

# Putting Research to Work for Military Families



**Focus:**  
Multiple  
Branches

## A Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial of the Strength At Home Men's Program for Partner Violence in Military Veterans

Taft, C. T., Macdonald, A., Creech, S. K., Monson, C. M., & Murphy, C. M. (2015). A randomized controlled clinical trial of the Strength At Home Men's Program for partner violence in military veterans. *The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 77(9), 1168-75. doi:10.4088/jcp.15m10020

**SUMMARY:** Evaluation of the efficacy of the Strength at Home Men's Program (SAH-M), a group intervention program designed to end intimate partner violence (IPV), was conducted. One hundred and thirty-five male Veterans and Service members and 111 female partners participated in a randomized controlled clinical trial. Overall, participants exhibited a reduction in physical and psychological IPV use.

### KEY FINDINGS:

- Participants in the SAH-M program, relative to those who were in the non-treatment group, reduced behaviors that involved controlling their partner through isolation and monitoring.
- SAH-M program reductions in physical and psychological IPV were maintained at the 3-month follow-up.
- Participants in the SAH-M program exhibited significant reductions in both denigration and hostility IPV compared to the non-treatment group.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS:

Programs could:

- Continue providing IPV training opportunities for professionals working with Service members and their partners
- Promote, across military branches, the benefits of intervention approaches for IPV offenders
- Provide support groups for IPV offenders and their partners

### IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICIES:

Policies could:

- Continue support for more understanding on the relationship between IPV and Service members that have been in a combat related mission
- Increase collaboration between military branches and local community organizations to enhance programs for Service member IPV offenders
- Encourage awareness campaign on military bases regarding the importance of addressing IPV

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## METHODS

- Participants were recruited over a period of three years and from two major metropolitan areas in the Northeast by clinician-referrals, self-referrals, and court-referrals.
- Groups of 4-5 IPV offenders were assigned randomly to receive either SAH-M immediately or an enhanced treatment as usual (ETAU).
- The SAH-M is a 12-week group therapy program that works with individuals social information processing deficits.
- Statistical analysis was used to investigate the effect of treatment on changes in IPV over time.

## PARTICIPANTS

- Participants had to be over 18, a male Veteran or Service member, and one self, collateral, or court-report of at least one act of male-to-female physical IPV, and no current substance or dependence abuse.
- The mean length of intimate relationships was 87 months and 67% of the sample had children.
- Over 65% of the men reported exposure to military combat, with over half having had a posttraumatic stress disorder diagnosis.

## LIMITATIONS

- The study was limited to heterosexual male Veteran or Service members who engaged in IPV as such limits the generalizability to other types of relationships.
- Out of the 67 participants that were allocated to the SAH-M program only 49 participated in the post-treatment assessment, and 45 in the 3-month follow up, such a drop-out can affect the outcomes of the study.
- The mean number of sessions attended in the 12-week program was 7.3 with 71.6% attending 6 or more sessions and 55.2% attending 9 or more sessions, which can potentially limit the benefits of the program.

## AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could:

- Explore in-depth the relationship between IPV, military combat, and military culture
- Examine how treatment program outcomes for male and female IPV offenders may differ
- Address possible factors that may contribute to the recidivism of participants and IPV behaviors

## ASSESSING RESEARCH THAT WORKS



For more information about the Assessing Research that Works rating scale visit:  
<https://reachmilitaryfamilies.umn.edu/content/assessing-research-that-works>