

Family Advocacy Program

Program Content Guide

The following established style guidelines reflect the longstanding practices of developers and editors of content for the Family Advocacy Program. They are consistent with rules and guidance outlined in the Associated Press Stylebook and reflective of Office of Military Community and Family Policy style and usage preferences.

Do

- Pay attention to the overall organization and flow of an article. Information and ideas should be logically organized, and there should be a sense of continuity or flow from one idea to the next.
- Emphasize the importance of community when writing about child abuse and neglect (e.g., strong communities strengthen families; community members can help by being informed, attentive and supportive).
- Use language that is family first (e.g., build family togetherness, resilience and readiness vs. build resilience and readiness when writing about child abuse and neglect). Do not do this, however, when discussing domestic abuse, because victim safety and choice is the guiding principle, which may require separation from the abuser and dissolution of the family unit.
- Avoid redundancy.
- Use language that is affirming for victims, is victim-centered and [trauma-informed](#).
- Write in gender-neutral terms, except if otherwise appropriate (e.g., gender-specific services or groups).
- Use relationship-neutral words such as “partner,” “spouse” or “couple.”
- Flesh out and clarify statements and ideas.
- Ensure that subheads reflect the content of the text that follows.
- Emphasize the positive as much as possible when producing content.
- Focus on a strengths-based perspective and integrate protective factors language.
- Incorporate prevention into content.
- Keep the wide audience range in mind.
- Use softening or qualifying words such as “generally,” “maybe,” “can be” or “might” to avoid making blanket statements about how people feel, react, etc.

Do Not

- Discuss unhealthy relationship behaviors without including a reference to the Family Advocacy Program, where individuals who are concerned for their safety and well-being can find information and help.
- Make assumptions.
- Use messages implying that a victim could have prevented the abuse that happened to them, or even language that suggests that the victim has a role to play in prevention. Unless worded carefully, this can still sound like victim-blaming.
- Tell people how they feel.
- Tell people what they should, need to, must, ought to, can't or won't do.
- Tell people what they should always or never do.
- Use statistics, unless vetted through the Office of Secretary of Defense Family Advocacy Program.

Formatting

- “Less is more” — be concise.

Preferred Terms

Preferred	As opposed to
can, may or might	will or are
child abuse and/or neglect	child abuse
child exhibiting	perpetrator, offender, abuser (when referring to a child)
child impacted	victim
domestic abuse	domestic violence
Domestic Violence Awareness Month	Domestic Violence Prevention Month
installation Family Advocacy Program	---
intimate partner violence	intimate partner abuse
LGBTQ	---
medical treatment facility	military treatment facility

Preferred	As opposed to
Military and Family Support Center	Family Support Center
more than	over
multidisciplinary team	multi-disciplinary team
nonthreatening	nonviolent
normative sexual behavior in children and youth	normal sexual behavior in children and youth
often or generally	always
partner or spouse	husband or wife
problematic sexual behavior in children and youth	unhealthy child sexual behavior
same-sex couple or same-sex partner	---
some or many	most or all
spectrum	scale
technology misuse, misuse of technology, digital abuse, technology-facilitated domestic abuse	tech abuse
tend to	usually
transitional compensation	Transitional Compensation Program
victim advocate or advocacy	Victim Advocate Program

Definitions

Term	Definition
child abuse and neglect	<p>The department and each of the military services define child abuse and neglect as the physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of a child by a parent, guardian or foster parent caregiver – whether the caregiver is intrafamilial or extrafamilial – under circumstances indicating that a child is being harmed or having their welfare threatened. Such acts by a sibling, other family member or another person will be deemed to be child abuse only when the individual is providing care under an expressed or implied agreement with the parent, guardian or foster parent.</p>
domestic abuse	<p>The Department of Defense and each of the military services define domestic abuse as a pattern of behavior resulting in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional or psychological abuse, which may include excessive jealousy, personal insults or verbal harassment as well as threatening language suggesting the use or future use of physical violence • Economic control, which includes one spouse or partner controlling how the other spends money, intentionally accumulating credit card debt in the other’s name or refusing to share the decision-making on household finances • Interference with personal liberty, which may include tracking the victim through electronic devices, apps or social media, or forbidding the victim to leave the home • Spousal neglect, in which one spouse or partner fails to provide the necessary care or assistance to the other spouse or partner in situations where they are incapable of self-care physically, emotionally or culturally <p>To be classified as domestic abuse, department policy requires that the harmful behavior be directed by a current or former spouse, or current or former intimate partner with whom the abuser shares or has shared a common domicile, or a person with whom the abuser has a child in common.</p>
domestic abuse restricted reporting	<p>Three groups of professionals have been granted the authority to keep information about domestic abuse confidential under the restricted reporting option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAP victim advocates

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAP clinicians • Health care providers <p>Making a restricted report means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law enforcement is not notified. • Command is not involved. • The person impacted by domestic abuse has access to the full range of FAP services, including medical care, counseling and support from a victim advocate – who will work with the victim to develop a safety plan and identify next steps, including pursuing options outside the military system.
domestic abuse unrestricted reporting	<p>With an unrestricted report, someone impacted by domestic abuse or any concerned person may notify officially designated personnel – chain of command, FAP or military law enforcement – of an incident of abuse.</p> <p>Making an unrestricted report means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law enforcement will investigate the incident, which will include contacting the alleged offender. • Command will be notified and may take administrative action against the alleged offender. • The person impacted by domestic abuse has access to support and protection from command, such as a no-contact order or a military protective order. • The person impacted by domestic abuse has access to the full range of FAP services, including medical care, counseling and support from a victim advocate – who will work with the victim to develop a safety plan and identify next steps. • The person impacted by domestic abuse has access to legal services. • The person impacted by domestic abuse can receive assistance in applying for transitional compensation, if applicable.
domestic violence	<p>Domestic violence is used by the military to specifically name the offense under the United States Code, the Uniform Code of Military Justice or state law involving the use, attempted use or threatened use of force or violence against a person, or violation of a lawful order such as a military protective order or civil protection order that was issued</p>

Term	Definition
	<p>for the protection of a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current or former spouse or intimate partner • Current or former intimate partner with whom the abuser shares or has shared a common domicile • Person with whom the abuser has a child in common <p>In 2019, the UCMJ was updated to include domestic violence as a specific crime for which the accused can be prosecuted by court-martial.</p>
Family Advocacy Program	FAP is the DOD program designated to address domestic abuse, child abuse and neglect, and problematic sexual behavior in children and youth. The program is delivered through the military services, which work in coordination with key military components and civilian agencies to promote victim safety and empowerment and provide appropriate treatment for affected service members and their families.
FAP victim advocates	Trained FAP victim advocates and clinicians offer a range of services and programs, including workshops to build skills for healthy relationships and help in planning for safety in a crisis, as well as support to new and expecting parents. They also respond to reports of domestic abuse, child abuse and neglect, and referrals concerning PSB-CY.
New Parent Support Program	The New Parent Support Program is a prevention program providing intensive, voluntary home visitation to expectant parents and parents of children from birth through 3 years of age whose life circumstances place them at risk of child abuse and neglect. The NPSP is part of FAP.
problematic sexual behavior in children and youth	Problematic sexual behavior in children and youth is defined as behavior, initiated by children and youth, which involves using sexual or private body parts in a manner that is developmentally inappropriate or potentially harmful to the individual or the individuals impacted by the behavior.
protective factors	These are conditions in individuals, families or communities that, when present, increase the health and well-being of an individual or family.
Safe Exit button	This button, which Military OneSource has installed on content that is designed to help someone in an abusive relationship, and aligns with industry best practices, allows the user to exit an article online and instantly view Weather.com in its place. Within the content itself, it is referred to as the Exit Site button.

Term	Definition
technology-facilitated domestic abuse or digital abuse	Technology-facilitated domestic abuse, or digital abuse, is the misuse of technologies such as texting and social networking to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner.