

# Putting Research to Work for Military Families



Focus:  
Army

## Intimate Partner Violence Among Married Male U.S. Army Soldiers: Ethnicity as a Factor in Self-Reported Perpetration and Victimization

Rosen, L. N., Parmley, A. M., Knudson, K. H., & Fancher, P. (2002). Intimate partner violence among married male U.S. Army soldiers: Ethnicity as a factor in self-reported perpetration and victimization. *Violence and Victims*, 17(5), 607-622. doi:10.1891/vivi.17.5.607.33716

**SUMMARY:** Findings from previous research are mixed in identifying and determining the effects and types of violence among intimate partners. Self-report data collected from 488 male U.S. Army Soldiers were used to examine how depression, marital adjustment, and psychological and behavioral health were related to intimate partner violence (IPV). Findings revealed that Black Soldiers were more likely to experience IPV from their partner, while White Soldiers inflicted more IPV on their partners. Many factors were related to IPV among study participants.

### KEY FINDINGS:

- Black Soldiers who experienced severe aggression (i.e., kicking, stabbing, shooting) were at greater risk for depression and marital problems than White Soldiers.
- Black male Soldiers were more likely to report being a victim of severe partner aggression than White Soldiers, especially when the couple did not agree on important relationship issues (i.e., household tasks).
- White Soldiers who reported greater mistrust of others were more likely to perpetrate severe partner aggression and to have a history of childhood physical and emotional abuse than Black Soldiers.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS:

Programs could:

- Enhance education, activities, and curricula related to managing important relationship issues among Service members and their partners (e.g., making decisions, handling financial matters)
- Educate military couples with a history of IPV about positive coping skills
- Disseminate information regarding possible symptoms of mental health problems Service members and their partners may experience and where individuals and families can find support

### IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICIES:

Policies could:

- Encourage the development and continuation of programs that promote positive coping among Service members and their partners
- Continue to support programs for identification and prevention of IPV in military couples
- Recommend further research examining factors related to a history of childhood physical and emotional abuse among Service members and their families

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## METHODS

- Soldiers at an Army base in Alaska were recruited by word-of-mouth to participate in this study.
- Data were collected via questionnaires assessing IPV, marital adjustment, alcohol problems, narcissism, and seasonal mood disorder.
- Relationship between IPV, demographic characteristics (i.e., age, pay), psychological and behavioral health (i.e., depression, alcohol problems), and marital adjustment were examined.

## PARTICIPANTS

- The sample consisted of 488 U.S. Active Duty, enlisted Soldiers who were part of a non-deployable unit.
- All Soldiers were male, with an average age of 27 years.
- All Soldiers were either White (n = 358) or Black (n = 130).

## LIMITATIONS

- Data were self-reported, thus findings may be biased toward the male partner's point of view.
- The sample consisted of only male Soldiers, and results may not generalize to female Soldiers
- The sample may have selection bias as the study participants were not recruited at random.

## AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could:

- Examine the effects of childhood physical and emotional abuse on partner aggression later in life
- Collect data from a random, representative sample of Service members, including female Service members and Service members of other races/ethnicities
- Conduct a similar study examining IPV among a sample of military and non-military couples where both partners are involved in the study

## ASSESSING RESEARCH THAT WORKS



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