



Understanding Military Sexual Trauma

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Overview

- 1) Definition and prevalence of MST
- 2) Signs and symptoms of a survivor of MST
- 3) Building skills to increase intimacy
 - . Disclosure
 - . Emotional regulation
 - . Communication



Rape Culture: Myths and Facts

Myth	Fact
Victims are raped by strangers	85% of rapists are friends, co-workers, family members
Victims make false accusations	95-97% of accusations are accurate
If the victim didn't fight, then it wasn't rape	May not fight because of threats, passing out, coercion.
Victims ask for it by flirting	It's about power, not desire



Consent as tea


“ 3 min video



What is MST?

- “ MSA:
 - . Intentional sexual contact or penetration involving a military Service Member or military setting,
 - . In which someone is involved against his or her will
 - . That is characterized by Force; Threats; Intimidation; Abuse of authority; Absence of consent
- “ MST is an overarching term created by the VA that includes:
 - . MSA, sexual harassment, and
 - . Subsequent, psychological, and medical consequences
- “ Hazing (Podcast about Hazing: <http://bit.ly/HazingMST>)

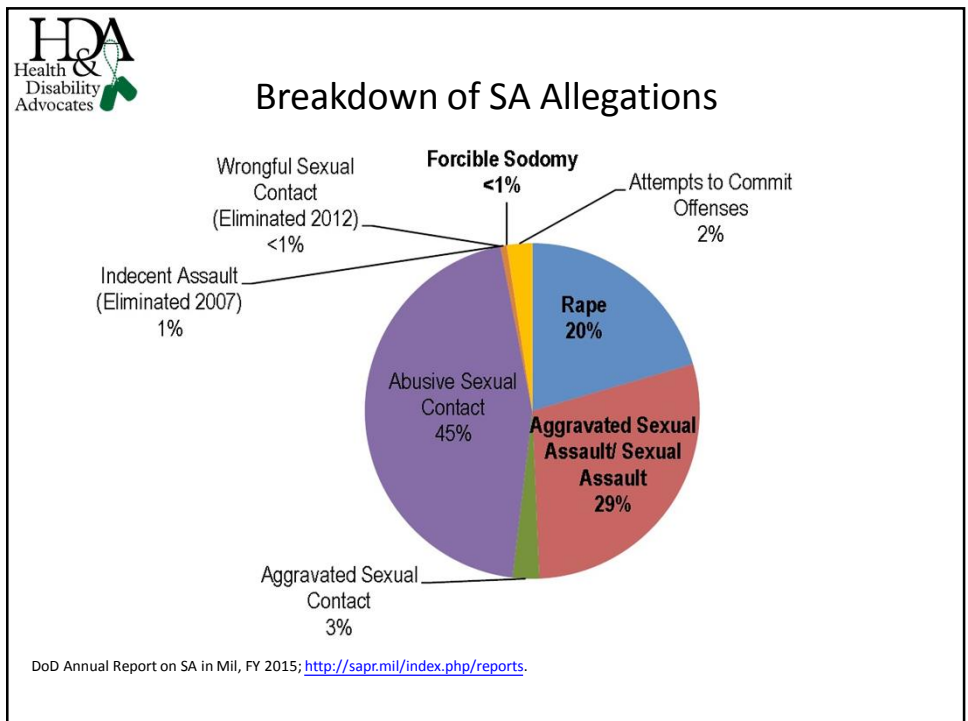
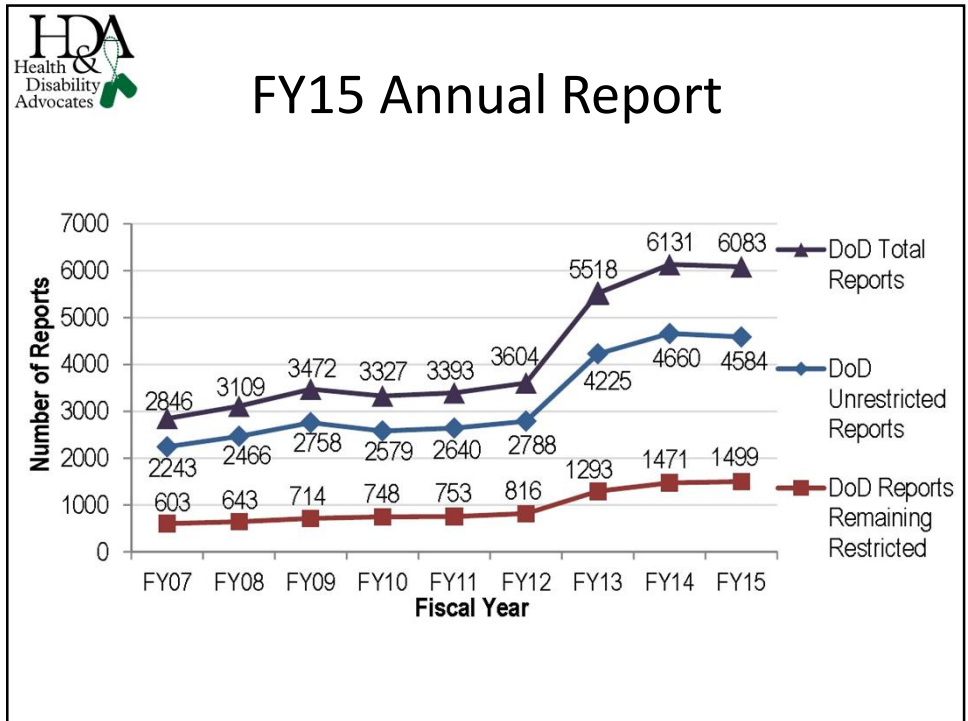
http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/mst_general_factsheet.pdf; 38 USC Sec. 1720D; DOD DIRECTIVE 6495.01, SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE (SAPR) PROGRAM 18 (Jan. 23, 2012, incorporating Change 1, Apr. 30, 2013), available at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/649501p.pdf>; and Articles 120 and 125 of the UCMJ.



How Common is MST?

	Estimated	Reported	Est. % Women	Est. % Men
2006	34,200	2289 (~6.7%)	6.8%	1.8%
2010	19,300	2532 (~13.1%)	4.4%	0.9%
2012	26,000	2828 (~10.9%)	6.1%	1.2%
2015	20,300	6,083 (~24%)	4.3% (9,600)	0.9% (10,600)

DoD SAPR. (2014). Appendix A: Provisional statistical data on sexual assault. *Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military*. Retrieved from http://sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/FY14_Annual/FY14_Annual_Report_Appendix_A.pdf



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Survivor Story 1

“ 3 min video

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Prevalence of Sexual Violence in the Military

24% of Veterans say they know a MSA survivor.


Female Veterans (60%) are **3x** more likely than male Vets (20%) to know a MSA survivor.

PROSECUTION RATES

Of the 2,783 cases that qualified for possible disciplinary action:

Category	Count
Went to military courts	926
Did not go to military courts	1,857

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/172286/one-four-vets-know-military-sexual-trauma-victim.aspx>; Army OneSource; SAPR Report FY 2015 [http://sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/fy15 Annual/Appendix B Statistical Data on Sexual Assault.pdf](http://sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/fy15%20Annual/Appendix%20B%20Statistical%20Data%20on%20Sexual%20Assault.pdf)



Comparison: Rates of SA


	Timeframe	Men	Women
Military ¹	Annual rates	0.9%	4.3%
College ² (Post-secondary)	Anytime during enrollment	6.25%	20%
General Population ³	Lifetime	1.4%	18.3%
MST Among Homeless ⁴	Anytime during service	3.3%	39.7%


¹DoD SAPR. (2014). Appendix A: Provisional statistical data on sexual assault. *Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military*. Retrieved from http://sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/FY14_Annual/FY14_Annual_Report_Appendix_A.pdf

² National Sexual Violence Resource Center, "Statistics about Sexual Violence," (2015) http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/publications_nsvrc_factsheet_media-packet_statistics-about-sexual-violence_0.pdf

³Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012). Sexual violence: Facts at a glance. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/SV-DataSheet-a.pdf>

⁴Pavao, J., Turchik, J. A., Hyun, J. K., Karpenko, J., Sawelkiss, M., McCutcheon, S., Kane, V., & Kimerling, R. (2013). Military sexual trauma among homeless veterans. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 28(Suppl 2), 536-541.

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- ### Characteristics of MST
- “ **Higher prevalence of PTSD** among survivors of MST (60%) than civilian sexual trauma (50%)
 - “ Complexities are similar to civilian sexual assault, but often are more pronounced:
 - . Perpetrator is a brother or sister in arms; assault is akin to **incest**
 - . Survivors may have to rely on their perpetrators (or their associates) for approval of medical or psychological care
 - . MST survivors may continue to live and work in proximity to their perpetrators unless transfer is approved
 - “ Primary difference is in notification; reporting; and courts-martial process (the courts are a lot different)

Restricted Report	Unrestricted Report
 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A confidential reporting method that allows a Service Member disclose to specified officials that he or she has been the victim of a sexual assault• Victim receives access to medical care, counseling, and advocacy, without requiring officials to automatically report to law enforcement or initiate an official investigation	<h3>Reporting Options</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When a victim reports an incident of sexual assault, the matter is referred for investigation and victim's rights apply.• Victims may receive health care, counseling, & advocacy services. However, details of the incident are reportable to command and law enforcement.

HDA Health & Disability Advocates	Survivor Story 2
" 15 sec video	



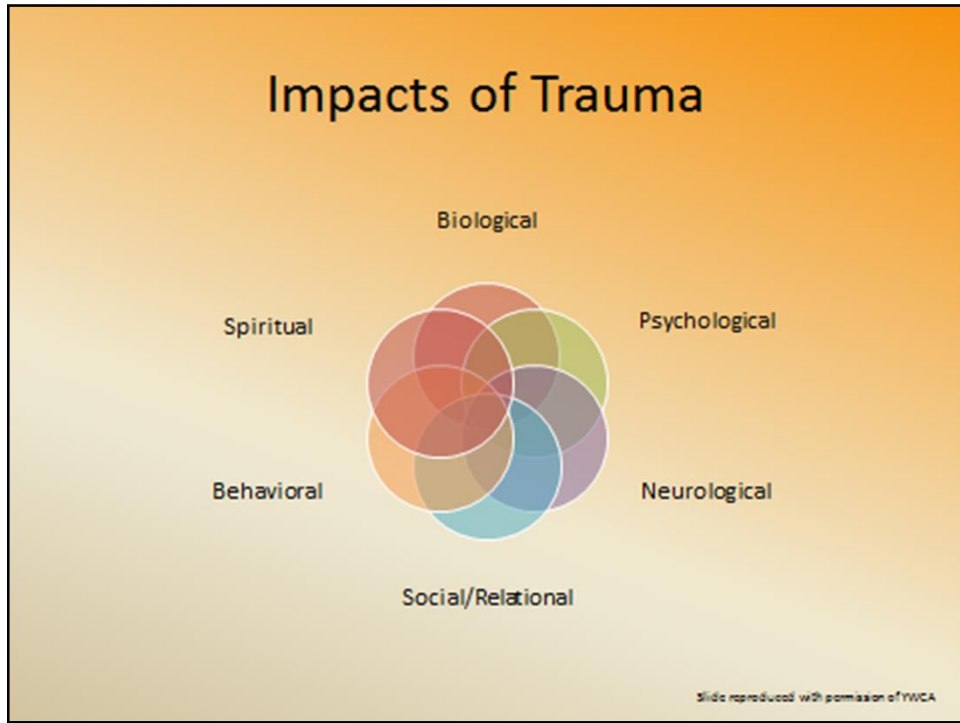
Some Notable Changes

- “ No article 32 hearings
- “ Eliminated statute of limitations
- “ Expedited unit transfer upon request
- “ Can receive treatment at VA for MSA that occur on Title 10 (AD) or Title 32 (NG)

<http://www.mccaskill.senate.gov/violence>




Signs and Symptoms of MST



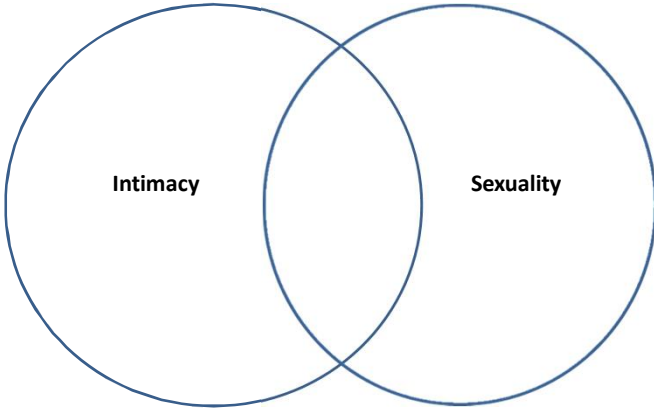
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MST+ Masculinity = HUGE Conflict


James, D. (2013, June 23). *In Debate over Military Sexual Assault, Men are Overlooked Victims* . Retrieved June 24, 2013, from The New York Times: www.nytimes.com; Bell, Margret E., Turchik, Jessica A., & Karpenko, Julie A. (2014). Impact of Gender on Reactions to Military Sexual Assault and Harassment. *Health & Social Work, 39*(1), 25-33. Bell, Margret E., Turchik, Jessica A., & Karpenko, Julie A. (2014). Impact of Gender on Reactions to Military Sexual Assault and Harassment. *Health & Social Work, 39*(1), 25-33.



Results from support group on sexuality



Monsoon et al 2009; Rush Road Home Project; Hyun, J., Pavao, J., & Kimerling, R. (2009). Military Sexual Trauma. *PTSD Research Quarterly*, 20(2), 2-8.




PTSD is **9 times** higher in female survivors compared to female SMs who were not assaulted

Nearly **½** of all female survivors of MST have symptoms of depression

↓

Suicide is the **2nd** highest cause of Service Member deaths per year

↓



22 Veterans commit suicide every day

Female survivors were less likely to complete college and less likely to earn more than **\$25,000** annually.

12% of the adult homeless population are Veterans **8%** are female (<1% of total U.S population are Veterans)

↓

39.7% of homeless female Veterans & **3.3%** of homeless male Veterans experienced MST

↓

49,933 Veterans experience homelessness on any given night



Building Skills to Increase Intimacy



Barriers and (positive) Responses

“ 3 min video



Handling Disclosures: Examples of what to say

- “Do you feel safe now?”
- “I believe you.”
- “It’s not your fault.”
- “You are very brave.”
- “I support whatever choice feels best to you.”
- “You’re not alone.”
- “You only have to share what you want.”
- “Your reactions are not unusual.”
- “Do you have support? Is there anyone else you want to know?”
- “How is this impacting you?”
- “How can I help you?”

Campbell, Rebeca, and Sheel Raja. "Secondary Victimization of Rape Victims." *Secondary Victimization of Rape Victims*. University of Illinois at Chicago, Violence and Victims, V. 14 (3), 1999.
Macy, R.J. (2007b). Sexual revictimization: Implications for social work practice. *Families in Society*, 88(4), 627-636.



Emotional Regulation as a Skill

35 sec video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cu7A8LzL1o>



Need for Strong Emotional Regulation

- “ Each survivor will need to rebuild and strengthen skills surrounding intimacy (regaining their sexuality and sexual identity) after an assault.
- . expressing feelings
 - . reconnecting with the mind
 - . emotional awareness
 - . regaining trust (with both personal body and others)

Bell, Margret E., Turchik, Jessica A., & Karpenko, Julie A. (2014). Impact of Gender on Reactions to Military Sexual Assault and Harassment. *Health & Social Work*, 39(1), 25-33.

International Society for Sexual Medicine. (2013). *Sexuality and Sexual Pleasure after Sexual Assault*. Pawtucket, RI: The Journal of Sexual Medicine.

Northcut, T., Kienow, A. (2014) *The Trauma Trifecta of Military Sexual Trauma: A Case Study Illustrating the Integration of Mind and Body in Clinical Work with Survivors of MST*.

Miller, M., Wolf, E., Reardon, A., Harrington, K., Ryabchenko, K., Castillo, D., Freund, R., Heyman, R. PTSD and conflict behavior between veterans and their intimate partners. *J Anxiety Discord* 27(2) 240-251 (March, 2013)



Communication as a Skill

15 sec video

Bell, Margret E., Turchik, Jessica A., & Karpenko, Julie A. (2014). Impact of Gender on Reactions to Military Sexual Assault and Harassment. *Health & Social Work*, 39(1), 25-33.

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We're pretty bad at communicating

<http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/03/well-quiz-the-mind-behind-the-eyes/>
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/04/28/science/faking-pain.html> Lora Rose Hunter, Julia D. Buckner, and Norman B. Schmidt. Interpreting facial expressions: The influence of social anxiety, emotional valence, and race. *J. Anxiety Disord.* 2009 May;23(4):482-488. Aaron Smith, Americans and Text Messaging. PewResearch Center. Sept. 19, 2011.

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Positive Example of Communication?

15 sec video

Miller, M., Wolf, E., Reardon, A., Harrington, K., Ryabchenko, K., Castillo, D., Freund, R., Heyman, R. PTSD and conflict behavior between veterans and their intimate partners. *J Anxiety Disord* 27(2) 240-251 (March, 2013)



Childhood Responses to Trauma in the Family

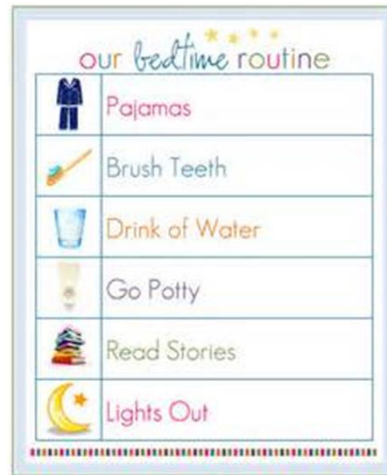


Collins, K. et al. (2010) Understanding the impact of trauma and urban poverty on family systems: Risks, resilience, and interventions. Baltimore, MD: Family Informed Trauma Treatment Center

Ahrens, Courtney E. & Aldana, E. (2012). The Ties That Bind: Understanding the Impact of Sexual Assault Disclosures on Survivors Relationships with Friends, Family, and Partners. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation* (13), 226-243.



Talking to Children and the Family



Effects of Complex Trauma. National Child Traumatic Stress Network. Emotional and Psychological Trauma Symptoms, Treatment, and Recover. HelpGuide.org. VA. Eve B. Carlson, and Joseph Ruzek. PTSD and the Family. PTSD: National Center for PTSD. Therese J. Borchard. 7 Things a Depressed Parent can Say to a Child. Psychcentral.com. Trauma and children – tips for parents. BetterHealth Channel.



Conclusion

- “ Impact of MST on sexuality
 - . Physiological as well as emotional/relational
- “ Clinical considerations for assessment and treatment of sexual difficulties in survivors of trauma
- “ Building communication skills in the family to increase intimacy



- “ Ahrens, Courtney E. & Aldana, E. (2012). The Ties That Bind: Understanding the Impact of Sexual Assault Disclosures on Survivors Relationships with Friends, Family, and Partners. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation* (13), 226-243.
- “ Bell, Margret E., Turchik, Jessica A., & Karpenko, Julie A. (2014). Impact of Gender on Reactions to Military Sexual Assault and Harassment. *Health & Social Work*, 39(1), 25-33.
- “ Borchard, T. J. “7 things a depressed parent can say to a child.”(2013) Pysch Central. <http://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2013/11/13/7-things-a-depressed-parent-can-say-to-a-child/>
- “ Carlson, E.B., & Ruzek, J. “PTSD and the Family” (Feb. 16, 2016) National Center for PTSD: <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treatment/family/ptsd-and-the-family.asp>
- “ Collins, K. et al. (2010) Understanding the impact of trauma and urban poverty on family systems: Risks, resilience, and interventions. Baltimore, MD: Family Informed Trauma Treatment Center
- “ Coxell, A. W., & King, M. B. (2010). Male Victims of Rape and Sexual Abuse. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 380-391.
- “ Davies, M., Pollard, P., & Archer, J. (2006). Effects of Perpetrator Gender and Victim Sexuality on Blame Towards Male Victims of Sexual Assault. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 146(3), 275-291.



- ~ Gidycz, C.A., Orchowski, L. M., King, C.R., & Rich, C.L. (2008). Sexual victimization and health-risk behaviors: A Prospective Analysis of College Women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 23 (6), 744-763.
- ~ <http://afterdeployment.dcoe.mil/library>
- ~ International Society for Sexual Medicine. (2013). Sexuality and Sexual Pleasure after Sexual Assault. Pawtucket, RI: The Journal of Sexual Medicine.
- ~ Northcut, T., Kienow, A. (2014) The Trauma Trifecta of Military Sexual Trauma: A Case Study Illustrating the Integration of Mind and Body in Clinical Work with Survivors of MST. *Clin Soc Work J* (2014)
- ~ Miller, M., Wolf, E., Reardon, A., Harrington, K., Ryabchenko, K., Castillo, D., Freund, R., Heyman, R. PTSD and conflict behavior between veterans and their intimate partners. *J Anxiety Disorder* 27(2) 240-251 (March, 2013)
- ~ Sadler, A. "Health-related Consequences of Physical and Sexual Violence: Women in the Military." *Obstetrics & Gynecology* 96.3 (2000): 473-80. Web.



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