War and Military Families:
Translating Family Prevention Science into Practice
A National Public Health Response

Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
U.S. Department of Justice

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Challenges of Military Children and Families

- Extended and repeated separations from a primary caregiver in the context of danger
- Altered family roles and responsibilities
- School and community transitions
- Increased stress on caretaking parent
- Community level stress/loss
- Media and communication exposure
- Impact of combat exposure on returning parent
- Possible parental mental health problems, physical injury, or loss
Research on Parental Wartime Deployments on Children

- Limited but expanding research base
- Indices of resilience identified.
- Developmental/gender differences in reactions: emotional/behavioral, service utilization, academic, risk behaviors (Lester 2010; Chandra 2010; Chartrand et al, 2008; Reed et al 2011)
- Rise in child maltreatment during deployments and related to separation/reunion (Gibbs et al 2007)
- Rising mental health utilization in military children including both outpatient and inpatient visits since OEF/OIF (Gorman 2010; Mansfield et al, 2011)
- Focused on during deployment risk, limited child self report, primarily assessments with caregiver parent only, convenience samples, cross sectional or retrospective data.
Prevalence of Clinically Significant Symptoms in Children and Spouses by Deployment Status


- Service member parent PTSD symptoms predicted Child depressive symptoms, Externalizing and Internalizing Behaviors in Reintegration group (p < .05)

- Civilian At Home Parent Psychological symptoms predicted Child Depression, Externalizing and Internalizing Symptoms for both Deployed and Reintegration group (p < .05)

- Cumulative months of deployments predicted Child and Spouse Distress (p < .05)
Translating Prevention Science into Practice: Integrating Convergent Research

Traumatic Stress and Developmental Research: Children and Families

Family Resilience Models

Family Centered Preventive Intervention: FOCUS Model

Evidence Based Prevention Interventions

Implementation Science: Public Health Prevention
Implementation Process: Alignment of Family Prevention with Military Goals and Systems of Care

- Public Health Prevention Model (NRCIOM, 1994, 2009)
- Technology enhanced system for screening, customization, and evaluation
- Partnered approach with military leadership, care systems, private and academic
- Destigmatizing framework for promoting psychological health within community
- Supporting readiness, recovery, and reintegration
FOCUS: Individual Family Resiliency Training

Sessions 1 & 2

Parents only

Sessions 3 & 4

Children only

Session 5

Parents only

Sessions 6 – 8

Family Sessions
Public Health Strategy for Implementation
FOCUS Suite of Services:
Beardslee, Lester, Klosinsiki et al; Prevention Science, 2011

Universal

- Community and Leadership Briefs
- Educational Workshop
- Provider Consultation
- Skill Building Group
- Family Consultation
- Individual Family Resiliency Training

indicated
Families OverComing Under Stress Project for Military Families

US Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

US Marine Corps Combat Operational Stress Control Program

Office of Military Community and Family Policy (OSD)
FOCUS Resiliency Training for Military Families Services from 2008-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Outreach and Education</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community/ Group Briefings</td>
<td>3025</td>
<td>183,804</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOCUS Workshops</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>16,845</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOCUS Consultations</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>2,469</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOCUS Skill Building Groups</td>
<td>1174</td>
<td>10,244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOCUS Individual Family Resilience Training</td>
<td>Multi Session Training</td>
<td>2196 Adults 2281 Children</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Prevalence of Parental Distress Before and After FOCUS
Prevalence of Clinically Significant Distress at Intake & Post Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Anxiety</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Members</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Parent</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>13%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
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SM = 531, CS = 925

p < .001

Intake vs. Post
FOCUS Child Adjustment
Prevalence of Children with Significant Difficulties Before and After FOCUS (n=1547)

*Based on Parent Report of Total Difficulties on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and U.S. cut-offs for high difficulties. *** p < .001
Both boys and girls showed a significant reduction in conduct problems on the SDQ from intake to post-FOCUS (p<.001) and maintained low symptoms at the follow-up assessment. Overall, boys showed a significantly greater number of conduct problems than girls (p<.05).

SDQ = Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
Prevalence of Pro-Social Behavior at Intake & Post Intervention

p < .001  Children =1547
Lessons for Implementing Family Resilience Interventions at Scale

- Curriculum should be modular, portable, and scalable allowing for the customization of the curriculum to address all participant, population and community needs while maintaining the fidelity to the model.
- Systematic training, supervision and evaluation needed to ensure the quality of all services.
- Challenges for scalability and sustainability include balancing rigorous implementation strategies with reach to address the needs of large and dispersed population.
- Role for “indicated prevention” as a novel fit into continuum of both family support and health cares services.
- Opportunities for integrating technological approaches to deliver and augment in-person services.
UCLA Family Resilience Center
Veteran and Military Families

- “Welcome Back Veterans” UCLA Family Resilience Center (McCormick Foundation/National Baseball League)- Partnership with Los Angeles Veteran Administration

- Operation Mend-FOCUS Veteran and Family-Centered Services, Training and Injury Care

- Veteran’s Administration Intervention Research: Long Beach VA, Greater Los Angeles VA.

- FOCUS Combat Injury Trial (USUHS)

- Community FOCUS training: USC Building Capacity in Military Connected Schools; Department of Mental Health-CA National Guard; NMFA Family Retreat Curriculum

- DOD Military Children Reintegration Study (Purdue-UCLA collaboration)
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