 vary slightly from prior reports.

Unduplicated Child Victim Rate Per 1,000 in Met Criteria Child Abuse and Neglect Incidents

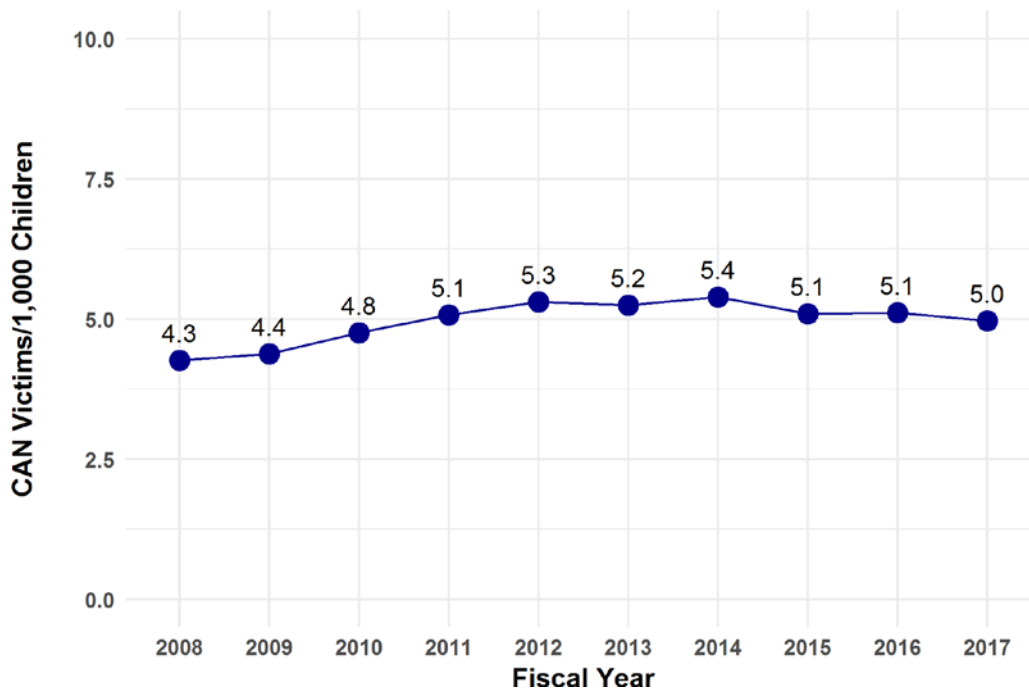


Figure 4. Rates of unduplicated child victims per 1,000 children.

Comparison to Civilian Data

Civilian data compiled by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services indicates that the U.S. civilian substantiation (met criteria) rate for reported cases of child abuse and neglect was 17.2 percent in FY16,²⁰ and the rates have decreased steadily since FY03.²¹ The military met criteria rate for reported incidents was 50.2 percent in FY17, which is consistent with FY16 (50.3 percent). While both of these rates have fluctuated individually, the military met criteria rate has consistently been well above the civilian rate of substantiation in the past decade. Considering that DoD confirms child abuse and neglect at more than twice the civilian rate and still has a lower rate of victims per 1,000 children, the overall rate of child abuse and neglect per child in the military is substantially lower than in the civilian sector.

The DoD rates of child abuse and neglect victims are approximately half of their counterpart rates in the U.S. civilian population as compiled by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.²²

²⁰ Civilian child protective service agencies use the term “substantiate” to designate when an investigation indicated that child abuse or neglect occurred. In 2010, FAP adopted the IDC and standardized research-based decision tree algorithm to determine whether an incident “meets criteria” for abuse or neglect as defined by the DoD. For the purposes of this report, the terms “substantiated” and “met criteria” represent equivalent determinations.

²¹ *Child Maltreatment* 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 reports.

²² U.S Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children’s Bureau (2017). *Child maltreatment 2016*.

The DoD unique victim rate for FY17 is 5.0 per 1,000 military children, and the civilian rate for FY16 is 9.1 per 1,000 children. Civilian data for FY17 are not yet available, as the report will be released in early 2019.

Demographic Characteristics of Child Victims

Overall, the sex of child abuse and neglect victims in met criteria incidents in FY17 is nearly evenly divided; 49 percent were female and 51 percent were male. Figure 5 displays the sex of child abuse and neglect victims for each type of met criteria incident. The proportions by which each sex experienced types of child maltreatment indicated that slightly more males experienced neglect (29 percent male vs. 27 percent female) and physical abuse (11 percent male vs. 9 percent female) and slightly more females experienced emotional abuse (10 percent female vs. 9 percent male) and sexual abuse (4 percent female vs. 1 percent male).

Sex of Child Victims in Met Criteria Incidents (FY17)

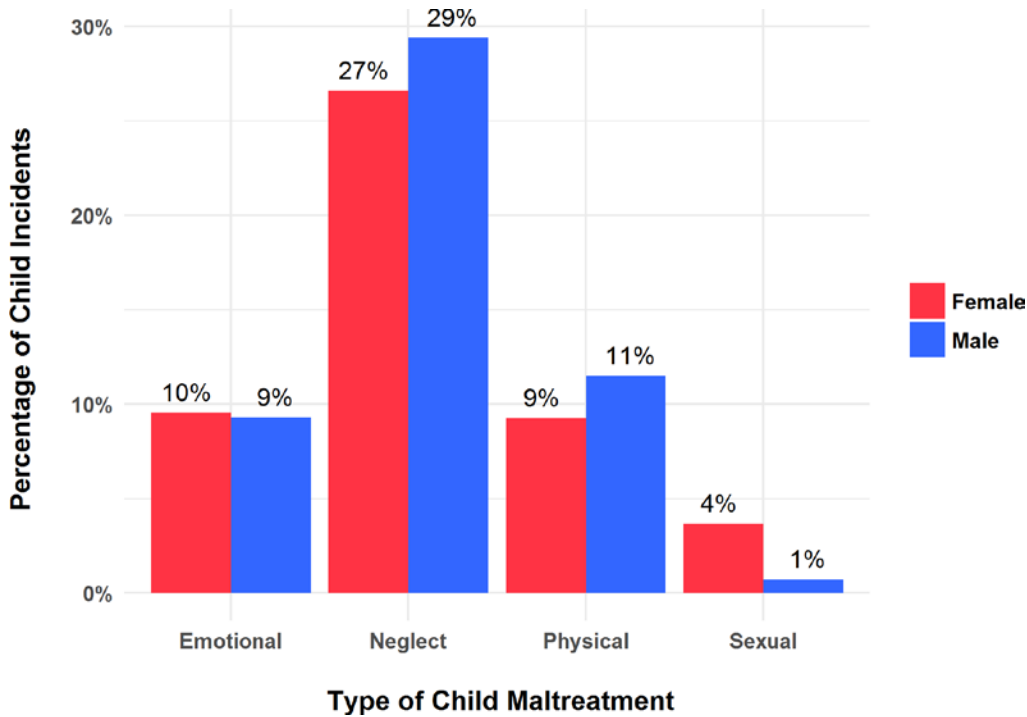


Figure 5. Sex of child victims by maltreatment type in FY17 met criteria incidents.

Figures 6 and 7 highlight the age distribution of child victims in met criteria CAN incidents. In FY17 there were 3,528 met criteria CAN incidents with child victims who were age 5 or younger, representing more than one-half (55.9 percent) of all victims of child maltreatment in FY17. Of these incidents, there were 1,482 with children 1 year of age or younger and 2,046 involving children age 2-5 years old. Incidents involving children age 6-11 represented one-quarter (1,941 children) of all met criteria incidents of abuse or neglect, and just under one-fifth (958 incidents) involved children who were between the ages of 12 and 17.

Ages of Child Victims in Met Criteria Incidents (FY17)

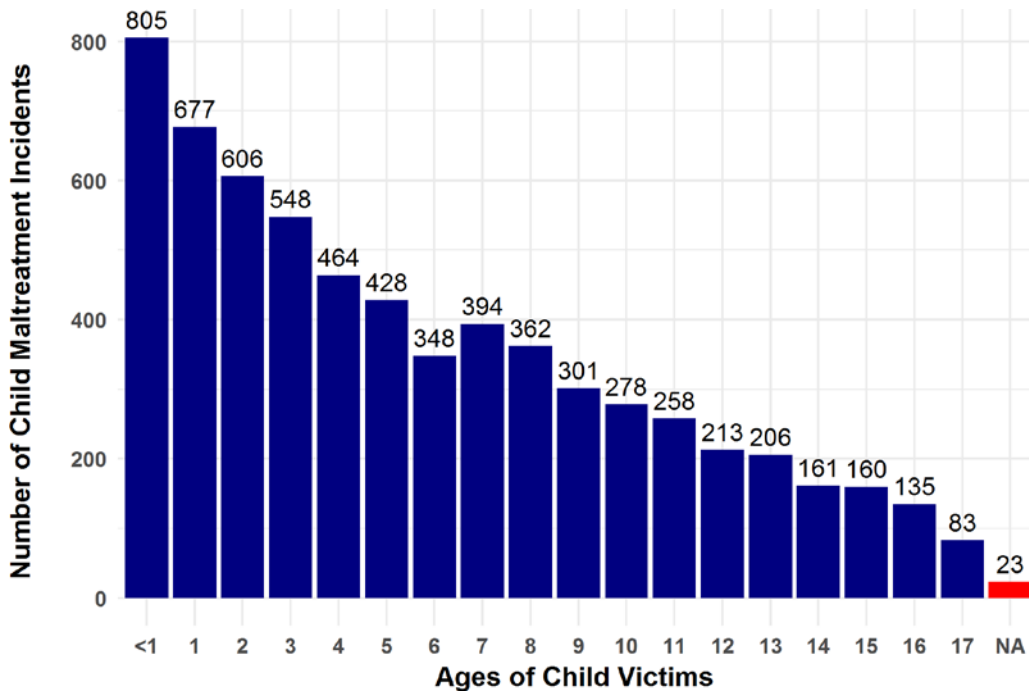


Figure 6. Ages of child victims in met criteria incidents in FY17.

Compared to the total population of children in military families in FY17, the disparity between proportions of young children (age birth to five) in met criteria incidents is pronounced. As displayed in Figure 7, a much greater proportion of children in met criteria incidents of child maltreatment are age 1 or younger compared to the proportion of such children in the total child population (23.8 percent vs. 7.4 percent). Meanwhile, there are fewer child victims in met criteria incidents age 2-5 (32.1 percent of met criteria incidents vs. 37.6 percent of total child population), 6-11 (25.9 percent) and 12-17 (18.3 percent) compared to the proportion of such children in the total child population (29.5 percent and 25.5 percent, respectively).

Age of Victim in FY17 Met Criteria CAN Incidents, Compared to Demographics

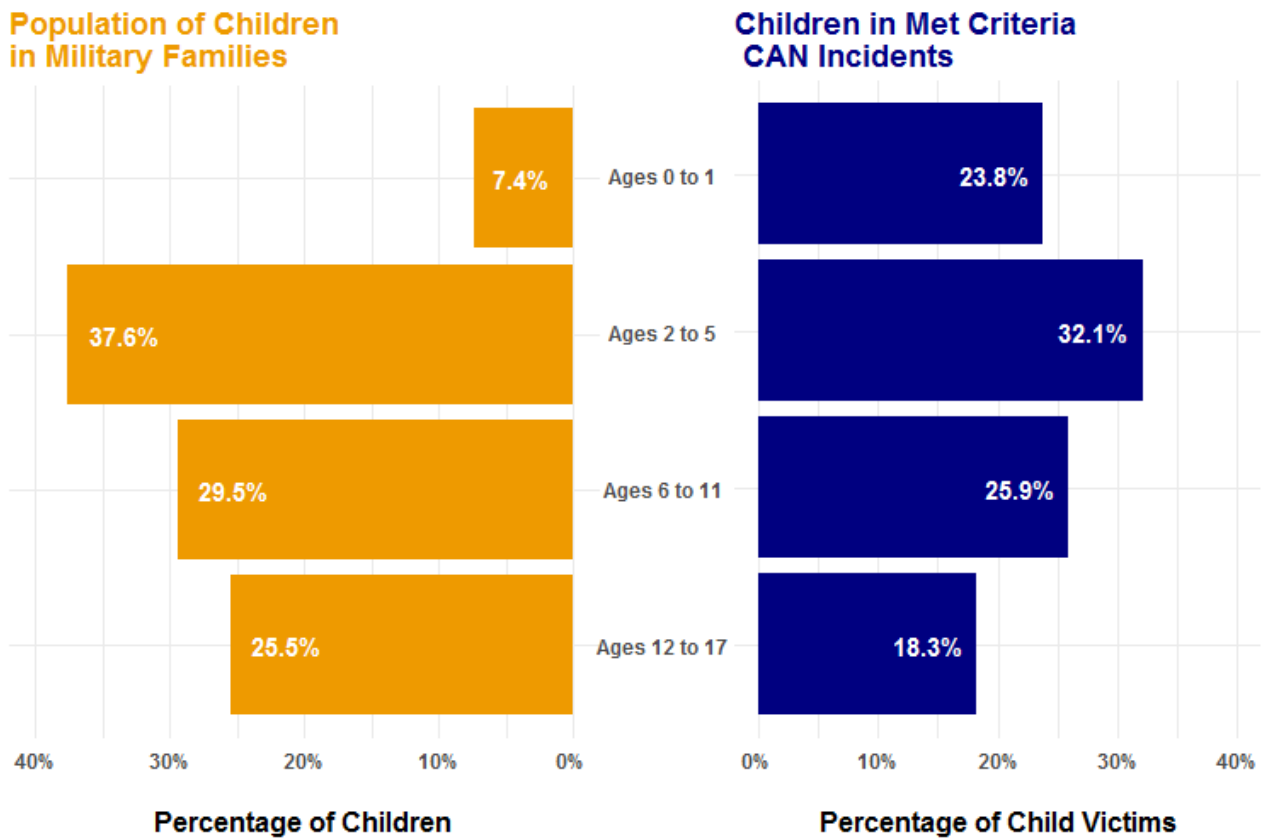


Figure 7. Ages of children in the military population and ages of child victims in FY17 met criteria incidents, where age was specified.

3-3 OFFENDER PROFILE

This section describes adults who were involved in incidents that met criteria for child abuse and neglect, as well as characteristics, including military status and paygrade.

Of the alleged met criteria offenders who were involved in incidents of child abuse and neglect in FY17, 50 percent were parent(s) who were military members, 43 percent were civilian parents, and fewer were other family members (2 percent) or extrafamilial caregivers (4 percent). Approximately 1 percent of offenders had an unknown status due to missing data (see Figure 8).

Caregiver Status of Offenders in Met Criteria Child Abuse and Neglect Incidents

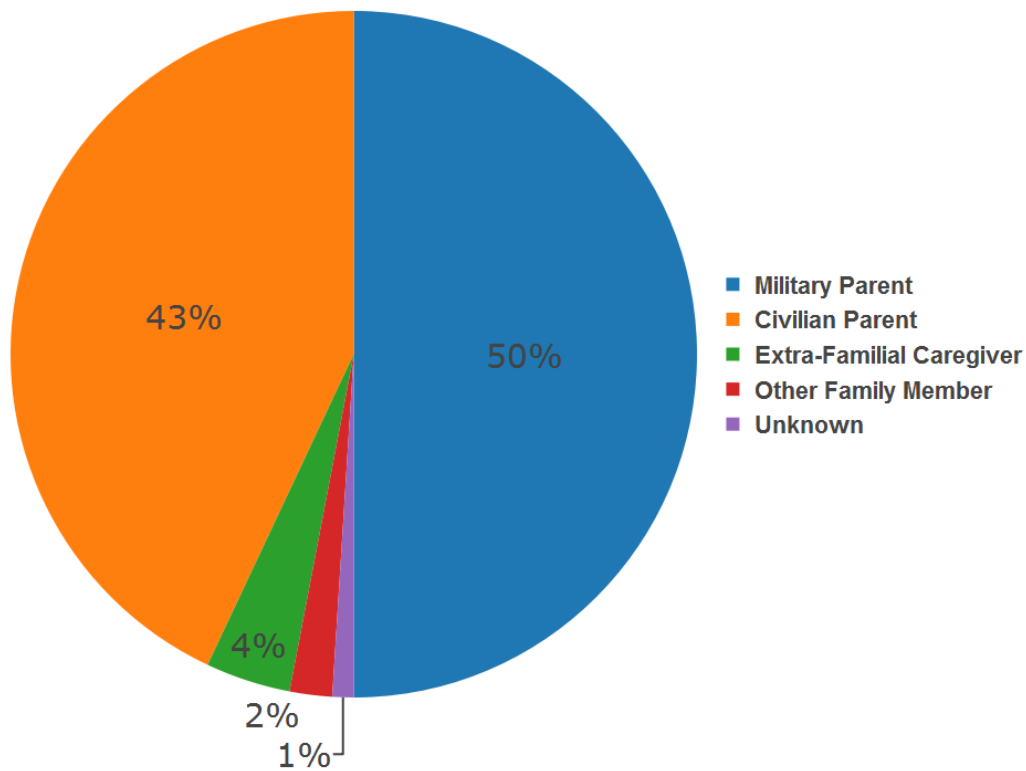


Figure 8. Status of offenders of met criteria child maltreatment incidents in FY17. Military parents include active duty members as well as Reserve and National Guard members who are in an active status.

As shown in Figure 9, the status distribution of offenders in met criteria child abuse and neglect incidents has been relatively consistent since FY08. In FY17, 52 percent of alleged offenders were military members and 48 percent were civilians.

Military Status of Met Criteria Offenders in Child Abuse and Neglect Incidents (FY08-FY17)

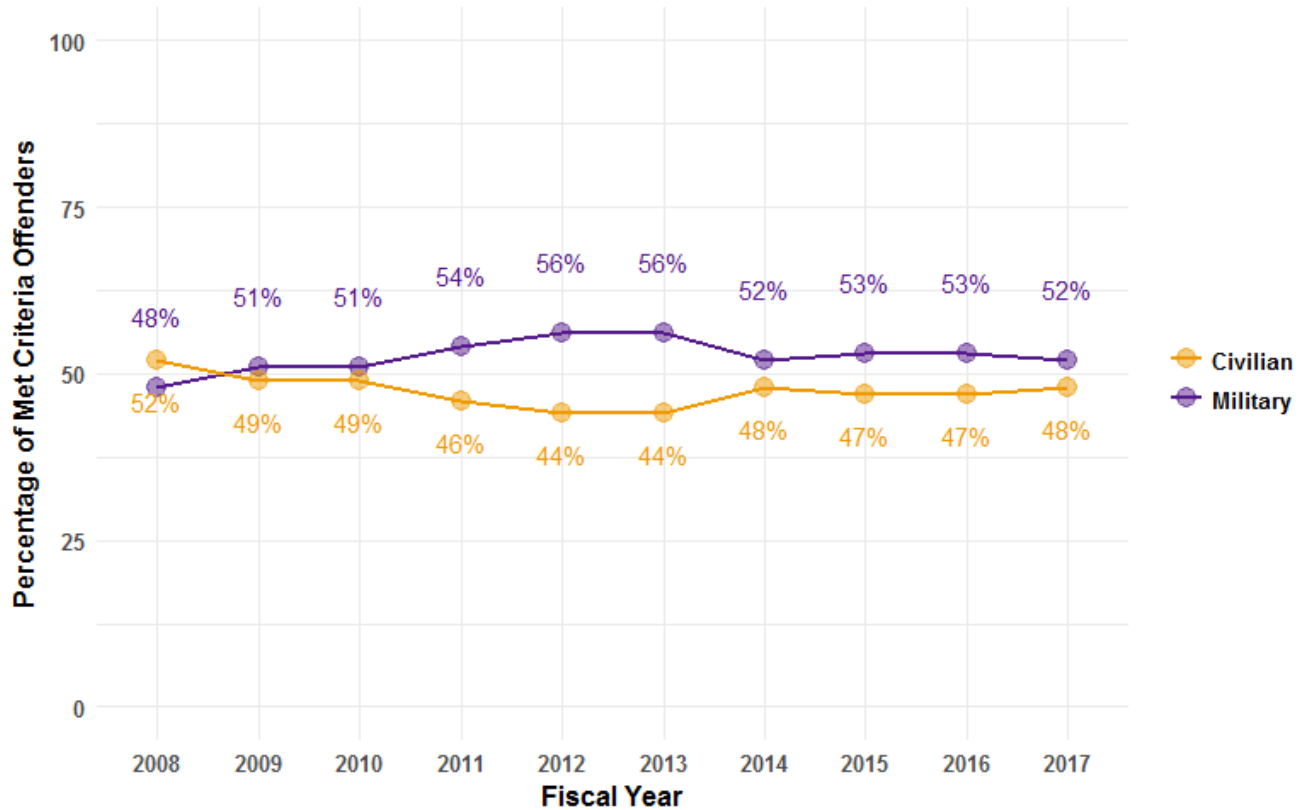


Figure 9. Status of met criteria offender in child abuse and neglect incidents.

Figure 10 displays pay grade breakdown for military parent offenders who were involved in a child abuse and neglect incident that met criteria. The majority of parent offenders were junior enlisted members; 69 percent were E4-E6 and 15 percent were E1-E3. Fewer parent offenders were senior enlisted (E7-E9; 10 percent) and officers (3 percent were O4-O10; 2 percent were O1-O3; and 1 percent were WO1-WO5).

Military Parent Met Criteria Offenders by Pay Grade (FY17)

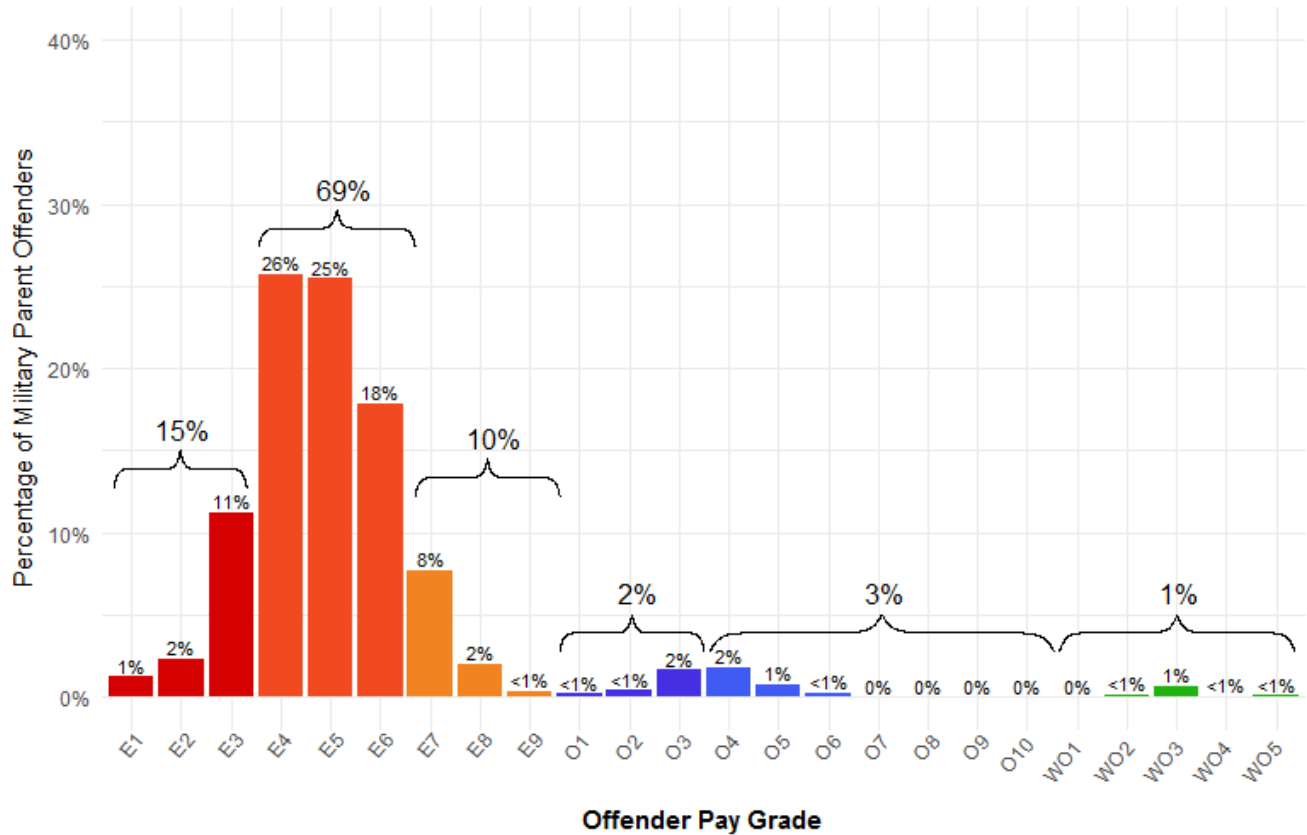


Figure 10. Military includes active duty members as well as Reserve and National Guard members who are in an active status.

Compared to the total population of active duty parents in FY17, the differences between proportions in the pay grades of active duty parent offenders in met criteria child abuse and neglect incidents are pronounced. As displayed in Figure 11, a much greater proportion of active duty parents in met criteria incidents of child maltreatment are in the E4-E6 pay grade (69 percent vs. 51 percent) and the E1-E3 pay grade (15 percent vs. 4 percent).

Meanwhile, there are proportionally fewer active duty parents involved in met criteria incidents compared to the active duty parent population in the E7-E9 (10 percent vs. 20 percent), O1-O3 (2 percent vs. 8 percent), O4-O10 (3 percent vs. 13 percent), and WO1-WO5 (1 percent vs. 3 percent) pay grades.

Active Duty Parent Met Criteria Offenders by Pay Grade, Compared to Demographics (FY17)

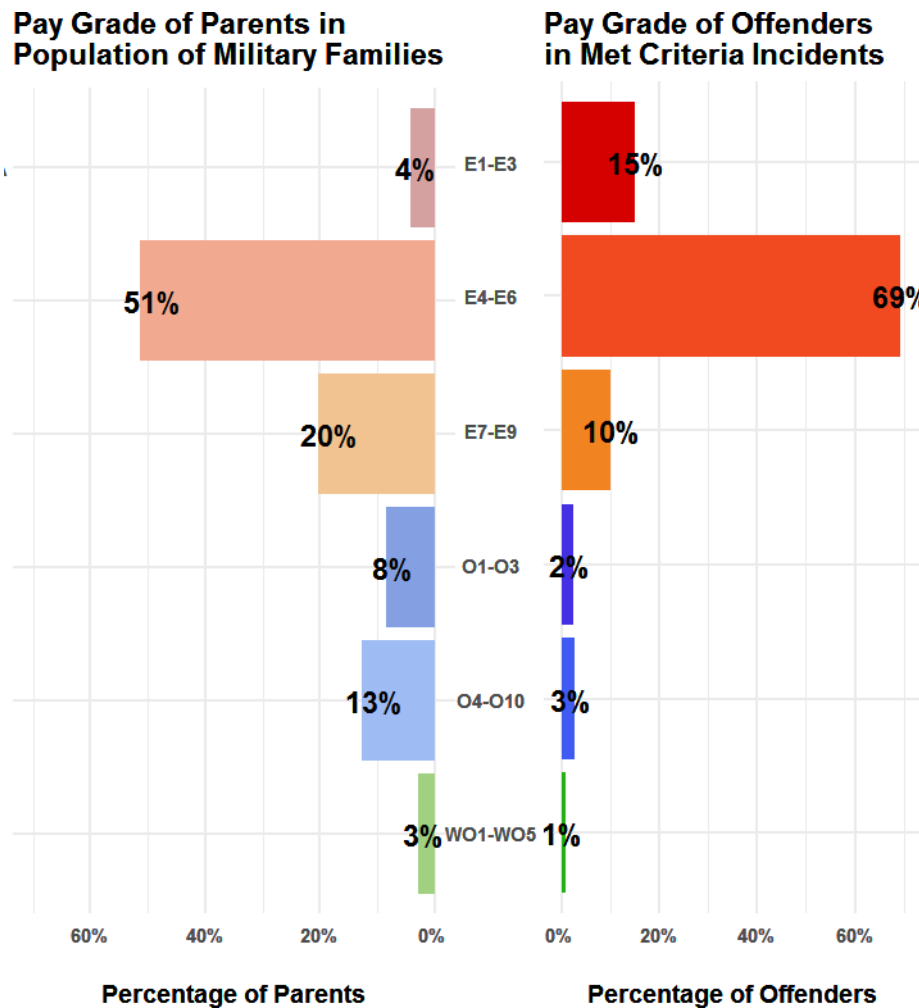


Figure 11. Comparison of the proportions of parents in the military population with a particular pay grade (on the left) to the proportion of parents who were offenders of a met criteria incident of child maltreatment with a particular pay grade (on the right).

While the breakdown of active duty parents by pay grade in Figure 11 indicated that the greatest proportion of military parent offenders were in the E4-E6 pay grade, the rate per 1,000 of active duty parent offenders involved in incidents of child abuse and neglect that met criteria is highest for parents who are in the E1-E3 (14.0) pay grades (see Figure 12).

Rate of Active Duty Parent Met Criteria Offenders Per 1,000, by Pay Grade

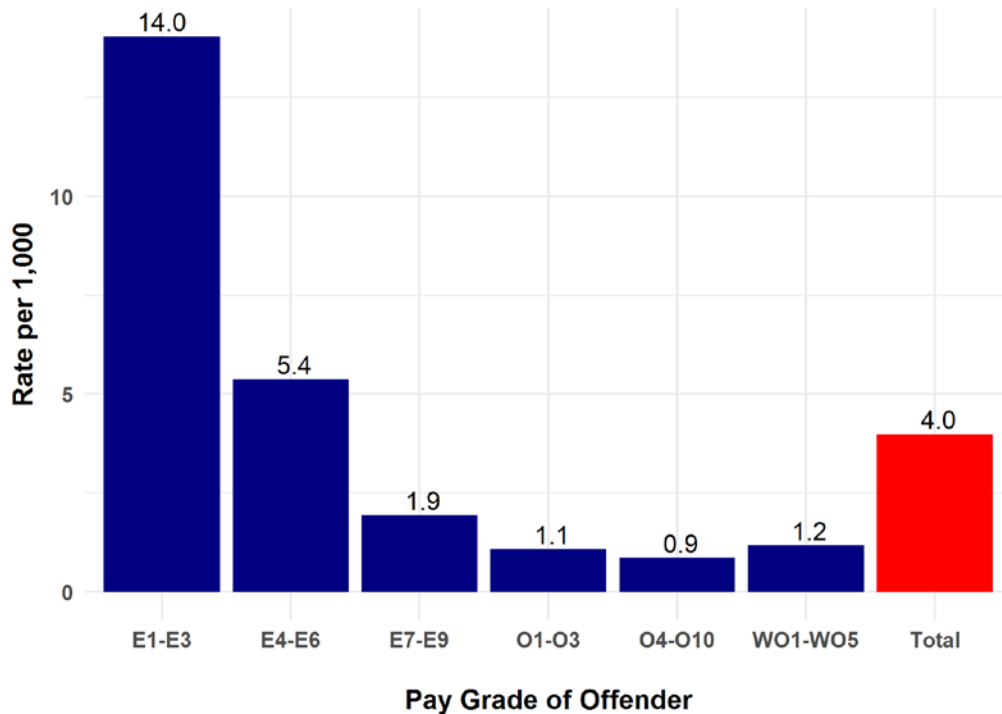


Figure 12. Rate of offenders of a met criteria incident of child maltreatment per 1,000 parents in the population by parent pay grade.

As shown in Figure 13, 54 percent of offenders in child abuse and neglect incidents that met criteria are male and 46 percent are female.

Sex of Offenders in Met Criteria Child Abuse and Neglect Incidents (FY17)

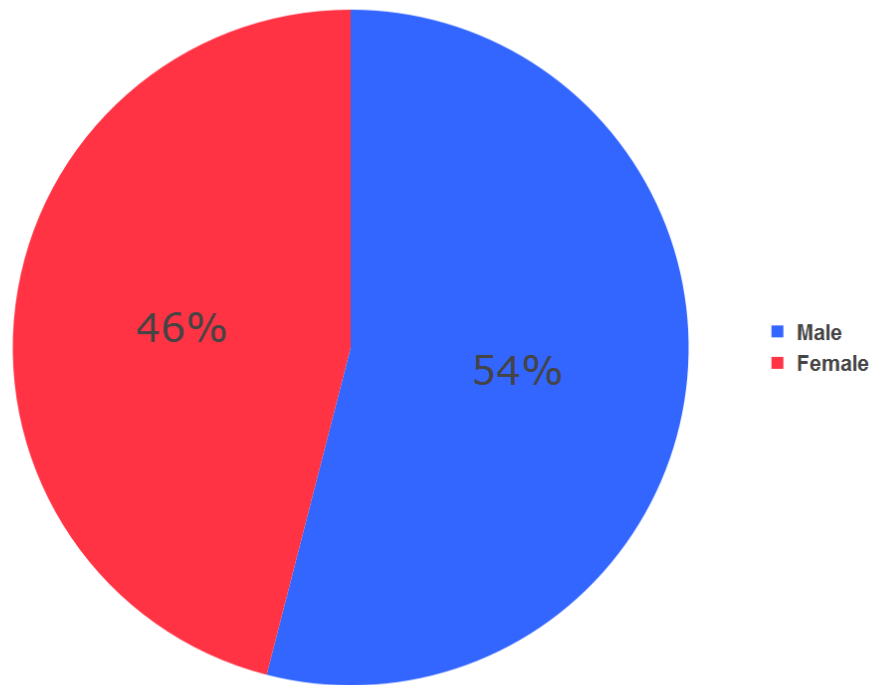


Figure 13. Sex of offenders of met criteria child abuse and neglect incidents in FY17. There were two offenders whose sex was not identified.

3-4. CHILD ABUSE FATALITIES

As discussed previously, fatality reviews to examine fatalities from FY17 will take place in the Military Services in FY19. Data on fatalities included in this report represent only those fatalities that were taken to the IDC after the death of the victim in FY17 and met criteria as related to child abuse and neglect.

There were 17 child abuse-related fatalities involving 23 offenders that were taken to the IDC and entered into the Central Registry in FY17 (see Table 3). Four child victims and six of the met criteria offenders were previously known to FAP.²³ In the child fatality incidents, 11 of the met criteria offenders were male and 12 were female. Thirteen of the met criteria offenders were active duty, and 10 offenders had a civilian status. All of the child victims were under 5 years old, and 79 percent of the child victims were 1 year old or younger.

Table 3: Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities Reported to FAP in FY17

Total Fatalities: 17
- 23 met criteria offenders involved (including 6 fatalities with 2 offenders)
- 4 Child victims previously reported to FAP
- 6 offenders previously reported to FAP
Sex of met criteria offenders
- 11 Male
- 12 Female
Status of met criteria offenders
- 13 Active Duty
- 10 Civilian
Age of Victims
- 11 Fatalities were 1 year old or younger
- 1 Fatality was between ages 1-3
- 5 Fatalities were between ages 4-15

Note: Represents only those fatalities taken to the IDC in FY17. Service fatality reviews will take place in FY19.

²³ Cases where a child or family was previously known to FAP include instances where services were received (e.g., New Parent Support Program), prior incidents that may or may not have met criteria, prior cases that may be closed resolved, incidents involving other offenders, and current open cases.

4. DOMESTIC ABUSE

This section discusses reports to FAP of domestic abuse (spouse abuse and intimate partner abuse) in FY17, incidents of spouse abuse and intimate partner abuse that met criteria, and the characteristics of those adult victims and alleged offenders for cases that met criteria.

Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6400.06 (Domestic Abuse Involving DoD military and Certain Affiliated Personnel) defines “domestic abuse” as domestic violence, or a pattern of behavior resulting in emotional/psychological abuse, economic control, and/or interference with personal liberty that is directed to a person 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.

For purposes of this report, we provide distinct analysis of incidents of spouse abuse, incidents of intimate partner abuse, as well as an analysis of the umbrella category of domestic abuse, which contains the sum of all such incidents.

Spouse abuse – Either the victim or offender may have been an active duty Service member or the civilian spouse of an active duty Service member.

Intimate partner abuse – In FY06, an additional category, “intimate partner”, was added to capture incidents involving (1) a former spouse, (2) a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, or (3) a current or former intimate partner with whom the victim shares or has shared a common domicile. In such cases, the victim or the offender may have been an active duty Service member or civilian.

Domestic abuse, per DoD policy, represents four distinct types of maltreatment for either spouse or intimate partner abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Spouse neglect is a type of domestic abuse in which an adult fails to provide necessary care or assistance for his or her spouse who is incapable of self-care physically, emotionally, or culturally. Each of these types of maltreatment is outlined in implementing guidance for use during the standardized incident determination process.²⁴

Incidents of domestic abuse are reported separately by type of maltreatment; one or more incidents may be submitted on an individual victim. Prior to FY15, incidents may have included multiple types of abuse under one incident; as explained previously, reporting was standardized for consistency.

²⁴ DoDM 6400.01-Volume 3 (Family Advocacy Program), Glossary, August 11, 2016.

4-1. DOMESTIC ABUSE INCIDENTS

In FY17, there were a total of 8,069 met criteria incidents of domestic abuse reported to FAP. As shown in Figure 14, physical abuse represented three-quarters (74.25 percent) of these incidents, emotional abuse represented a little less than one quarter (21.99 percent), and fewer incidents involved sexual abuse (3.72 percent) and neglect (.05 percent).

Domestic abuse incidents involving sexual abuse comprise 3.72 percent of all met criteria domestic abuse incidents. The proportion of domestic abuse incidents that involve sexual abuse has incrementally increased since FY09, when the distinct numbers of sexual abuse were first available.²⁵ The proportion of domestic abuse incidents that involved sexual abuse in FY17 increased slightly over the proportion in FY16 (3.44 percent).

Type of Domestic Abuse in Met Criteria Incidents (FY17)

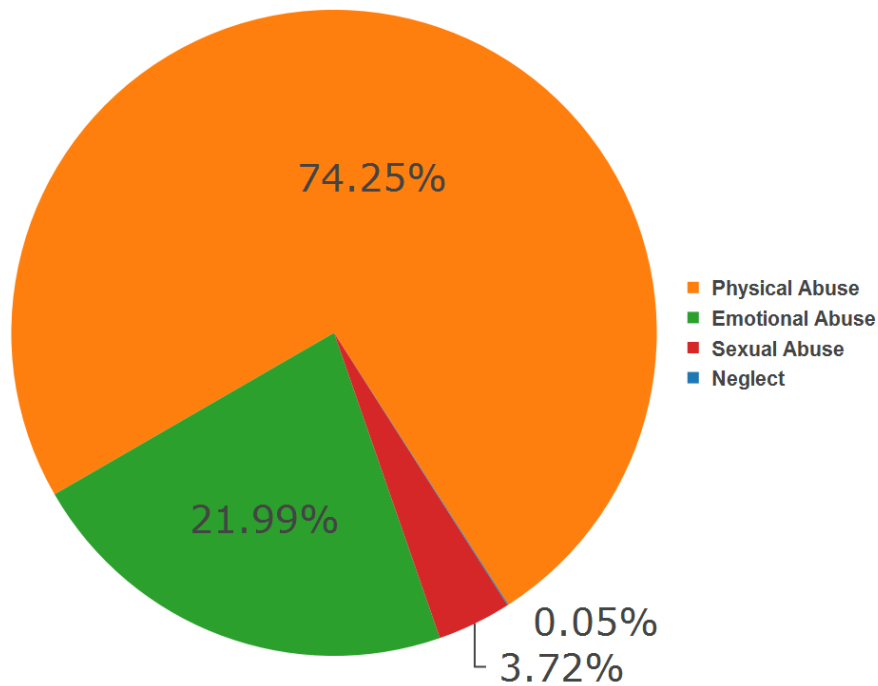


Figure 14. Domestic abuse includes spouse abuse and intimate partner incidents.

²⁵ The FY17 proportion of domestic abuse incidents that involve sexual abuse (3.72 percent) is a statistically significant increase when compared to the average of previous years (Grubbs test: $z = 1.68$, $p = .045$).

4-2. SPOUSE ABUSE

As outlined in the previous section, spouse abuse includes acts of physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect. Incidents of abuse are reported separately by type of abuse; one or more incidents may be submitted on an individual victim. As noted previously, prior to FY15, incidents may have included multiple types of abuse under one incident; reporting was standardized for consistency. The FY08 through FY17 data on spouse abuse included in this section is limited to only those incidents involving married individuals.

There are three rates calculated for spouse abuse in this report: the rate of reported incidents, the rate of met criteria incidents, and the rate of spouse victimization. The first two rates can be impacted by external factors. For example, the rate of reports can fluctuate based on the impact of awareness campaigns, training, and efforts to reduce stigma in the community associated with contacting FAP. Process improvements attributed to the implementation of the IDC – counting each type of maltreatment as a distinct incident – can impact the rate of met criteria incidents. The spouse abuse victimization rate measures the number of married individuals who experience spouse abuse per 1,000 married military couples, and offers an alternative way to examine the rates of spouse abuse that reflects the unique number of spouses who experienced abuse and neglect across years.

As shown in Table 4, the FY17 rate of reported spouse abuse per 1,000 couples was 24.5, which is higher than the rate per 1,000 in FY16 (23.4). This numerical difference of 1.1 represents a 5 percent increase in the rate of reported incidents.²⁶ The rate of incidents of spouse abuse that met criteria per 1,000 married couples was 11.2, which is lower than the rate per 1,000 in FY16 (11.8). This numerical difference of .6 represents a 5 percent decrease in the rate of met criteria incidents.²⁷

Table 4: Reports and Incidents of Spouse Abuse (FYs 2008-2017)

Fiscal Year	Married Couples Population	Reported Incidents	Reports/1000	Met Criteria Incidents	Met Criteria Incidents/1000
2008	718,526	15,939	22.2	6,767	9.4
2009	738,067	18,208	24.7	7,476	10.1
2010	751,758	18,785	25.0	8,411	11.2
2011	753,110	19,277	25.6	8,386	11.1
2012	734,308	18,671	25.4	8,345	11.4
2013	713,135	17,295	24.3	7,935	11.1
2014	690,460	16,287	23.6	7,464	10.8
2015	665,429	15,725	23.6	7,892	11.9
2016	646,782	15,144	23.4	7,661	11.8
2017	638,132	15,657	24.5	7,153	11.2

Note. Incidents of maltreatment are reported separately by type of maltreatment; one or more incident may be submitted on a single victim.

²⁶ The rate of spouse abuse reports (see Table 4) has not varied significantly year-to-year since FY08. Slight changes in the rate of reported spouse abuse represent chance variation (Grubbs test, $z = 0.29$, $p = .39$).

²⁷ The rate of spouse abuse incidents (see Table 4) has not varied significantly year-to-year since FY08. Any variation in the rate of met criteria incidents of spouse abuse per 1,000 married couples could be due to chance (Grubbs test, $z = 0.27$, $p = .39$).

The rates of spouse abuse incidents reported to FAP and the rate of the spouse abuse incidents that met criteria per 1,000 married couples from FY08-FY17 are displayed in Figure 15. Both of these rates have only seen slight fluctuation over the past 10 years, and there is not a statistically significant difference between the FY17 rates when compared to the average of rates from prior years.

Spouse Abuse Report vs. Met Criteria Rates per 1,000 Married Couples (FY17)

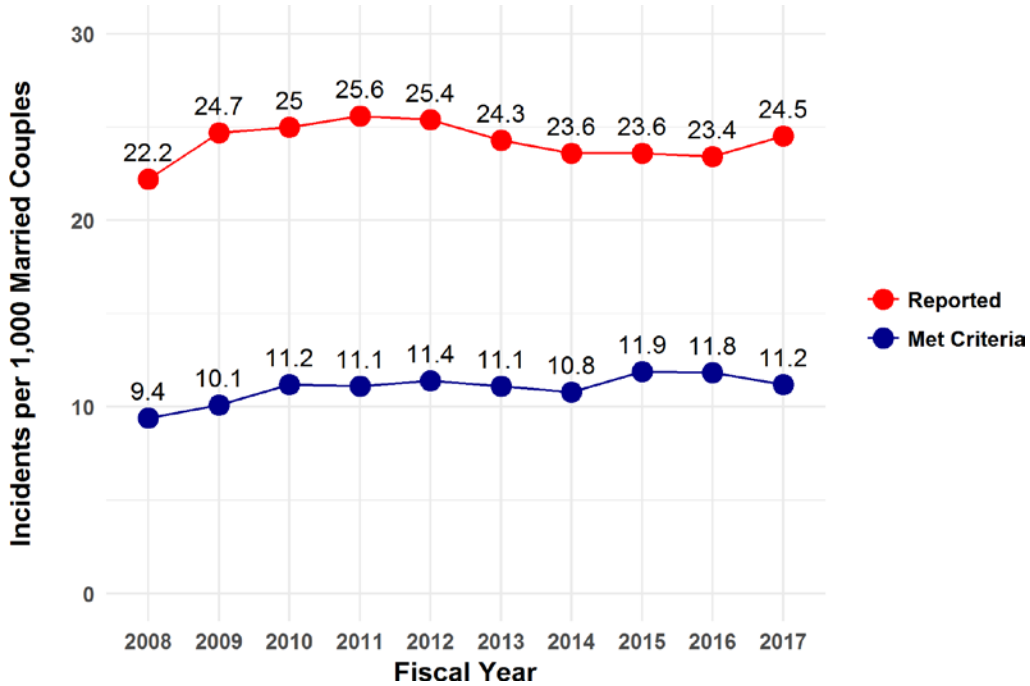


Figure 15. Prior to FY15, incidents may have included multiple types of maltreatment (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect) under one incident report.

As shown in Table 5, there were 5,781 unduplicated victims of spouse abuse in FY17. The FY17 unique spouse abuse victim rate per 1,000 married couples is 9.1, which is lower than the rate per 1,000 in FY16 (9.3). This numerical difference of .2 represents a 2 percent decrease in the rate of spouse abuse victims.²⁸

Table 5: Unduplicated Victims of Spouse Abuse

Fiscal Year	Met Criteria Incidents	Unduplicated Victims	Married Couples Population	Met Criteria Incidents/1000	Rate of Victims/1000
2008	6,767	6,283	718,526	9.4	8.7
2009	7,476	7,091	738,067	10.1	9.6
2010	8,411	7,698	751,758	11.2	10.2
2011	8,386	7,510	753,110	11.1	10.0
2012	8,345	7,462	734,308	11.4	10.2
2013	7,935	6,928	713,135	11.1	9.7
2014	7,464	6,491	690,460	10.8	9.4
2015	7,892	6,314	665,429	11.9	9.5
2016	7,661	6,033	646,782	11.8	9.3
2017	7,153	5,781	638,132	11.2	9.1

Note. This table shows the number of spouse abuse incidents that met criteria for maltreatment and the number of unique victims who experienced those incidents. Incidents of maltreatment are reported separately by type of maltreatment (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect); one or more incident may be submitted on a single victim.

²⁸ In FY16, the Department initiated data process improvements, including the use of additional criteria to determine the number of unique victims in each fiscal year. Therefore, victim counts and victim rates presented in Table 5 vary slightly from prior reports.

The rates of unduplicated spouse abuse victims per 1,000 married couples from FY08-FY17 are displayed in Figure 16.²⁹

Rate of Unduplicated Spouse Abuse Victims Per 1,000 Married Couples, Over Time

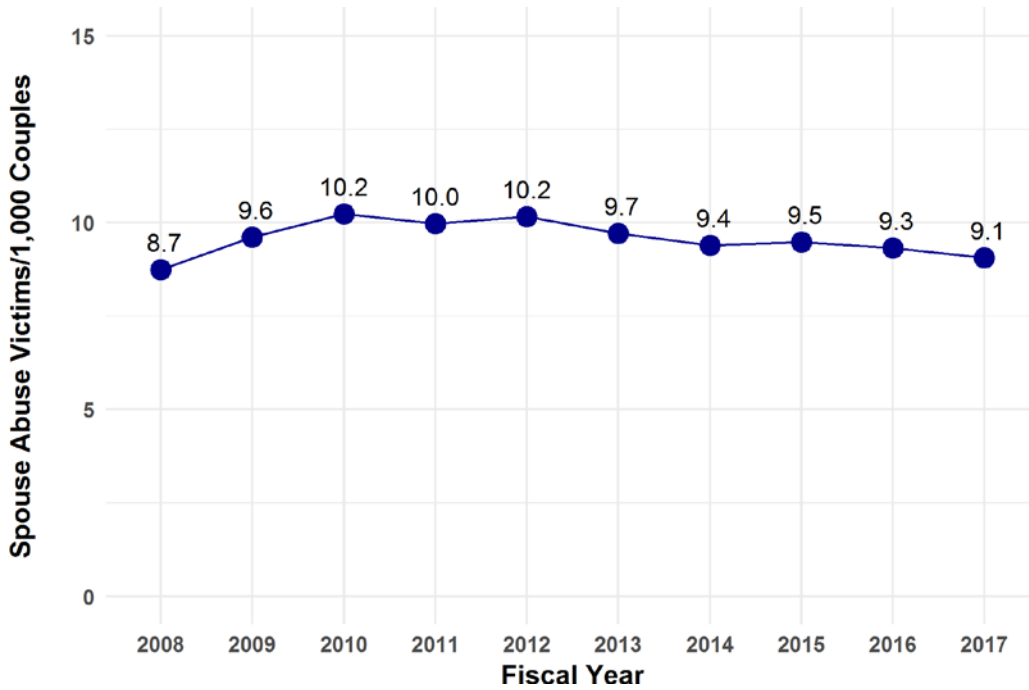


Figure 16. Yearly rates of unique victims of met criteria spouse abuse per 1,000 married couples in the military population.

Comparison to Civilian Data

Unlike child abuse and neglect, there is no federal mechanism to track rates of civilian spouse abuse for comparison to the military population. This is, in part, due to the fact that each state has different laws and definitions of domestic abuse, which makes any aggregation of these incidents very difficult.

²⁹ Although there is slight variation displayed in the spouse abuse victim rates between FY08 and FY17, the FY17 spouse abuse victim rate did not vary significantly from the average rate of victimization during this time period Grubbs test, $z = 1.08$, $p = .14$).

Spouse Abuse Victim Profile

This section describes adults who were victims in incidents that met criteria for spouse abuse.

The status of victims involved in spouse abuse incidents which met criteria in FY17 were divided nearly evenly between military and non-military status, as seen in Figure 17. Of the total victims, 53 percent were military members and 47 percent were non-military.

Military Status of Victims in Met Criteria Spouse Abuse Incidents (FY17)

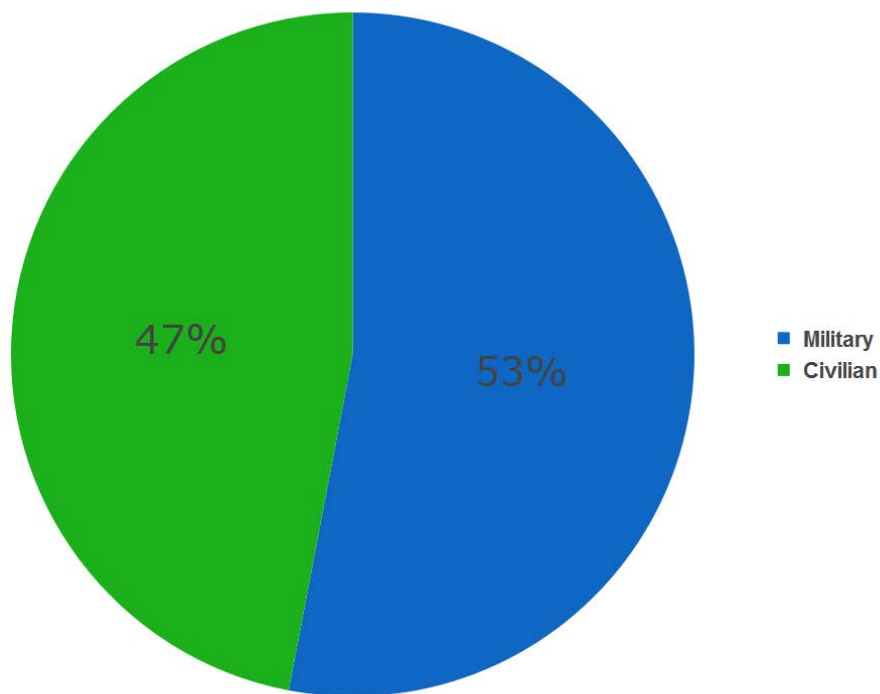


Figure 17. Military status of spouse abuse victims. Military includes active duty members as well as Reserve and National Guard members who are in an active status.

Overall, 64 percent of victims of spouse abuse in met criteria incidents were female and 36 percent of the victims were male.

Figure 18 displays the sex of spouse abuse victims for each type of maltreatment. The proportions by which each sex experienced types of spouse abuse indicated that more females experienced all types of abuse. Ninety-four percent of spouse abuse victims who experienced sexual abuse were female vs. 6 percent male. Seventy-five percent of victims who experienced emotional abuse were female vs. 25 percent male. Sixty-two percent of victims who experienced physical abuse were female vs. 38 percent male); 69 percent of victims who experienced neglect were female vs. 31 percent male.

Sex of Victims in Met Criteria Spouse Abuse Incidents (FY17)

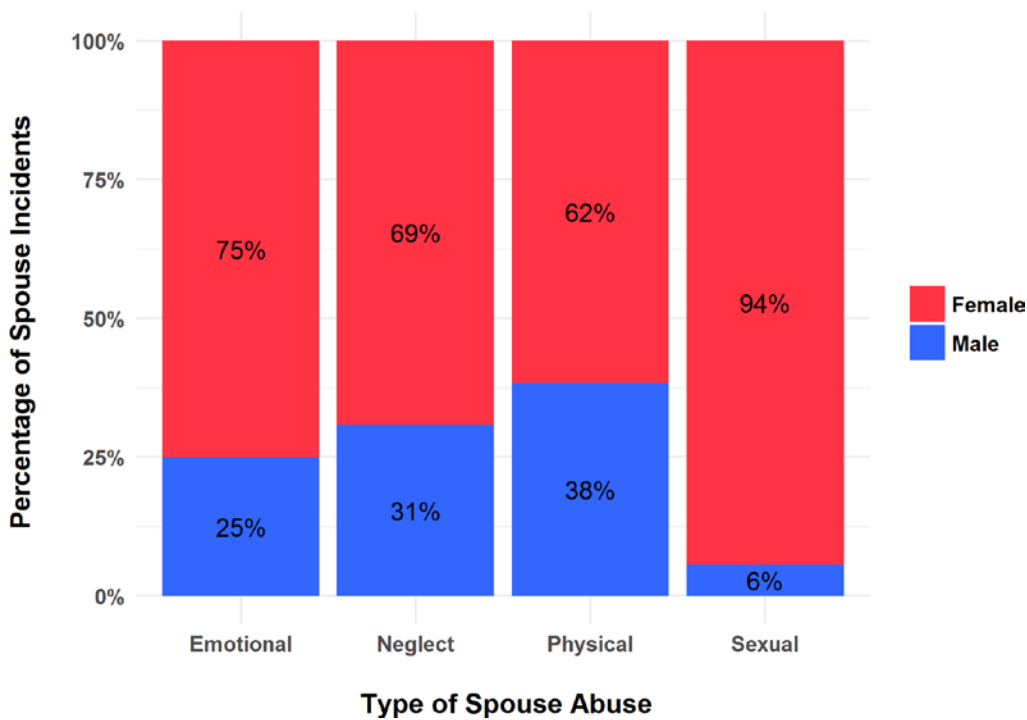


Figure 18. Sex of victims of met criteria spouse abuse incidents, by type of maltreatment.

Spouse Abuse Offender Profile

This section describes adults who were the alleged offenders involved in incidents that met criteria for spouse abuse as well as characteristics, including military status and paygrade.

The status of offenders involved in spouse abuse incidents that met criteria in FY17 are displayed in Figure 19. Fifty-seven percent of alleged offenders were military members and 43 percent were civilian.

Military Status of Offenders in Met Criteria Spouse Abuse Incidents (FY17)

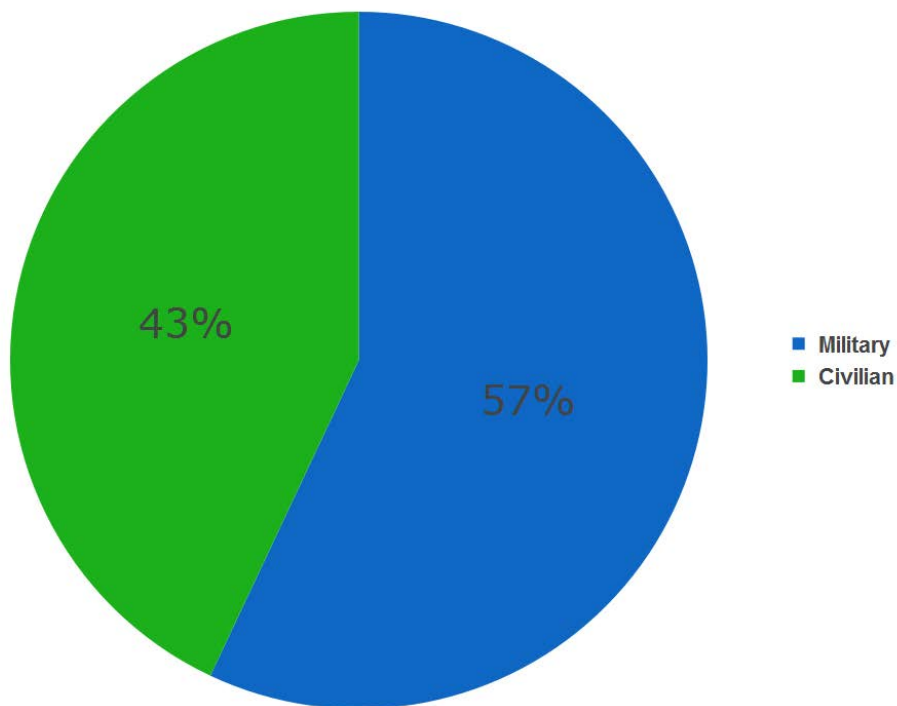


Figure 19. Military status of spouse abuse offenders. Military includes active duty members as well as Reserve and National Guard members who are in an active status.

As shown in Figure 20, the status distribution of offenders in met criteria spouse abuse incidents has been relatively consistent since FY08. In FY17, 57 percent of alleged offenders were military members and 43 percent were civilian.

Military Status of Offenders in Met Criteria Spouse Abuse Incidents, Over Time

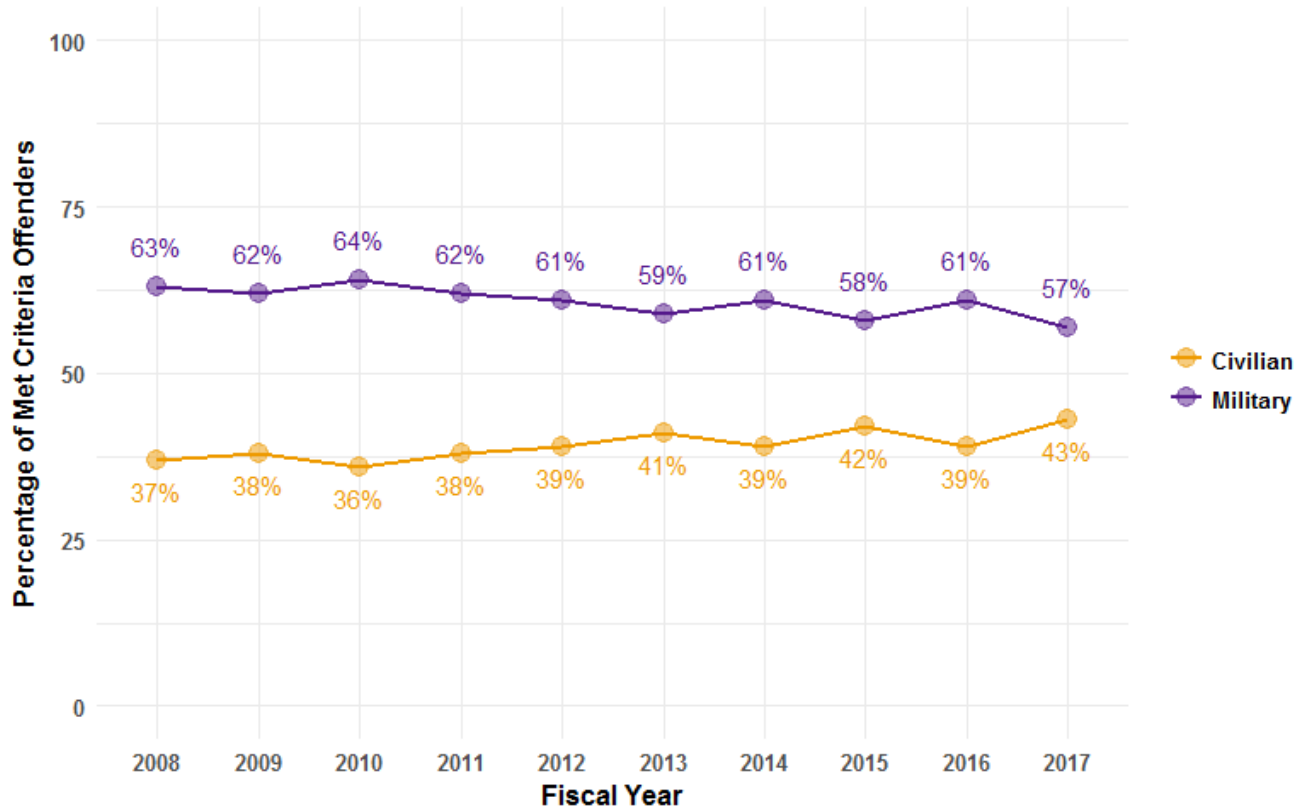


Figure 20. Military status of spouse abuse offenders in met criteria incidents over time.

Figure 21 displays a breakdown by pay grade for military offenders who were involved in a spouse abuse incident that met criteria. The majority of alleged offenders were junior enlisted members; 64 percent were E4-E6 and 25 percent were E1-E3. Eight percent of alleged offenders were E7-E9, were eight percent) and officers (two percent were O1-O3, one percent was O4-O10, and less than one percent was WO1-WO5).

Military Met Criteria Spouse Abuse Offenders, by Pay Grade (FY17)

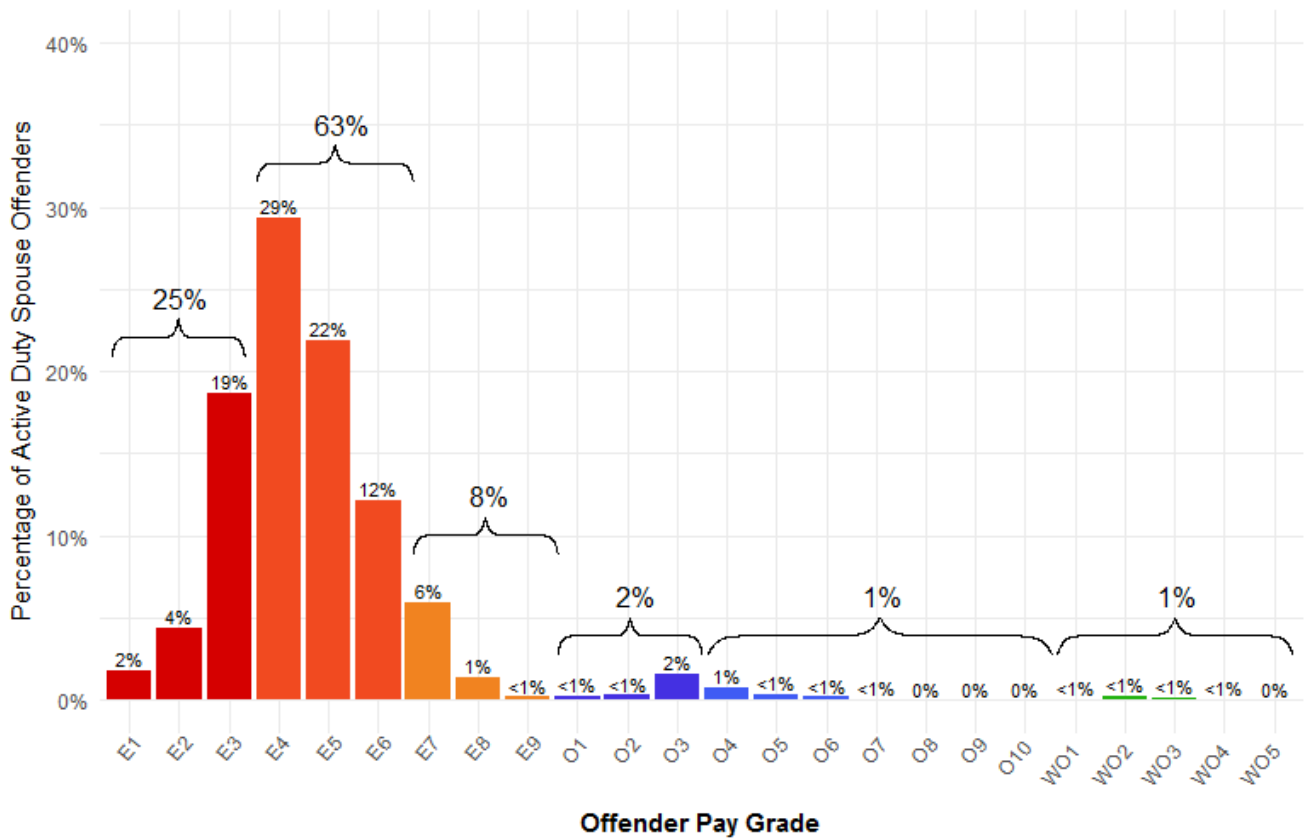


Figure 21. Military includes active duty members as well as Reserve and National Guard members who are in an active status.

When compared to the total population of active duty married couples in FY17, the differences among proportions of active duty spouse abuse offenders in met criteria incidents are pronounced. As displayed in Figure 22, the proportion of active duty offenders in met criteria incidents of spouse abuse as compared to the active duty population of married couples is greater in the E4-E6 pay grade (63 percent vs. 53 percent) and the E1-E3 pay grade (25 percent vs. 9 percent).

Meanwhile, the proportion of active duty offenders involved in met criteria incidents as compared to the active duty population of married couples is lesser in the E7-E9 (8 percent vs. 16 percent), O1-O3 (2 percent vs. 10 percent), and O4-O10 (1 percent vs. 11 percent) pay grades when compared to the total population of active duty married couples.

FY17 Active Duty Spouse Abuse Offenders by Pay Grade, Compared to Demographics

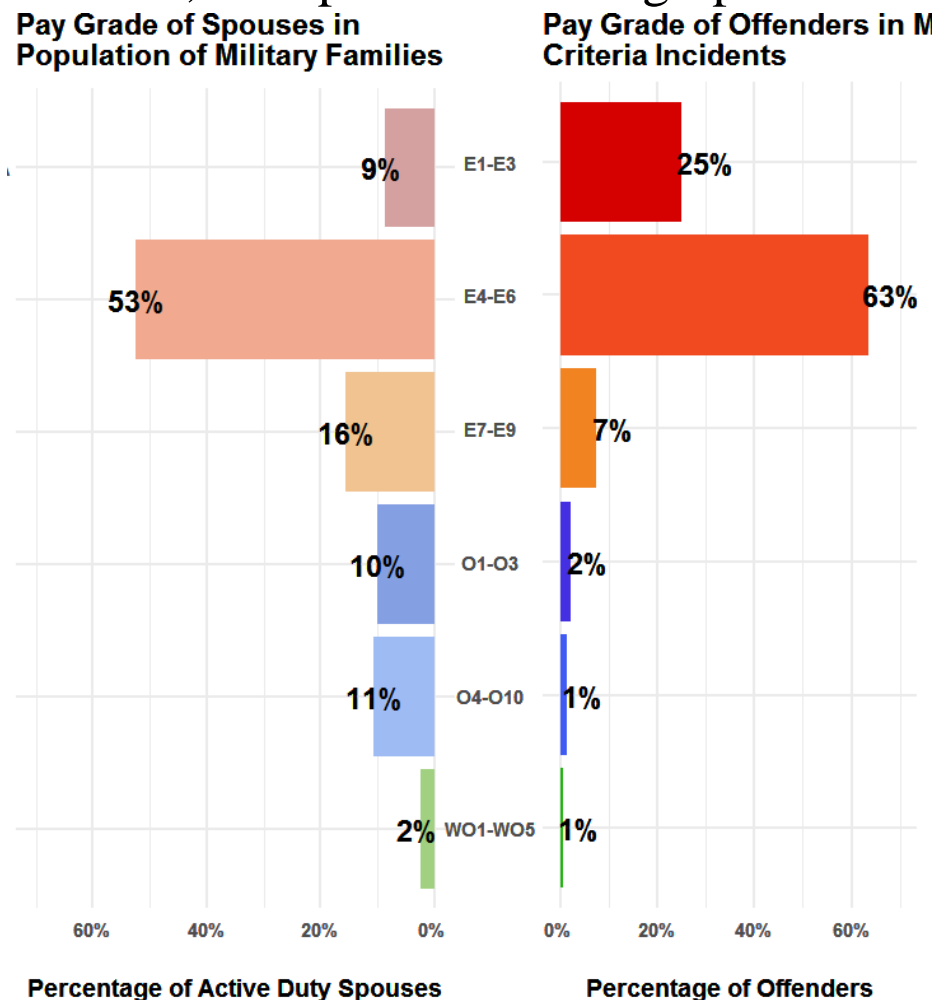


Figure 22. Comparison of the proportion of spouses in the military population with a particular pay grade (on the left) to the proportion of spouses who were offenders of a met criteria incident of spouse abuse (on the right) by pay grade.

While the breakdown of active duty spouse abuse offenders by pay grade in Figure 22 indicated that the greatest proportion of active duty offenders were in the E4-E6 pay grades, the highest rate per 1,000 of active duty offenders involved in incidents of spouse abuse is for offenders who are in the E1-E3 (14.8) pay grades (see Figure 23).

Rate of Active Duty Spouse Abuse Offenders Per 1,000 Married Couples, by Pay Grade (FY17)

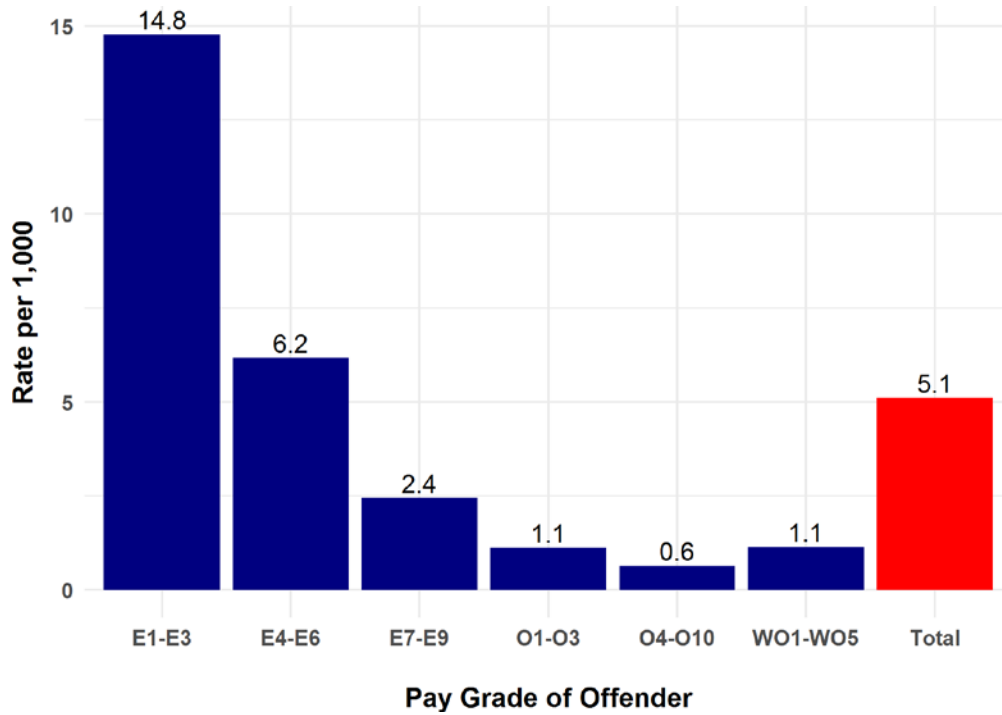


Figure 23. Active duty only calculated using demographics of active duty population.

Overall, 62 percent of spouse abuse offenders were male and 38 percent of the offenders were female.

Figure 24 shows the proportions of male and female offenders for each individual type of met criteria spouse abuse, and indicates that more males were offenders for all types of spouse abuse. The vast majority of spouse abuse offenders for incidents of sexual abuse were male (93 percent vs. 7 percent female) and three-quarters of offenders for emotional abuse incidents were male (75 percent vs. 25 percent female). A little less than two-thirds of offenders in neglect incidents were male (62 percent vs. 38 percent female), and 60 percent of offenders in physical abuse incidents were male vs. 40 percent female.

Sex of Met Criteria Spouse Abuse Offenders (FY17)

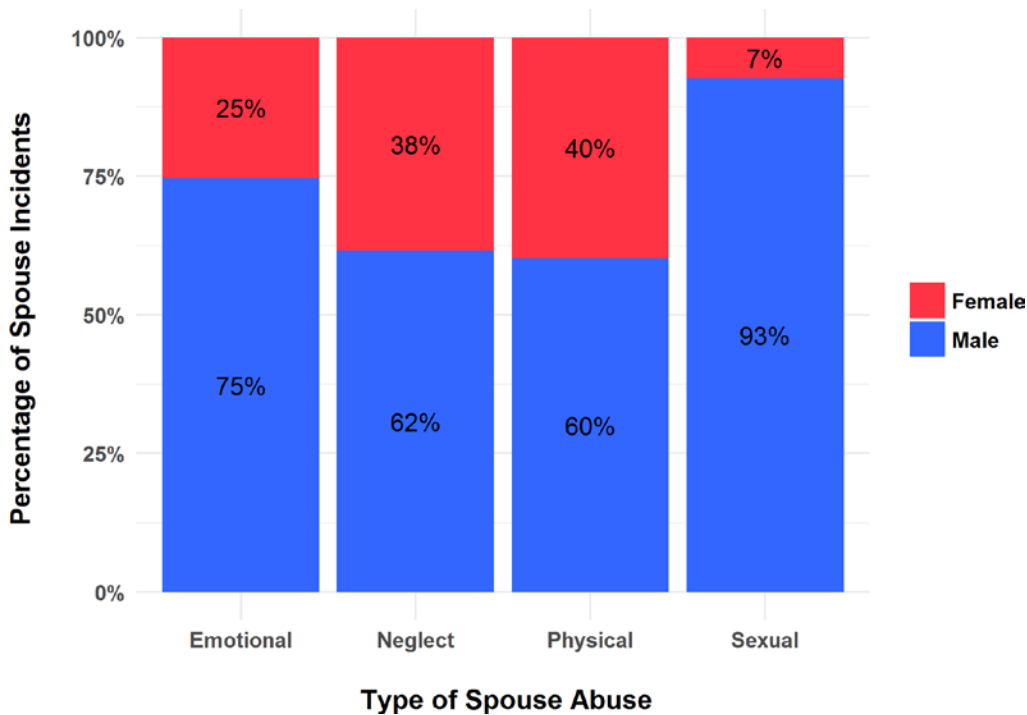


Figure 24. Sex of offenders in met criteria incidents of spouse abuse.

Looking specifically at active duty offenders of met criteria spouse abuse, 87 percent were male, and 13 percent were female.

Figure 25 shows the proportions of active duty male offenders and active duty female offenders for each individual type of met criteria spouse abuse, and indicates that the majority of active duty offenders for all types of spouse abuse were male. The vast majority of active duty spouse abuse offenders for incidents of sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect were male (96 percent vs. 4 percent female for sexual abuse, 95 percent vs. 5 percent for emotional abuse, and 100 percent for neglect). Eighty-six percent of active duty offenders in physical abuse incidents were male vs. 14 percent female.

Sex of Active Duty Spouse Abuse Offenders (FY17)

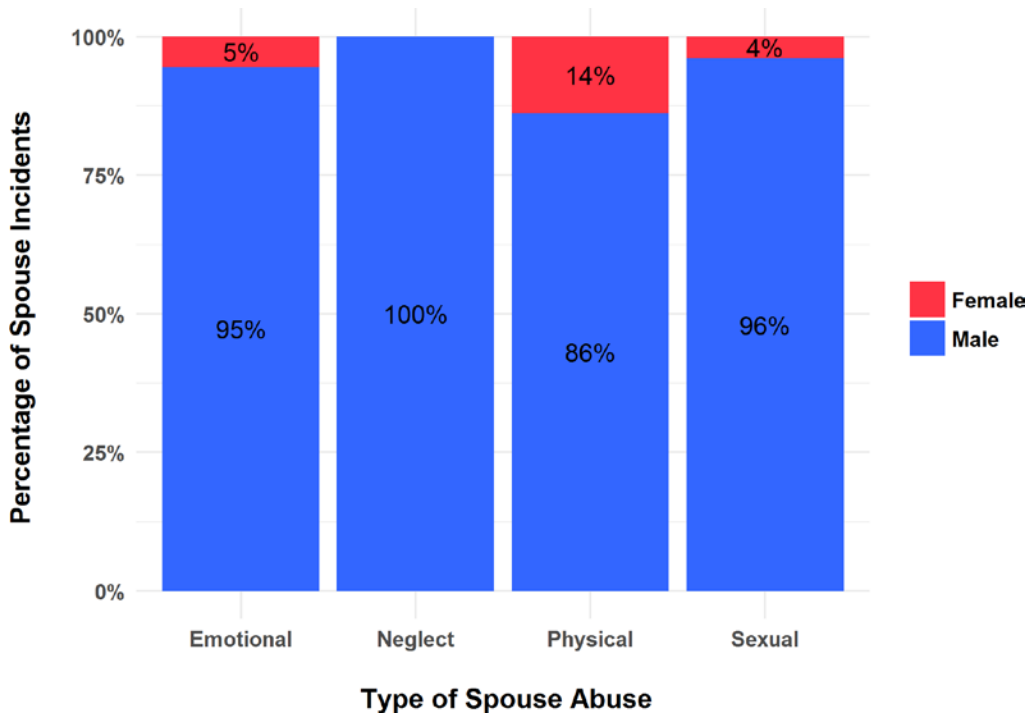


Figure 25. Sex of active duty offenders in met criteria incidents of spouse abuse.

Figure 26 shows the breakdown of spouse abuse offenders by sex and military status. Among male offenders of met criteria incidents of spouse abuse, 2,867 were Military Service members, 545 were family members, and 139 fell into the “other” category.³⁰ Among female offenders of met criteria incidents of spouse abuse, 418 were Military Service members, 1,533 were family members, and 250 fell into the “other” category.

Spouse Abuse Offenders, by Sex and Military Status (FY17)

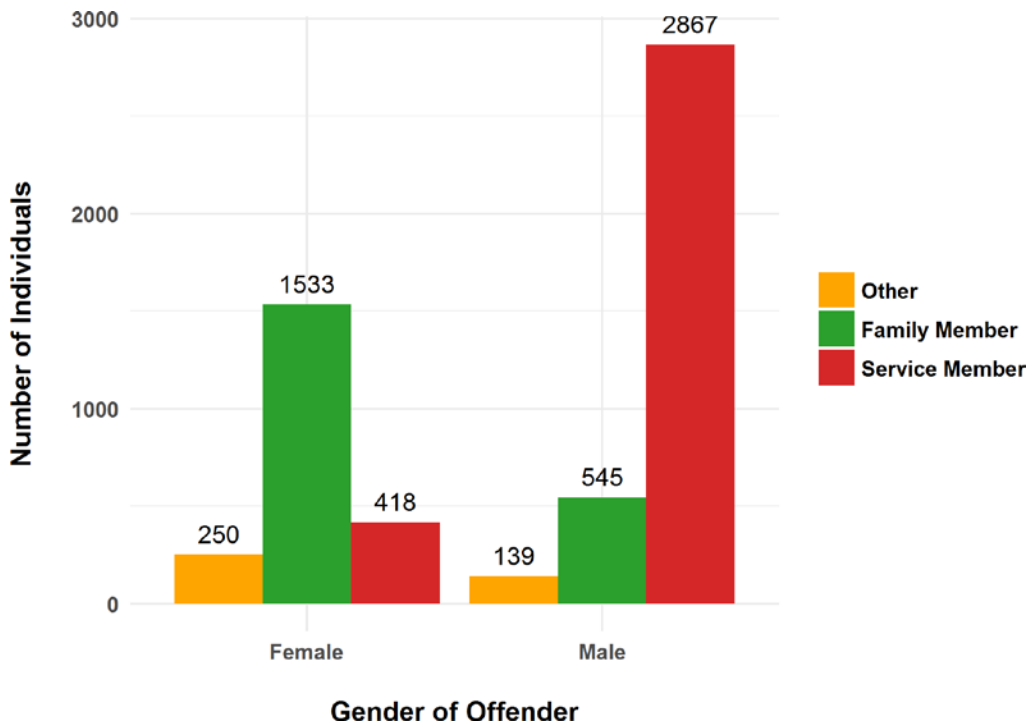


Figure 26. “Other” category includes DoD civilian, retired, government civilian, non-beneficiary, and unknown status, due to missing data.

³⁰ The “other” category includes alleged offenders who were DoD civilians, retired Military Service members, government civilians, non- beneficiaries, and had an unknown status.

4-3. INTIMATE PARTNER ABUSE

As with child abuse and neglect and spouse abuse, incidents of intimate partner abuse are reported separately by type of abuse. Prior to FY15, incidents may have included multiple types of abuse under one incident; now, more than one incident may be submitted on an individual victim. This represents a change in reporting for consistency. The data on intimate partner abuse included in this section include those incidents involving former spouses, individuals with whom the victim shares a child in common, and current or former partners with whom the victim shares or has shared a common domicile. As outlined previously, the types of maltreatment for intimate partner abuse are consistent with those for spouse abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect).

In FY17, there were 916 met criteria incidents of unmarried intimate partner abuse, involving 756 adult victims (see Table 6).³¹ A rate per thousand of intimate partner abuse cannot be established, as data on unmarried individuals involved in intimate partner relationships as defined by DoD are not available.

The number of met criteria unmarried intimate partner abuse incidents and unique victims has generally experienced incremental year-to-year increases since FY09, which was the first year that full data on intimate partner abuse were available. However, Table 6 indicates that this trend has not continued in FY17, with decreases in the number of reported incidents, met criteria incidents, and intimate partners who experienced abusive behaviors.

Table 6: Incidents of Intimate Partner Violence (FY09-FY17)

Fiscal Year	Reported Incidents	Met Criteria Incidents	Unduplicated Victims
2009	1,415	747	562
2010	1,539	721	588
2011	1,662	867	648
2012	1,718	909	656
2013	1,866	996	689
2014	1,870	969	669
2015	1,798	966	778
2016	1,771	1,022	847
2017	1,519	916	756

Note: Reported incidents of intimate partner abuse were separated as a distinct category beginning in FY09.

³¹ The number of FY17 incidents of intimate partner abuse (see Table 6) does not reflect a statistically significant increase in relation to the average and represents chance variation (Grubbs test, $z = 0.14$, $p = .44$). The unduplicated number of met criteria intimate partner abuse victims in FY17 has also not differed significantly from the average number of incidents of intimate partner abuse since FY09 (Grubbs test, $z = 0.74$, $p = .23$).

Intimate Partner Abuse Victim Profile

This section describes characteristics of adults who were the victims in incidents that met criteria for intimate partner abuse.

The military status of victims involved in intimate partner abuse incidents which met criteria in FY17 are displayed in Figure 27. Of the victims of intimate partner abuse, 64 percent of victims were Military Service members and 36 percent were civilian.

Military Status of Victims in Met Criteria Intimate Partner Abuse Incidents (FY17)

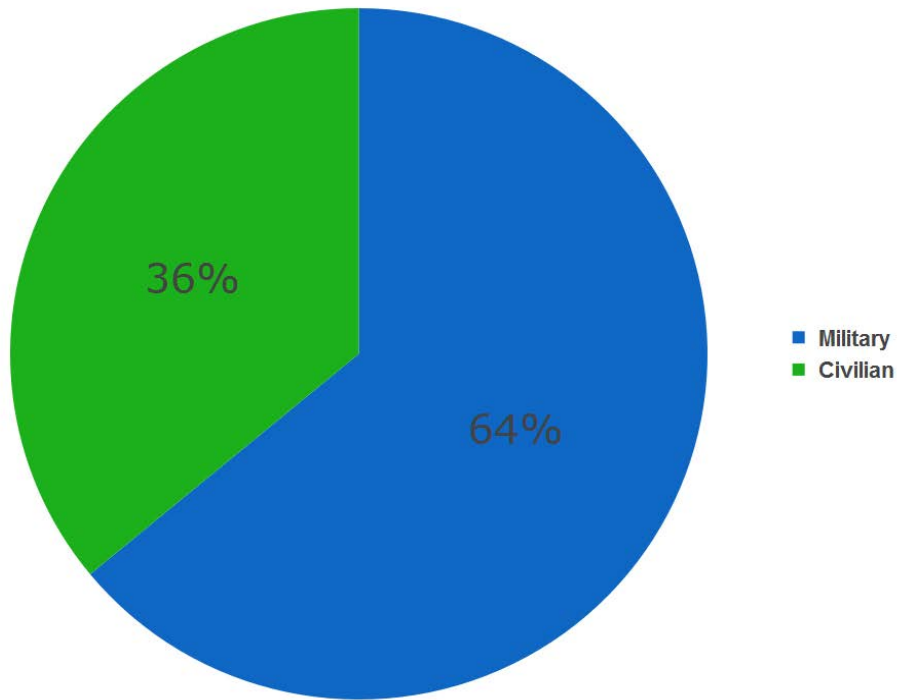


Figure 27. Military status of victims of met criteria incidents of intimate partner violence in FY17. Military includes active duty members as well as Reserve and National Guard members who are in an active status.

The sex of victims involved in intimate partner abuse incidents which met criteria in FY17 are displayed in Figure 28. Of the victims of intimate partner abuse, 71 percent were female and 29 percent of victims were male.

Sex of Victims in Met Criteria Intimate Partner Abuse Incidents (FY17)

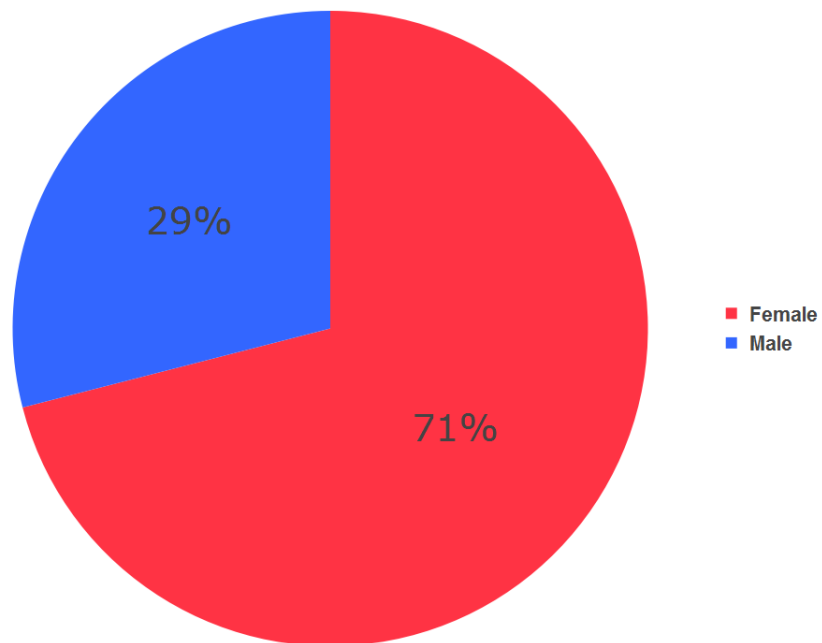


Figure 28. Sex of victims of met criteria incidents of intimate partner violence in FY17.

Comparison to Civilian Data

Similar to spouse abuse, there is no federal mechanism to track rates of civilian intimate partner abuse for comparison to the military population. This is, in part, due to the fact that each state has different laws and definitions of intimate partner abuse which makes any aggregation of these incidents very difficult.

4-4. SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse of a spouse or intimate partner is defined as:

“A sexual act or sexual contact with the spouse or intimate partner without the consent of the spouse or intimate partner or against the expressed wishes of the spouse or intimate partner. Includes abusive sexual contact with a spouse or intimate partner, aggravated sexual assault of a spouse or intimate partner, aggravated contact of a spouse or intimate partner, rape of a spouse or intimate partner, sodomy of a spouse or intimate partner, and wrongful sexual contact of an intimate partner.”³²

In the Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military, sexual abuse is referred to as “domestic abuse-related sexual assault.”

Sexual abuse in the domestic violence field is contextually distinct from sexual assault in that it occurs within a marriage or intimate partner relationship as part of a larger pattern of behavior resulting in emotional or psychological abuse, economic control, and/or interference with personal liberty. Sexual abuse occurring within the context of a domestic relationship is indicative of higher risk for more serious injury or fatality, and is referred to FAP for comprehensive safety planning, victim advocacy and support, and treatment (when appropriate).

In FY17, there were a total of 300 met criteria incidents of sexual abuse, and 282 unique victims of sexual abuse who received FAP services (see Table 7).³³ This is an increase of 1 incident from the number of met criteria incidents of sexual abuse in FY16 (299). Given there were more incidents than victims, one or more victims experienced more than one incident of sexual abuse.

Table 7: Incidents of Met Criteria Sexual Abuse

Fiscal Year	Total Met Criteria Domestic Abuse Incidents	Met Criteria Sexual Abuse Incidents	Percentage of Overall Met Criteria Domestic Abuse
2009	8,223	155	1.89
2010	9,132	181	1.98
2011	9,253	208	2.25
2012	9,254	202	2.18
2013	8,931	208	2.33
2014	8,433	241	2.86
2015	8,858	262	2.96
2016	8,683	299	3.44
2017	8,069	300	3.72

Note: Total met criteria domestic abuse incidents include spouse abuse met criteria and intimate partner abuse met criteria numbers combined.

³² DoDM 6400.01-Volume 3 (Family Advocacy Program (FAP): Clinical Case Staff Meeting (CCSM) and Incident Determination Committee (IDC)), Glossary, August 11, 2016.

³³ The number of met criteria sexual abuse incidents in FY17 (300 incidents) is significantly greater than the average of the previous years (Grubbs test: $z = 1.41$, $p = .08$).

As shown in Figure 29, of the 282 unique victims of sexual abuse who received Family Advocacy Program services in FY17, 96.5 percent were female and 3.5 percent were male. Of the 282 alleged offenders, 95.4 percent were male and 4.6 percent were female.

Sex of Offenders and Victims in Met Criteria Sexual Abuse Incidents (FY17)

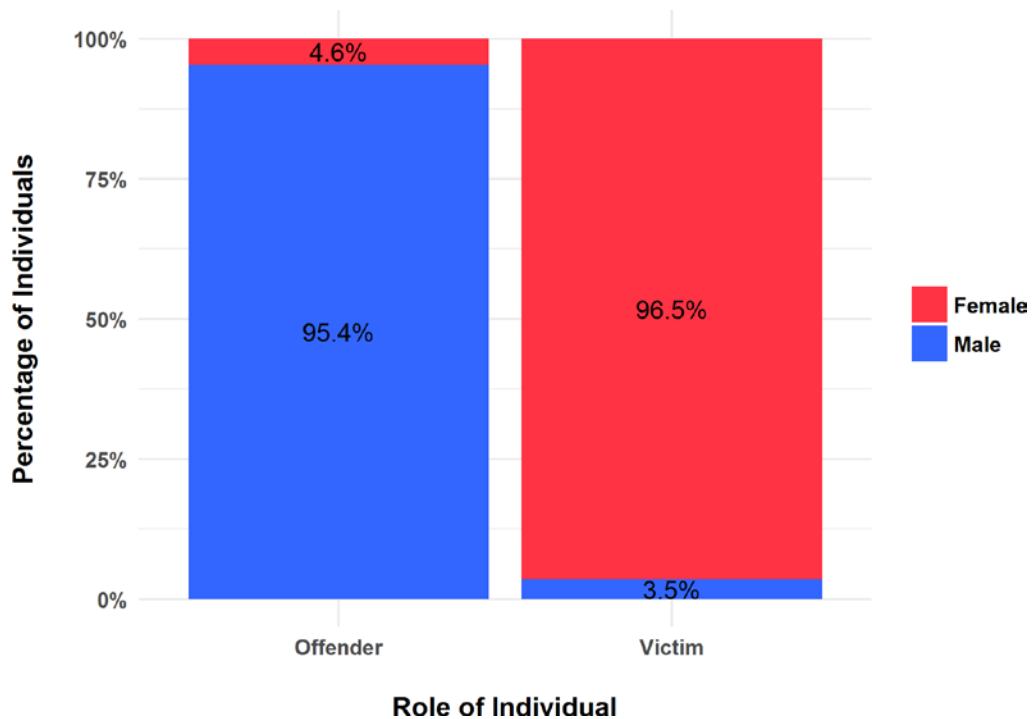


Figure 29. Sex of offenders and victims in met criteria incidents of domestic sexual abuse.

As shown in Figure 30, of the 282 unique victims of sexual abuse who received Family Advocacy Program services in FY17, 60.6 percent were family members, 33.7 percent were Military Service members, 5 percent were non-beneficiaries and .7 percent were government civilians.

Of the 282 alleged offenders, 78 percent of alleged offenders were Military Service members, 15.6 percent were family members, 3.6 percent were non-beneficiaries and 2.8 percent were government civilians.

Of the 78 percent of alleged offenders who were Military Service members, 99.6 percent were active duty, and <1 percent were Reserve, and in the National Guard. Of Military Service member offenders, 96.2 percent were enlisted members and 3.4 percent were officers, and <1 percent were warrant officers.

Status of Offenders and Victims in Met Criteria Sexual Abuse Incidents (FY17)

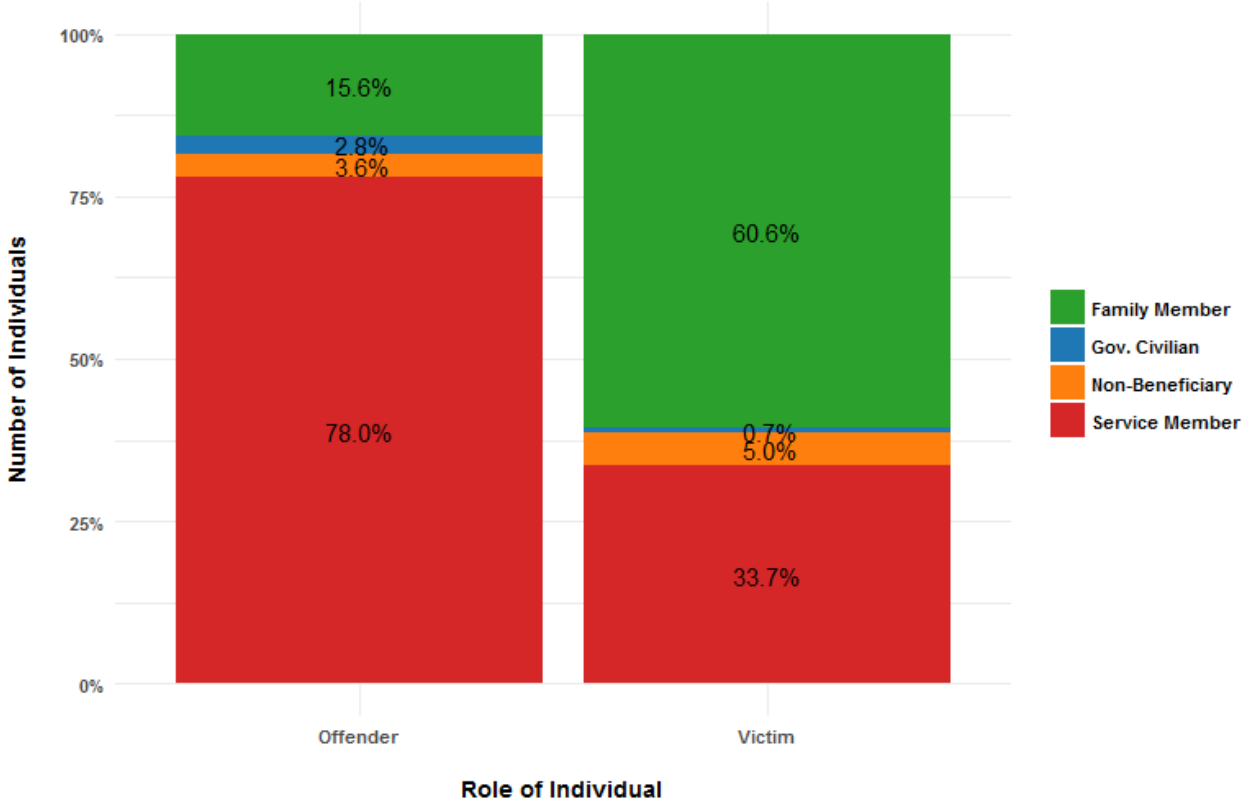


Figure 30. Status of offenders and victims in met criteria incidents of domestic sexual abuse.

4-5. DOMESTIC ABUSE FATALITIES

As discussed previously, fatality reviews to examine fatalities from FY17 will take place in the Military Services in FY19. Data on fatalities included in this report represents only those fatalities that were taken to the IDC after the death of the victim in FY17 and met criteria as related to domestic abuse.

There were nine domestic abuse fatalities reported to FAP in FY17 (four spouse abuse fatalities, four intimate partner abuse fatalities, and one former spouse fatality), of which four victims and five of the met criteria offenders were previously known to FAP³⁴ (see Table 8). In the domestic abuse fatality reports, eight of the met criteria offenders were male, and one of the met criteria offenders was female. Seven of the met criteria offenders were active duty and two of the met criteria offenders were civilian.

Table 8: Domestic Abuse Fatalities Reported to FAP in FY17

Total Fatalities: 9 (4 spouse, 1 former spouse, 4 intimate partner)
- 4 Victims previously reported to FAP
- 5 Met Criteria Offenders previously reported to FAP
Sex of met criteria offenders
- 8 Male
- 1 Female
Status of met criteria offenders
- 7 Active Duty
- 2 Civilian

Note: Represents only those fatalities taken to the IDC in FY17. Service fatality reviews will take place in FY19.

³⁴ Cases where an adult of family was previously known to FAP include instances where services were received (e.g., New Parent Support Program), prior incidents that may or may not have met criteria, prior cases that may be closed resolved, incidents involving other offenders, and current open cases.

5. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAM

In addition to providing an update on specified Central Registry data elements, section 574 of the NDAA for FY 2017 (Public Law 114-328) mandates that the Department provide an annual assessment of the effectiveness of the DoD Family Advocacy Program. This report highlights two different approaches currently utilized to assess and promote effectiveness in the DoD Family Advocacy Program.

The first approach outlined is via quantitative annual metrics, which are the primary mechanism through which OSD FAP measures the performance and effectiveness of family readiness programs, specifically on the success rates of the New Parent Support Program (NPSP) and domestic abuse offender clinical treatment.

The second approach is to capture a snapshot of the efforts and initiatives deployed at the Service level to measure and enhance the effectiveness of respective Service Family Advocacy Programs. Although all Services comply with core FAP program requirements and Departmental policy, they also have considerable flexibility to tailor their approach to prevention programs, safety assessment, and clinical treatment to best meet the needs of military families in their Service. Therefore, there is a great amount of innovation in piloting programs, creating effective training to increase the skills of credentialed personnel, and receiving feedback from participating families to ensure that the services provided by FAP are effective and appropriate.

5-1. FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAM METRICS

Below are the FY17 results for the metrics regarding the success of the NPSP and the success of the domestic abuse offender treatment programs. Both of these programs are implemented by the Military Services and administered by FAP at the installation level.

These data are collected by the Military Departments, as required by section 581 of the NDAA for FY 2008 (Public Law 110-181). Each of the Military Services collects information for these metrics and submits the data annually to OSD FAP for analysis and reporting. Although OSD FAP aggregates data from each of the Services upon receipt, there is some minor variation in interpretation of current implementing guidance and how definitions are operationalized across the Service FAP programs.

Success of New Parent Support Program

NPSP offers intensive home visiting services on a voluntary basis to expectant parents and parents with young children (ages 0-5 years in Marine Corps; ages 0-3 in other Services) who display some indicators of being at risk for child abuse or domestic abuse, have been assessed and determined as at risk for child abuse and neglect or domestic abuse, or have been reported to FAP for an incident of child abuse or neglect for a child age 0-5 years in their care.³⁵

To measure the success of NPSP, the Military Services collect annual data on the number of families who received NPSP services two times per month for at least six months in the prior fiscal year and

³⁵ DoDI 6400.05 (New Parent Support Program), Enclosure 3, June 13, 2012.

who do not have any incidents of child abuse and neglect reported to FAP that met criteria in the current fiscal year. To achieve success, the total Department ratio of families served to families with no child maltreatment reports that meet FAP criteria must be 85 percent or higher.

The following table displays the metric for NPSP as well as the aggregated DoD results for FY17.

Table 9: Success of the New Parent Support Program (FY17)

METRIC	TOTAL DOD
Number of families without open family maltreatment cases that began receiving intensive home visitation NPSP services (at least two home visits per month) during the previous fiscal year (FY16) and continued receiving intensive home visitation NPSP services for at least 6 months.	1,752
Such families that had no reports within 12 months after NPSP services ended that met FAP criteria for child maltreatment.	1,718
Percentage successful NPSP	98.06 percent
Target: 85 percent	

As displayed in Table 9, in FY17, a total of 1,752 families across all Military Services met the criteria of the metric and received NPSP services within the provided timeframe. Of those families, 1,718 did not have a report that met criteria for child maltreatment, which results in a success rate of 98.06 percent. This rate exceeds the established target rate of 85 percent.

Success of Domestic Abuse Offender Treatment Programs

Each Service’s FAP program delivers clinical interventions to individuals involved in met criteria domestic abuse incidents, which are based on a clinical assessment and targeted to directly address the specific concerns of each alleged offender. By collecting data on the recidivism of alleged spouse offenders who have received FAP clinical treatment services, OSD FAP can assess the impact that these treatment services are having on alleged offenders in preventing incidents of domestic abuse in the short term (12 months).

To measure the success of domestic abuse offender treatment programs, the Military Services collect annual data on the number of alleged spouse abuse offenders who have been involved in an incident that met FAP criteria for domestic abuse, started and completed clinical treatment services during FY16, and were not involved in any incident that was reported to FAP and met criteria in FY17. To achieve success, the Total Department rate of spouses with no subsequent incidents that meet FAP criteria must be 85 percent or higher.

The following table displays the metric for Domestic Abuse Offender Treatment Programs as well as the aggregated DoD results for FY17.

Table 10: Success of Domestic Abuse Offender Treatment Programs (FY17)

METRIC	TOTAL DOD
Total allegedly abusive spouses in any incident that met FAP criteria for domestic abuse who began receiving FAP clinical treatment services during FY16 and completed FAP clinical treatment services by September 30, 2016.	2,183
Such spouses that were not reported as allegedly abusive in any incident that met FAP criteria for domestic abuse within FY17.	2,080
Percentage successful Offender Treatment	95.28 percent
Target: 75 percent	

As displayed in Table 10, in FY17, a total of 2,183 allegedly abusive spouses across all Military Services met the criteria of the metric and started (and completed) FAP clinical treatment services within the provided timeframe. Of those spouses, 2,080 did not have a report that met criteria for domestic abuse within the following fiscal year, which results in a success rate of 95.28 percent. This rate exceeds the established target rate of 75 percent.

5-2. SERVICE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

In addition to tracking the FAP metrics at the OSD level, it is critical to include a snapshot of the initiatives to measure and enhance effectiveness employed at the Service level in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the FAP program. Each section below highlights one to two Service-level efforts, which are used to measure the effectiveness of different aspects of the FAP program.

Air Force

In October 2009, Air Force FAP introduced an evidence-based program across all installations to measure the effectiveness of FAP clinical treatment programs, as determined by participating clients. This program, the Feedback Informed Treatment (FIT) model, is used in therapy with clients receiving treatment for child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse, as well as secondary prevention programs such as NPSP and Family Advocacy Strength Based Therapy. FIT takes a unique approach by initiating a conversation with the client at both the beginning and end of each session and using two brief quantitative scales (four questions each) in every session. The Outcome Ratings Scale (ORS) is used at the beginning of each session to determine the level of distress the client has experienced over the past week, and is logged into a tracking website (myoutcomes.com), which can be accessed by the patient’s smartphone. Feedback from the client at the end of the session is gathered using the Session Rating Scale (SRS), which provides information on how the client experienced the session and identifies any area of the therapy course that can be changed to create more benefit to the client in the next scheduled session.

FAP social workers receive annual training in using FIT, and facilitation using the ORS and SRS have created an iterative process, which has yielded promising results. Specifically, the FIT program has been proven to lower drop-out rates for treatment participation and is associated with improved therapeutic outcomes. By tracking the patient's level of distress throughout treatment, the ORS has been useful in demonstrating that Air Force FAP clients who participate in this program have experienced statistically significant increases in their reports of wellbeing at the close of treatment compared to their initial FAP assessment. For example, Air Force maltreatment clients from 2010-2017 who have participated in the FIT program have seen their mean ORS score increase by six points from the initial session (mean score = 24.93) through end of treatment (mean score = 30.68).³⁶

By using standardized tools to regularly measure client clinical progress and receiving feedback on their experience in treatment, the FIT program is an effective way for the Air Force to track the effectiveness of their FAP treatment programs as well as receive input on ways to strengthen their treatment efforts to better serve their clients and support Air Force families.

Department of Navy

Research has consistently found that the best help for a child after abuse occurs is to support the non-offending parent or caregiver in addition to the child who experienced maltreatment. Therefore, the Navy has expanded victim advocacy services to non-offending parents and caregivers in child abuse and neglect cases in order to ensure the effectiveness of FAP services, and to produce the best outcomes for military children involved in abuse allegations. Navy guidance requires that the non-offending parent or caregiver in a child abuse and neglect incident be assigned a victim advocate within one business day of the initial referral. The goal of the victim advocate is to provide safety planning to ensure that the home environment has minimal risk for future incidents, offer referrals to supportive resources, help the non-offending parent or caregiver develop positive life skills, and create a vision of a strong, safe, and non-violent family. The primary factor in the resiliency of a child is to have supportive relationships that provide care, create love and trust, and offer encouragement to the child who has experienced trauma or maltreatment. The provision of victim advocacy services to the non-offending parents of child victims is an effective way to strengthen factors, which contribute to the child's resiliency, and improve the safety and well-being of military children.

In addition to providing expanded victim advocacy services, in 2017, the Navy began relying on standardized curricula for domestic abuse offenders to ensure validity and sustainability in results and effectiveness. Each region has the opportunity to choose from five available curricula and decide which curriculum is the best fit for their respective unique demographics, location, resources, and state requirements. These domestic violence curricula are available for male offenders, female offenders, and as a preventative measure for couples who do not have a met criteria allegation of abuse and are considered low risk/low severity. All of the five approved curricula have been vetted through the Penn State Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness to ensure that their methodologies and design components align with those proven to achieve successful outcomes from treatment. To ensure standardized implementation of these curricula across installations, the Navy will host annual training opportunities for group facilitators with the developers of each program prior to facilitation of the curriculum or within a year of the guidance implementation.

³⁶ The possible range of scores on the ORS is from 0 to 40, where higher scores are associated with more positive self-reports of wellbeing outcomes.

By implementing evidence-informed approaches through the provision of victim advocacy and standardized curricula to promote validity of domestic abuse offender treatment, the Navy is taking innovative steps to maximize the effectiveness of the programs and services that it provides to families to address allegations of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse.

The Marine Corps has implemented an initiative to standardize client satisfaction feedback forms, needs assessments, and training feedback surveys in an effort to improve processes and access to FAP services in an ongoing manner. These efforts are incorporated into day-to-day operations as part of a continual improvement and review process.

Army

Army leadership and the military community continue to focus their attention on the importance of a comprehensive approach to the provision of effective family quality of life programs for soldiers, families, and Army civilians. In this context, the Army FAP implemented the Domestic Abuse Victim Advocacy Program (DAVAP), which has a primary mission to prevent domestic abuse by mitigating external stressors that can aggravate or trigger patterns of abusive behavior, encourage help-seeking behaviors, and provide support through the multidisciplinary response system. The primary goal of the DAVAP is to raise victim awareness and understanding of safety information, ensure that victims understand their reporting options and response systems, and to increase the level of engagement with military and civilian resources and informal support networks. In 2015 and 2016, Army FAP conducted a study at 4 volunteer installations to ensure that the DAVAP program was working as intended, victims understood their situation and how the response system works, and victims are able to identify available resources and actions they can take to improve their safety. Study results indicate that victims' information improved in 70 percent of the areas studied after working with a victim advocate. Specifically it is clear from the study that the DAVA's fundamental role, as described above, has been successful and the DAVAs have established an alliance with victims, and helped them to assess their situation and risk for future abuse, including potentially lethal situations.

In addition to the assessment of the DAVAP, the Army also began operationalizing Combined Parent Child–Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CPC–CBT) to address the needs of children and families at risk for child physical abuse through child interventions, parent strategies to address child trauma, and family interventions. Research has supported CPC–CBT as successful in reducing the use of physical punishment and parental distress, as well as improving positive parenting skills and children's emotional and behavioral functioning.³⁷ In addition, studies have indicated that use of CPC–CBT yielded greater improvements in positive parenting skills and children's Post Traumatic Stress Disorder when compared to use of just cognitive behavioral therapy for parents.

In 2016, this evidence-based treatment approach was implemented across 15 Army installations. Since implementation, 108 FAP clinicians have been trained on this approach through 4 courses of the Advanced Family Advocacy Staff Training in addition to ongoing case consultation.

The Army's commitment to assessing the effectiveness of their DAVA program, as well as implementing evidence-based treatment approaches to address child abuse and neglect, indicates the high importance placed on effective delivery of high-quality programs and treatment services to promote the well-being of Army children and families.

³⁷ Runyon, M.K., Deblinger, D., & Schroeder, C.M. (2009). Pilot evaluation of outcomes of combined parent-child cognitive-behavioral group therapy for families at-risk for child physical abuse. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, 16, 101-118

6. PROGRAM & POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Department is committed to keeping our families safe and healthy and to taking every measure to prevent child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse/intimate partner violence in our military communities. One incident of child abuse and neglect or domestic abuse is too many, and programs like FAP implement evidence-based prevention and treatment programs with the goal of ensuring the safety and well-being of all military families. OSD FAP reinforces the enduring commitment of Department leadership to provide effective, efficient programs to promote the safety, readiness, and well-being of all Military Service members and their families through a coordinated community response to child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse.

Overview of Key Findings

Findings from this report indicate that rates of child abuse and neglect and spouse abuse have not dramatically increased in recent years, which may be a sign that the comprehensive prevention strategy and additional research efforts engaged by FAP to reduce the incidents of family maltreatment and support military families have been effective.

However, FY17 data did indicate there was a slight increase in the number of incidents involving sexual abuse reported to FAP in FY17 (300 incidents in FY17, up from 299 incidents in FY16). This additional incident reflects a statistically significant increase, where the number of incidents in FY17 is significantly greater than the average of the previous years. These cases are a small subset (approximately three percent) of all domestic abuse incidents tracked by FAP. This increase warrants attention, and is further addressed in Appendix B.

Continual monitoring and assessment in areas relating to key findings – particularly to focus on prevention of incidents of adult sexual abuse and exploring domestic abuse among junior enlisted members – are necessary to inform current and future program efforts. The DoD recognizes that there is more work to be done and remains committed to enhancing prevention efforts to prevent incidents of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse and provide effective treatment and resources for military families.

Reframing Trends & Assessing Military Risk Factors in Child Abuse and Neglect

Although the rates of reported met criteria incidents do not indicate statistically significant increases in FY17, OSD FAP continues to be vigilant in conducting analysis to better understand the nature of trends in FAP data which may reveal the impact of effective policies and process improvements. One such additional analysis, outlined in Appendix A, examines the increase in the rate of met criteria child abuse and neglect incidents from FY09–FY14 and provides new context to previously reported trends in military child maltreatment.

In addition, OSD FAP is working with the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS) on a two-part study to identify military-specific risk factors associated with child abuse and neglect. Part I of the study will compare demographic, family, and military experience data associated with active duty military families (Service members, spouses, and children) who experienced one or more “met criteria” incidents of child abuse or neglect between October 1, 2013 and September 30, 2014, to a propensity score-matched sample of active duty military families who had one or more

dependent children during 2014, but no history of child maltreatment. Analysis of these data will allow USUHS to frame a model of risk and protective factors for military child abuse and neglect that will inform a follow-on comprehensive analysis of data from FYs 04-14. Part II of the study will employ a comprehensive retrospective examination of demographic and health care data to model the course of the military experience and dynamics of families who experienced at least one incident of “met criteria” child abuse or neglect during an 11-year period (October 1, 2003 through September 30, 2014). The study findings will contribute to the development of a risk and protection model that will inform policy and practice approaches to preventing child abuse and neglect, above and beyond the best practices the Department has already established.

Focus on Sexual Abuse

The statistically significant increase in the number of sexual abuse incidents as a subset of domestic abuse in FY17 is deeply concerning to OSD FAP and highlights the need for increased monitoring and programs aimed to prevent these incidents. Although sexual abuse is a small percentage (3.72 percent) of all domestic abuse incidents that met criteria in FY17, each incident is important given that sexual abuse is a high predictor of lethality in domestic abuse relationships. OSD FAP worked with the Military Services and Dr. Joel Milner and Dr. Randy McCarthy of Northern Illinois University in 2017 to conduct exploratory analysis to better understand this cumulative increase. While it is not possible to identify a singular driver of this increase, exploratory analysis using demographics and contextual factors – presented in Appendix B – provides a deeper understanding of this trend as well as several relevant policy and program changes which may have contributed to this growth. This analysis will also allow targeted treatment and prevention efforts, geared toward maximizing the effectiveness of any intervention strategy.

Exploring Domestic Abuse among Junior Enlisted Members

OSD FAP has partnered with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), through The Lab at OPM, to employ human-centered design strategies to address the disproportionate rates of domestic abuse among the military's most junior enlisted (E1-E3) members. Through this collaboration, OSD FAP and The Lab at OPM will engage an interdisciplinary combination of stakeholders to work collaboratively to explore this challenge, expose comprehensive ideas in framing the problem, and endeavor to design meaningful solutions based on the needs of the target population. As of the release of this report, the project is in the development stages, with initial human-centered design activities expected to begin in the 4th quarter of FY18 and continuing into FY19.

APPENDIX A: Reframing Trends in Child Maltreatment

Over the past several years, the Department has been closely monitoring the increase in the rates of reported and met criteria incidents of child abuse and neglect. As displayed in Figure 1, there was a statistically significant year-to-year directional increase in the rate of incidents of child abuse and neglect, which met criteria from FY09 – FY14 (meaning that this rate increased every year for 5 years, from 4.8 per 1,000 children in FY09 to 7.3 per 1,000 children in FY14). Although this trend did not continue after FY14, this topic has received continual attention from OSD FAP, both in the forms of targeted prevention efforts and resources for at risk families (such as the “Safe and Sound” digital outreach strategy) as well as a deeper exploration of data treatment and trends, which may have had an impact on fluctuations in these reported rates. This section will provide results of additional analysis conducted on historical FAP Central Registry data (FY05-FY17) to provide new context to previously reported trends in military child maltreatment.

Child Abuse and Neglect Report vs. Met Criteria Incident Rates per 1,000 Children

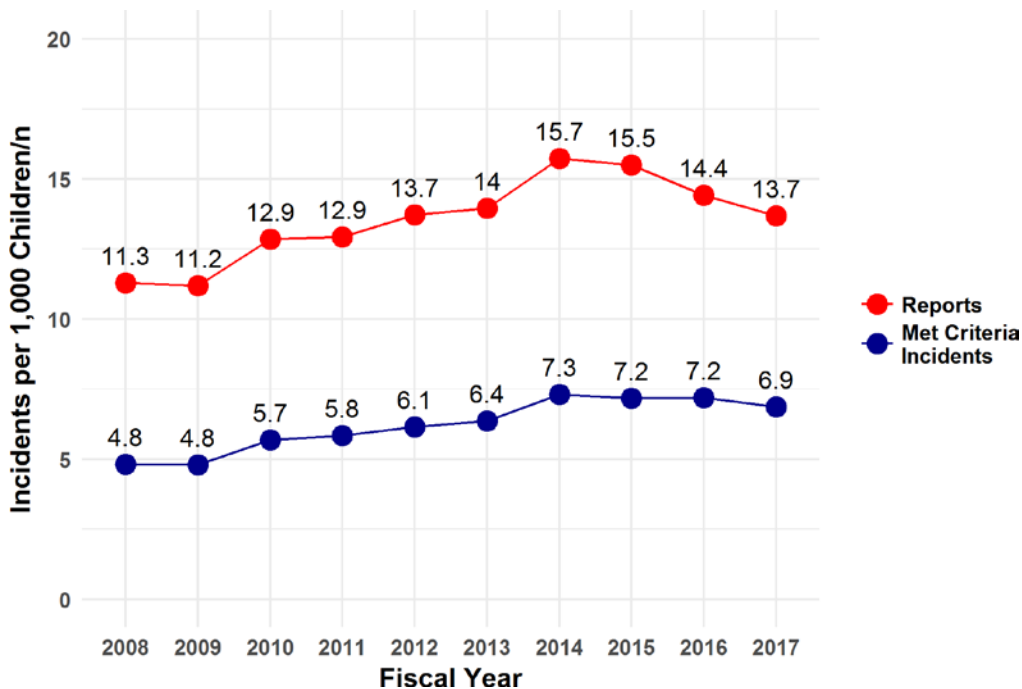


Figure 1. Rates of child abuse and neglect incidents reported to FAP and the rates of child abuse and neglect incidents that met DoD criteria per fiscal year.

Despite the year-to-year upward trend in the rate of met criteria incidents from FY09 to FY14, the rate of unduplicated child victims during that timeframe did not increase by the same margins (4.3 per 1,000 children in FY09 to 5.6 per 1,000 children in FY14; see Figure 2), indicating that this increase in incidents was not likely caused by an influx in the number of children who experienced maltreatment during those years. The steady nature of the child victimization rate over these same years prompted OSD FAP to explore alternate hypotheses for the increase in the rates of reports and met criteria incidents for child abuse and neglect.

Unduplicated Child Victim Rate Per 1,000 in Met Criteria Child Abuse and Neglect Incidents

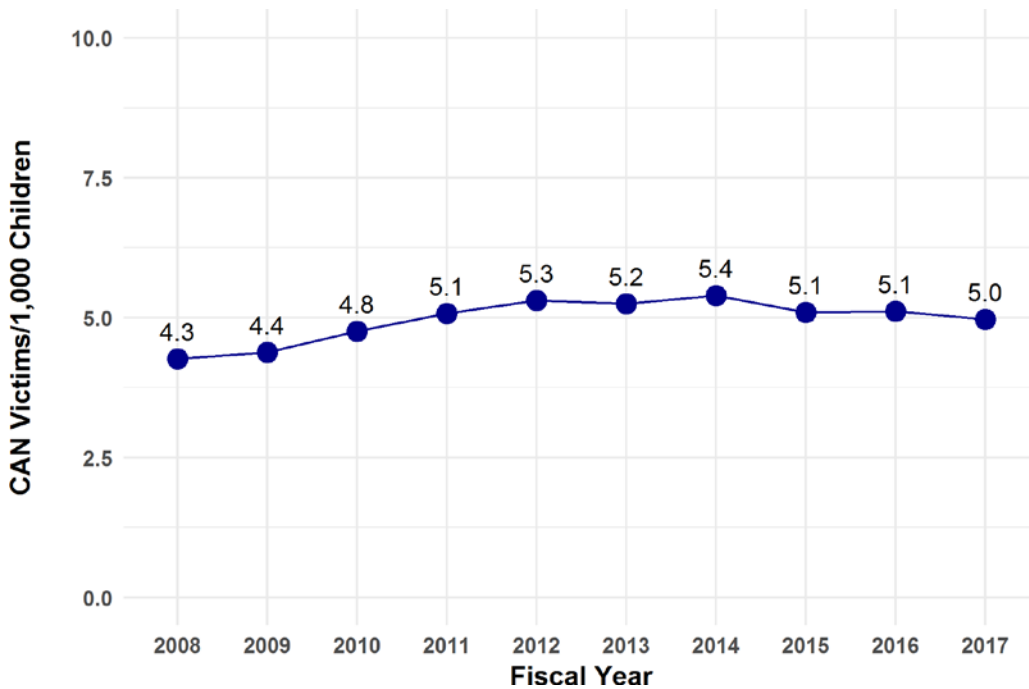


Figure 2. Rates of unduplicated child victims per 1,000 children.

The overall upward trend in the rate of child abuse and neglect met criteria incidents was previously attributed to a steady increase in incidents involving specifically child neglect during that timeframe. While it is accurate that the proportion of incidents involving child neglect did increase substantially over that time period, our subsequent analysis has shown that this increase in child neglect was only part of the cause for the increase in overall met criteria incidents.

One hypothesis for the increase in the rate of met criteria incidents from FY09–FY14 is that more children were involved in multiple incidents of child abuse and neglect in a fiscal year. The number of victims that were maltreated on two different dates would therefore have two unique report dates, which would increase the overall number of met criteria incidents. However, as shown in Figure 3, the number of unique report dates per victim parallels the number of unique victims across all years examined (i.e., the red line is parallel to the grey line). Therefore, a small number of child victims experienced maltreatment on more than one date, but this did not change across the years. In FY17, approximately 290 children (or 6 percent of unique child victims) were involved in more than 1

reported allegation of child abuse and neglect.

Number of CAN Incidents vs. Unique CAN Victims

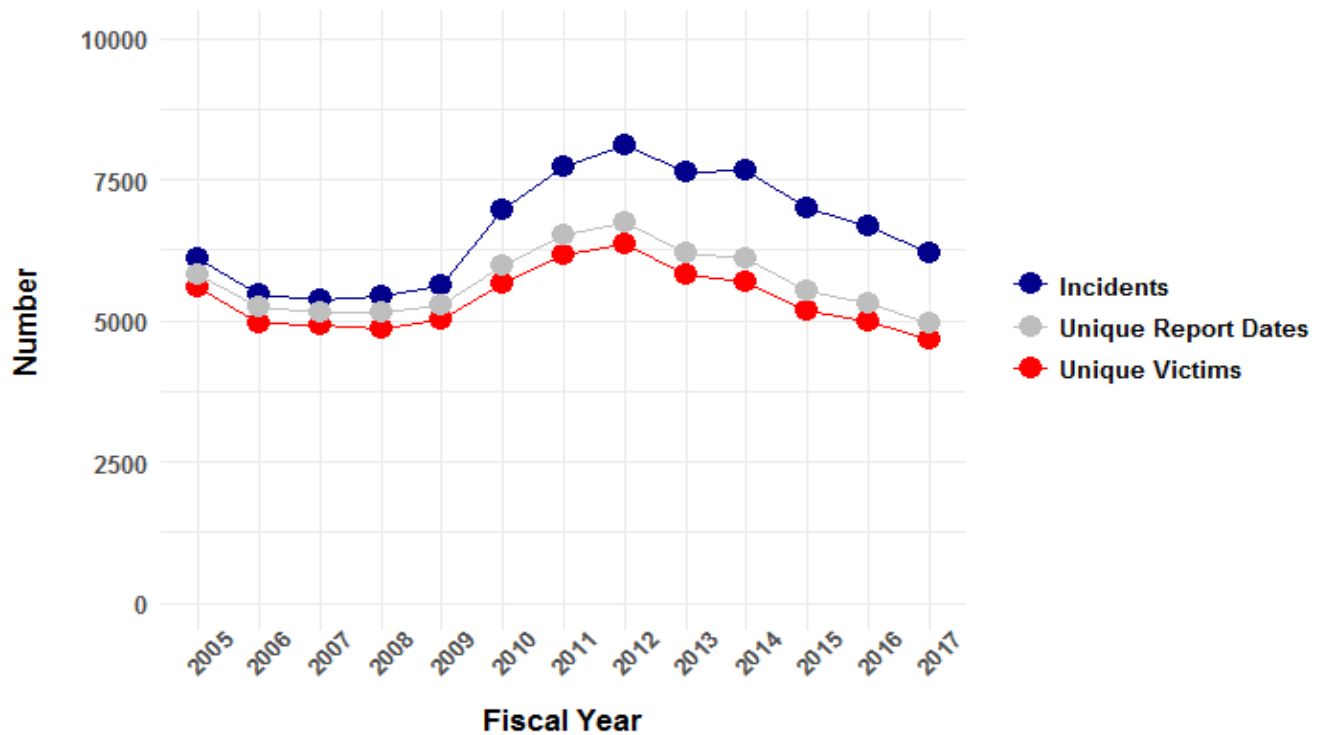


Figure 3. The number of child abuse and neglect incidents reported to FAP that met DoD criteria, the number of unique report dates that align with those reports, and the number of unique child victims who were associated with those incidents.

A second hypothesis for this increase was due to more unique individuals being listed as offenders in incidents of child abuse and neglect each year. Since 2010, the Military Services all implemented a research-based decision tree algorithm that uses standardized maltreatment definitions to determine if an incident “meets clinical criteria” for maltreatment. This tool is used to remove subjectivity and personal bias in the Incident Determination Committee meetings (led by senior-level command, with FAP, law enforcement, legal, and command representatives).

Prior to the use of this tool, if a child experienced multiple types of maltreatment (e.g., physical abuse and emotional abuse) in one report, the experience was tracked as one incident. Similarly, if a child was abused or neglected by more than one alleged offender (i.e., both parents), the report may have tracked only one primary offender, with any additional offender (such as a second parent) listed as secondary in the same incident. With the introduction of the decision-tree algorithm, each type of abuse – and each individual offender involved in such allegations – was considered separately as a distinct incident. Thus, this new methodology may have resulted in additional incidents that were not reflective of an increase in actual maltreatment, but of a new way of counting.

Indeed, as indicated in Figure 3, the number of incidents begins to increase at a faster rate in FY10 than the number of report dates and unique victims (i.e., the blue line and the red line diverge). Thus, the increase in incidents, as reflected by the divergence of the rates, appears to be due to more unique

individuals being listed as offenders on the same report date than to more children experiencing re-victimization in multiple incidents of child abuse and neglect each year.

Additional analysis of the number of offenders per child maltreatment provided further support for this second hypothesis. In FY05, there were only 1.06 offenders per child maltreatment incident across all Services (or, 1 out of every 20 child abuse and neglect incidents had more than one offender). This has steadily increased in recent years, and in FY17, there were 1.24 offenders per child maltreatment incident across all Services (or, one out of every four child abuse and neglect incidents had more than one offender).

This examination of the relationship between child abuse and neglect incidents, victims, and offenders allows a complete reframing of the oft-cited upward trend in military child abuse and neglect in prior years. After a review of these analyses, it is clear that process improvements (i.e., implementation of the IDC and decision tree algorithm) and treatment of unique offenders of child abuse and neglect (i.e., counting separately in our data reports during a time period where the proportion of child neglect incidents were also increasing) were more likely the drivers of any rate increases, rather than a true increase in military children experiencing abuse and neglect.

APPENDIX B: Examination of Trends in Sexual Abuse

The increase in the number and proportion of domestic abuse incidents (inclusive of spouse abuse and intimate partner abuse) involving sexual abuse is another area that OSD FAP has continued to monitor carefully. As shown in Table 1, the number of incidents involving sexual abuse that met criteria has continued to gradually increase since FY09, with the increase finally reaching statistical significance with 300 incidents in FY17. Additionally, the percentage of domestic abuse incidents involving sexual abuse has also grown incrementally since FY09 when distinct numbers of sexual abuse were first available. OSD FAP takes these reports very seriously, and has conducted exploratory analysis using demographics and contextual factors to better understand this cumulative trend. This section will provide the results of this additional analysis conducted on historical FAP Central Registry data (FY09-FY17) and provide information on relevant policy and program changes that have occurred across the Services since FY09, which may have contributed to this trend.

Table 1: Incidents of Met Criteria Sexual Abuse

Fiscal Year	Total Met Criteria Domestic Abuse Incidents	Met Criteria Sexual Abuse Incidents	Percentage of Overall Met Criteria Domestic Abuse
2009	8,223	155	1.89
2010	9,132	181	1.98
2011	9,253	208	2.25
2012	9,254	202	2.18
2013	8,931	208	2.33
2014	8,433	241	2.86
2015	8,858	262	2.96
2016	8,683	299	3.44
2017	8,069	300	3.72

Note: Total met criteria domestic abuse incidents include spouse abuse met criteria and intimate partner abuse met criteria numbers combined.

Exploratory Analysis

As shown in Figure 1, both the number of sexual abuse incidents and the number of those incidents which met criteria have increased since FY09. The rate of reports, however, has grown at a faster rate than the number of incidents, beginning in FY14. One potential explanation for this faster growth in the number of reported allegations of sexual abuse is the increased training on and awareness in the broader military community (both Service members and families) of prohibited sexual assault behaviors, regardless of the relationship dynamic.

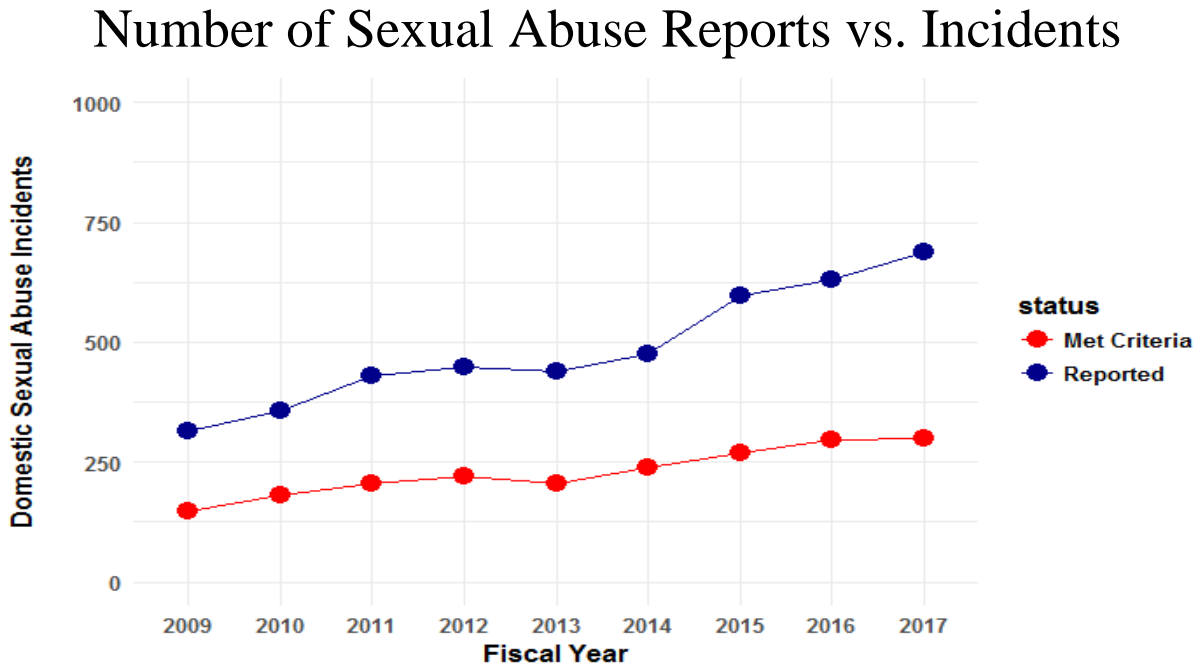


Figure 1. The number of domestic abuse incidents reported to FAP that involved sexual abuse, and the number of those incidents which met DoD criteria, over time.

A direct way of examining the slight growth in the number of met criteria incidents since FY09, is to calculate any changes in the likelihood at which incidents are meeting DoD criteria for sexual abuse (the “met criteria” rate). Criteria for a report to meet the definition of spouse or intimate partner sexual abuse are outlined in DoDM 6400.01-Volume 3, “Family Advocacy Program: Clinical Case Staff Meeting and Incident Determination Committee,” August 11, 2016.

Any act that meets the definitional criteria must be considered to have a significant impact on the spouse or intimate partner, and therefore no voting is required to determine impact. As shown in Figure 2, the met criteria rate has remained consistent since FY09, even indicating a slight decrease in the rate which incidents met criteria for sexual abuse in recent years.

Sexual Abuse Incident Met Criteria Rate, Over Time

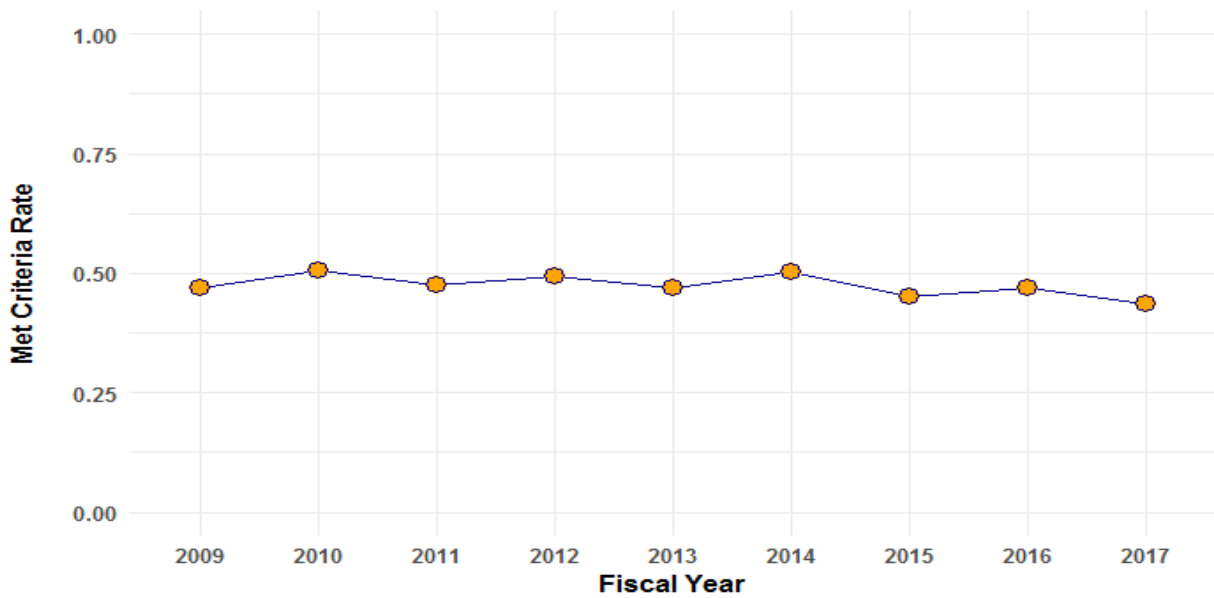


Figure 2. The rate at which sexual abuse incidents reported to FAP met DoD criteria, over time.

Another consideration when examining the growing number of sexual abuse incidents is that there has been an increase in the number of offenders who re-offend (i.e., offenders who are reported in multiple incidents in a fiscal year). To examine this possibility, the number of unique offenders of sexual abuse was compared with the total of sexual abuse incidents which met criteria. As shown in Figure 3, there has been a parallel recent increase in the number of unique offenders and incidents of sexual abuse. We concluded, therefore, that the recent increase in the number of incidents cannot be attributed to an increase in re-offending.

Sexual Abuse Met Criteria Incidents vs. Offenders

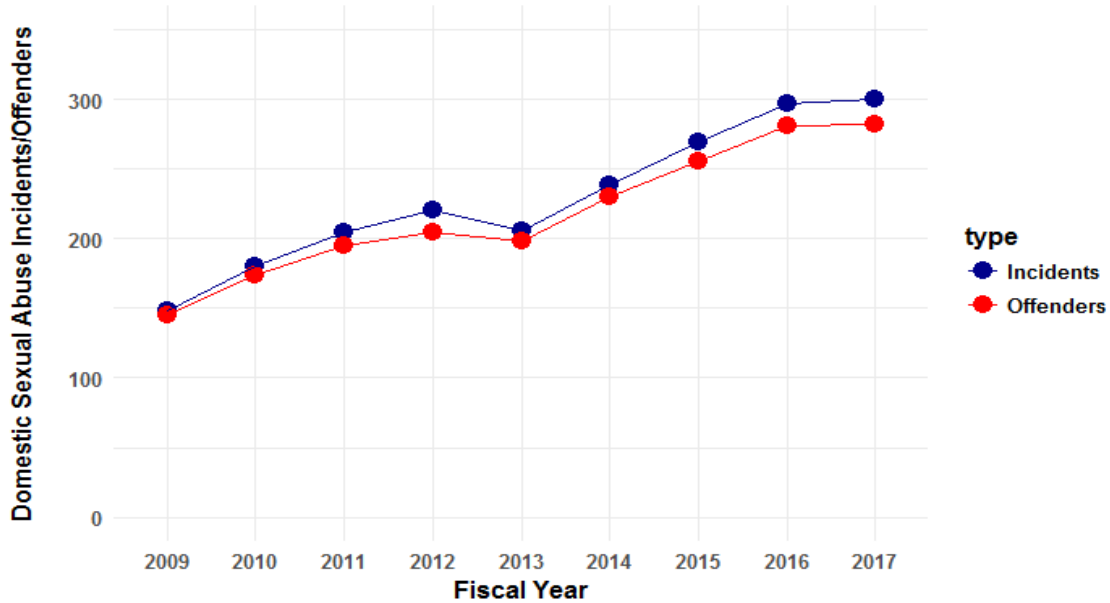


Figure 3. Number of unique sexual abuse offenders and incidents which met criteria (FY09 - FY17).

Analysis was also conducted to identify any changes in demographic characteristics of victims and offenders involved in incidents of sexual abuse over time. The proportion of sex of the offender has remained steady over time, with consistently greater percentages of male offenders (in FY17, 95 percent of offenders were male; 5 percent were female). The age of offenders has also remained consistent over time with little variation (mean age of male offenders over time was 29.17 years old; mean age of female offenders was 28.64).

The proportion of sex of the victim has also remained steady over time, with a higher percentage of female victims (in FY17, 97 percent of victims were female; 3 percent were male). The mean age for victims of sexual abuse has also been fairly stable across the years, with a mean age of 27 years old.

Another theory for the increase in sexual abuse incidents is that incidents among same-sex couples have increased in recent years. However, an analysis showed that sexual abuse incidents involving offenders and victims of the same sex were very rare, therefore we concluded they cannot account for the recent increase since FY09.

Number of Sexual Abuse Victims, by Offender Status

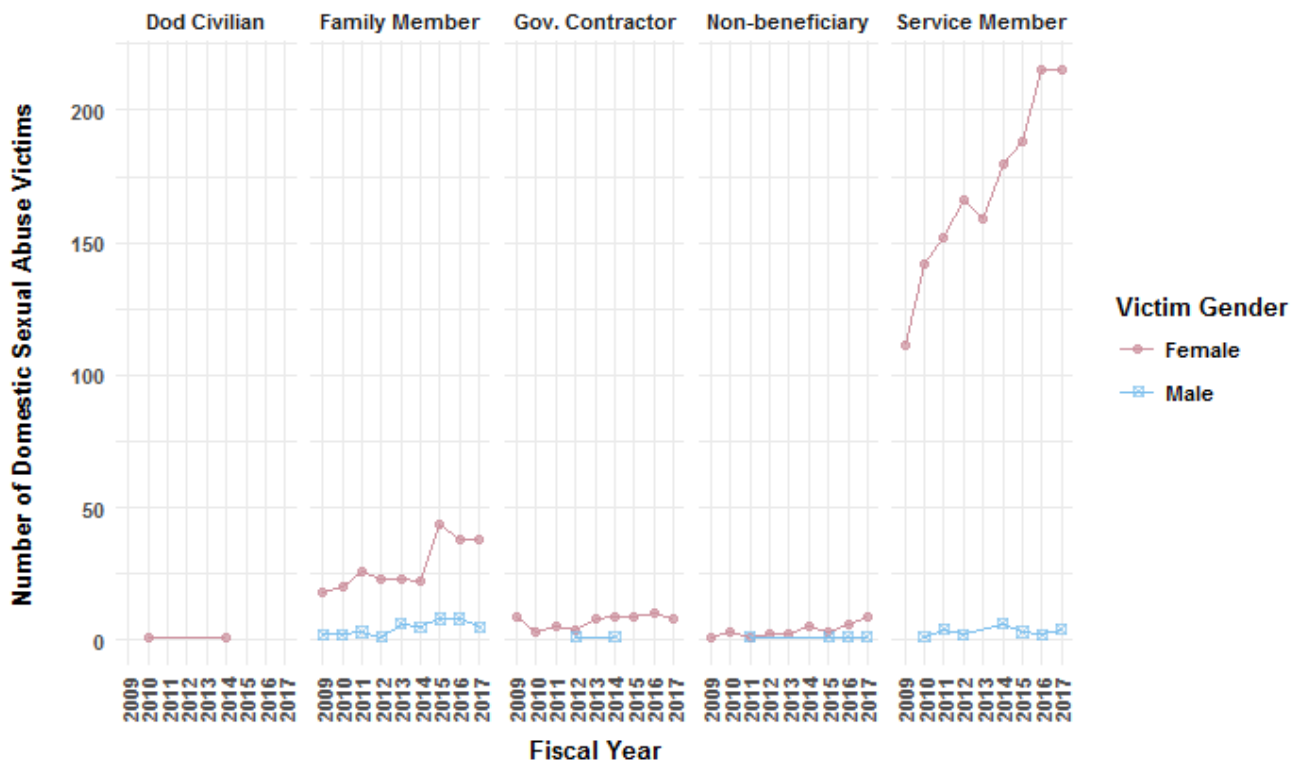


Figure 4. Number of unique sexual abuse victims, by status of the offender, over time.

To provide additional context about this increase in the number of incidents of sexual abuse, analysis was conducted on the trends in the relationship between offenders' military status and victims' gender. As seen in Figure 4, sexual abuse is most common for incidents where the offender is a service member and the victim was female. Further, incidents with female victims seem to be primarily responsible for the recent increase in the number of sexual abuse incidents.

A final hypothesis examined was the impact of including the growing category of intimate partner abuse along with spouse abuse in domestic abuse incidents involving sexual abuse. The additional category of intimate partner was added in FY06 to capture incidents of abuse among specified intimate relationships outside of marriage, and the number of victims and incidents of intimate partner abuse have grown in the past several years. As shown in Figure 5, there was an increase in both the number of offenders who are spouses and intimate partners of their victims, and the increasing number of spouse abuse incidents involving sexual abuse accounts for the greatest increase over time. In fact, while the number of spouse offenders grew from FY13-FY16, the number of spouse offenders has started to decrease in FY16, whereas the number of intimate partner offenders has continued to steadily grow since FY12.

Number of Offenders, by Relationship to Victim

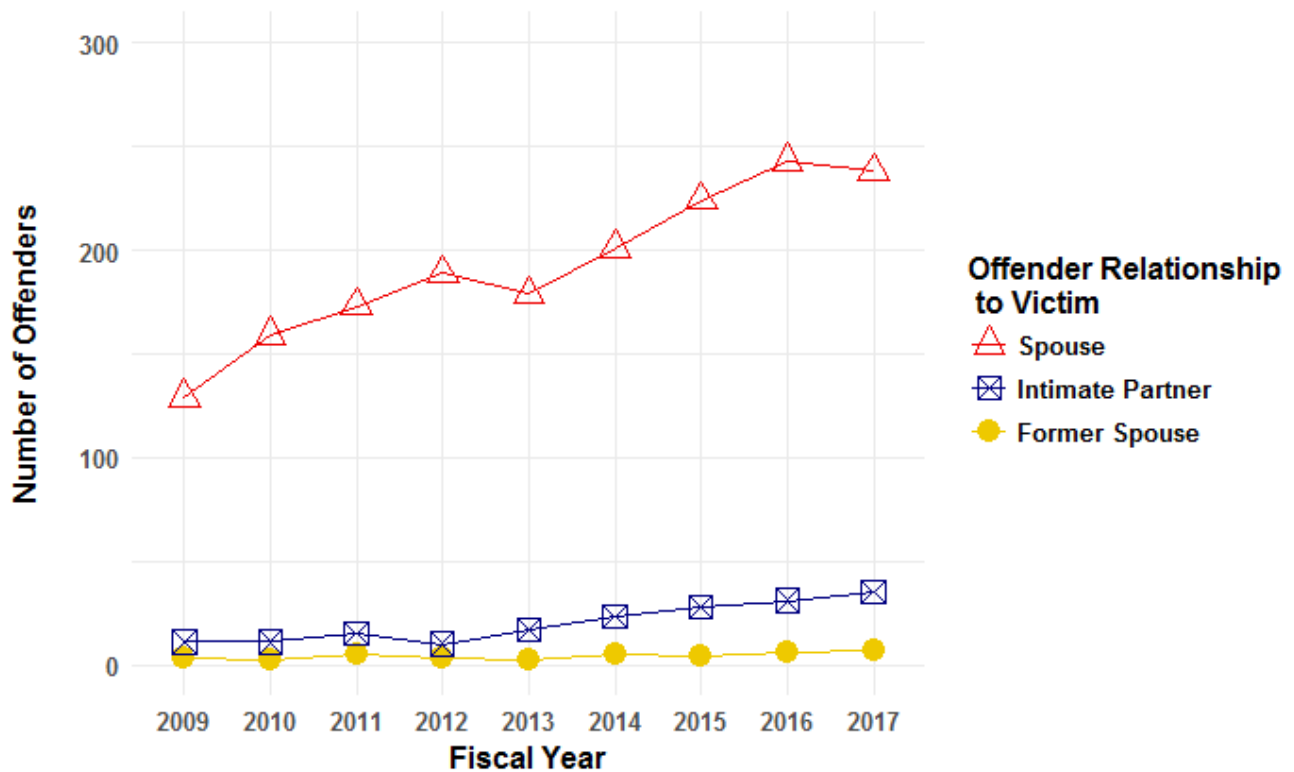


Figure 5. Number of sexual abuse offenders, by relationship to victim, over time.

While this exploratory quantitative analysis does not provide a conclusive reason for the uptick in the number of sexual abuse incidents since FY09, it does provide a wealth of contextual information to better understand trends in which individuals are experiencing higher numbers of sexual abuse incidents over time, shifts in demographics of the victim and offender, and any changes in the

composition of the relationship between victim and offender. Additional analyses will be conducted on characteristics of sexual abuse incidents to identify trends, including source of referral.

Impact of Policy and Program Changes

In addition to exploring historical Central Registry data to identify factors related to the increase in sexual abuse incidents, it is also critical to review program and policy changes which provide a backdrop for this increase in sexual abuse incidents. In recent years, OSD FAP has engaged in a number of activities that focus on sexual abuse in domestic relationships to educate victims, and providers and advocates how best to ensure the safety and well-being of military spouses and intimate partners. Due to increased awareness, however, these efforts may also have contributed to the increase in the number of reports of sexual abuse since FY09.

In 2015, the Department established the Victim Assistance Leadership Council to provide a forum to exchange information and collaborate on issues affecting victims of crime and harassment and to promote efficiencies, coordinate policies, and assess implementation of Victim Assistance Standards. This cross-pollinating of information across victim assistance programs has highlighted the significance of assessing for sexual offense in all victim reports. It is common for married victims of domestic abuse to not report experiences of sexual abuse within a marriage because of conflicted feelings involving personal rights and the feeling of obligation to comply with sexual demands in a marital union. As a result, in the past, incidents of sexual abuse within spouse and intimate partner relationships were often not disclosed until months into the therapeutic relationship. In recent years, FAP has made greater efforts to inquire about sexual abuse incidents within spouse and intimate partner relationships early in the assessment; specifically, all Services include a question on their standardized intake assessment to ask victims directly about their experience of sexually abusive behaviors immediately after an allegation of domestic abuse has been reported.

Finally, there has historically been ongoing confusion in the field regarding the differences in FAP and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) programs and services to address sexual abuse. The FAP and SAPR programs have made greater efforts in the past 10 years to work collaboratively – both at the OSD and Service installation levels – to educate active duty Service members, family members, and clinical providers in the field regarding the unique scope and mission of each program. This collaboration has enabled each respective program to increasingly make more appropriate referrals for individuals who have experienced sexual abuse, based on the relationship with the identified alleged offender, to ensure they are being served in the program that is designed to address their report.

Identifying this information on Service policy and program changes since FY09, in combination with the exploratory analysis outlined in this section, enables the Department to better target subsequent analyses to better understand all possible drivers behind this increase in the number of sexual abuse incidents.