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FAMILY VIOLENCE MEASUREMENT

A SOURCEBOOK FOR FAP

US ARMY COMMUNITY AND FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

Family Violence and Trauma Project
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26 February 1998

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1. AGENCY USE ONLY *(Leave blank)*

2. REPORT DATE

3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE

Family Violence Measurement: A Sourcebook for FAP

5. FUNDING NUMBERS

6. AUTHOR(S)

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7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

Family Violence and Trauma Project, Department of Psychiatry, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Bethesda, MD 20814

8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

Prepared for the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center, Family Advocacy Program, under an Inter-Service Support Agreement between the Department of the Army and the Department of Defense.

10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Distribution Unlimited

12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE

13. ABSTRACT *(Maximum 200 words)*

This guidebook poses six specific topics for examination. Each topic represents a common and familiar scenario. It is intended to help build a knowledge base of research methods for the personnel who staff the Army's Family Advocacy Program. The material covered includes the following questions: (1) How much abuse is there? (2) What are the differences in types of maltreatment? (3) What effect does change in population size have on rates? (4) Who are the victims and offenders? (5) What are the effects of substance involement on spouse and child abuse? (6) What information can FAP gain from the source of referral?
This document will serve several purposes: (1) to teach some basic research methods; (2) to help FAP managers gather and analyze information from subordinates, and (3) to help people in the field analyze their own unique situation.

14. SUBJECT TERMS

Army family violence spouse abuse child abuse research

15. NUMBER OF PAGES

50

16. PRICE CODE

17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT
U	U	U	None

This report was prepared for the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center, Family Advocacy Program under an Inter-Service Support Agreement between the Department of the Army and the Department of Defense, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Department of Psychiatry.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the course of the past few years, the leadership of the Army Family Advocacy Program (FAP) has instituted a number of initiatives intended to result in evaluations of the effectiveness of the FAP. This publication is a part of this effort. It is intended to help build a knowledge base of research methods for the personnel who staff the Army's Family Advocacy Program.

This guidebook poses six specific topics for examination. Each topic presents a common and familiar scenario. The material is written in such a way that the logic and numerical operations can be followed in detail and reproduced. We hope that this will serve several purposes: (1) to teach some basic research methods, (2) to help people in the field analyze their own unique situation, and (3) to help FAP managers gather and analyze information from subordinates. In other words, we hope that they will become the teachers, and make this information common FAP knowledge.

This drive toward implementing evaluation has other resources that you can use. The Joining Forces Newsletter has included a statistics page in each of the six quarterly editions. The purpose of the statistics column is to present basic statistical information for those who may have never studied statistics or have had a long break from such study.

We also compiled and published the proceedings of the January 1996 annual FAP training conference in San Diego in which the performance-based management model was presented. The development of this model in terms of its application to FAP will continue at the next annual FAP training in Salt Lake City. This is all part of an ongoing, continuous effort to upgrade the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors of FAP personnel who will participate in the evaluation efforts to come.

We would appreciate your comments and criticisms on this material. Please send comments to James E. McCarroll at jmccarro@usuhs.mil or Laurie Thayer at lthayer@usuhs.mil.

QUESTION 1. HOW MUCH ABUSE IS THERE?

INTRODUCTION

Questions regarding child and spouse abuse in the Army are frequently asked by many levels of command, the civilian community, and the media. Their questions often focus on the magnitude, or extent of spouse abuse in the Army. There are primarily two different ways to report this information. While both methods yield important data, they address two different questions.

The first question is: ***How many cases of child or spouse abuse did the Army have in a certain year?*** The best way to answer this is to determine the *frequency*, or basic count of abuse victims during that year. This is easy enough, but **suppose** we are comparing ourselves to last year (FY96) when we had fewer married people? If there was an increase in the frequency of spouse abuse for FY97 we would probably say, "Wait a minute, we have more people this year, of course we have more cases." But, exactly what were the differences in cases and populations?

This gets to the second question: ***What is the rate of abuse in the Army?*** The rate takes into account not only the frequency, but also the size of the population the cases came from and the period of time over which the rate has been calculated. For spouse abuse it is reported as a rate per 1,000 *married persons* (soldiers and spouses) per year. For example, the rate of spouse abuse in the Army for 1997 was 9.0 / 1,000 married persons. For child abuse it is reported as a rate per 1,000 *children* per year. For example, the rate of child abuse in the Army for 1997 was 6.4 / 1,000 children.

FREQUENCY VS. RATE

To illustrate the difference between a frequency and a rate, let's look at Post A in 1996 and in 1997.

Frequency. In 1996, Post A had 130 cases of spouse abuse and a married population of 1,000. In 1997, however, Post A had 90 cases of spouse abuse and a married population of 500 (see Figure 1). From this information, we know that Post A had a decrease in the frequency of spouse abuse cases from 1996 to 1997 (from 130 cases to 90 cases). However, Post A also had a decrease in its population of married persons (from 1,000 married persons to 500 married persons).

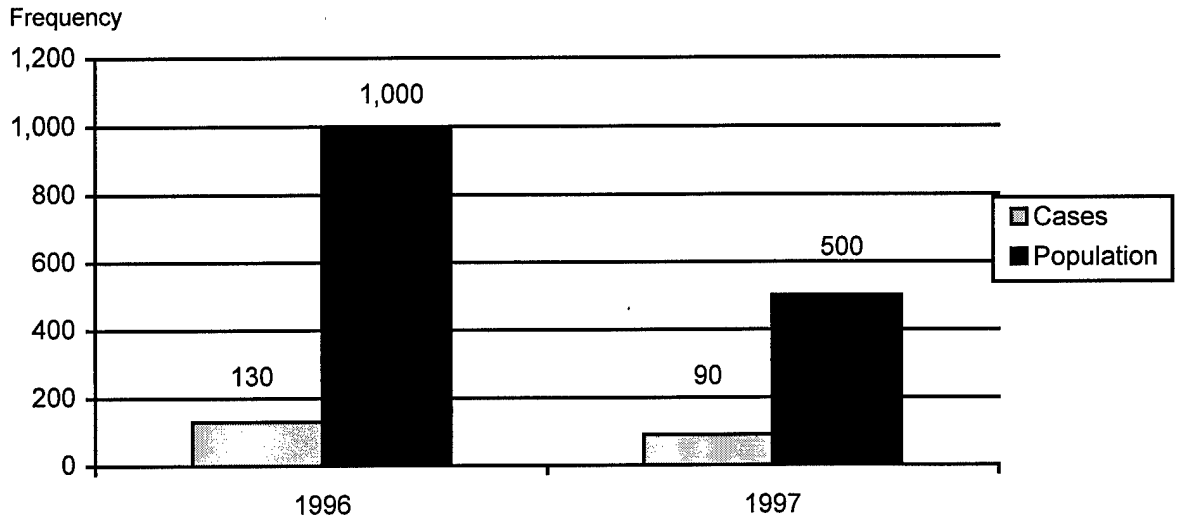

Figure 1. Cases and Populations in 1996 and 1997 (Post A)

Rate. A rate is a numerical concept in which there is a relationship between the numerator and the denominator and a measure of time is an essential part of the denominator. The rate of spouse abuse for each year can be calculated by dividing the number of spouse abuse victims (numerator) by the population at risk for spouse abuse (denominator) and multiplying that fraction by 1,000 (for 1,000 married persons). The measure of time is a one year period. The rate tells you how many people out of every 1,000 were victims of spouse abuse. In 1996, Post A had a rate of (130/1,000) x 1,000=130/1,000. In other words, for every 1,000 people at Post A in 1996, 130 were spouse abuse victims. In 1997, however, Post A had a rate of (90/500) x 1,000=180/1,000 (see Figure 2). Or, for every 1,000 people at Post A in 1997, 180 were spouse

abuse victims. By examining these rates, we see that although Post A had a greater frequency of spouse abuse victims in 1996, spouse abuse was more common among married persons in 1997.

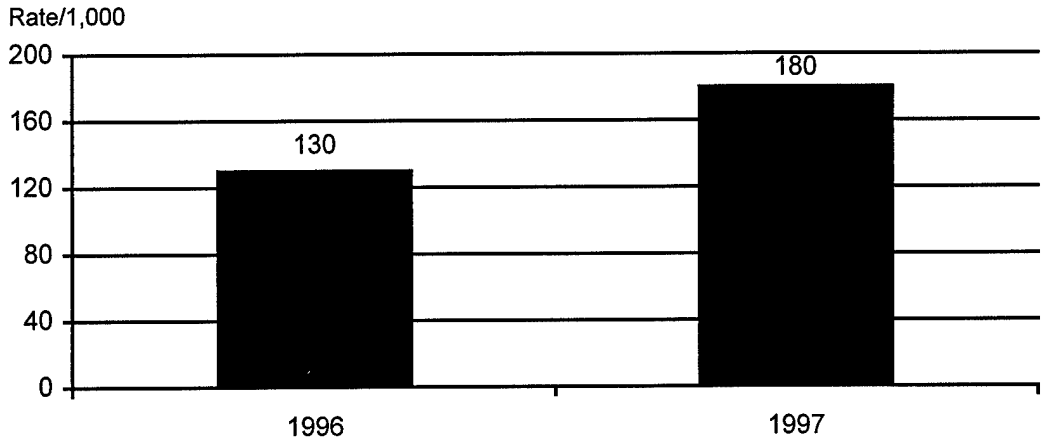

Figure 2. Rates per 1,000 in 1996 and 1997 (Post A)

USE OF FREQUENCIES AND RATES

Both the frequencies and rates can provide useful information to FAP. They can be calculated for both victims and offenders, however, victims will be emphasized in this discussion.

Use of Frequencies. Using the frequencies, FAP can determine the level of resources needed to continue high quality service to its spouse abuse victims and offenders. For example, for Post A more resources may have been needed in 1996 than were needed in 1997 due to the declining number of spouse abuse cases.

Use of Rates. The rates, however, provide different information to FAP. By examining the rates of spouse abuse, FAP can get a sense of how common spouse abuse is in the population. The trend in rates from 1996 to 1997 indicates that there is an increasing problem of spouse abuse at Post A. This gives insight into the need for more effective prevention programs and for heightening awareness in the community about spouse abuse.

ARMY SPOUSE ABUSE: FREQUENCIES AND RATES, 1989-1997

Frequencies. ***How many spouses have been abused in the Army since 1989?*** According to Figure 3, the frequency of initial substantiated spouse abuse incidents for men and women generally increased from 1992 to 1997. Throughout the Army there have been about 4,500 female and 2,300 male spouse abuse victims per year. In 1997, there were 3,314 female and 2,056 male spouse abuse victims. Overall, there were 5,370 total spouse abuse victims in 1997.

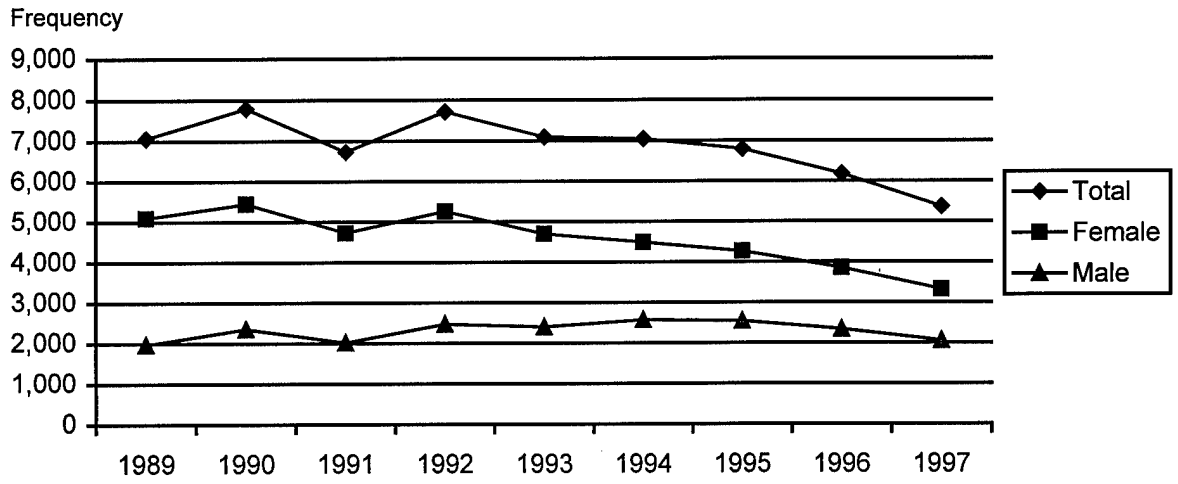

Figure 3. Frequency of Spouse Abuse Victims in the Army (Initial Substantiated Cases)

Rates. ***What have been the rates of spouse abuse in the Army since 1989?*** According to Figure 4, the rates of spouse abuse have shown an overall increase from 1989 to 1992. From 1992 to 1996 the rates have been fairly steady. In 1997, however, the rates decreased. In 1997, about 11 out of every 1,000 married females were abused, and about 7 out of every 1,000 married males were abused. Overall, approximately 9 out of every 1,000 spouses were abused in the Army in 1997.

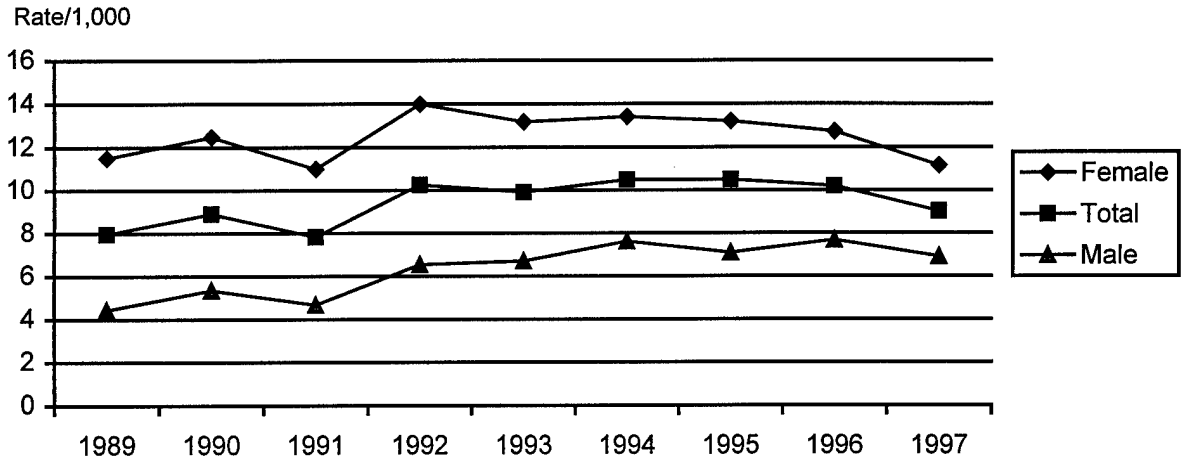

Figure 4. Spouse Abuse Rates per 1,000 (Army)

ARMY CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT: FREQUENCIES AND RATES, 1989-1997

Frequencies. ***How many children have been abused in the Army since 1989?*** According to Figure 5, the frequency of initial substantiated child abuse and neglect incidents for males and females has decreased from 1991 to 1997. Throughout the Army there have been an average of 1,900 male and 1,900 female child abuse and neglect victims per year. In 1997, there were 1,415 male and 1,489 female child abuse victims. Overall, there was a total of 2,904 child abuse and neglect victims in 1997.

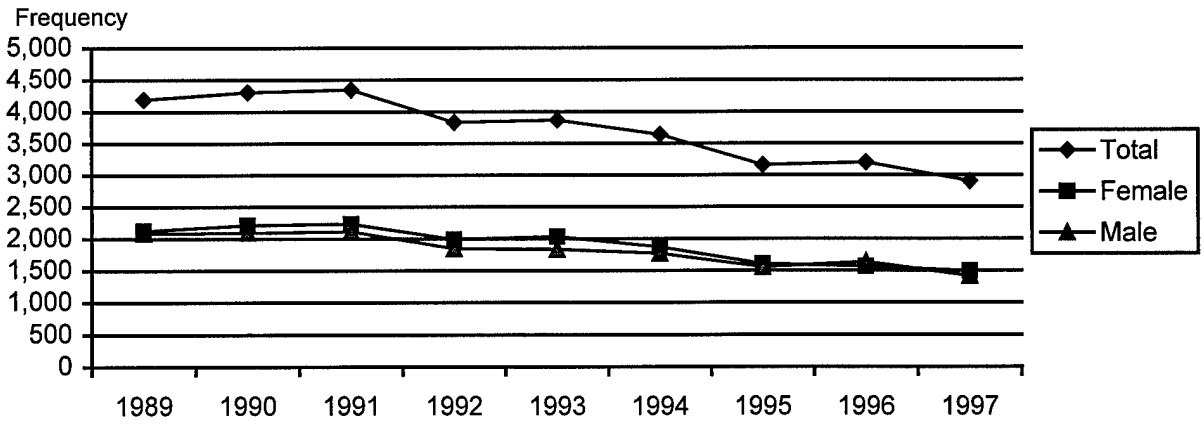

Figure 5. Frequency of Child Abuse and Neglect Victims in the Army (Initial Substantiated Cases)

Rates. ***What have been the rates of child abuse and neglect in the Army since 1989?***
According to Figure 6, rates were relatively steady from 1989 to 1994, but there has been an overall decrease in rates from 1994 to 1997. There was, however, a slight increase in rates in 1996. In 1997, 6.7 out of every 1,000 female children were abused or neglected, and 6.2 out of every 1,000 male children were abused or neglected. Overall, approximately 6.4 out of every 1,000 children were abused or neglected in the Army in 1997.

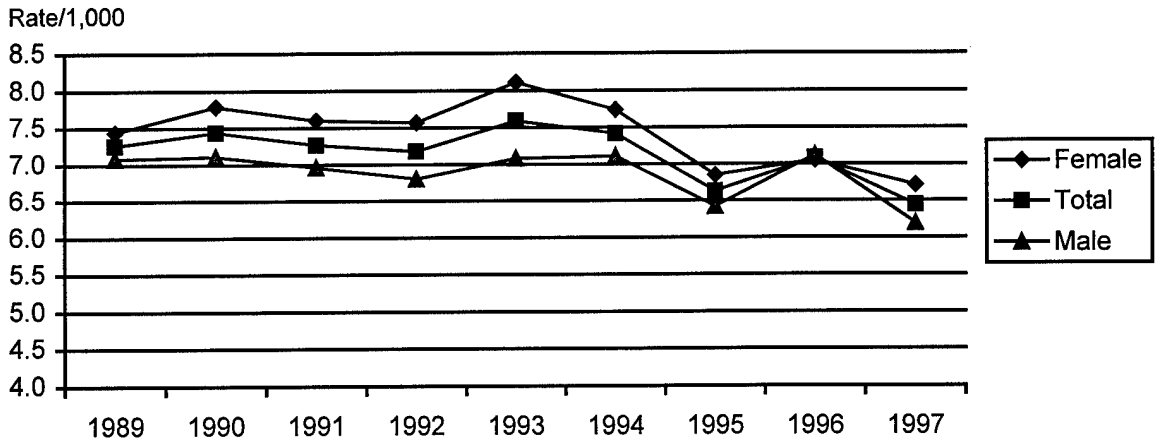

Figure 6. Child Abuse and Neglect Rates per 1,000 (Army)

WHAT CAUSED THE ARMY'S CHANGE IN RATES OVER THE YEARS?

In particular, what caused the decrease in spouse and child abuse rates for FY97 and how can we continue this decrease for the years to come? To answer these questions, the Army should take a close look at conditions and/or changes made within FAP and the Army as a whole during this time period.

- What did the Army do differently in 1997 that may be associated with the rate decrease for spouse and child abuse?
- Were prevention programs initiated?
- Was more training offered or required for FAP workers?
- Were fewer victims seeking help or treatment than in the previous years?

- Were there changes in missions or populations?
- Were there differences in the CRC decision making process?
- Were there new definitions of the types of maltreatment?

These and other specific questions warrant careful attention when discussing the Army's rates. A close examination of these issues and concomitant changes in rates can be of great benefit to FAP for both planning and evaluation.

DIFFERENCES IN SUBSTANTIATED AND UNSUBSTANTIATED REPORTS

Spouse Abuse. In addition to the frequencies and rates of spouse abuse, the case substantiation rate can also be of value. The case substantiation rate is the number of initial cases that were substantiated divided by the total number of initial cases reported. This number is given as a percentage. Figure 7 shows the number of substantiated and unsubstantiated initial cases of spouse abuse. In FY95, there were 6,753 substantiated cases and 3,262 unsubstantiated cases. The total number of initial cases reported in FY 1995 was 6,753 + 3,262 = 10,015. Using these numbers, the case substantiation rate for 1995 would be: (6,753 / 10,015) x 100 = 67.4%. For FY96 there was a case substantiation rate of 67.1%, and for FY97, there was a rate of 62.7%. For the Army, the spouse abuse case substantiation rate is slightly declining.

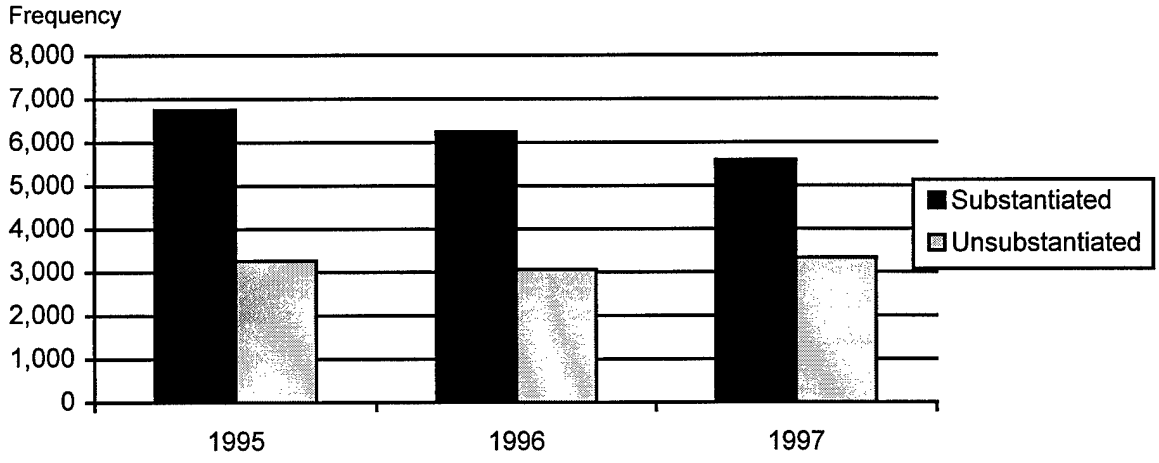

Figure 7. Spouse Abuse: Frequency of Substantiated and Unsubstantiated Cases in the Army

Child Abuse and Neglect. Figure 8 shows the frequency of initial substantiated and unsubstantiated child abuse and neglect cases. The case substantiation rate for child abuse and neglect has been slightly increasing for the Army. In 1995, the rate was 41.1%, in 1996 the rate was 43.5% and in 1997, the substantiation rate was 43.6%.

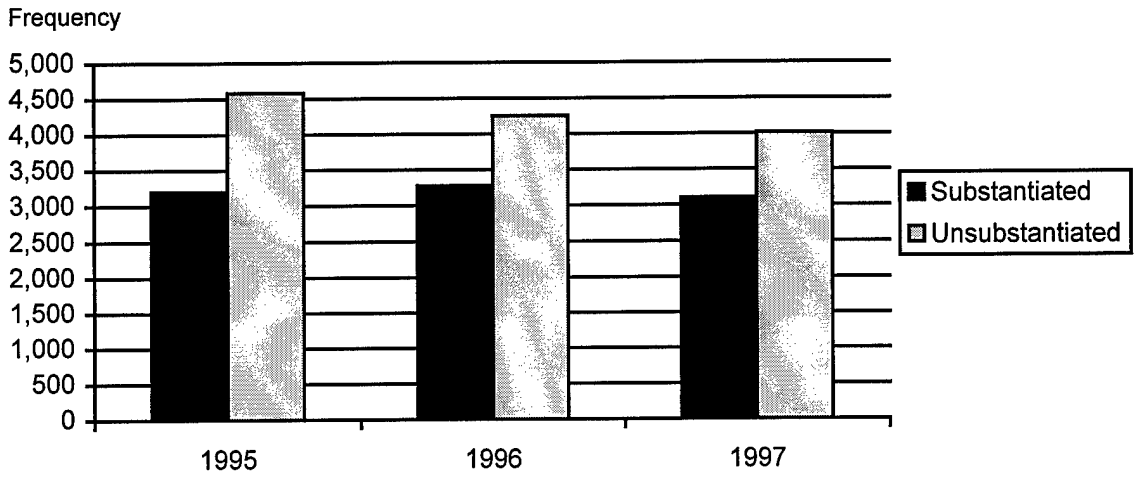

Figure 8. Child Abuse and Neglect: Frequency of Substantiated and Unsubstantiated Cases in the Army

The case substantiation rate is often overlooked when addressing changes in spouse and child abuse but it provides important information surrounding case investigation and referrals. Because the frequencies and rates are based upon only those cases which are substantiated, it is of value to review trends in case substantiation as well. If there has been an increase or decrease in case substantiation it is important to understand why.

- Were the criteria for case substantiation changed?
- Were there changes in referral policies, either on-post or by civilians, causing them to report more or fewer substantiated cases?
- Were there fewer referrals?
- Were there fewer CRC meetings?

CONCLUSION

Frequencies and rates are important measures of family violence. One is not more correct than the other, they merely present the numbers in different ways. It is important to look within the Army to see the trends of spouse and child abuse, and of case substantiation that have occurred over the years, and to raise questions as to why they happened. Through this process, the Army can extract important information which will help continue the reduction in child and spouse abuse for the years to come.

QUESTION 2: WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES IN TYPES OF MALTREATMENT?

INTRODUCTION

One aspect of family violence reporting that can provide a substantial amount of information to FAP is the type of maltreatment. For any incident of spouse abuse, the type of maltreatment can be one or more of the following: major physical injury, minor physical injury, and emotional maltreatment. For child abuse the categories of maltreatment are: major physical injury, minor physical injury, sexual maltreatment, deprivation of necessities (neglect), and emotional maltreatment. By looking at the frequencies, percentages, and rates of each type of maltreatment over the past few years, you can determine which type of abuse is the most prevalent, which are on the rise, and which are declining. Once these questions are answered, FAP can explore the possible causes for these trends in order to gain a better understanding of spouse and child abuse within the Army and to provide better prevention and treatment programs for each type of maltreatment. The following discussion will illustrate the frequencies, rates and percentages of the types of maltreatment for spouse abuse child abuse.

ARMY SPOUSE ABUSE: FREQUENCIES, RATES AND PERCENTAGES

Figure 1 presents the frequency, or number of spouse abuse victims by type of maltreatment for initial substantiated cases. The frequencies, however, do not take into account population changes. Figure 2 illustrates the rates per 1,000 of each type of maltreatment for spouse abuse. The rate takes into account the size of the married population and indicates how many spouses per 1,000 sustained each type of maltreatment. Figure 3 presents the percentage of the total initial substantiated cases which involved major physical injury, minor physical injury, or emotional maltreatment. By taking into account the size of the abused population, these percentages allow FAP to see how prevalent each type of maltreatment is among spouse abuse victims in the Army. Because a victim could have more than one type of maltreatment (i.e.

minor physical and emotional maltreatment), the total of the percentages in Figure 3 adds to more than 100%. Each type of maltreatment is calculated as a percentage of the total number of victims, not the total number of maltreatments. This method of calculating the percent may seem a little unconventional. However, it seems preferable to know the percent of victims who sustained a type of abuse, say major physical injury, rather than the percent of one type of maltreatment as a percent of all types of maltreatment.

Frequency (Spouse Abuse). According to Figure 1, the frequency of minor physical injury in the Army has decreased over the past three years. In 1995, there were 6,399 cases, in 1996 there were 5,701 cases, and in 1997 there were 4,806 cases of minor physical injury. Major physical injury, however, increased during the same period of time. In 1995, there were 126 cases compared to 239 in 1996 and 255 in 1997. Emotional maltreatment has fluctuated with the frequency ranging from about 490 to 600 cases per year. The frequencies do not take into account any changes in the population.

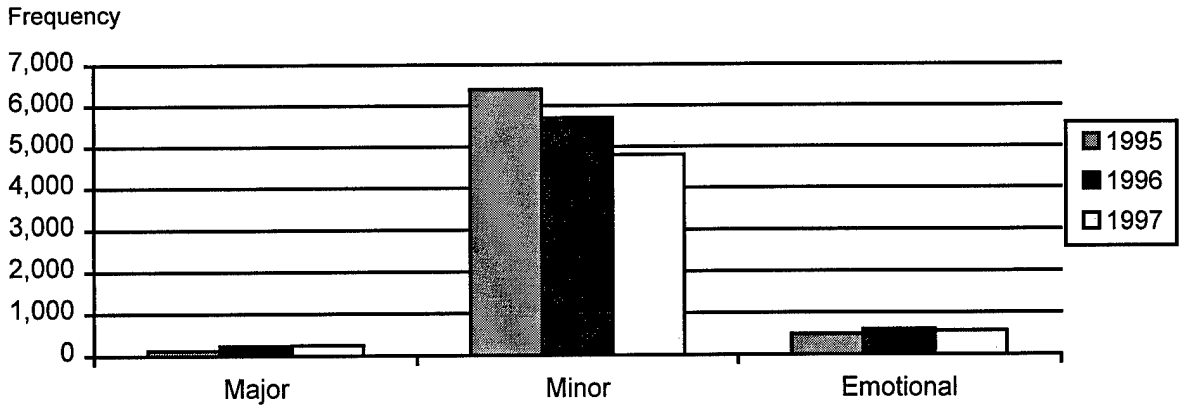

Figure 1. Spouse Abuse: Frequency of Major, Minor, and Emotional Abuse (Army)

Rate (Spouse Abuse). Figure 2 presents the rate of each type of maltreatment per 1,000 married persons. This graph presents different information from that in Figure 1. The rate takes into account the numbers of spouse abuse victims *and* the size of the married population. Figure

2 shows the decline in rates of minor physical injury. Major physical injury and emotional abuse showed slight increases from 1995 to 1996 but remained steady in 1997. According to Figure 2, the rate of minor physical injury for the Army decreased from 9.9 / 1,000 in 1995 to 8.1 / 1,000 in 1997. Major physical injury increased from 0.2 / 1,000 in 1995, to 0.4 / 1,000 in 1996 and 1997. Emotional maltreatment increased from 0.8 / 1,000 in 1995 to 1.0 / 1,000 in 1996, and then remained steady in 1997 at 1.0 per 1,000.

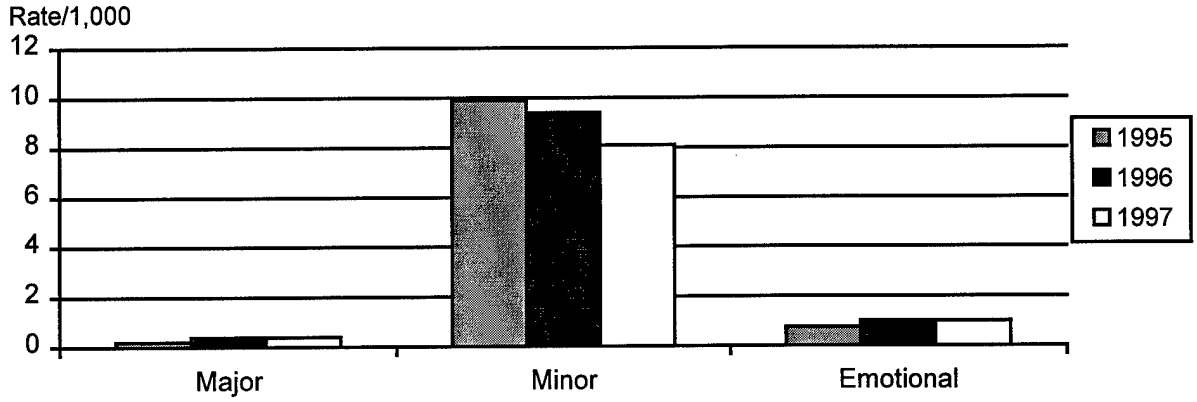

Figure 2. Spouse Abuse: Rates per 1,000 of Major, Minor, and Emotional Maltreatment (Army)

Percentage (Spouse Abuse). These percentages are calculated by dividing the number of cases of each type of maltreatment by the total number of victims. For example, there were 6,399 cases of minor physical injury in 1995. The number of victims in 1995 was 6,802. Based on these numbers, the percentage of minor physical injury was 94.1%. By taking into account the size of the *abused* population in the Army, percentages can be calculated that allow FAP to see the relative proportion of each type of maltreatment among the spouse abuse victims in the Army. Because a victim could have more than one type of maltreatment (i.e., minor physical injury and emotional maltreatment), the total of the percentages in Figure 3 adds to more than 100%. Each type of maltreatment is compared to the total number of victims, and not the total number of maltreatments.

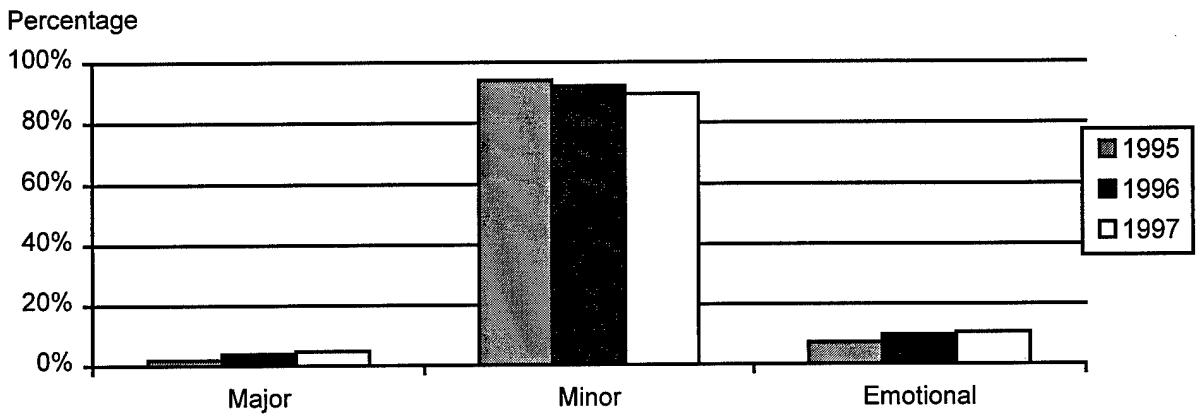

Figure 3. Spouse Abuse: Percentage of Total Initial Substantiated Cases With Major, Minor, and Emotional Maltreatment (Army)

This graph shows a decrease in minor physical injury and the increases in major physical injury and emotional abuse. According to Figure 3, the percentage of spouse abuse victims experiencing minor physical injury in the Army declined over the past three years. In 1995, 94.1% of victims sustained minor physical maltreatment. In 1996, 92.2% experienced minor physical maltreatment and in 1997, 89.5% of the spouse abuse victims experienced minor physical maltreatment. Major physical maltreatment and emotional maltreatment, however, increased over the past three years. In 1995, 1.9% of the victims sustained major physical maltreatment. In 1996, 3.9% experienced major physical maltreatment and in 1997, 4.7% of spouse abuse victims received major physical maltreatment. Similarly, emotional maltreatment increased from 7.2% of victims in 1995 to 9.7% of victims in 1996. In 1997, 10.6% of victims experienced emotional maltreatment.

Fatalities (Spouse Abuse). There were 12 spouse abuse fatalities in the Army from 1995 to 1997. In 1995 there were four female fatalities and one male fatality. In 1996 there were three female fatalities and one male fatality, and in 1997 there were three female fatalities.

ARMY CHILD ABUSE: FREQUENCIES, RATES, AND PERCENTAGES

Figure 4 presents the frequency of child abuse victims by type of maltreatment for initial substantiated cases. Figure 5 illustrates the rates of each type of maltreatment for child abuse, and Figure 6 presents the percentage of the total initial substantiated cases of spouse abuse which involved major physical injury, minor physical injury, sexual maltreatment, emotional maltreatment, and deprivation of necessities (neglect). Because a child could have more than one type of maltreatment (i.e., minor physical injury and neglect), the total of the percentages in Figure 6 adds to more than 100%. Each type of maltreatment is compared to the total number of victims, and not the total number of maltreatments.

Frequency (Child Abuse). According to Figure 4, there have been overall increases in the frequency of major physical injury, and emotional maltreatment. The frequency of minor physical injury has decreased over the past three years. The frequency of neglect and sexual maltreatment, however, have fluctuated over the years. In 1997, there were 139 cases of major physical injury, 938 cases of minor physical injury, 393 cases of sexual maltreatment, 554 cases of emotional maltreatment, and 1,167 cases of neglect in Army.

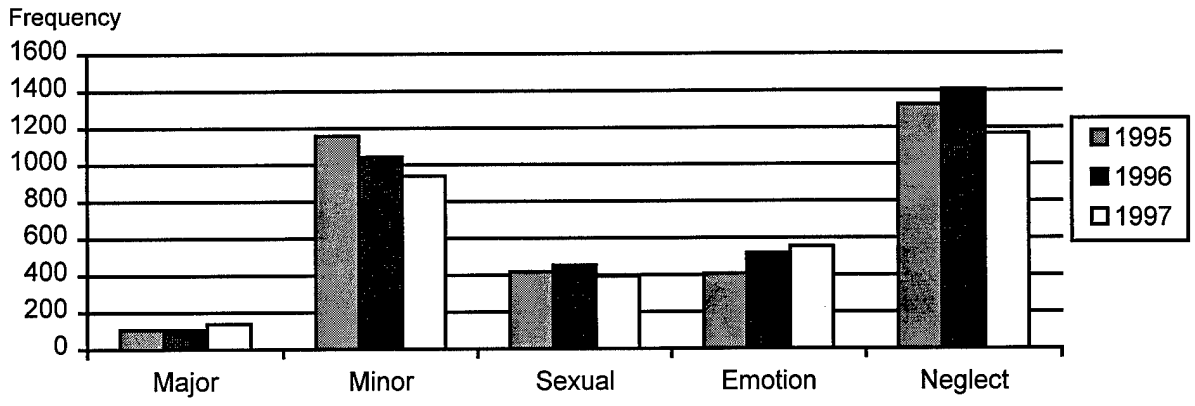

Figure 4. Child Abuse: Frequency of the Types of Child Maltreatment (Army)

Rate (Child Abuse). According to Figure 5, the rates of major physical injury and emotional maltreatment have increased over the past three years. The rates for sexual maltreatment and neglect have fluctuated, and the rates of minor physical injury decreased. In 1997, the rate of major physical injury was 0.3 / 1,000 children and the rate of minor physical injury was 2.1 / 1,000. Sexual maltreatment had a rate of 0.9 / 1,000 and emotional maltreatment had a rate of 1.2 per 1,000. Neglect had the highest rate: 2.6 /1,000 children in the Army.

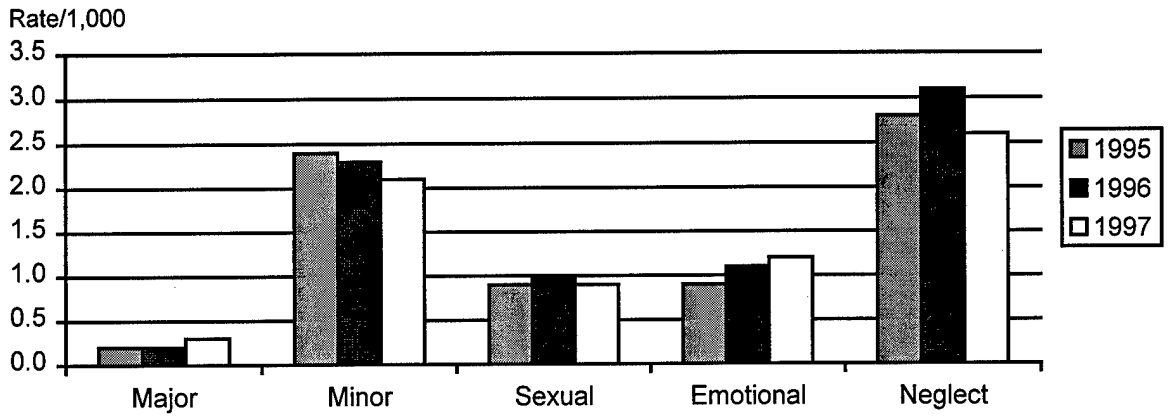

Figure 5. Child Abuse: Rates per 1,000 for Types of Child Maltreatment (ALL ARMY)

Percentage (Child Abuse). According to Figure 6, the number of victims experiencing major physical injury and emotional maltreatment is increasing as a percentage of the total victims. The number of victims experiencing minor physical injury is decreasing as a percentage of the total victims. The percentages of victims experiencing sexual maltreatment and neglect have fluctuated over the past three years, with no clear trends. In 1997, the percentage of all victims experiencing major physical injury was 4.8%, and the percentage experiencing minor physical injury was 32.3%. About 13.5% of victims were involved in a case of sexual maltreatment, 19.1% were involved in a case of emotional maltreatment, and 40.2% of victims were involved in a case of neglect.

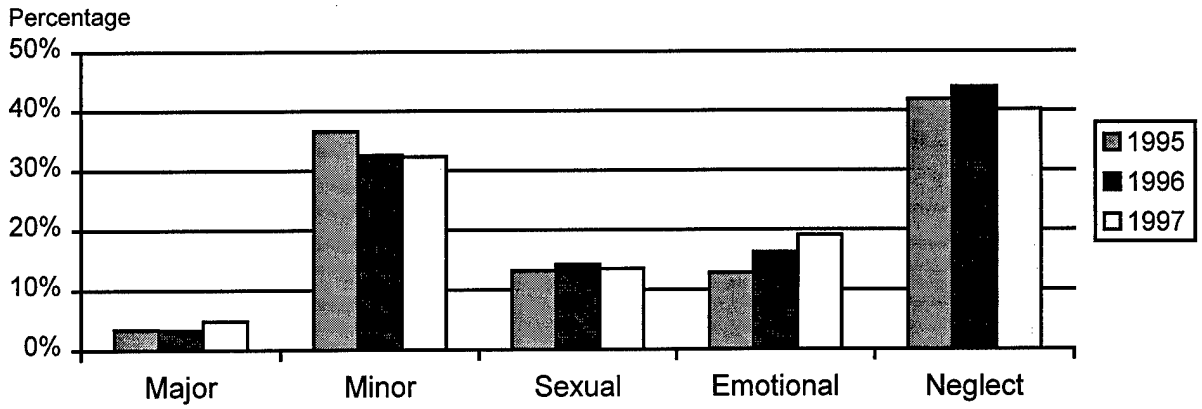

Figure 6. Child Abuse: Percentage of Total Initial Substantiated Cases of Each Type of Maltreatment (Army)

Fatalities (Child). From 1995 to 1997, there were 25 child abuse fatalities. In 1995, there were four female and five male fatalities. In 1996 there were two female and two male fatalities and in 1997 there were six female and six male fatalities.

DISCUSSION

Minor Physical Injury. Minor physical injury is the type of maltreatment affecting most spouse abuse victims. In 1997, 4,806 spouses were involved in a case of minor physical injury, a rate of 8.1/1,000 spouses. The percentage of spouse abuse victims involved in a case of minor physical injury was 89.5%.

During that same year, 938 children were involved in a case of minor physical injury, a rate of 2.1 out of every 1,000 children in the Army. Overall, 32.3% of all child abuse victims were involved in a case of minor physical injury. However, there is not much else known about these cases. In order to gain more information from these populations of victims, we need to ask more questions. For instance:

- Did these injuries result in in-patient or out-patient treatment? Was medical treatment required at all?
- Do all victims of minor physical maltreatment get the same kind of treatment?
- What are the similarities and differences between the cases?

- Are these cases single, isolated events or part of a series of maltreatments?
- What were the precipitating circumstances?
- What kind of treatment was provided? How long did they stay in treatment?

Major Physical Injury. The figure that is the most troubling is the increase in major physical injury. The increase is dramatic, and steady. For spouse abuse, the number of major physical injury cases doubled from 1995 to 1997. Major physical maltreatment in child abuse has also increased over the past three years. This should be alarming to command.

- How many of these cases occur per year at each of your installations?
- What are the FAPMs at your installations doing about them?
- What do they know about the cases?
- Has the definition for major physical maltreatment changed so that more cases are incorporated?

Emotional Maltreatment. This category is difficult to interpret.

- How do you define emotional maltreatment?
- What are the CRCs substantiating as adult and child emotional maltreatment and what are the consequences?
- What is the relation of emotional abuse to other types of abuse?
- Are there standard definitions/criteria that must be met to substantiate emotional maltreatment?

Sexual Maltreatment. Child sexual maltreatment increased from 1995 to 1996, but decreased in 1997. There is no clear trend occurring with this type of maltreatment.

- Is sexual maltreatment associated with other types of maltreatment?
- Who are the offenders? Are they family? Extrafamilial?
- Who are the victims?
- Is enough known about these maltreatments in order for FAP to influence their occurrence?

Deprivation of Necessities (Neglect). Neglect is the largest type of child maltreatment. Because it affects so many children, it is important to understand more about child neglect.

- Are details reported on the type of neglect (i.e. medical, educational, etc.)?
- Are all neglect cases treated in the same manner?
- Is there a clear, standard definition of neglect?
- Would it be helpful to have more information on the neglect cases?

Fatalities.

- What were the circumstances of the deaths?
- How many had been FAP cases?
- Could anything have been done differently?
- What can we learn for our prevention and treatment program from these deaths?

The rates of spouse abuse (Figure 2) and child abuse (Figure 4) may be deceptive in terms of where the problems are. It may be tempting to accept responsibility for the decrease in minor physical injury in 1997, but do not overlook other issues. We are not suggesting that you ignore the minor physical injury cases. However, the increasing number of cases of major physical injury may ultimately be more of a concern to you and the Army population than either minor physical injury or emotional maltreatment.

WHAT CAUSED THESE CHANGES IN TYPES OF MALTREATMENT FOR ALL ARMY?

To answer this, the Army should take a close look at conditions and/or changes made within FAP and the macom as a whole during this time period. Questions should be raised in addition to these when studying spouse and child abuse in the Army.

- What could contribute to the reduction of minor physical injury?
- Was a prevention program initiated a few years ago in order to reduce the amount of minor physical injury?

- If so, could this program be altered to address increasing major physical injury and emotional maltreatment?
- Why is major physical injury on the rise?
- Did the ramifications for any spouse or child maltreatment become more lenient?
- Is emotional maltreatment on the rise because it is being recognized and substantiated by staff more often than it was three years ago?
- Are there standard and clear definitions of major physical injury, minor physical injury, sexual maltreatment, emotional maltreatment and neglect across ALL ARMY?
- What can be done to eliminate fatalities due to maltreatment?

By addressing these and other questions, FAP can explore what the driving force is behind the increase or decrease for each type of maltreatment in the Army. Because each type of maltreatment is different in many ways, this knowledge would be of great benefit. Rather than developing methods to curb spouse or child abuse as a whole, (which may or may not be possible) new programs and approaches could be developed in order to specifically address each type of maltreatment.

CONCLUSION

The types of maltreatment give insight into spouse and child abuse in the Army. The difference in trends between frequencies, rates and percentages provides a basis for further understanding of family violence. By asking questions surrounding these trends, more information can be obtained and utilized to achieve FAP goals. Also, by providing more information with each case report, FAP can gain a better sense of what comprises minor physical maltreatment and neglect, and can use that information to directly address the types of maltreatment that affects the majority of victims and a large proportion of its population.

QUESTION 3: WHAT EFFECT DOES CHANGE IN POPULATION SIZE HAVE ON THE ARMY'S RATES OF ABUSE?

INTRODUCTION

When addressing spouse and child abuse rates, it is important to remember that the rate is dependent upon a numerator a denominator, and a period of time. The numerator is the frequency, (number of cases) of spouse abuse and the denominator is the size of the population at risk for being abused. For example, the rate of spouse abuse is calculated by dividing the frequency of spouse abuse by the population of married persons. These two numbers interact. Changes in one or both of them can cause a variation in abuse rates from year to year. It is easier for most people to envision a change in the frequency of spouse or child abuse affecting the rate, however shifts in population size can greatly influence the rate as well.

FAP *frequencies* are official Department of the Army statistics prepared by the Army Central Registry staff in San Antonio. Population figures are supplied to CFSC by the ASM Corporation and are available on the Family Data Base. These are end-of-year figures and the FVTP uses them because they are standard, reproducible, and readily available. One could use other sources for calculating populations as well, such as the Defense Manpower Documentation Center. While frequencies and populations are available for calculations, as far as we know, there are no official Department of the Army FAP ***rates***.

WHAT MAKES A RATE INCREASE OR DECREASE?

Often the cause of the increase or decrease in rates is not well understood. People tend to think only about the frequency of spouse abuse, asking the question, "If the frequency of spouse or child abuse has gone down, why haven't the rates?" Or, they tend to focus only on the population, asking the question, "If the population continues to decrease, why haven't the rates?" These questions, however, do not take into account the interaction between the frequency of abuse and the population at risk. A decrease in one of these numbers alone will not necessarily

cause a decrease in the abuse rate. Below are three figures which illustrate this. All three have decreasing frequencies and populations, but their trends in abuse rates are different: one is steady, one increases, and one decreases. The numbers presented in the figures were rounded for illustration.

- Figure 1 shows the spouse abuse cases, the population, and the rate for each year for Post A. ***If the population decreases at the same rate as the frequency each year, the rate will remain constant.*** In other words, in year 1, the population was 167 and the frequency of spouse abuse was 20. The rate per 1,000 was 120. This was calculated by the following: (20 / 167) x 1,000 = 120.

  For year 2, the population decreased from 167 to 142, a decrease of 15%. During that same time period, the frequency of spouse abuse decreased from 20 to 17, a decrease 15% as well. The rate of spouse abuse for year 2 is (17 / 142) x 1,000= 120, the same rate as in year 1. From year 2 to year 3, the population and the frequency both decreased about 29.5%. This gives a rate, again, of 120. As long as the population and the frequency of spouse abuse decrease by the same proportion, the rate will remain constant.

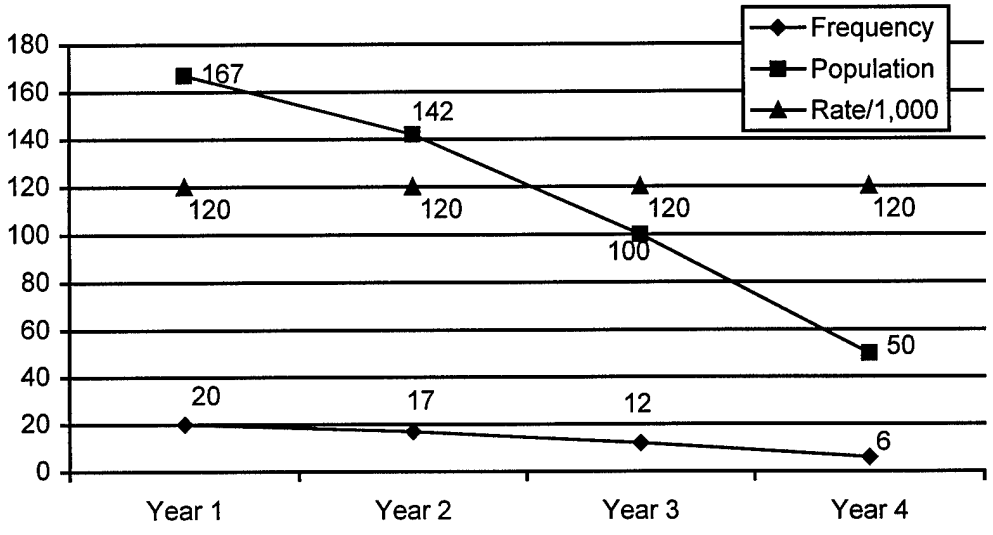

Figure 1. Population decreasing, frequency decreasing, and rate constant.

- If the ***population decreases faster than the frequency*** of spouse abuse, ***the rate will increase*** (see Figure 2). For year 1, the population was 280, and the frequency of spouse abuse was 20. This gives a rate of (20 / 280) x 1,000= 71 / 1,000. For year 2, the population decreased from 280 to 200, a decrease of 28.5%. During this time, the frequency of spouse abuse decreased from 20 to 17, a decrease of 15%. In this case, the population is decreasing faster than the frequency of spouse abuse cases. The rate of spouse abuse for year 2 is (17 / 200) x 1,000= 85 / 1,000. For year 3, the population decreased 37.5%, while the frequency of spouse abuse decreased 29.5%. The rate of spouse abuse for year 3 is 96 / 1,000. When the population decreases faster than the frequency, the rate of spouse abuse will increase.

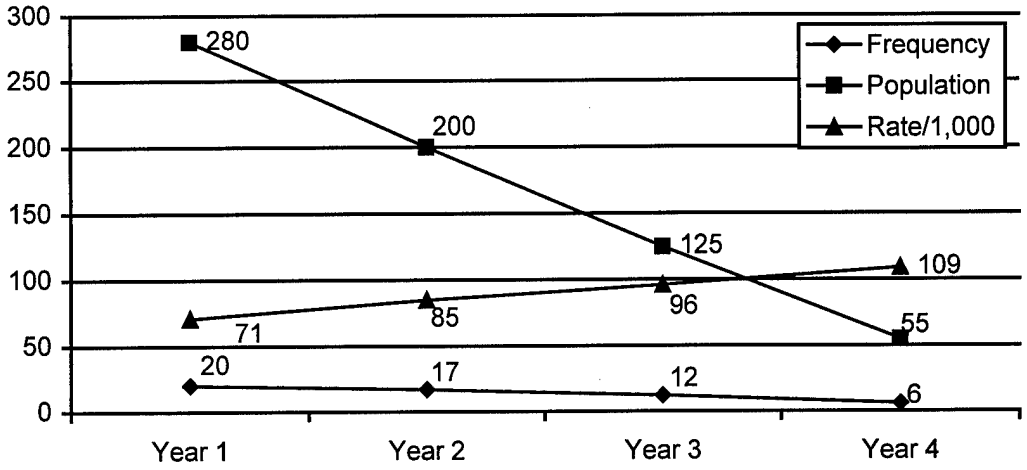

Figure 2. Population decreasing, frequency decreasing, and rate increasing

- If the ***population decreases slower than the frequency*** of spouse abuse, ***the rate will decrease*** (see Figure 3). In year 1, the population is 150, and the frequency of spouse abuse is 20. The rate of spouse abuse is (20 / 150) x 1,000=133 / 1,000. For year 2, the population decreased from 150 to 140, a decrease of about 6.6%. The frequency decreased from 20 to 17, a decrease of 15%. Year 2 had a spouse abuse rate of (17 / 140) x 1,000= 121 / 1,000. The population in year 3 decreased from 140 to 130, a decrease of 7.1%. The frequency of spouse abuse decreased from 17 to 12, a decrease of 29.5%. The rate of spouse abuse in year

3 is 92 / 1,000. When the population decreases slower than the frequency, the rate of spouse abuse will decrease.

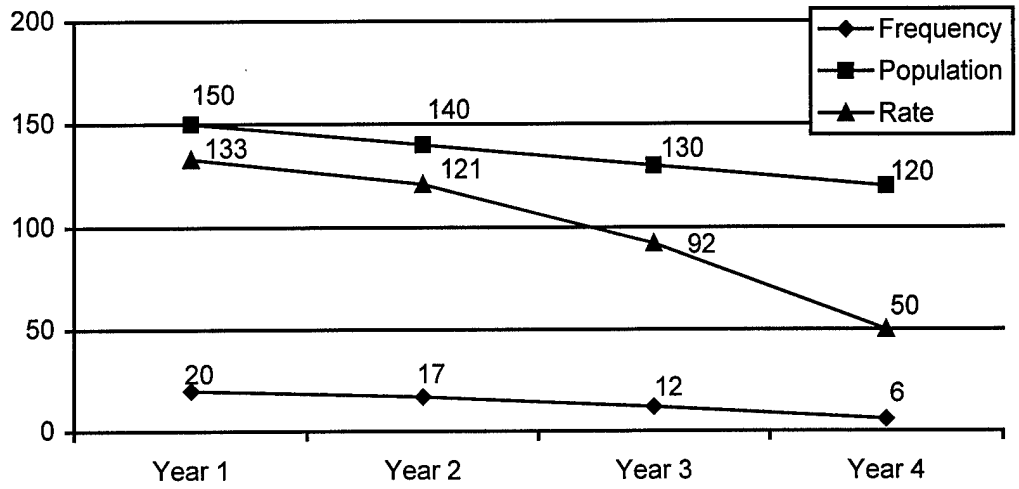

Figure 3. Population decreasing, frequency decreasing, and rate decreasing.

Above are three basic examples of the interaction between the frequency and the population at risk when they are both decreasing. In reality, however, these numbers can increase, decrease, or remain steady. Furthermore, they are likely to vary from year to year rather than to maintain a four year trend as illustrated above. These complications make it very important to understand the interaction between the frequency of abuse and the population at risk. Only when this interaction is understood, can the change in abuse rates be fully comprehended and utilized for FAP purposes. While the above examples dealt with spouse abuse, child abuse rates are calculated in the same manner. The only difference is that the population is the number of children, rather than the number of married persons.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THERE IS A RAPID SHIFT IN THE POPULATION?

This issue is of particular interest to the military when there are rapid population changes, such as downsizing and deployment. It is difficult to report one number as the size of a population in these situations. Because this count is involved in calculating the rate, the population size should be representative of the number of people who were at risk for spouse or child abuse throughout the year. If the population greatly decreases during a year, a count in the beginning of the year may overestimate the size of the population at risk. A count in the end of the year may underestimate the size of the population at risk. While this is an important issue for years when there are rapid shifts in the population size, for other years this difference in population size is of little concern.

TWO METHODS OF CALCULATING THE POPULATION SIZE

There are two main methods of counting the size of the population. The first, and most common method, uses the population size reported at the end of the fiscal year. The second method uses an average of the population over the course of the year. Both methods are illustrated below. When examining the rate, it is important to know how the population count was taken, in order to fully understand what the rate represents.

To illustrate the two most common methods of counting the population for a fiscal year, we can look at an imaginary post. Post A downsized over fiscal year 1996. In the beginning of the year it had a married population of 30,000, and at the end of the fiscal year it had a married population of 21,000. For 1996, Post A reported 45 cases of spouse abuse. Using the end of year population figures, the spouse abuse rate can be calculated. For 1996, the rate of spouse abuse would be (45 / 21,000) x 1,000 = 2.14 / 1,000. Or, for every 1,000 married persons, 2.14 were abused.

For years when there are large decreases in population size, there is concern that the population that produced the majority of the victims is not entirely accounted for using the end of year population counts. It can be argued that there were more people throughout the year at Post A to produce the 45 cases than are represented by the end-of-year count, and an average of the

population throughout the year would be more representative of the population at risk in Post A in 1996. To find the average population, simply add the beginning of the year population count to the end of year population count and divide by two. Post A had an average population of (21,000+30,000) / 2 = 25,500. Using this figure as the population count, the spouse abuse rate is (45 / 25,500) x 1,000 = 1.76 / 1,000. Or, for every 1,000 people, 1.76 were abused. Thus, these two methods yield different results, 2.14 / 1,000 vs. 1.76 / 1,000.

IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO METHODS?

Typically the change in population size is going to have to be very large in a short period of time to see any major differences between the rate calculated using the end of year population and the rate calculated using the average population. If you have a special circumstance (such as rapid downsizing) that should be taken into consideration when calculating spouse abuse rates for your MACOM or installation, it may be appropriate for you to calculate your rate using both population methods.

While both methods can be utilized to calculate the population counts, it is important to remember that both are estimates. Unless the specifics are known regarding when the change in population occurred, it is difficult to tell which population size is more representative of the population which produced the cases. Because neither method can report definitively the number of people who were at risk for spouse abuse over a year, it is important to keep in mind that they are estimates.

THE ARMY: SPOUSE ABUSE

The Army had one fiscal year where the population decreased very rapidly. In 1992, the married population decreased from 861,572 to 753,489 (see Figure 4).

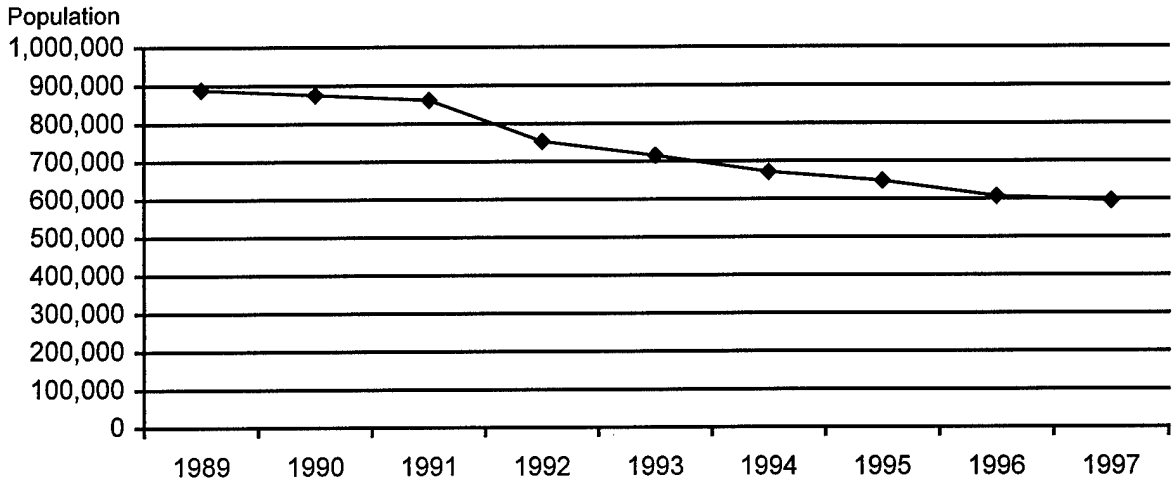

Figure 4. Population of Married Persons in the Army

Overall, there were 7,723 spouse abuse victims in the Army in 1992. Using the end of year figures, the rate of spouse abuse is (7,723 / 753,489) x 1,000 = 10.3 per 1,000. Using the average population figure (861,572 + 753,489 / 2 =807,530.5), the spouse abuse rate is (7,723 / 807,530.5) x 1,000 = 9.6 per 1,000. Figure 5 illustrates the rates of spouse abuse for each year using both end of year and average population counts. From this figure, one can see that the two methods are very similar, both methods illustrate the overall trend of spouse abuse from 1990 to 1997.

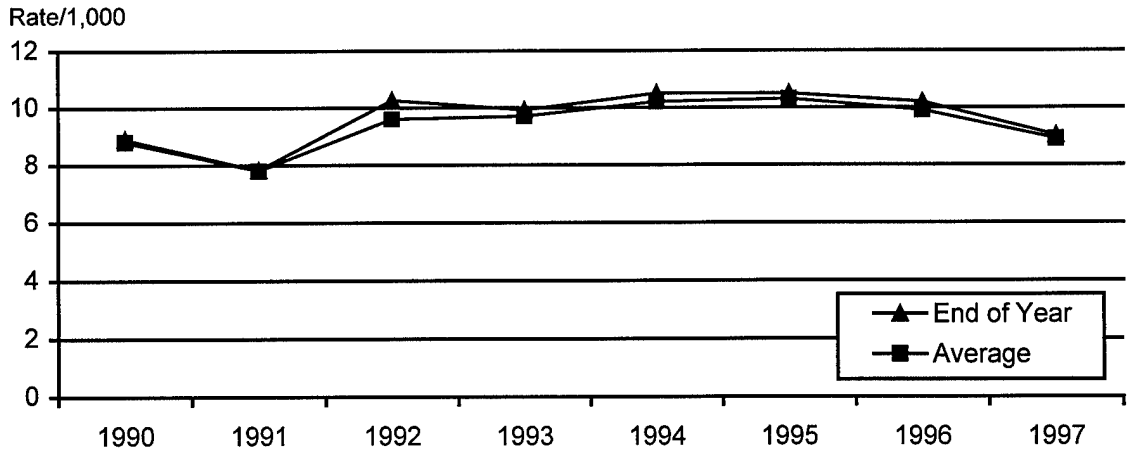

Figure 5. Rates of Spouse Abuse Using End of Year and Average Population Counts (Army)

THE ARMY: CHILD ABUSE

The Army had one year where the child population decreased very rapidly. In 1992, the child population decreased from 597,668 to 533,902 (see Figure 6).

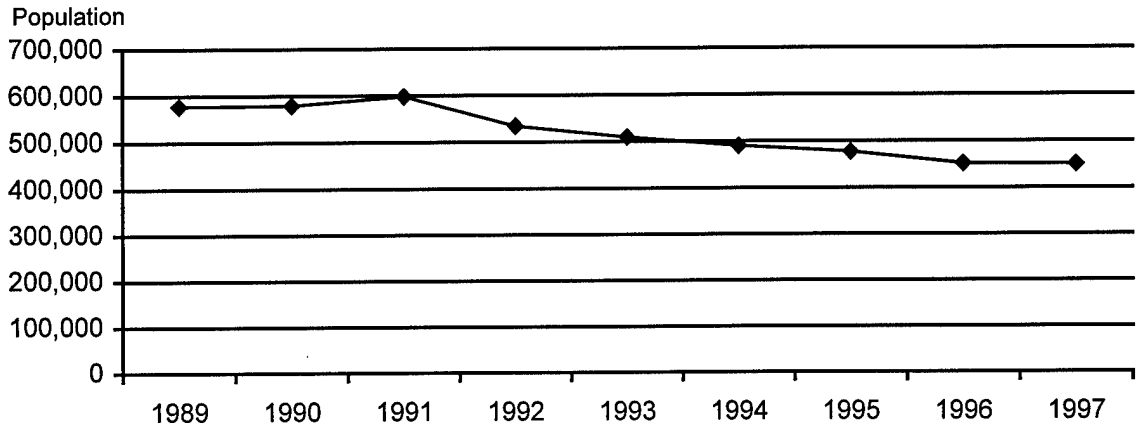

Figure 6. Population of Army Children

Overall, there were 3,833 child abuse victims in the Army in 1992. Using the end of year figures, the rate of child abuse is (3,833 / 533,902) x 1,000 = 7.2 per 1,000. Using the average population figure (597,668 + 533,902) / 2 = 565,785, the child abuse rate is (3,833 / 565,785) x 1,000 = 6.8 per 1,000. Figure 7 illustrates the rates of child abuse for each year using both end of year and average population counts. From this figure, one can see that the two methods are very similar, both methods illustrate the overall trend of child abuse from 1990 to 1997.

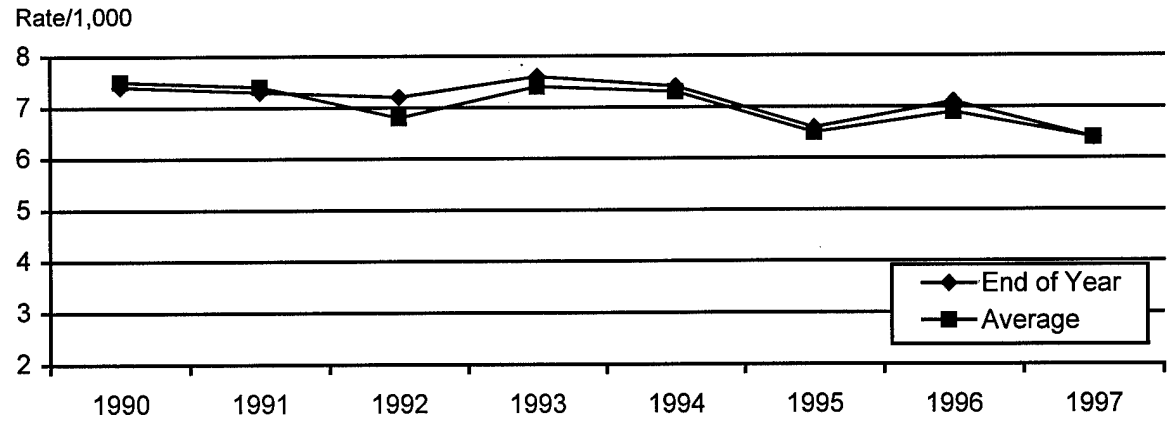

Figure 7. Rates of Child Abuse Using End of Year and Average Population Counts (Army)

CONCLUSION

When understanding rates of spouse and child abuse it is important to take into consideration both the frequency of spouse abuse and the population at risk. A closer look at the fluctuations in the frequency and population at risk can give insight into what is driving the change in the rate over the years. The population can be tabulated using two methods: an end of year count, or an average of the population over the year. When the change in population size is not large, both yield approximately the same rate, but when there is a large change over the year, a difference between the two methods can be seen. In years when this happens, it may be of help to calculate the rate using both methods, to give you a broader sense of the rate of spouse or child abuse for that year. Knowledge of the interaction between the frequency and the population along with an understanding of how the population was counted will help FAP and the Army interpret its spouse and child abuse rates and trends.

QUESTION 4: WHO ARE THE ARMY'S VICTIMS AND OFFENDERS?

INTRODUCTION

With any family violence program or intervention, it is very helpful to know who the victims and offenders are. Demographic information such as age and sex can provide basic, but fundamental information to FAP. Other information such as active duty or civilian status can be of help as well. This review of age, sex, and duty status is meant to give an overview of the offender and victim populations. This information can be helpful for creating programs specifically for the populations involved in spouse and child abuse at the Army.

PERCENTAGE OF VICTIMS

The distributions of age, sex, and duty status are presented here as percentages. A percentage is different from a frequency in that a frequency reports the absolute number of victims or offenders. It is also different from a rate in that a rate takes into account not only the frequency, but the population at risk—those involved and those not involved with spouse or child abuse in a given period of time. The percentage, however, uses victim specific populations. In other words, the population used in the calculation is not the population at risk, but the people who have already been involved in an incident of abuse. For example, the percentage of female spouse abuse victims is obtained by dividing the number of female victims by the total number of victims in the population (male and female) and multiplying that by 100 to get a percentage.

To illustrate this further, let's look at imaginary Post A which had 500 spouse abuse victims in 1997. There were 120 in the age group 15-25, 300 in the age group 26-35, and 80 were over 35 years old. Using this information, we can calculate the percentages of spouse abuse victims in each age group. The percentage of victims in the age group of 15-25 is (120 / 500) x 100 = 24%. In other words, 24% of the victims are in the age range of 15-25. (See Figure 1) Similarly we

can calculate the percentages for the other two age groups. For ages 25-35, the percentage is (300 / 500) x 100= 60%. The percentage of victims in the age range 35+ is 16%.

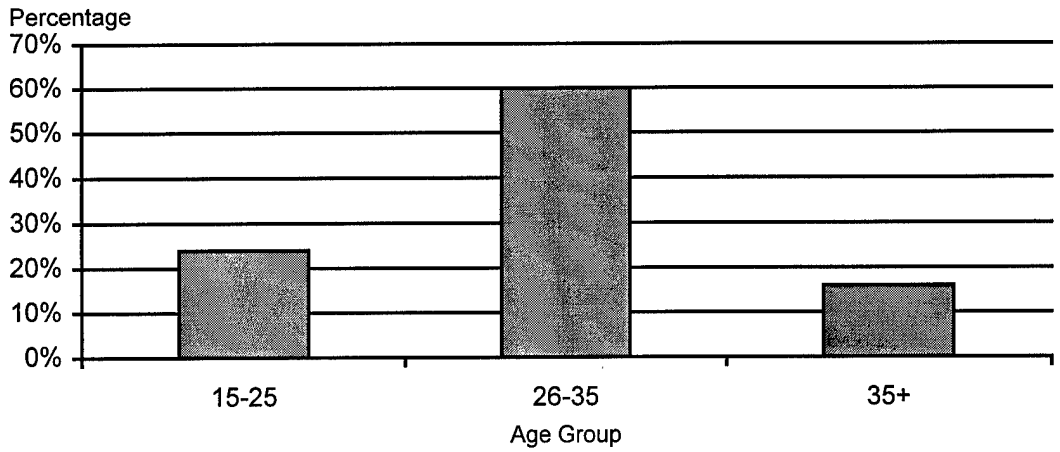

Figure 1. Percentage of spouse abuse victims by age group (Post A)

When the frequencies of each age group are added up, they will equal the number of spouse abuse victims (500), and the sum total of all age group percentages should be 100%. Because this information is reported in percentages, the goal of FAP and the Army can never be to reduce all percentages to 0%. For example, if FAP succeeds in reducing the percentage of female victims, the percentage of male victims will increase. This should be kept in mind when reviewing the following information.

THE ARMY: SPOUSE ABUSE

Age Groups (Spouse Abuse). In fiscal year 1997, about 39% of victims and 40% of offenders in the Army were in the age range of 22-26 years old (see Figure 2). The victims were slightly younger, outnumbering the offenders in the 15-17 and 18-21 age groups. The age groups 18-21 and 27-31 each had about 20% of victims and offenders. About 81% of both victims and offenders were between the ages of 18 and 31. The percentages taper off fairly quickly after age 31. The age distribution has changed very little from 1995 to 1997, so only 1997 percentages are presented here.

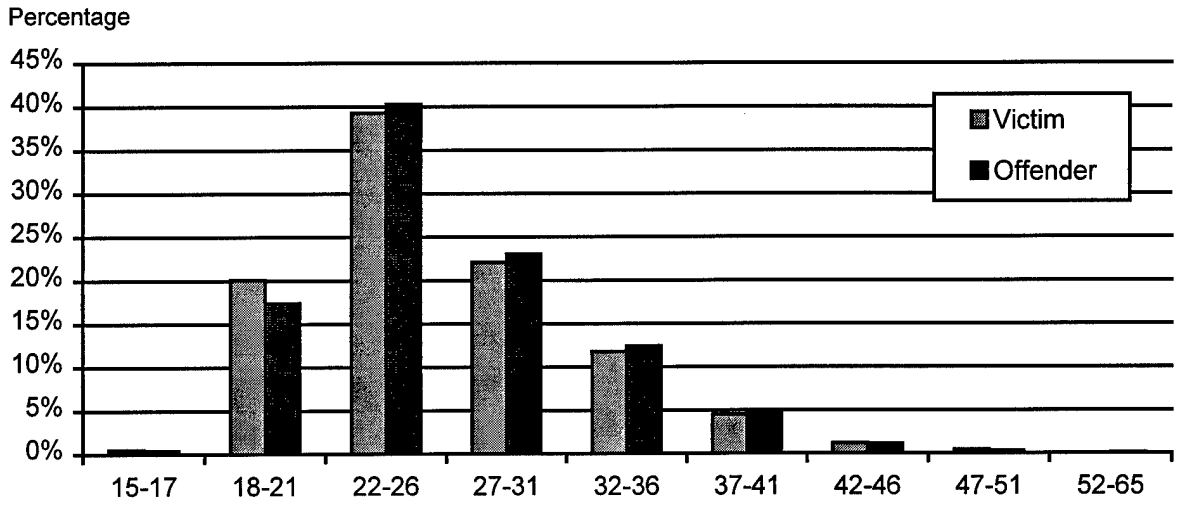

Figure 2. Spouse Abuse: Victim and Offender Age Groups, by percentage (Army)

Sex (Spouse Abuse). The sex of victims has not changed much over the past three years (see Figure 3). Females have consistently been about 62% of the victim population, and males have been about 38% of the victim population. While only victim sex is illustrated in the graph, it is easy to figure out the offender sex as well. Because this is spouse abuse, every female victim had a male offender and every male victim had a female offender. So, males have been about 62% of the offender population and females about 38%. These percentages have been fairly steady over the past few years.

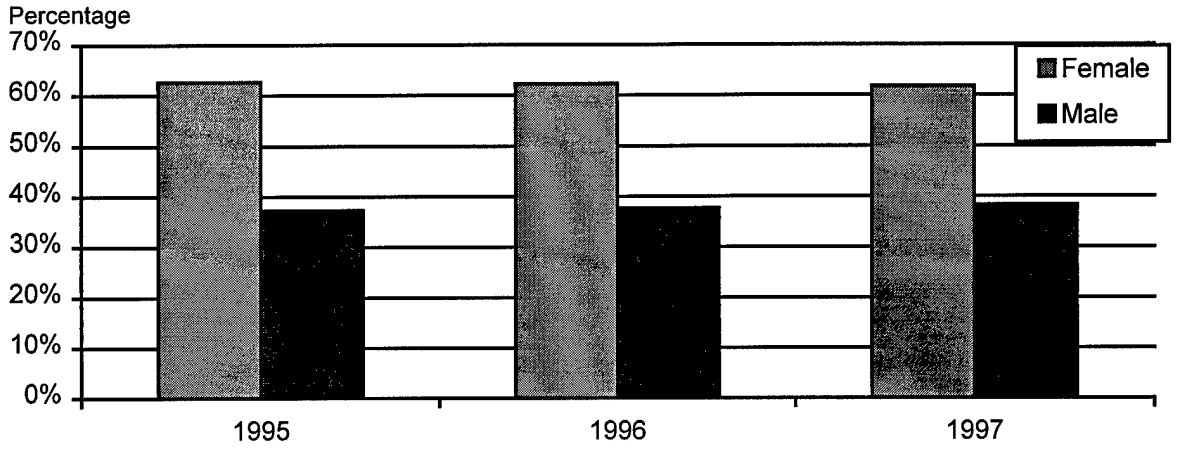

Figure 3. Spouse Abuse: Victim Sex, by percentage (Army)

ACTIVE DUTY AND CIVILIAN STATUS (SPOUSE ABUSE)

Offenders. The duty status of spouse abuse victims and offenders can provide a lot of information to FAP. Figure 4 illustrates the duty status of the offenders. The percentage of offenders who were active duty slightly declined over the past three years, averaging about 61%. In 1997, 60.6% of offenders were active duty. The percentage of civilian offenders slightly increased over the past three years averaging about 39%. In 1997, 39.4% of the spouse abuse offenders were civilian. Overall, however, this distribution has remained fairly steady.

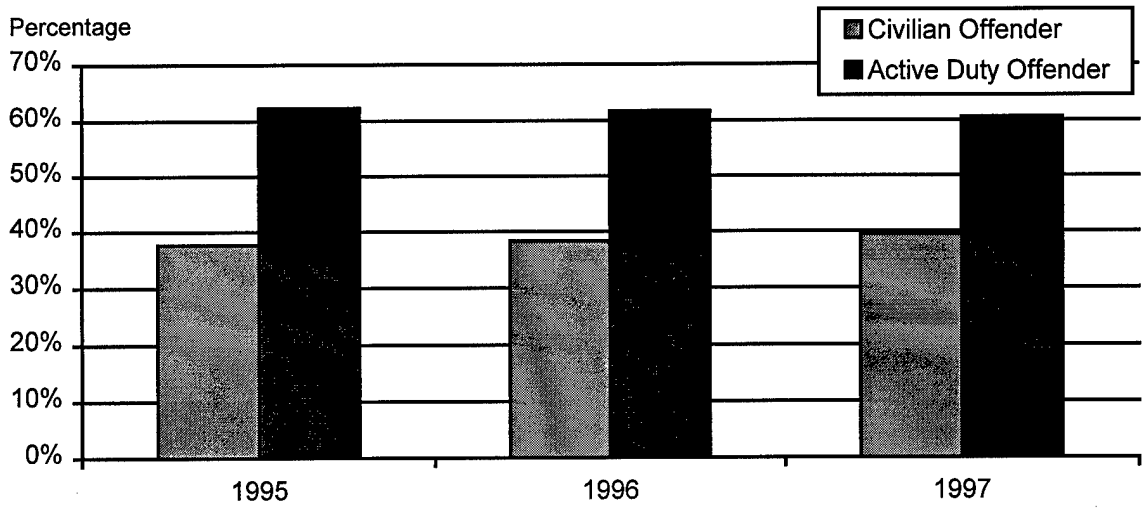

Figure 4. Spouse Abuse: Percentage of Offenders with Active Duty and Civilian Status (Army)

Victims. Figure 5 illustrates the duty status of the spouse abuse victims in the Army. The percentage of victims who were civilians has slightly declined over the past three years, averaging about 52.5%. In 1997, 52% of the victims were civilian. The percentage of active duty victims has slightly increased over the past three years averaging a little more than 47%. In 1997, 48% of the victims were active duty. However, like offenders, the distribution of duty status among victims has remained fairly constant over the years.

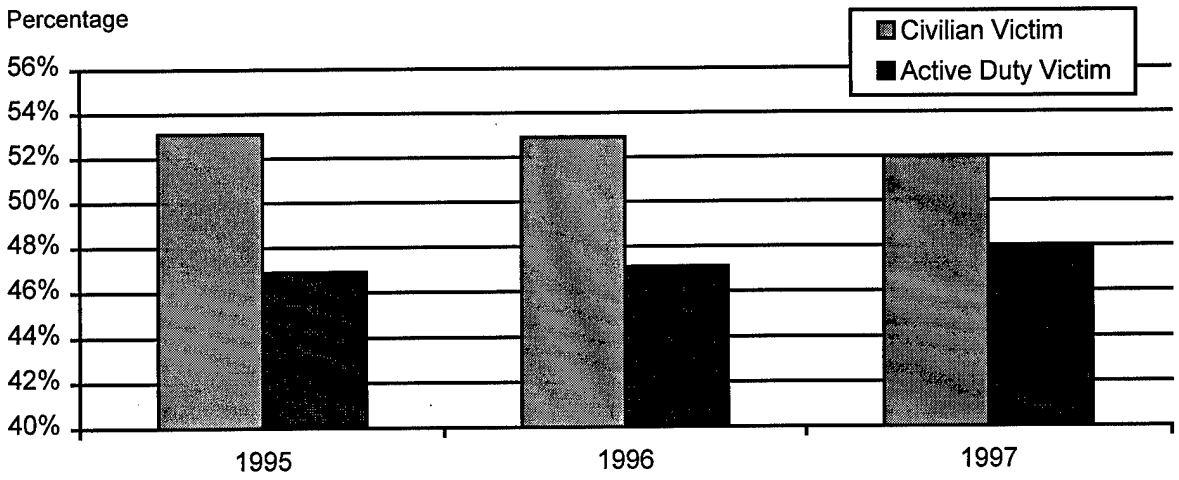

Figure 5. Spouse Abuse: Percentage of Victims with Active Duty and Civilian Status (Army)

Dual military. It is important to note that dual military couples are involved in spouse abuse as well. If there were no dual military couples, we would expect the percentage of active duty offenders and civilian victims to be the same, and the percentage of civilian offenders and active duty victims to be the same. Looking at those categories in Figures 4 and 5, we can see that this is not the case. Because they are different, we know that in some of the incidents, both the offender and the victim were active duty. While the majority of the spouse abuse cases involve an active duty and a civilian person, the dual military couples are a unique group that should not be overlooked.

THE ARMY: CHILD ABUSE.

The age and sex distributions of the victims of child abuse can be of help to FAP as well. Because the age and sex distributions of the child victims vary greatly for each type of maltreatment, each type of maltreatment is presented separately below. (See Figures 6-10). The Figures below represent fiscal year 1997 only.

Major Physical Injury (Child Abuse). Of children involved in an incident of major physical injury, children less than 1 year made up the largest percentage of victims (about 20% for girls and 23% for boys). While there was a higher percentage of male victims for the age groups <1

and 3-5, female victims had a higher percentage of major physical injury for ages 1-2 and 6-8. Boys and girls had a similar percentage of major physical injury for ages 9-17.

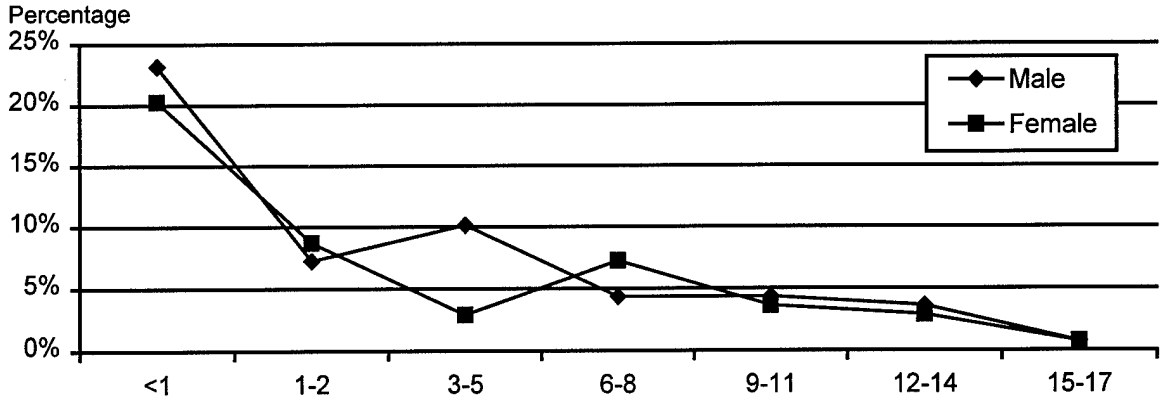

Figure 6. Child Abuse: Percentage of Male and Female Victims by Age Group for Major Physical Injury, 1997 (Army)

Minor Physical Injury (Child Abuse). For children involved in an incident of minor physical injury, the percentage of boys and girls increased for each age group until the age of 5. Boys had a higher percentage of minor physical injury for each age group up to age 11. Girls, however, had a larger percentage of victims in the age groups 12-17.

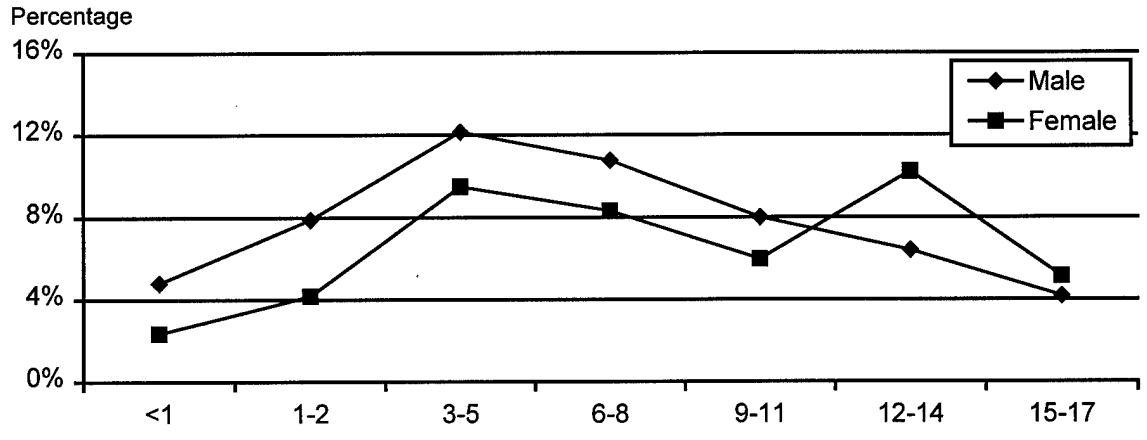

Figure 7. Child Abuse: Percentage of Male and Female Victims by Age Group for Minor Physical Injury, 1997 (Army)

Sexual Maltreatment (Child Abuse): For sexual maltreatment, the percentage of female victims outnumbered the percentage of male victims for almost every age group. The percentage of female victims declined from ages 5 to 11, but then had a sharp increase in the age group 12-14.

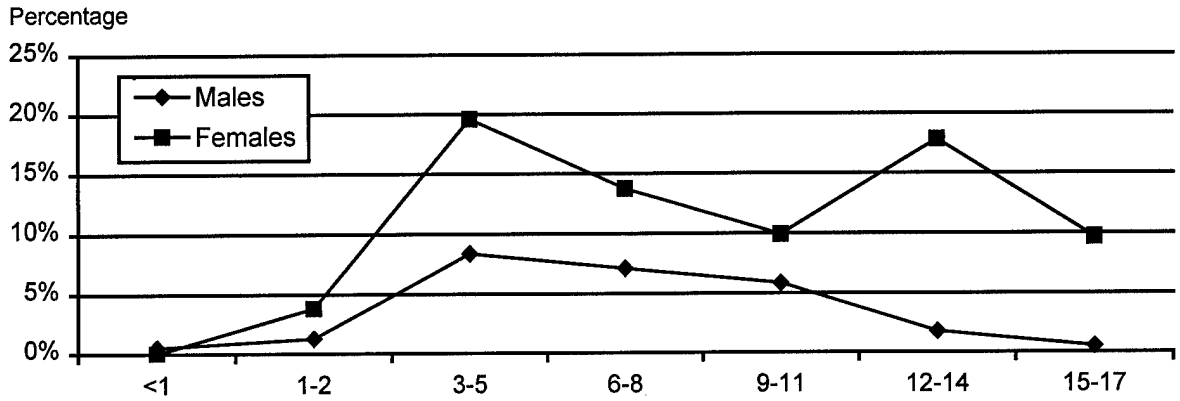

Figure 8. Child Abuse: Percentage of Male and Female Victims by Age Group for Sexual Maltreatment, 1997 (Army)

Emotional Maltreatment (Child Abuse). The percentage of emotional maltreatment for male and female victims of each age group seems to be fairly similar. The age groups 1-2, 3-5, and 6-8 contain the majority of emotional maltreatments.

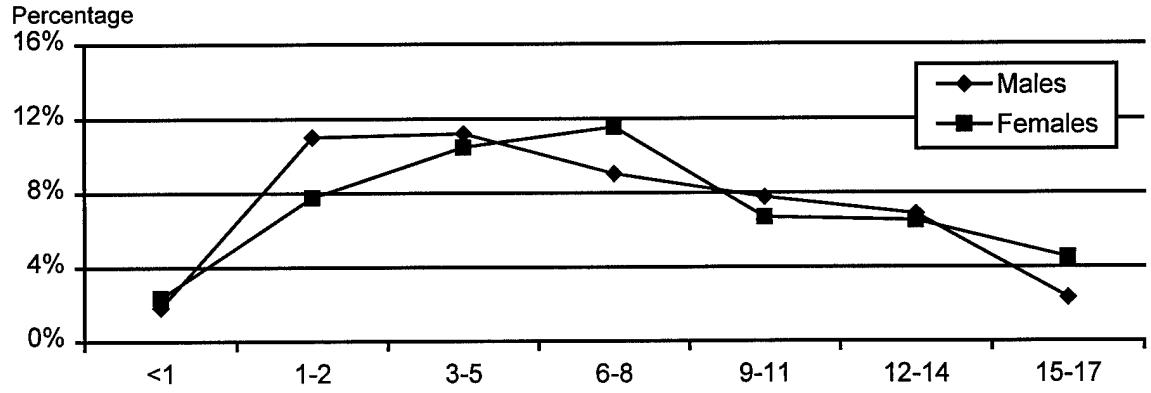

Figure 9. Child Abuse: Percentage of Male and Female Victims by Age Group for Emotional Maltreatment, 1997 (Army)

Deprivation of Necessities/Neglect (Child Abuse). The percentage of male and female victims with deprivation of necessities (neglect) was very similar for all age groups with the exception of the age group 1-2, where boys had a higher percentage of neglect (14.4% vs. 11.1%).

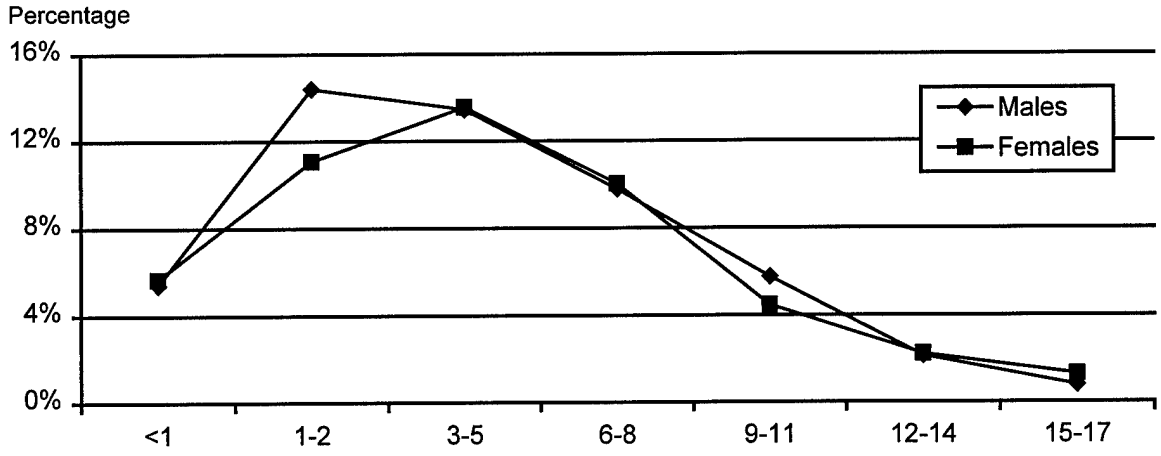

Figure 10. Child Abuse: Percentage of Male and Female Victims by Age Group for Deprivation of Necessities/Neglect, 1997 (Army)

WHAT ELSE CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS INFORMATION?

While the distribution of age, sex, and duty status for spouse and child abuse victims and offenders is helpful, it is also of value to raise questions as to why these patterns occur.

- For spouse abuse, why are there so few victims and offenders over the age of 36?
- Are the younger, enlisted men and women more likely to be referred for spouse abuse?
- Are sources of referral (police, medical personnel) keeping a closer watch on the younger population for spouse abuse?
- Does the younger population have more stressors that may contribute to spouse abuse?
- Are male spouse abuse victims less likely to seek treatment or support than female victims?
- Are the same resources available to active duty and civilian spouses?
- Are civilian offenders as likely to be discovered and referred?
- What is causing the peak in the age group 12-14 for female children who had minor physical injury and sexual maltreatment?

- Why do boys have a higher percentage of minor physical injury for most age groups?

By examining these and other questions regarding the age distribution, sex distribution, and active duty/civilian status distribution, FAP and the Army may be able to combat spouse and child abuse in different ways.

CONCLUSION

It is important to keep in mind that the percentages shown on these graphs are not indicative of the *rate* of spouse or child abuse in the Army. Regardless of the frequency of spouse abuse, the percentage distributions of victim and offender age, sex and active duty status have remained fairly constant. The information presented here is best used as supplementary information on the actual offenders and victims. It is helpful particularly for treatment purposes in that it describes the populations who need help. By asking questions surrounding these distributions, and also by using this information with the corresponding frequencies and rates of spouse abuse, FAP can gain a solid understanding of spouse and child abuse in the Army.

QUESTION 5: WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF SUBSTANCE INVOLVEMENT ON SPOUSE AND CHILD ABUSE?

INTRODUCTION

Substance involvement is a hotly debated topic in the realm of family violence. Some argue that substance involvement is related to spouse and child abuse, others argue there is no relation between the two. Even if substance involvement is correlated with spouse abuse, we can not say that it causes it. Furthermore, there are questions about which type of substance involvement may play a role in spouse abuse—alcohol, drugs, or both. One of the reasons researchers have a difficult time understanding the effects of substance involvement on spouse and child abuse is the lack of complete and accurate data. FAP and the Army can help address the question of the effect of substance involvement on family violence by ensuring that the information they report is as complete and accurate as possible.

SUBSTANCE INVOLVEMENT

Spouse and child abuse victims and offenders can report involvement with alcohol, drugs, both alcohol and drugs, or "No Involvement". FAP personnel can also record substance involvement as "Unknown". Substance involvement might be reported as "Unknown" if the alcohol or drug involvement is denied by the party in question, but the FAP personnel have reason to believe otherwise, or if the information was not requested. The figures for substance involvement are reported here as the percentage of the total victim or offender population. It is reported separately for victims and offenders for fiscal years 1995 to 1997.

"UNKNOWN" SUBSTANCE INVOLVEMENT

One of the largest impediments to studying the relationship between substance involvement and family violence is the large number of victims and offenders with "Unknown" substance involvement. To illustrate this, we can look at an imaginary Post A. Below is the breakdown of offender substance involvement (see Figure 1). For Post A, 15% of the offenders were involved with alcohol. One percent were involved with drugs only, and another 1% were involved with drugs and alcohol. 65% reported "No Involvement" with alcohol or drugs, and 18% had substance involvement which is "Unknown".

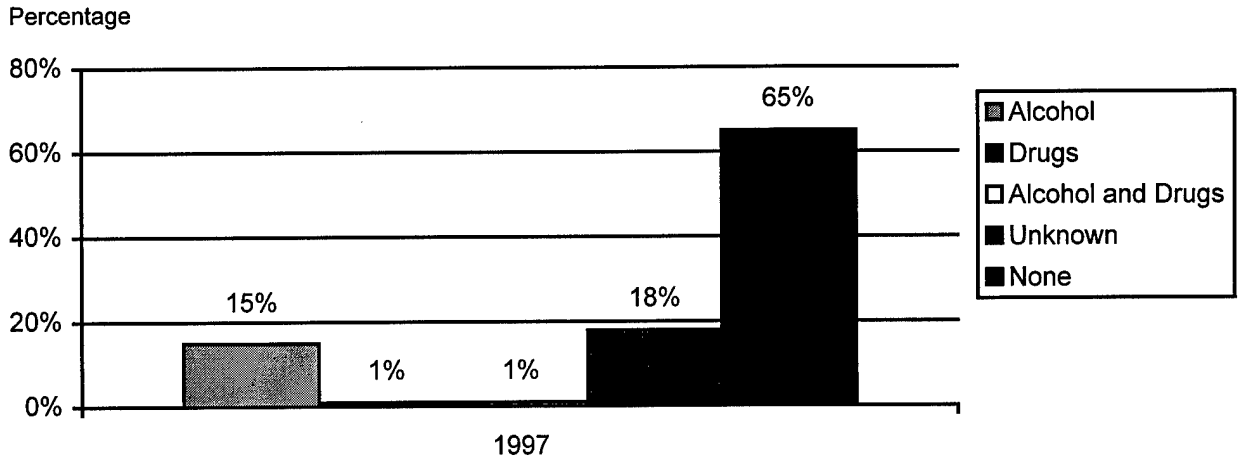

Figure 1. Offender Substance Involvement (Post A)

The "Unknown" category makes it difficult to conclude if there is an association between substance involvement and spouse and child abuse. If, for example, all 18% of the "Unknown" category were involved with alcohol, then 34% of all offenders would be in some way involved with alcohol (15% alcohol + 1% drugs and alcohol + 18% "Unknown"-but actually had alcohol involvement). This would provide much more support to the relationship between alcohol involvement and family violence.

When we turn our attention to the question of drug involvement and family violence, the above data would not show much association between the two—only 2% report involvement with

drugs. However, if the 18% who have "Unknown" substance involvement were actually involved with drugs, 20% of the offenders would then be involved (1% drugs + 1% drugs and alcohol + 18% "Unknown"–but actually had drug involvement). In this situation, very different conclusions could be drawn about the association between drug involvement and spouse and child abuse.

The "Unknown" category could also be offenders with no substance involvement. If this were the case, 83% of the offenders would have "No Involvement" (65% none + 18% "Unknown"–but had no substance involvement). This breakdown would weaken the association between substance involvement and family violence and produce a very different picture.

In reality, however the "Unknown" category is a combination of those possibilities. There are likely to be some offenders with alcohol involvement, some with drug involvement and some with "No Involvement". The distribution of those cases is very important because, as illustrated above, it could yield very different interpretations of the role of substance involvement with family violence.

ARMY: SPOUSE ABUSE

Victim substance involvement. The percentages for each type of reported substance involvement for spouse abuse victims have been fairly steady over the past three years (see Figure 2). About 15% of the victims were involved with alcohol, about 0.2% were involved with drugs, and another 0.2% were involved with both alcohol and drugs. Between 70% and 71% of victims reported "No Involvement". However, approximately 14% of victims' substance involvement was reported as "Unknown".

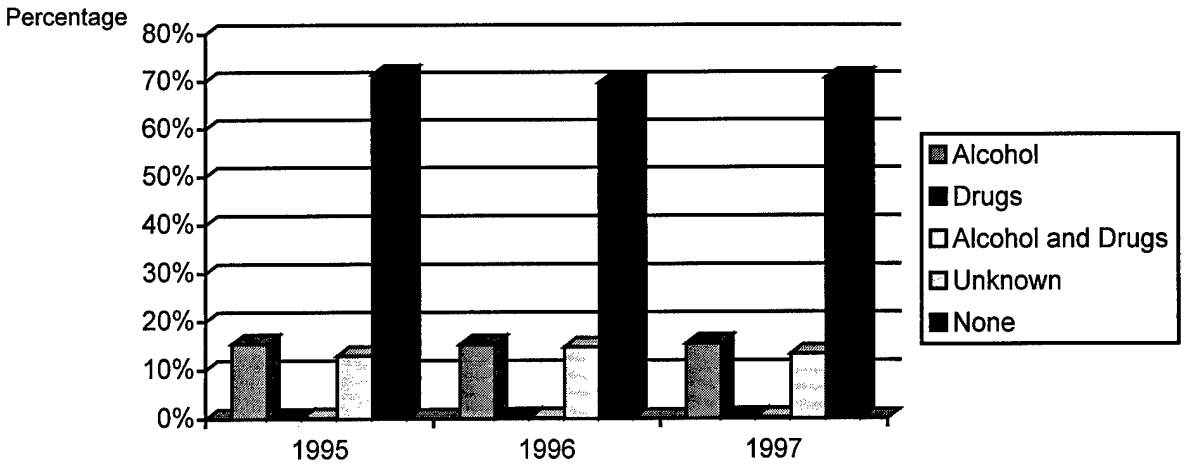

Figure 2. Spouse Abuse: Victim Substance Involvement (Army)

Offender substance involvement. The percentages for each type of substance involvement for spouse abuse offenders has also been steady over the past three years (see Figure 3). Approximately 21% of offenders were involved with alcohol, 0.4% were involved with drugs, and about 0.4% were involved with both alcohol and drugs. Between 63% and 65% of offenders reported "No Involvement" with alcohol or drugs. Fourteen percent of offenders' substance involvement was reported as "Unknown".

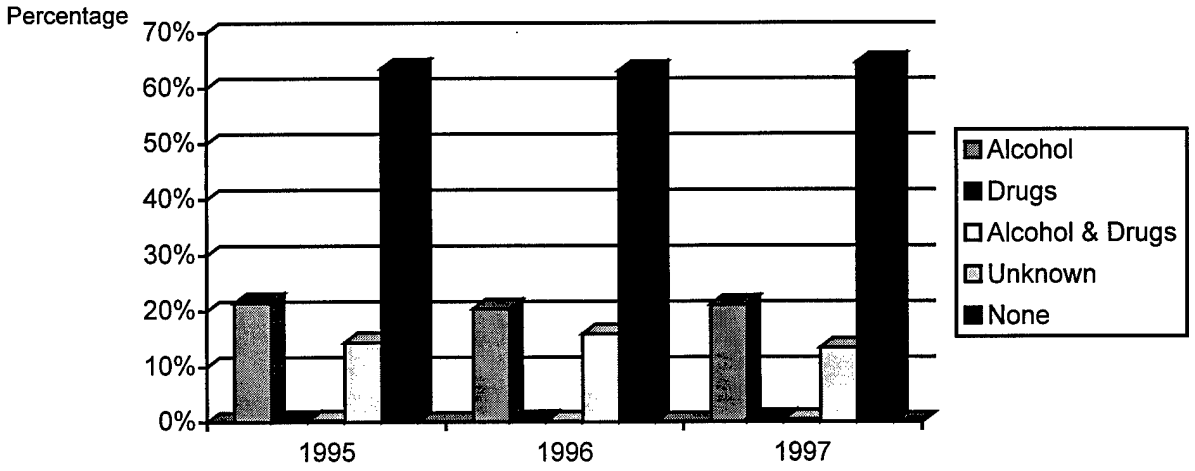

Figure 3. Spouse Abuse: Offender Substance Involvement (Army)

Victim and Offender Comparisons for Spouse Abuse. Differences in substance involvement between the Army's victims and offenders are listed below.

- Spouse abuse offenders are involved with alcohol about 5% more than the victims.
- Both drug involvement and the combined alcohol and drug involvement are slightly higher for offenders than for victims.
- About 7% more victims report "No Involvement" as compared to offenders.
- Offenders have slightly more "Unknown" substance involvement than the victims.

ARMY: CHILD ABUSE

Victim substance Involvement. Although we would expect the substance involvement for child abuse victims to be small, it should be inquired. A child can be reported as an abuse victim until the age of 17, and unfortunately, substance involvement may start at an early age. About 2% of the child abuse victims were involved with alcohol, and about 0.2% of victims were involved with drugs and another 0.2% were involved with alcohol and drugs (see Figure 4). This trend has been very steady over the past three years. About 87% of the cases report "No Involvement" with substance, but there is a range of 8% to 11% with "Unknown" substance involvement.

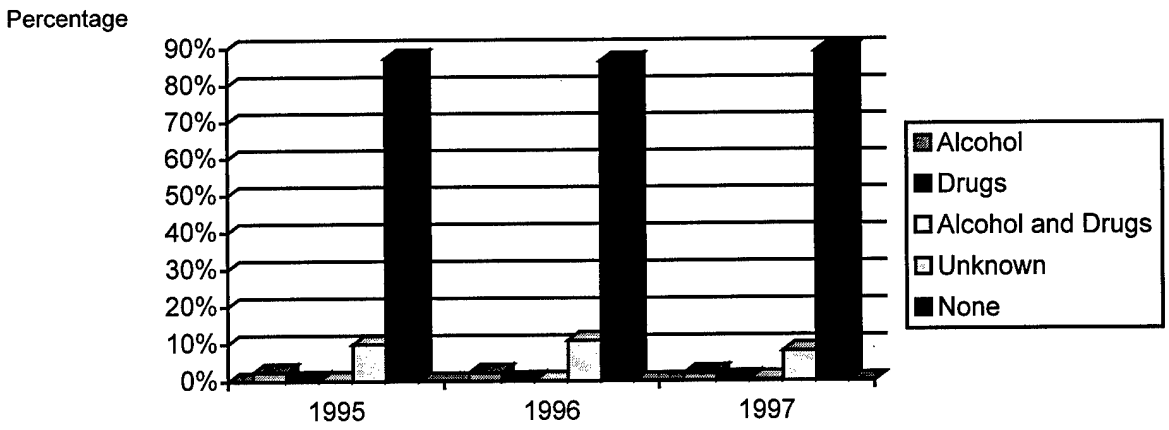

Figure 4. Child Abuse: Victim Substance Involvement (Army)

Offender substance involvement. The percentages of each type of substance involvement have also remained fairly steady over the past three years (see Figure 5). From 1995 to 1996 there has

been an increase in "No Involvement" and a decrease in the percentage of child abuse offenders with "Unknown" substance involvement. Approximately 9.0% of offenders were involved with alcohol, 1.2% were involved with drugs, and 1% were involved with alcohol and drugs. "No Involvement" has increased from about 65% to about 69%. "Unknown" substance involvement has decreased from 23.3% in 1995 to 19.7% in 1997. This decreasing trend is very important and FAP should continue to work at lowering this percentage in the future.

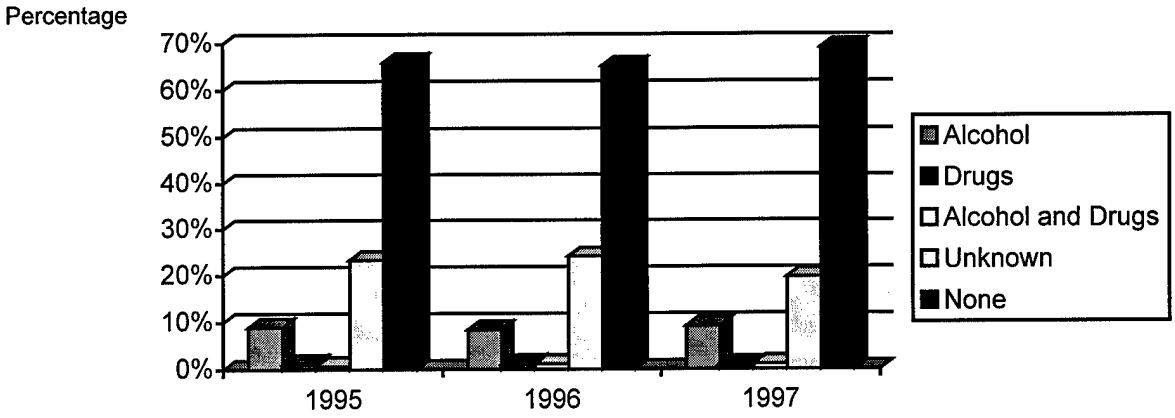

Figure 5. Child Abuse: Offender Substance Involvement (Army)

WHAT MAY AFFECT THE REPORTING OF SUBSTANCE INVOLVEMENT IN ARMY?

In order to understand what affects the distribution of substance involvement in Army, and in order to address the percentage of victims and offenders with "Unknown" substance involvement, FAP can raise questions surrounding those issues.

- Do victims and offenders feel comfortable giving substance involvement information? Do they know what would happen if they admit substance abuse?
- Does FAP inquire about substance involvement on EVERY victim and offender?
- Does "Unknown" represent a response from a victim or offender that you do not believe, or is the question about substance involvement not asked?
- What else can be done to address the percentage of "Unknown" substance involvement? (i.e., would an interview by a drug and alcohol counselor yield a different result?)

- What are the criteria for saying that there is substance involvement in a case?

CONCLUSION

By asking these and other questions surrounding substance involvement, FAP can gain a better idea of what role substance abuse plays in Army's spouse and child abuse. Using the information gained from addressing these questions, FAP will be able to provide more complete and accurate information to those studying the relationship between substance involvement and family violence and provide better prevention and treatment programs. With better information, the questions surrounding substance abuse can be addressed with more confidence and accurate conclusions.

QUESTION 6: WHAT INFORMATION CAN FAP GAIN FROM SOURCES OF REFERRAL?

INTRODUCTION

Spouse and child abuse cases are reported through a variety of different routes, both military and civilian. The majority of ***spouse abuse cases*** are reported by law enforcement, medical or dental personnel, the command, social services or family centers, and by self-referrals of the victim or offender in the case. The majority of ***child abuse cases*** are referred by law enforcement, medical or dental personnel, civilian social services, neighbors, child care workers, and command. The source of referral can be of great value when addressing spouse and child abuse in Army. In many cases, referral sources are seen as gatekeepers. That is, they hold the most power in terms of whether someone is referred or not referred. For spouse abuse, MPs are the primary gatekeepers. For child abuse, civilian social services is the primary gatekeeper.

DO REFERRAL SOURCES AFFECT ARMY'S FREQUENCY OF FAMILY VIOLENCE?

While sources of referral are not going to *create* more cases of spouse or child abuse, they could *find* more cases, which would increase the frequency of abuse. In other words, there is not going to be an increase in spouse or child abuse because the OB/GYN department had training in recognizing it. However, the newly trained medical personnel will be more alert to spouse and child abuse and may identify more cases. These cases of abuse were previously in the population, but were not noticed or referred to FAP. With increased training and education, more cases are likely to be reported. This phenomenon is important to keep in mind when educational programs are initiated for sources of referral. The frequency of spouse or child abuse may increase, but that increase is probably an indicator that the education effort was successful and victims who were not being recognized before, are now being identified and helped.

SOURCES OF REFERRAL

While there are numerous categories of referral, they have been collapsed into several main categories to facilitate discussion. The categories are as follows:

- Law enforcement- both military and civilian
- Medical/dental- both military and civilian
- Social services- family services for military and social services for civilian
- Command- only military
- Victim self-referral- by the victim of the incident
- Offender self-referral- by the offender of the incident
- Neighbor- used for child abuse only (for spouse it is part of "Other")
- Child Care Worker- used for child abuse only (for spouse it is part of "Other")
- Other includes everything else, both military and civilian: chaplain, neighbor, etc.

The sources of referral are listed as a percentage of the spouse or child abuse cases referred by that source.

ARMY: SPOUSE ABUSE

FY 1997. Referral sources for fiscal year 1997 are presented in Figure 1. Law enforcement is by far the largest source, referring 50.1% of the spouse abuse cases. Medical/dental referrals is the second largest, referring 15%. The percentage of referrals from command is similar to that of command, referring about 14.2%. The victim self-referred him/herself in 9.3% of the cases and the offender self-referred in 4.4% of the cases. The percentage of referrals by social services was 2.2%. All other referrals constituted 4.8%.

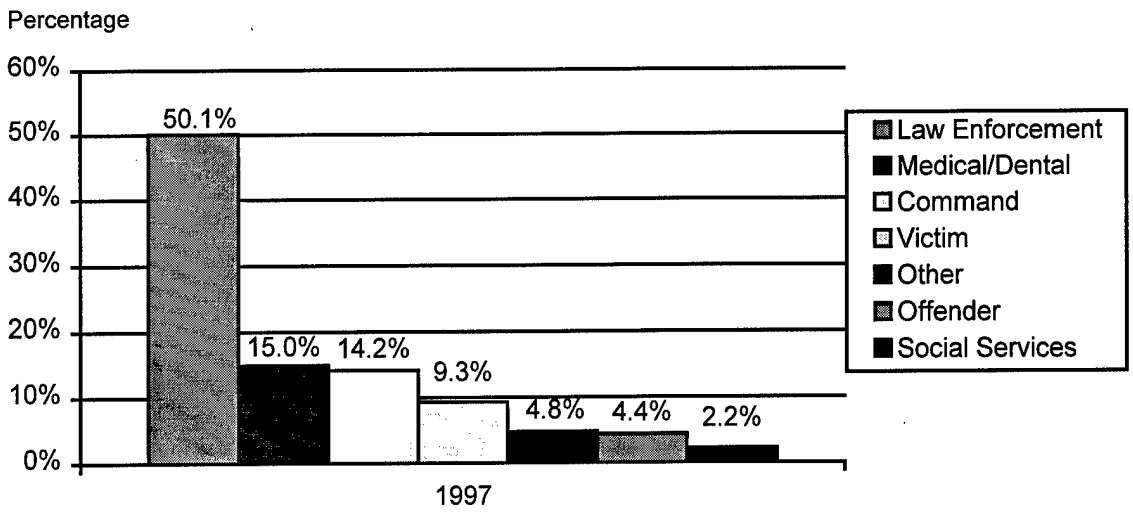

Figure 1. Spouse Abuse: Source of Referral (Army)

TRENDS IN THE SOURCE OF SPOUSE ABUSE REFERRAL

Overall, the breakdown of the sources of referral has not changed drastically over the past three years. The percentages for the majority of the sources have remained fairly constant, only a few have shown apparent trends. Social services increased from 1.3% in 1995, to 1.5% in 1996, to 2.2% in 1997. Referrals from medical/dental personnel decreased from 16.7% in 1995 to 15.8% in 1996 to 15.0% in 1997. Self referrals from offenders decreased over the past years, from 5.1% in 1995, to 4.8% in 1996, to 4.4% in 1997. Other major sources such as law enforcement, and command have remained fairly steady.

ARMY: CHILD ABUSE

FY 1997. Referral sources for fiscal year 1997 are presented in Figure 2. Social services referred the majority of child abuse cases (25%). Medical/dental and law enforcement each referred about 20%. Neighbors referred 10.6% of the cases, command referred 6.1% and child care workers referred 5.7%. The offender self-referred him/herself in 4% of the cases. All other sources made up 8.1% of the child abuse referrals for 1997.

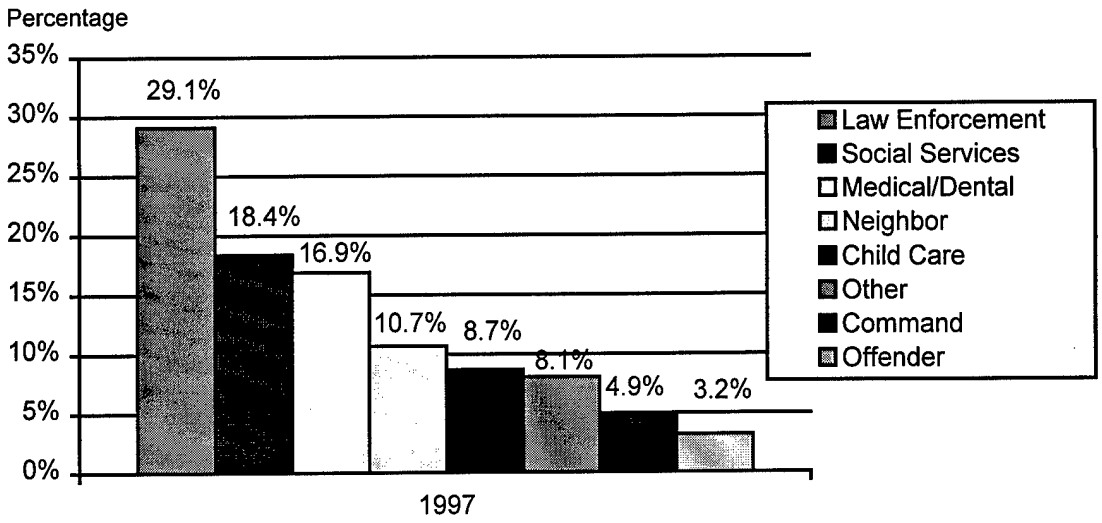

Figure 2. Child Abuse: Source of Referral (Army)

TRENDS IN THE SOURCE OF CHILD ABUSE REFERRAL

Overall, the breakdown of the sources of referral has not changed much over the past three years. Only one source has shown an apparent trend. Self referrals from the offender increased from 1.5% in 1995 to 1.8% in 1996 to 3.2% in 1997. Referrals from other sources have remained fairly steady.

EVALUATION OF SOURCES

The percentage distribution of referral sources can also provide to FAP information on which sources are alert to family violence, which are taking an active role in referring cases, and which may need more training or education. For example, it is not surprising that law enforcement is responsible for such a large percentage of the referrals because they probably have had a lot of training on the issue of spouse and child abuse. There are obviously other reasons why MPs are called. It may provide confidentiality to the reporter and people expect MPs to solve disputes. So, for many reasons, it is essential that FAP work closely with MPs to understand how they conduct their responses and investigations. Traditionally, the Army FAP has invested a lot of resources in MP training and the FAP should have a close working relationship with this group.

Other routes of referral usually do not get the same type or amount of training as MPs so it is also important to know how other sources of referral see their responsibilities in reporting child and spouse abuse. Questions can be raised to explore these issues in detail.

- Do medical/dental professionals have enough training in recognizing spouse abuse?
- Is the number of victims who visit the hospital consistent with the percentage of referrals from medical/dental professionals?
- Is command referring every case of spouse abuse it is aware of? Are some cases not referred?
- Is it easy for victims or offenders to self-refer?
- Is FAP working with civilian sources of referral such as social services who refer the majority of the child abuse cases? Can this relationship be improved?

FAP can gain a lot of knowledge on spouse and child abuse by looking at who the sources of referral are for its cases. FAP can then find what it can do to help or improve the referral capabilities of each source.

WHO MIGHT BE "HIDING" FROM REFERRAL SOURCES?

With all of the sources of referral, there still may be some victims in the population that may be completely missed. For example, what about an incident of minor and/or emotional abuse? It may not involve law enforcement if the incident occurs at home and no attention is drawn to it. The victim may not require medical/dental attention, and the command and social services may not know about it either. The offender is not likely to self-report, and the victim may be afraid to get help. While this scenario is fabricated, it is very important for FAP to think about who might be under reported and how they may reach these child and spouse abuse victims.

CONCLUSION

Source of referral can give FAP a lot of information, not only about how the spouse and child abuse cases of Army are actually referred, but also which sources may need more training in referring cases of abuse. By studying the distribution of the referral sources, FAP can get a sense

of who is referred and who may be missed. It is also important to remember that any education or training provided to a referral source is likely to increase the reporting of spouse and child abuse cases. This would not be an indication that child or spouse abuse is increasing in the Army, only that more incidents are known about and can then be helped. Overall, understanding and working with the sources of referral is an important step to a successful FAP program. A total community effort is required to maintain a high quality FAP program.